

BRIEF



People ride a boat during sunset on the first day of the new year, in Kolkata, Saturday.

Idol broken

Coimbatore: A life-size idol of Lord Krishna was found vandalised in the early hours of Saturday in the city prompting local BJP leaders to seek immediate action against the miscreants. Morning walkers noticed broken pieces of the idol strewn across the place at Bharati Park in the city and immediately alerted police. Local BJP leaders, including the party's district president R Nandakumar, arrived at the spot and demanded the police must take action against "communal forces" being supported by a few "anti-Hindu" organisations that are reportedly involved in the act.

Denied entry

Mangaluru: Six Muslim girl students of the government women's PU College in Udupi have alleged that the principal is not allowing them to wear 'hijab' (headscarf) in the classrooms. The students also complained that they are not being allowed to talk in Urdu, Arabic and Beary languages. The girls stood outside the classroom for three days in protest. The students claimed though their parents approached the principal Rudra Gowda for talks, he refused to hold discussion on the issue.

Terrorist killed

Srinagar: A terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, police said. The encounter took place in Jumagund area of the north Kashmir district. "One unidentified terrorist killed in an encounter at Jumagund area of Kupwara. Army & Police are on the job. Further details shall follow. @JmuKmrPolice," the Kashmir Zone Police said on Twitter.

Major fire

Kolkata: A major fire gutted a godown of a chemical factory here, where paint, thinner and other related items were stored, an official said. Eighteen fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the flames, which had also spread to a neighbouring hosiery factory, he stated. It took fire tenders around three hours to bring the blaze under control, he said.

Arms factory

Banda: An illegal arms and ammunition manufacturing factory was uncovered following a raid here and five people were arrested, police said on Saturday. The raid was conducted on Friday night based on a tip-off, SHO of Chilla police station Narendra Pratap Singh said. "Eight illegal arms and equipment used in making them have been recovered from the factory," he said.

Weather
High 24 Low 13

FATAL MISHAP

Stampede at Vaishno Devi leaves 12 dead

■ During New Year rush

Jammu, Jan 01 (PTD):

Twelve people lost their lives and over a dozen others were injured in a stampede at the famous Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir in the early hours during a heavy rush of devotees on New Year.

This is the first such tragedy at the shrine, located atop the Trikuta hills - about 50 km from here - that attracts lakhs of people every year.

The incident occurred between 2.30 AM and 2.45 AM on Saturday near a relatively narrow passage at gate number 3 outside the sanctum sanctorum of the hilltop shrine where devotees usually arrive round the clock after trekking from the Katra base camp, a distance of nearly 13 km.

A high-level inquiry was



Bodies of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine stampede victims being kept at a Community Health Centre at Katra, in Reasi district, Saturday morning.

ordered into the stampede by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha to be headed by Principal Secretary (Home) Shaleen Kabra with Divisional Commissioner Jammu Rajiv Langar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh as its members.

Condolences poured in from all quarters and Prime Minister Narendra

Modi spoke to Sinha and Union ministers Jitendra Singh to take stock of the situation.

According to eyewitness accounts, the number of devotees was allegedly beyond the permitted level with flagrant violation of COVID-19 norms, and some of the survivors accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of "mismanagement".

High-level inquiry ordered

A high-level inquiry was ordered into the stampede by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha to be headed by Principal Secretary (Home) Shaleen Kabra with Divisional Commissioner Jammu Rajiv Langar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh as its members.

'Death due to mismanagement'

According to eyewitness accounts, the number of devotees was allegedly beyond the permitted level with flagrant violation of COVID-19 norms, and some of the survivors accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of "mismanagement".

Relief announced

The JK administration has announced a relief of Rs 10 lakh to the deceased and Rs 2 lakh to the injured which will be paid by the Shrine board. The PMO tweeted that "an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh each from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of those who lost their lives due to the stampede at Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan. The injured would be given Rs 50,000: PM @narendramodi".

Three of family die after motorcycle rams into truck

Janjgir-Champa, Jan 01:

About the mishap

Three cousin brothers were killed when their speeding motorcycle crashed into a parked truck in Janjgir-Champa district, police said on Saturday. The accident occurred on national highway no 49 near Banari area under the Janjgir police station limits late on Friday night, said Janjgir station house officer (SHO) Umesh Sahu. The trio, identified as Deepak Patel (19), Parmeshwar Patel (17) and Tarun Patel (16), died on the spot due to the impact, he said, adding that the deceased were residents of Janjgir-Champa.

The accident occurred on national highway no 49 near Banari area under the Janjgir police station limits late on Friday night. The trio, identified as Deepak Patel (19), Parmeshwar Patel (17) and Tarun Patel (16), died on the spot due to the impact, he said, adding that the deceased were residents of Janjgir-Champa.

on the spot due to the impact, he said, adding that the deceased were residents of Janjgir-Champa.

GST collection at Rs 1.29 lakh crore

New Delhi: GST revenues in December 2021 grew 13 per cent to over Rs 1.29 lakh crore, mainly due to pickup in economic activity and anti-evasion steps, the Finance Ministry said on Saturday. Though the collection was lower than Rs 1.31 lakh crore mopped up in November, December is the sixth month in a row when the revenues from goods sold and services rendered stood at over Rs 1 lakh crore. "The gross GST revenue collected in December 2021 is Rs 1,29,780 crore, of which CGST is Rs 22,578 crore, SGST is Rs 28,658 crore, IGST is Rs 69,155 crore (including Rs 37,527 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 9,389 crore (including Rs 614 crore collected on import of goods)," the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

CM ADDRESSES SECURITY FORCES

'Naxals on back boot, large part of Bastar free of their menace'

Raipur, Jan 01:

Claiming that a major portion of the Bastar region was now free of naxal insurgency, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Saturday hailed the security forces for their successes against the rebels.

He was addressing a gathering of state police and paramilitary personnel on the occasion of New Year at Police Parade Ground here.

His government has changed Chhattisgarh's image as an insurgency-affected state, Baghel said.

I am happy that our police have been doing excellent work in naxal-affected areas. Naxalism is not just a law and order problem, but also a political and so-



cial problem. Security forces have set up camps in Maoist strongholds which pushed the rebels on the back foot, the chief minister was quoted as saying in an official release. Now the forest-dwellers, mostly tribals (in naxal-affected areas), consider security personnel as their friends and understand that security personnel have been deployed there for their own safety.

"This all could become

possible because the police are helping locals, and development works, including the construction of roads, bridges and culverts, are taking place. A major portion of Bastar has got rid of the naxal menace, Baghel said.

Earlier, when it came to Chhattisgarh, people outside the state spoke only about naxalism, "but our government has changed this thinking and this image of the state," he said.

44 Naxalites surrendered

Konta: The police of Sukma district got a big success in the Naxal operation on the very first day of the year 2022 when a total of 44 Naxalites, including 9 women belonging to the Maoist organization, surrendered together. SP Sunil Sharma and other officers were present on the occasion of the surrender of 44 Naxalites in Sukma's Naveen Camp Karigundam. These Naxalites who surrendered before the police, influenced by the rehabilitation policy of the Chhattisgarh government, decided to return to the mainstream of the society. A reward of Rs 2 lakh has been announced by the government on a surrendered Naxalite. In this episode, people who strayed from the mainstream of the society were surrendered by the villagers of the surrounding areas of Karigundam village on Saturday by bringing them to the newly established camp. During this, the surrendered Naxalites and the villagers accompanying them were fed food by the soldiers. It has been told that all the surrendered Naxalites will be given the benefit of the rehabilitation schemes of the government.



PM-KISAN SCHEME

PM releases Rs 20,946 cr to farmers; over Rs 1.8 lakh cr transferred so far

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday released Rs 20,946 crore to 10.09 crore farmers across India as the 10th installment of financial aid under the PM-KISAN scheme and said there was a need for innovation in agriculture along with promotion of natural farming.

Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, a financial benefit of Rs 6,000 per year is provided to the eligible farmer



families, payable in three equal installments of Rs 2,000. The PM-KISAN scheme was announced in the February 2019 Budget. The first installment was for the period December 2018 to March 2019.

Addressing a virtual

event for release of the amount, Modi said that the scheme is a big support for farmers and the Centre has transferred all installments on time directly into bank accounts of beneficiaries, without any involvement of middlemen.

'Covid cannot impede India's development'

Amid growing concerns over spread of Omicron, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India needs to accelerate pace of development in the new year and will not allow the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic to dampen the growth process. He stressed that the country will continue to fight the pandemic with "full caution and vigilance", and also take care of the national interest.

LONG WAIT FOR DEVOTEES



Devotees wait in queues to pay obeisance at the Golden Temple on the first day of the New Year 2022, in Amritsar, Saturday.

UNFORTUNATE INCIDENT

Four killed in landslide, more feared trapped at mining site

Bhiwani (Hr), Jan 01 (PTD):

Four people have been killed and many others are feared trapped following a landslide at Dadam mining site here on Saturday.

Police said around half-a-dozen dumper trucks and some machines were buried under the debris caused by the landslide which occurred around 9 am in Tosham block.

Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij said several rescue teams have been pressed into service for the rescue work. Vij gave information about the death toll in a tweet. I am deeply saddened over the incident that took place at the min-



A view of the site of a landslide incident at Dadam mining area of Bhiwani district, Saturday.

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team from Ghaziabad, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) from Madhuban and an Army unit from Hisar have been called. So far four people have died, said Vij in a tweet. Bhiwani Chief Medical Officer Raghuvir Shandilya had earlier said that Toofan Sharma (30), a native of Bihar and Binder (23), who hailed from Baganwala in Haryana's Jind district, have died in the incident.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (Siwani) Manoj Kumar said four to five people may still be trapped under the debris.

operation is being run by the administration.

Revelers forget Covid guidelines; celebrate NY Day with gaiety



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 01: Steel City wore a festive look on Saturday as the denizens celebrated the New Year Day with great zeal and enthusiasm. Neglecting the Covid guidelines, the people were seen moving around and partying in groups with masks. The

pandemic prevention guidelines were violated at restaurants, hotels, gardens and even at many religious places.

All parks and gardens were also filled with revelers throughout the day. Even food vendors had a gala as they were seen luring picnickers by decorating their wooden cart with chaat, bhel puri,



Central Chronicle News

among others. Since dawn, people were seen hitting the roads leading to Dongargarh, Ganga Maiyya, Gangrel Dam, etc with family members. By noon all the places teemed with festive crowds. Revelers at Maitri Bagh Zoo chose to carry cooked food items to have a feast.

Here the youngsters enjoyed watching the animals and the natural beauty. Though restless monkeys attracted a huge number of visitors, especially children, the tigers and lions also had their share of visitors.

Devotees in large numbers thronged various temples in the city, praying and hoping for a pros-



Central Chronicle News

perous New Year on Saturday. Popular temples such as Hanuman temple in Sector 9, Balaji Temple in Sector 5, Bamleshwari Temple in Sector 6, Ganesh Temple in Sector 5, Sai Baba Temple in Sector 6, Shani Dev Temple in Khursipar, Kalibari in Nehru Nagar, etc wore a festive look and were

jam-packed with people. Special Prayers were also held at Churches across the city.

Devotees waiting in a long queue were seen at Hanuman Temple in Sector 9, right from the early morning. This temple was all decked up for the occasion. The Bamleshwari Temple appeared very pretty and



women devotees in large numbers reached here for the 'darshan' of Mother Goddess and performed special pujas. A large number of people visited the Ganesh Temple in Sector 5 and sought blessings from the god of new beginnings.

The New Year celebrations in the city attained a different shade, with

spirituality and revelry. While devotees throng temples right from the early morning formed one face, the partying youth making merry added fizz to the other side. People celebrated the New Year day by visiting the parks in the city and nearby picnic spots which became the revelry hub.

Candidates instructed to file expenditure accounts by January 04

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 01: The election for the councilors of four different civic bodies of the district was held on December 20. It is mandatory for the candidates to submit the expenditure account in 03 parts from the date of their nomination till the victory procession after the declaration of the result. Under this process, the first part of accounts was collected on December 08-10 while the second part was collected during December 14-17.

In Bhilai Municipal Corporation Bhilai, out of

318 councilor candidates, only 96 candidates have submitted the final expenditure account. Accordingly, 222 candidates are yet to submit the final expenditure account. They have been instructed to submit the final expenditure account by January 04.

In Bhilai-Charoda, the final expenditure account has been submitted by 20 candidates out of the total 147 candidates. The remaining candidates have been provided time till January 5 to submit the final expenditure account. Similarly, out of 163 candidates in Risali,

the final expenditure account has been submitted by only 62 candidates.

The deadline for submission of remaining candidates has been fixed as January 05. On the other hand, out of 87 candidates in Jamul Municipal Council, the final expenditure account has been submitted by only 09 candidates.

The remaining candidates have been given time till January 06. January 05 has been fixed as the last date to submit the final expenditure account for 05 candidates of Nagar Panchayat Utai.

While submitting the

final expenditure account, the candidates have to furnish the final account of expenditure in Form "A", details of entire expenditure in Form "B" along with original bills and acknowledgment of deposits in bank account, etc.

They will also have to submit affidavits attested by a notary. On completion of all the formalities, the auditor will provide receipt to the candidates. The candidates have been instructed to submit the final expenditure account before the last date to avoid plenary action.

Safety month inaugurated with unfurling of Safety Flag at Ispat Bhavan

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 01: The month of January is observed every year as Safety Month in SAIL-Bhilai Steel Plant.

The Plant's Safety Engineering Department organises a programme on this occasion. Director I/c Bhilai Steel Plant Anirban Dasgupta unfurled the Safety Flag at Ispat Bhavan on Saturday. Acting CGM Safety & Fire Services GP Singh read out the oath of Safety.

Director I/c released the Safety Audit Calendar prepared by Safety Engineering Department. Present on the occasion



were Executive Directors, Senior Officers and members of the Bhilai Collective. The programme was organised with Covid protocols in place.

Executive Director (Works) Anjani Kumar unfurled the Safety Flag at Sayantra Bhavan.

Stating that all work related to production is significant, he urged members of the Bhilai Collective to strictly observe safety guidelines and regulations, SoPs and SMPs at their respective places of work or anywhere else inside the Plant so that we can ensure a safe work-

place and ensure accident free steel. SK Agarwal, GM (Safety) read out the safety oath.

Safety Flag was unfurled at various other shops and departments. Various programmes will be organised in the month of January 22 by Safety Engineering Department.

SMILE MORE, LAUGH MORE



Pic: Raja Dewangan

Director I/c greets employees on New Year

Urges them to Work Together to Achieve Targets

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 01: Director I/c Bhilai Steel Plant Anirban Dasgupta visited all the major shops and departments on Jan 01, 2022 and greeted members of respective departments on the occasion of New Year.

Addressing the collective of different shops and departments, Dasgupta extended his new year wishes and urged everyone to accord top priority to safety at their respective workplaces and also on roads while going to work or going back home.

We must now work together in the remaining three months of the current fiscal year to achieve annual production targets, he said. He also appealed



to all to observe Covid protocols and ensure that everyone, including contractual workers, has taken both doses of vaccine.

Accompanying Director I/c during the Plant visit were Manas Biswas, ED (Mines & Rowghat), Dr SK

Issar, ED (M&A), Rakesh, ED (MM), AK Bhatta, ED (Projects), Anjani Kumar, ED (Works) and other senior officers.

During their Plant visit, Director I/c and Executive Directors went to URM, RSM, RTS & RPDB, WRM & MM, BRM, T&D, RMD,



Cost Control, SMS 2 and 3, RCL, Instr & Automation, P&BS, EMD, Environment Management Dept, PEM, BF's, SGP, Coke Ovens, Sinter Plants 2 and 3, OHP, RMP 2 and 3, RED 1 and 2, Plate Mill, Water Mgt Dept, PPC, Energy Mgt Dept, Safety Engg Dept,

Fire Services, Contract Cell, MRD, Central Plant Stores, Electrical, Mechanical & Utilities Organisation, all Engineering Shops, Plant Garage, HRD, Projects Dept, Town Services Dept and Medical & Health Services Dept.

BMC starts New Year on positive note



Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 01: Bhilai Municipal Corporation witnessed a fresh and positive start on New Year Day. On one hand, the cases of pension and ex-gratia were approved while on the other, the cleanliness workers were honoured. The first file of 2022 signed by BMC Commission was of a pension case. The application was approved and the pension amount was immediately transferred to the bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Bhilai Municipal Corporation Commissioner Prakash Kumar Sarve initiated the working of New Year 2022 by approving the pension applications of four people under the public welfare schemes. Soon after the ap-

proval of applications, the concerned department processed the applications and the pension amount was immediately transferred to the bank accounts of the four beneficiaries.

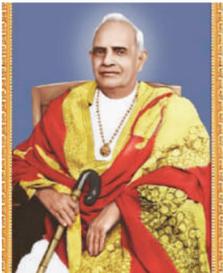
Giving information in this regard, Ajay Shukla, in-charge of Pension Branch, informed that pension applications of Nurjahan, Kamaljeet Kaur, Y Daymani and Satyapriya Sonani, all residents of Bhilai Township, were approved and the amount was transferred to their bank accounts.

Later, the BMC Commissioner honored the sanitation workers and "Swachhata Didis" on the occasion of the New Year. He lauded their significant contribution in the field of cleanliness. He added that the respect

of Swachhata Didis is the respect of the sanitation workers of the entire civic body. He added that with the sustained efforts of all, BMC will make efforts to achieve higher ranking in cleanliness survey. On the first day of the New Year, BMC Commissioner met all the officers / employees in the auditorium and encouraged everyone to conduct good works.

Supervising Engineers UK Dhalendra, RP Joshi, BK Dewangan, Zone Commissioners Amitabh Sharma and Manish Gaikwad, Accounts Officer Jitendra Thakur, Health Officer Dharmendra Mishra, Revenue Officer NR Ratnesh, Executive Engineers DK Verma and Sanjay Sharma, Tulsi Vrinda Dewangan, Vidyadhar Dewangan, Steno Purushottam Sahu and Sanjay Sharma, Sharad Dubey, Mohanty, Rajdeep Vaishnav, Jaykumar Jain and other officers and employees were present.

BNS to organize various events on Mannam Jayanti



Bhilai, Jan 01: Bhilai Nair Samajam is organizing various events on the occasion of Mannam Jayanti on January 02. Any public programme has not been organized in view of the Covid 19 guidelines. The programme will begin with offering floral tributes to the great social reformer Mannathu Padmanabhan at his statue in Smriti Mandap in Bhilai Nair Samajam School, Sector 8 around 9:00 am. Thereafter, a mega medical camp and blood donation camp will be organized at Bhilai Nair Samajam School in Housing Board. Members in large numbers will participate in blood donation camp.

Good response on appeal to honour Swachhata Didis in DMC area

• More than 10 thousand families honored cleanliness didis by offering flowers

Central Chronicle News

Bhilai, Jan 01: The call of Durg Mayor and public representatives to welcome the New Year by offering flowers to Swachhata Didis in the morning of the New Year day, met with huge response and thousands of citizens offered the same first thing in the morning.

The citizens of various wards under DMC greeted the cleanliness didis who come to collect household waste/garbage every day and play a pivotal role in maintaining cleanliness in the city. MLA Durg (urban) Arun Vora, Durg Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwal, Durg Municipal Commissioner Hareesh Mandavi, Speaker Rajesh Yadav, ADM Nupur Rashi Panna, Health



Department in-charge Hameed Khokhar, Leader of Opposition Ajay Verma, ward public representatives, journalists, officer employees, unions, district police department officials, Sahu Samaj members and more than 10 thousand families including people from every section, gave flowers, applied vermilion, offered blankets, warm clothes etc and even honored them by presenting shawls, tiffin boxes, water bottles and fruits.

MLA Arun Vora, while honouring the Swachhata Didis, said that be it epi-

demic time or unfavourable weather condition the Swachhata Didis pick up garbage generated at homes to keep the city clean. This contribution to the city will always be remembered by the people.

Mayor Dheeraj Bakliwal and Commissioner Hareesh Mandavi said that definitely such programs should continue until all the cleanliness didis are felicitated because if they are not there the city can not be clean and therefore they should be given their worth by honouring them. To show this respect and

gratitude what better than starting it from New Year. The Swachhata didis too extended their gratitude to the denizens for honouring them.

Among others who also felicitated the Swachhata Didis were MiC members Abdul Gani, Rishabh Jain, Sanjay Kohle, Deoak Sahu, Bhola Mahobia, Jayshree Joshi, Jamuna Sahu, Satyawati Verma, Anup Chandania, Mandeep Singh Bhatia, Shankar Thakur, Amit Dewangan, Arun Singh, Kashiram Kosare, Meena Singh, Naresh Tejwani, Rajkumar Narayani, Manish Baghel, Om Prakash Sen, Babita Yadav, Madan Jain, Shashi Bai Sahu, Kamal Devangan, Indrani Kuleshwar Sahu, Shraddha Soni, Neeta Jain, Pushpa Gulab Verma, Najahat Parveen, Mani Geete, Prakash Joshi, Hema Sharma, Kamala Sharma and others.

Journalists to get 15 percent discount on purchase of house in RDA colony: CM

■ CM Baghel attends the new year celebration program of Raipur Press Club
 ■ CM announces sanction of Rs 2 lakh for the compilation and publication of Ch'garhi daily column 'Jhangu-Mangalu Ke Goth' as a book



Press Club today.

Raipur, Jan 01: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel today attended the New Year Celebration programme of Raipur Press Club today. At the program, Chief Minister Baghel announced that the journalists will be provided 15% discount if they purchase house in the colony of Raipur Development Authority. He also announced a grant of Rs 2 lakh for the compilation and publication of Chhattisgarhi satirical column 'Jhangu-Mangalu Ke Goth' as a book. This satirical column is published daily in the evening daily 'Agrdoot'. Chief Minister also inaugurated the Gym set up in the

Extending hearty wishes of New Year 2022 to the journalists, Chief Minister Baghel said that journalism is a difficult task, but our journalists have performed their duties even under the challenging circumstances of COVID crisis. He thanked the journalists for their service. Chief Minister paid tribute to the journalists who left the world untimely during the Corona period and expressed his condolences to their families.

In the program, Baghel honored Dr. Nitin M. Nagarkar, Director of AIIMS Raipur, for providing excellent service to the patients during the Corona period. He said that AIIMS has played an important role in controlling the spread of COVID-19 in the state. Secretary of Chhattisgarh Olympic Association, Gurcharan Singh Hora was also felicitated at hands of Chief Minister. Senior journalist Ramesh Nayyar, Dr. Himanshu Dwivedi and President of Press Club

Damu Ambadare also addressed the program. Ambadare expressed his gratitude to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel for increasing the amount of Samman Nidhi for senior journalists from Rs.5000 to Rs.10,000, for allotting accommodation for journalists in Sondongri and for providing financial assistance to the families of journalists who lost their lives due to COVID-19.

In the program organized by Raipur Press Club, MLA and Chairman of Chhattisgarh Housing Board Kuldeep Juneja, Chairman of Chhattisgarh Text Book Corporation Shailesh Nitin Trivedi, Mayor Ejaz Dhebar, Commissioner of Public Relations Department Dipanshu Kabra, Director Saumil Ranjan Choubey and many senior journalists of the capital including Press Club treasurer Shagufta Shireen were present.

HUGE RUSH



The gardens, Jungle Safari and 'Purkhauti Muntakgan' and other places of outing near capital city were abuzz with activities and witnessed huge rush on first day of welcoming 2022.

Mana and District Hospital Pandri to be operated as Covid Hospitals in 1st phase



Raipur, Jan 01: Collector Sourabh Kumar gave held a meeting of district level officers in the meeting room of District Collectorate here today to discuss measures for effective control and prevention of infection of corona virus and its new variant Omicron. Considering continuous rise corona positive cases in the district, it is necessary that people keep following the rules to avoid Covid, he said. He directed to increase Covid testing in major congested places including airports, railway stations, bus stations, market areas and OPDs in hospitals. The Collector asked to restart the Fundahar Covid Center for the present asymptomatic patients who want to stay away from the family at home. Similarly, in the first phase, Mana and District Hospital Pandri will be operated as Covid Hospitals. He instructed to sub-

■ Instructions given to increase testing and speed up vaccination for Covid control and prevention

mit daily information about corona testing and its report, availability of beds, containment zones, people who have been released from tracing. As many as 121 people infected with Corona virus have been identified in Raipur district during the period between December 25 and December 31 and 27 of them did not get the vaccine, the CMHO said in the meeting. Collector Sourabh Kumar emphasised mandatory Covid vaccination of people for prevention and control of Covid infection. According to him Covid infection spreads more through the people who are not

vaccinated. Follow the corona protocol and follow the prescribed norms like wearing masks, using sanitizers and maintaining physical distance etc.

Those people who have already taken the first dose, must get the second dose. He also asked the officials of Municipal Corporation and Police Department to ensure action for this. He directed to re-activate the earlier set up Covid Control Room and give important information regarding Covid to the citizens.

He also asked to follow the prescribed procedure for the patients of home isolation. Also present on the occasion were Raipur Municipal Commissioner Prabhat Malik, District Panchayat Chief Executive Officer Mayank Chaturvedi and Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr Meera Baghel.

First week roster ready for Covid vaccination of college students

Students of 15 to 18 years to be vaccinated from January 03

Raipur, Jan 01:

The first week roster has been prepared for Covid vaccination of the college students in coordination with the concerned departments under the direction of Collector Sourabh Kumar. The roster has been prepared for January 3 to January 8.

Nodal Officer Kedar Patel informed that on January 3 and 4, the vaccine would be administered at Government Co Education Polytechnic College, Baron Bazar, Government Girls Polytechnic College, Baron Bazar, Government J Y o g a n a d a m Chhattisgarh College and Government ITI Mana. Similarly, on January 5 and 6, vaccines will be administered at Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla University, Government

Nagarjuna PG Science College and Government Engineering College, Sejbahar, Raipur.

Similarly, on January 7 and 8, Covid vaccines will be administered at Sakshi Kayyopadhyay Hiralal Mahavidyalaya Abhanpur, Government ITI Abhanpur, Satyanarayan Agrawal Government Arts and Commerce College, Kohka Tilda, Government ITI Kohka Tilda and Government Arts and Commerce Girls College, Devendra Nagar, Raipur.

Make necessary arrangements for Covid vaccination of students: Collector

Raipur, Jan 01: Collector Sourabh Kumar has directed the principals of educational institutions to make necessary arrangements regarding the Covid 19 vaccination of students in the age group of 15 to

18 years studying in their institutions. He said that the roster for the first week has been prepared.

Nodal Officer Kedar Patel informed that the team of Health Department will be present in those designated institutions from 10:30 am to 5:00 pm for vaccination. The age of students for vaccination should be 15 to 18 years as on January 1, 2022. For online registration, it is mandatory for them to have mobile and photo ID card.

He said that the online registration of students in those institutions in the Covid portal will have to be done by the students themselves or by the team appointed by the institutions. Covid Appropriate Behavior will have to be compulsorily followed at the time of vaccination.

Action plan discussed for Covid-19 vaccination of children



Raipur, Jan 01:

Action plan was discussed for Covid-19 vaccination of children in the age group of 15-18 years at a meeting held at Red Cross Conference Hall in Collectorate here today on the direction of Collector Sourabh Kumar.

All other important topics were discussed including earmarking of rooms for vaccination at the session sites. It was directed to ensure all necessary parameters in the waiting room, vaccination room and post-vaccination monitoring room.

Adequate availability of Covaxin in the vaccination room, hand sanitizer, mask, needle destroyer, availability of screen to

maintain privacy, etc. were discussed in detail at the meeting.

It was directed to all the concerned that all the beneficiaries of 15 to 18 years of age would enter the vaccination centres by wearing masks and would bring proper documents of date of birth along with them to ensure their eligibility. The age of the students for vaccination should be 15 to 18 years.

All the block BMOs, BPMs, BETOs, CPMS, CDMS, BDMs and CMHO from District Health Department, DPM, Vaccination Officer, District Statistical Officer, District Media In-charge and principals of educational institutions were present in the meeting.

Hearing in State Women's Commission to be held on January 3 and 4

Raipur, Jan 01: Chhattisgarh State Women's Commission is going to hear cases registered in Raipur district over husband-wife dispute, sexual harassment, assault, dowry torture, harassment at workplace and domestic violence on 3rd and 4th January. The hearing will be conducted between 11 am and 5 pm in Commission Office in Raipur. As many as 45 cases will be heard on those two days.

Priyanka Friend Social Welfare Society celebrated Christmas

Raipur, Jan 01:

Priyanka Friend Social Welfare Society organised Christmas celebrations at Municipal Garden, Raipur on Saturday. Members of the society celebrated the festival by lighting a candle in front of the picture of Lord Jesus Christ and cutting a cake. On the occasion information to protect from Corona through social distance, washing hands with soap and using sanitizer were informed to the people present at the garden. The society also distributed mask to the



people present there. Society's President Priyanka Vaishnav said that on behalf of the society, they went to the Holy Cross Church and prayed for the prosperity of the

country and the state. Jyoti Verma, Riya Chauhan, Ritesh Tiwari and patrons of the organization Dr Hitesh Dewan, Bhupendra Sahu were present.

Swearing-in ceremony of Mayor, Speaker on Jan 4

Raipur, Jan 01: Under Section 17 and 18 of the Chhattisgarh Municipal Corporation Act 1956, the first meeting for the oath of the newly elected corporators of the Municipal Corporation Birgaon and the election of the Mayor and Speaker and the members of the Appeal Committee will be held on January 4. The swearing-in of the newly elected corporators will be held from 10:30 am to 11:30 am in the auditorium, Municipal Corporation, Birgaon.

Presentation of nomination papers for the election of mayor will be done from 11:30 am to 12 noon and decision will be taken from 12:15 pm to 12.15 pm on micro scrutiny of nominations and objections. If necessary, the voting will be done from 12.15 pm to 1 pm and the counting of votes and result declaration will be done from 1 pm to 1.30 pm. Similarly, the presentation of nomination papers for the election of the speaker will be done from 2 pm to 2.30 pm and the scrutiny of nominations and objections will be decided from 2.30 pm to 2.45 pm. If necessary, polling will be done from 2.45 pm to 3.30 pm and counting of votes and result declaration will be done from 3.30 pm to 4 pm. The election of the Appellate Committee shall be held immediately after the election of the Speaker.

Government of India
Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers
Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals

75
Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

-PM, Narendra Modi

Honouring Innovation in Petrochemicals Sector through

11th National Petrochemicals Awards

Nominations are Invited from Indian Citizens / Institutions / Industries / Organisations / Start-up registered in India.

— Awards in Thirteen Categories —

One Award of ₹5 Lakh

• Special Award for the Life Time Achievement in Petrochemicals

Twelve Awards of ₹3 Lakh for Winner & ₹1 Lakh for Runner-Up each

Govt. of India inviting application under various categories including Polymeric Materials, Products, Processing, Waste Management, Packaging, Agriculture and Water Conservation, Medical and Pharmaceutical, Research, Innovative "Start-up" & Best Employer.

Last Date of Submission : 31st January, 2022

To apply visit website
www.chemicals.nic.in / www.cipet.gov.in / www.nationalpetrochemicalsawards.pds.gov.in

Scan QR Code for Website

CAIT hails decision deferring GST hike on textiles

Raipur, Jan 01: CAIT National Vice President Amar Parwani, chairman Magelal Maloo, Amar Gidwani State President Jitendra Doshi, States Working President, Vikram Singh Deo, Parmanand Jain, Vashu Makhija, State General Secretary Suriender Singh, State Working General Secretary Bharat Jain, State Treasurer Ajay Agrawal and state media incharge Sanjay Choubey informed that the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has hailed the decision to withdraw 12% GST on textiles from January 1, 2022 and it has termed this step of the GST Council as pragmatic, justified, logical

and much awaited. CAIT National Vice President Mr. Amar Parwani and State President Mr. Jitendra Doshi welcomed the decision on behalf of the traders across the country said that it would bring relief to lakhs of textile traders of the country who were under immense stress for more than a month. They also said that like textiles, it is also necessary to postpone the decision to increase the GST rate on footwear as well. Mr. Parwani & Mr. Doshi said that this decision of the GST Council shows how the politicians of the country have become puppets in the hands of the bureaucracy and do not even consider its

merits and demerits before taking any decision what to say of having consultations with the traders and the stakeholders. Mr. Parwani & Mr. Doshi has urged the Union Finance Minister Mrs. Nirmala Sitharman to constitute, a "task force" to consider the intricacies of the taxation system, simplification & rationalization, increase in tax base and revenue to the Government. The said task force may be formed under the chairmanship of the Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes, which should include representatives of trade beside senior officials. CAIT took up this issue vigorously for the last one month in the

whole country and where it met Union Finance Minister Mrs. Nirmala Sitharman and Union Commerce and Textile Minister Piyush Goyal, expressing strong opposition to the traders and demanded its withdrawal. The CAIT Chapters of the states met their state finance minister and other senior government officials and gave memorandums and demanded to take back this increase. CAIT had earlier demanded the Central Government and the GST Council to rethink the entire GST tax system and make it a very simple tax system which encourages more and more traders across the country to register under GST.

Guidelines issued regarding prevention of Covid-19 infection

Raipur, Jan 01:

Guidelines have been issued by the state government regarding prevention of Covid-19 infection of Covid-19 and Omicron variants in Chhattisgarh. Under this, it has been asked to ensure 100% compliance of Covid compliant behavior. In this, emphasis has been given to pay special attention to social distancing including the use of masks and sanitizers.

Similarly, instructions have been given to compulsorily investigate the cases of Covid-19 and ensure compliance of the instructions issued earlier for the Containment Zone in the area of active cases. In line with this, a control room has been set up in the Directorate of Health Services for the management of the Covid-19 epidemic at the state level,

which will be open 24 hours a day. The telephone number of the said state level control room is 0771-2235091. Similarly, by activating the Covid-19 control room at the district level immediately, instructions have been given to ensure wide publicity by issuing the phone number of the control room to the media. Instructions have also been given that information about Covid-19 testing, contact tracing, home isolation, hospital admission and containment zones should be prepared daily in the Covid-19 control room and the state level control room must be informed about it by 7 pm. Instructions have been given by the state government that special care should be taken in the investigation of district-wise Covid-19. This work of investigation should not be less than the target

- And Omicron variants
- State level control room set up

in any situation in the district. To check the people coming from other states in the district by air, rail or road, Covid-19 check-up should be done by arranging for checking at the airport, railway station, bus stand and border road of other states respectively. 5 percent of positive cases in RTPCR test from each district should be sent to WGS Bhubaneswar for test. According to the guidelines for sample testing of persons traveling abroad in the district, if they become positive, they should be sent for WGS test. A certificate should be taken from all the factories operating under the district that all the people

working in it have been tested for Covid and no person is working in the said institute without Covid test. The village where there is even a single active case of Covid-19 should be made a containment zone till that episode remains active.

All the people who came in contact should be tested by doing contact tracing of Covid-19 positive patient and home quarantine should be done till the test report comes. All positive cases should be kept in home isolation for 14 days. All the people coming from foreign travel should be kept in home quarantine till their negative report comes in the test done in the district. The contacts of positive patients should be kept in home quarantine till their negative report comes in the test done in the district. Arrangements should be

made for the treatment of Covid-19 positive patients in home isolation as per the guidelines issued earlier.

Duty of doctors and health workers should be imposed for health monitoring of persons treated in home isolation. According to the need of the patients treated in home isolation, transportation should be arranged for referral to hospitals. A web portal should be created by the department for all the Covid-19 patients admitted in the hospitals. This portal is for both government and private hospitals. In this, the list of patients admitted and the beds available for Covid are updated in real time, using this portal the information of patients admitted in government and private hospitals of Covid-19 should be kept updated.

Lakhma gave necessary guidelines



Raipur, Jan 01:

- For organising Global Investor Meet successfully

A meeting of the Board of Directors of CSIDC was organized at Udyog Bhawan under the chairmanship of Industries Minister and CSIDC Chairman Kawasi Lakhma. The work being done by CSIDC was discussed in detail in the meeting.

Industry Minister Lakhma inquired about the preparations being made for Invest Chhattisgarh-Global Investor Meet 2022 to be organized in January 2022 and gave necessary directions to the officials to make the event a suc-

cess. In the meeting of the Board of Directors, Industries Minister Lakhma, while reviewing the works of CSIDC, directed the officers to complete the work within the stipulated time period. In the meeting, the Industries Minister Mr. Lakhma was apprised about the tea-coffee board constituted by the officials as per the instructions of the Chief Minister and the action taken by CSIDC to pro-

vide space for this. It may be mentioned that the Industries Minister Kawasi Lakhma is also the Deputy Chairman of the Tea-Coffee Board. In the meeting of the Board of Directors, Principal Secretary, Commerce and Industry Department Mr. Manoj Kumar Pingua, Director Industries Mr. Anil Tuteja, Director, City and Village Investment Department Mr. Jaiprakash Maurya, Additional Secretary Finance Mr. Satish Pandey and CSIDC Managing Director Mr. P. Arun Prasad were present.

CM Baghel presented a cheque of Rs 12.60 lakh

- To the blade runner Chitrasen Sahu

Raipur, Jan 01: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Friday presented cheque of Rs 12 lakh 60 thousand from Chief Minister's Relief Fund to blade runner and double leg amputee mountaineer from Chhattisgarh Mr. Chitrasen Sahu, at his residence office here. Chief Minister has announced to provide financial assistance to the para-athlete and national basketball player Sahu at the Run for CG Pride Marathon organized on December 14 in



Raipur. Sahu participated in the "Run for CG Pride" event organized on December 14 to mark the completion of three years of Bhupesh Baghel led state government in Chhattisgarh. Expressing his deepest gratitude to

Chief Minister, Chitrasen Sahu said "I will make all possible efforts to make Chhattisgarh 'Mahtari' (mother) proud by successfully completing my mission of conquering Mount Aconcagua in South America."

Collector directs to take all preventive measures

- In view of likely third wave of Omicron
- Issues instructions through video-conferencing to officers

Kondagaon, Jan 01:

For prevention of Covid-19 in the district, Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena has prepared work plan for all block headquarters of the district. Along with this through video conferencing he directed the officers to take all preventive measures to put a check on starting of new Covid-19 cases.

Giving information in this regard, Collector in-

formed that taking seriously the new corona virus variant 'Omicron' in foreign countries, many important decisions have been taken for its prevention. For this wearing of masks has been made compulsory for all and he has directed for intensive checking of persons wearing Masks or not at all public places viz. 'Haat', 'Bazar', 'Chowk-Chourahas' and do no allow crowd of people to gather at one place and ask them to maintain social distancing. For this in the first leg, Covid-19 testing has to be completed within 3 days for all shopkeepers of 'Haat-Bazar'; to staff of paddy purchase centres; Bank officers and



employees; labourers of Rice Mills; shopkeepers of rural areas. In all government offices, employees will be deputed at the main gate and daily checking will be done using infra-red thermometer and will ensure persons entering the office wear masks. Paying special attention to people more sensitive to Corona and those

with co-morbidity of high blood pressure, blood sugar, Kidney problems and others, a list of such persons will be prepared and all will be contacted and asked to be safe take extra precautions and would be issued helpline numbers.

To gain control on any situation arising out of Corona virus, a control room has been established by the district administration and it will be operational 24 hrs. All the persons coming to the medical shops with demand of medicines for cough and cold will be taken and scrutinised and cross-checked. This will be monitored by the Food safety officer and such patients

will be checked visiting their residence.

To control any situation out of corona virus or any other new variant, the persons coming from abroad will be asked to stay in isolation for 7 days and then testing will be done on the 8th day and only on finding their report to be positive that they will be allowed to go out.

Testing centres will be established at the entry point of the district and in view of likely third wave to ensure all preparations the Block Medical Officers have been directed to ensure working all Concentrators and Ventilators in PHCs and smooth working of three Oxygen plants.

Jt Director Education conducts inspection of SAGEMS

Konta, Jan 01:

Taking better initiative in the field of education by the state government, Swami Atmanand Govt English Medium Schools (SAGEMS) have been started operating in the entire state. In this episode, Swami Atmanand Excellent English Medium School is also being operated at Block Headquarters Konta from this session. Presently this institution is being operated at Odia Para, Block Headquarters Konta. Soon this institution will be shifted to the newly constructed building.

Monitoring of this institution is being done con-



tinuously to strengthen Swami Atmanand Vidyalaya and develop it according to the intention of the government. The operation of this institution is constantly re-

viewed by Collector Sukma.

In this episode, on Saturday a surprise inspection of the school was done by Hemant Upadhyay Joint Director

School Education Department, Bastar Division. During his visit SA-1 examinations were being taken. All the classes were supervised by the Joint Director. The Joint Director also checked the level of the students and expressed satisfaction. During this, he also discussed with all the teachers of the institution and encouraged them by giving necessary guidelines.

During the inspection, Block Education Officer SK Deep, BRC Konta Mahendra Bahadur Singh, Assistant Block Education Officer P.Srinivas Rao, head teacher of the institution T.Srinivas Rao were present.

Awareness rally taken out in Kanharपुरi

Dongargaon, Jan 01: It was under guidance of Principal Govt PG College Dongargaon Dr BN Meshram an awareness rally was organised by NSS students in Gram Kanharपुरi. In this rally, it was through slogans by students of NSS that awareness was created among the villagers about covid-19 vaccination and how to create healthy and good sanitation in the village and also about environment safety. Among the senior students of NSS included Dileshwar, Daneshwar, Dinesh Kumar, Jeevan Kumar, Yashwant Kumar, Aditya, Gaukaran, Prashant Kumar, Umakant, Komal Kumud, Thamendra Kumar and other students were present.

MDSHG to prepare 'silage' as fodder for animals

Kondagaon, Jan 01:

With abundance of 'makka' (Maize), the Animal Husbandry Department has decided to provide chaff cutter, silage processing machine and vacuum machine to women of Maa Durga Self-Help Group (MDSHG). Silage is a nutritional fodder prepared by processing 'Makka husks' and is used as fodder for animals. This includes 7-8% Protein and other ingredients which provide energy upto 70%. It is during rains, when there is plenty of fodder available for animals, at that time this can be prepared and kept safely stored for entire year. This type of Silage being



prepared is being sold at the cost of Rs 6 per kg and which will not only generate employment, but would also prepared additional source of income for women.

In this programme, Sarpanch Khemta Kashyap, Dy.Sarpanch

Itwarin Pandey, President MDSHG Sarita Pandey, Rurban Nodal Veterinary Clinic Badekanera Varish Nand, Hirdu Thakur, Budhram Netam, Nandu Poyam, Vishwanath Baghel and Gram Patel, Puajari and senior citizens were present.

CM begins his New Year with the labourers at Chawdi in Raipur

- Baghel shared joyful moments with the hard-working daily wage workers, distributed sweets and blankets

Raipur, Jan 01: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel spent the first morning of the New Year today at Kotwali Chawdi of capital city Raipur with the hard-working labourers. Baghel extended hearty greetings of New Year 2022 to the people at chawdi and distributed sweets-blankets to the labourers at chawdi. On this occasion, Baghel extended New Year greetings to all the people including the labourers. As a New Year gift to the workers, Chief Minister Baghel announced the increase in financial aid under Bhagini Prasooti Sahayta Yojana of Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board from Rs.10 thousand to Rs.20 thousand. He said that Chhattisgarh has received the award for being the cleanest

state of the country for the third time in a row, all thanks to the hard work and determination of the sanitation workers. He congratulated the sanitation workers for this achievement. Chief Minister said that State Government is carrying forward the tradition of honoring the labor, as per the teachings of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi. He said that our New Year resolution is to fulfill the dreams of the elders and our ancestors, our forefathers. Today morning, Chief Minister reached Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Shram Ann Yojana Kendra, established to provide hot-cooked meals to the labourers in Gandhi Maidan of capital city Raipur, and interacted with the labourers there. He also enjoyed morning tea with them. Labourers informed Chief Minister that at this center, registered labourers get freshly-cooked meal at just Rs 5, while the non-registered ones can get a full meal at Rs 10. He said that State



Government has decided to provide an annual financial assistance of Rs 6 thousand to the landless labourers in the state. Soon the eligible beneficiaries will start receiving this financial aid under Rajiva Gandhi Grameen Bhoomihena Krishi Mazdoor Nyay Yojana. On the occasion, Mayor Raipur Municipal Corporation Ejaz Dhebar and Chairman Chhattisgarh Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board Sushel Sanni Agrawal and many public rep-

resentatives were also present. On the occasion, Chief Minister said that ever since he took charge as Chief Minister, he celebrates the first morning of new year with the labourers and daily wage workers in Chawdi. He said that it is because of the hard work of labourers that we have quality infrastructure such as buildings, roads and drains. We have clean surroundings because of the sanitation workers, we have food on our plates because of the farmers. He

added that we have learnt this valuable lesson of respecting the labour from Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi, who had fought for the rights of indigo farmers. Gandhiji made the weavers' spindle, the spinning wheel a symbol of the national movement, he himself did the work of manual scavengers. Gandhiji went to the locality of the Dalits and did the cleaning work there. Mahatma Gandhi taught us that no work is small, if done with dedication and sincerity. While addressing the labourers at Chawdi, Chief Minister said that after the formation of our government, we gave fair value of their produce to the farmers. Today, farmers are being provided Rs 2500 per quintal for paddy, including the support price of paddy and input subsidy under Rajiv Gandhi Kisan Nyay Yojana. Referring to the State Government's decisions in the interest of the labourers, he said that the retirement age of laborers working in indus-

tries has been extended from 58 years to 60 years, benefiting about 4 lakh workers. More than 16 lakh workers have been provided assistance of about Rs 284 crore under various schemes. Chief Minister further said that 172 Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools have been opened in the state to provide quality English medium education to the underprivileged children of the state. As labourers have to leave for work early in the morning, they are unable to take care of their family's health, they have to wait in lines at the hospitals, and lose out on that day's wage. To solve this problem of labourers in the state, State Government has launched Mobile Medical Unit. Dai Didi Clinic Yojana has been started separately for women. Mukhyamantri haat Bazar Clinic Yojana has been started in rural areas and Mukhyamantri Shahari Slum Swasthya Yojana has been started in urban areas.

Bhagat attends Baba Guru Ghasidas Jayanti festival



Raipur, Jan 01:

Food Minister Amarjit Bhagat attended Guru Ghasidas Jayanti festival at Para village in Nayapara tehsil of Gariaband district. On this occasion, he offered sails in Joda Jaitkham and greeted the villagers on Guru Ghasidas Jayanti and New Year. On this occasion, Minister Bhagat said that life can be made successful by following the path shown by Baba Guru Ghasidas ji. His entire life has been devoted to the welfare of human beings. He was a true guide and social reformer.

path, which we should follow. The messages of Guru Ghasidas have a deep impact on the people of our Chhattisgarh state. That is why the spirit of generosity, kindness, compassion and love is prevalent in our culture. Minister Bhagat said that life can be made successful by following the path shown by Baba Guru Ghasidas ji. His entire life has been devoted to the welfare of human beings. He was a true guide and social reformer.

Paddy safe from unseasonal rains in procurement centers

Paddy worth crores drenched in water

Central Chronicle News

quintals from 96 societies have been procured across the district.

Immediately after the purchase, it has to be lifted but due to non clearance from MARKFED, it was not lifted within the stipulated period.

11.99 lakh quintals of paddy is still lying jammed in other societies awaiting lifting, but has got wet due to the rains.

Meanwhile due to mud and dampness in the premises of the centers, paddy procurement in the centers has been halted for three to four days.

Dhamtari, Jan 01 Thousands of quintals of paddy procured and stored in 31 centers have got drenched in water, due to unseasonal rains which lashed the region this week. Though plastic caps were used to cover the paddy purchased, but due to persistent rains the sacks got wet.

In the district paddy procurement at a support price of Rs 2500 was inaugurated from Dec 1. In last 29 days, a total of 22.28 lakh

small-marginal and big farmers in the district.

They have been facilitated by buying paddy in lump sum from small farmers. So far 12 thousand 367 small marginal farmers have been procured in the district and paddy has been purchased from 3 thousand 49 big farmers.

Help is also being provided by the farmers in gunny bags in the purchase of paddy. During the paddy procurement period till now, 2 lakh 10 thousand 323 gunny bags have been provided by the farmers with their consent.

41 procurement centers of the district in the ongoing paddy procurement since December 1.

Priority is being given in selling paddy to small and marginal farmers and so far, 6 lakh 30 thousand 690 quintals of paddy has been purchased from 15 thousand 417 farmers in the district under the guidance of Collector Dhawade, in which till now 1 lakh 87 thousand 614 quintals of paddy have been lifted by the miller.

On the instructions of Collector Dhawade, purchases are being made in the ratio of 80:20 from

procurement centers from getting wet from rain.

In compliance of which the stacked paddy was completely covered with tarpaulin and cap cover in all the committees.

Taking cognizance of the priority, Collector Mr. Dhawade has also taken a report with photo from the nodal officer regarding the preservation of paddy in all the procurement centers and damage due to unseasonal rains.

Nodal Officer District Co-operative Central Bank informed that there are 30 service cooperative societies in Korea district,



under which paddy is being procured in the Kharif marketing year 2021-22 through 41 procurement centers.

He said that there was no loss or damage to the paddy due to the unseason-

al rains received last day and today. Paddy procurement is going on in the district on support price for the Kharif marketing year 2021.22.

Paddy is being procured smoothly from farmers in

Nodal officer submitted report

Central Chronicle News

Korea, Jan 01: Paddy procurement has started in the state from December 1 and procurement is going on while making sure all the arrangements for the convenience of the farmers in the procurement centers.

On the basis of the forecast of rain in Surguja division by the Meteorological Department, instructions were given by Collector Shyam Dhawade to protect the paddy stacked in the

Special Gram Sabha meeting to be held on Jan 5

Central Chronicle News

Simga, Jan 01: Despite the order of the Collector, the special Gram Sabha could not be held against the NoC given to the under-construction APL plant, discussion was to be held. The adjourned meeting will be held on Jan 5.

The matter is under consideration in the High Court, the citizens of Ringni had demanded a special Gram Sabha by applying to the District Collector Baloda Bazar in

the public darshan program regarding the no-objection certificate illegally given to the under-construction APL Apollo plant in village Ringni Kesda.

On the orders of the Collector, SDM Simanga directed the Gram Panchayat Ringni Sarpanch and Secretary to hold a special Gram Sabha meeting to discuss the no-objection certificate given to APL Apollo Company. On December 29, in the special Gram Sabha meet-

ing at Ringni, except the above subject, the Sarpanch and the Secretary were discussing other subjects and were misleading the villagers that we were not aware of the instructions of SDM Simga and then the villagers showed them the copy of the order.

SDM Simga TR Maheshwari immediately reached Ringni and inquired about the situation and SDM Maheshwari said that the Gram Sabha itself is an independent entity

and according to the rules, they have the right to take a decision, but the above matter is pending in the High Court under Public Interest Litigation, their decision will be valid.

In the above context, District Panchayat member Renuka Abhinav Yadu said that the work is not being done according to the rules and orders of the government, without the approval of the Gram Sabha, it is not recognized, its construction works should be stopped only

after the approval in the Gram Sabha.

It is worth mentioning that ever since the formation of APL Apollo Company has started, the villagers of Ringni are protesting. The suppression of public opinion with the help of the administration is a violation of fundamental rights. The villagers are angry with the attitude of the plant. It has to be seen what is the decision in the Gram Sabha to be held on January 5.

'Assistant teachers strike not timely'

Central Chronicle News

Balod, Jan 01: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, on his recent visit to the region, condemned the recent political turmoil in the State and blamed a certain sect of people in adding to controversies. He also attacked the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party, in supporting the trespassers of law and order in the State.

He also took a jibe on former Dr. Raman Singh on his prevailing silence on Seer Guru Kalicharan's derogatory remarks against Mahatma Gandhi.

Speaking on the ongoing



strike by Assistant teachers, the Chief Minister said that the strike of assistant teachers is not justified at all, as they were on paid leave during the COVID 19 pandemic and have also been regularized as per norms.

He condemned the

strike saying further the strike comes in a time when the schools are open long after corona period. The future and education of the students should not be played with, he said urging the striking teachers to end their protest with priority.

80000 quintals of paddy lying in open!

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Jan 01: The unseasonable rains here have brought no respite to paddy procured recently here in the region. About 80000 quintals of paddy procured from farmers in government procurement centers are lying under the open sky and a good part of it has already drenched in the rains and efforts to save the grains would yield no results, as plastic covers have been used to protect the stored grains.

Seven procurement centers have been set up under District Co-operative Central Bank branch Rajim. As on 29 December, 1 lakh 69 thousand 520 quintals of paddy worth Rs.33 crore have been pur-



chased. Till now, rice millers are lifting paddy from these procurement centers for custom milling. But the speed with which the paddy should be lifted is not happening. Due to this, 79,690 quintals of paddy is stuck in these procurement centers.

From this it can be estimated that out of the pur-

chased paddy, only 20% of the paddy has been lifted by the rice millers. Remaining 80% paddy is left, but the cause of biggest concern is, how safe the paddy lying in the open can be saved from getting wet due to unseasonable rains. In the procurement center of village Beltukri, paddy has been covered with tarpaulin, but

due to not covering half of it, it is visible open.

This procurement center has maximum 16 thousand 606 quintals of paddy jam from seven procurement centers. 11 thousand 500 in Arand, 13 thousand 725 in Pokhara, 12 thousand 613 in Basin, 8 thousand 664 in coma, 11 thousand 511 in Rajim, 5 thousand 532 quintals in Shyam Nagar are stuck waiting for transportation, which remains a big challenge for the administration to save it from the rains.

On the other hand, District Collector Nilesh Kshirsagar visited Shyam Nagar procurement center and directed the in-charge to cover it properly with taalpatra to save it from rain water.

Collector directs to conduct immediate assessment

Korba, Jan 01: District Collector R Sahu instructed all the revenue officers to immediately assess the damage caused to crops and houses due to unseasonable rains on the previous day. She also took information from the officials about saving the paddy kept in the paddy procurement centers from getting wet due to untimely rains.

The Collector directed that the paddy in the collection centers should be kept covered with cap cover or tarpaulin to avoid getting wet in the rain and arrangements should be made for drainage of water in the centres.



Toll free number have been issued for information about loss in linseed, rye, mustard crops due to unseasonable rain, under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, these three crops have been notified

for Rabi 2021 in Korba district. The Toll free numbers are 1800-4190-344, 1800-116-515 and 1800-209-5959. The information about the damage caused to these crops due to untimely rains can also be given to the field officials of the Agriculture Department.

Farmers have also been advised by the Agriculture Department to keep the barn kept in the barn covered with polythene and to monitor the pest in pulses, oilseeds and vegetable crops. Agricultural experts have advised the farmers to spray rule-based insecticides on the appearance of pest infestations in the crops.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all General Public that my client Smt Mehlabin W/o Sri Yasin Ali Rio Kalibadi Chowk Raipur C.G. is the owner of the property Plot No B 255, Sector 04, Land K/N No 696 (part), Area 52.50 Sq. Mtr. Tikrapara, RDA's Town Development Scheme No 04, Kanau Vihar, P.H. No 114/45, RIC Raipur 1, Tehsil & Dist Raipur C.G. which she had received from her legal owner Raipur Development Authority through Chief Executive Officer which was registered as Agreement Deed in the Office of Sub Registrar Raipur C.G. vide Book No A1, Granth No 67202, Page No 17 to 21, as Serial No. 1014 (G) dated 29-05-2015.

That above said Original Agreement Deed has been lost by her nearby Kalibadi Chowk Raipur C.G. on dated 20-12-2019 & could not find it anywhere. That by virtue of this General Public Notice, it is hereby acquainted to General Public, Person Individual, Banks, Financial Institutions, Societies, Boards, Corporations, Authorities that she haven't misused the above said Original Agreement Deed anywhere & not mortgaged the above said Original Title deed to any General Public, Person Individual, Banks, Financial Institutions, Societies, Boards, Corporations, Authorities. It is also informed that if the said Original Agreement Deed is held hostage etc. by any person, moneylender, institution or body, then he himself will be responsible for the consequences thereof, in future for any such transaction my party or their legal heirs or their future transferees will not be held responsible.

That Smt Mehlabin has executed a Sale Agreement to sell the above said Property to Smt Riti Singh Panhar. That Smt Riti Singh Panhar is taking the advancement facility & going to mortgage the above said property to Bank of Baroda, Raipur C.G. If anyone has any claim or objection in Selling/Mortgaging the above said property, can object in writing within 07 days from the date of publication of this General Notice with relevant proofs & documents supporting the claim, in my office. After that my client will not be liable to pay such objection & will be free to Purchase/Mortgage the Property.

Raipur C.G.
Date: 01-01-2022
Shop No. 625, Bhatk Mata Karma Parivar
RDA Building, New Rajendra Nagar, Raipur, (C.G.)
Cell No. 999323853, 9425515881

Nitin Keddia
Advocate

CoBRA commando killed in encounter with Naxals

Central Chronicle News

Sukma/Konta, Jan 01: A commando of the CRPF's jungle warfare unit CoBRA was killed in an encounter with Naxals in Sukma district on Friday, a police official said. The gunfight took place in Palachalma forest under Kistaram police station limits when a team of the 208th Battalion of the Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) was out on an anti-Naxal operation, Sukma Superintendent of Police Sunil Sharma told PTI.

When the patrolling team was cordoning off the forest, located over 450 kilometres from Raipur, an exchange of fire took place, he said. Constable Virendra Singh,

belonging to CoBRA's 208th battalion, suffered a bullet injury on his chest and was shifted to the CRPF's field hospital in Kistaram. Preparations were being made to airlift him to Raipur for further treatment but he succumbed by then, the SP said. Sukma is part of the state's Left Wing Extremism-hit south Bastar re-

gion where the Central Reserve Police Force and its CoBRA units are extensively deployed to quell the Maoist menace.

आम सूचना
सर्वसामान्य को सूचित किया जाता है कि मैं अपने पत्नी का एक अनामिक बचत खाते का बंद कर दे रहा हूँ। जिसका शाखा कार्यालय - चौहान स्टेट, भिलाई, तहसील व जिला दुर्ग (छ.ग.) में स्थित है, की तरफ से, यह सूचित करता हूँ कि एक ग्राहक प्रिन्सिपल लाइसेंस व. टालसिंह लाइसेंस, निवासी - बलदेव बाग, जिला राजनांदगाव (छ.ग.), ने एक संपत्ति जो कि मोबा - गांधी नगर, कोरिनमारा, जिला राजनांदगाव (छ.ग.) जिसका खाता नं. 475/6, रकबा 1951 वर्गफुट है, पर लोन प्राप्त करने हेतु मेरे उक्त पत्नी के समक्ष आवेदन प्रस्तुत किया है। उक्त संपत्ति को प्रिन्सिपल लाइसेंस ने विमन राय नायक से पंजीकृत बयानमा दिनांक 20.12.2021 के द्वारा क्रय किया था। उक्त विमन राय नायक ने उक्त संपत्ति का लोन प्राप्त करने हेतु मेरे उक्त बयानमा दिनांक 05.06.1998 के द्वारा क्रय किया था। उक्त संपत्ति से संबंधित पंजीकृत बयानमा दिनांक 05.06.1998 की मूलप्रति कहीं गुम हो गई है जिसकी सूचना संबंधित पुलिस थाना में दिनांक 31.12.2021 को दे दी गई है।

अतः उपरोक्त परिस्थितियों में जिस किसी व्यक्ति, संस्था, बैंक, वित्तीय संस्था, शासकीय व अशासकीय निकाय, कंपनी, निगम, ग्राम पंचायत, साहकार, फर्म आदि को उपरोक्त संपत्ति की खरीद/बिक्री/बैंक पर किसी भी प्रकार का दावा आपत्ति हो तो आम सूचना प्रकाशन की तिथि से 15 दिनों के भीतर मेरे कार्यालय में मय दरस्तारें सहित स्वयं उपस्थित होकर लिखित में दावा आपत्ति दर्ज करावे। समयवधि परमात् उक्त संपत्ति को मेरे पत्नी द्वारा बैंक रकम ऋण की प्रक्रिया पूर्ण करेगा। तत्पश्चात् किया गया कोई भी दावा आपत्ति अथवा व शुच्य माना जायेगा जो मेरे पत्नी के बैंक खाते में ही होगा।
अतः सूचना जाने।
सुप्रो चक्रवर्ती
(अभिवक्ता)
पता- शॉप नं. 12, नगर निगम परिसर,
सुपौला, भिलाई (छ.ग.)
मो. नं. - 8982559665

PUBLIC NOTICE

Know all men that Smt. Rupal Dwan Wife of Shri Vaibhav Dwan agreed to purchase the property bearing Kharsa No. 1393/14, area 1000 Sq. Ft. Situated at Moza-Raipur Khas (Kushabpur), Dr. Vanamrao Lakhie ward No. 64, P. C. No. 46, RIC Raipur-1, Teh. & Dist. Raipur from Shri Shyam Saroj S/o Sri Umashankar Singh and for that an agreement to sale has been executed.

Before that said Shri Shyam Saroj, had purchased the above said property in question bearing Kharsa No. 1393/14, measuring area 1000 Sq. Ft. from Shri Rakesh Singh S/o Shri Vanchohan Singh by means of a Sale Deed duly registered in the office of the Sub Registrar Raipur on 30.03.2011, vide Book No. A/1, Volume No. 50396, Serial No. 10825 (Kh). Before the above said property measuring area 1000 Sq. Ft. was purchased by said Smt. Rupal Dwan from Smt. Rakesh Singh S/o Shri Ashok Kumar Jaiswal by means of a Sale deed duly registered in the office of the Sub Registrar, Raipur on 20.02.2007, vide Book No. A/1, Volume No. 33953, Serial No. 5551 (Kh).

Now said Smt. Rupal Dwan Wife of Shri Vaibhav Dwan applied Loan from Axis Bank to purchase the above said property and she was expected to handover the Proposed original registered sale deed along with the previous original Title deeds which were registered on 03.03.2011 bearing Serial No 10825 (Kh) and 20.02.2007 bearing Serial No 5551 (Kh) but as soon as Smt. Rupal Dwan Wife of Shri Vaibhav Dwan was informed to hand over the Original previous registered Title deeds she approached the seller (Shri Shyam Saroj) and she was informed that one original Sale deed dated 20.02.2007 bearing Serial No. 5551 (Kh) having lost by him and being not traceable in this regard a complaint had been lodge in concerned Police station therefore he can not hand over the same.

I hereby invite objection upon the missing of the said registered original sale deed dated 20.02.2007 bearing Serial No 5551 (Kh) within 7 days from the publication of this notice. It may be noted that any objection thereafter in respect of the above referred property will have no bonafide and shall not be binding on the Axis Bank and its Subsidiary. The said property will remain unaffected.

Raipur (C.G.)
Date: 01.01.2022
(Devashish Dutta)
Advocate
For Axis Bank Ltd.,
56, Jalvihari Colony Raipur (C.G.)
Mobile No. 9827160468

यूको बैंक
UCO BANK

Branch Office: UCO Bank Kohka, Bhlai, Dist. Durg (C.G.)
Ph. No : 0788-2290421, Email:kohka@ucobank.co.in

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the Public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which have been taken by the Authorised Officer of UCO Bank, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on 17.01.2022 between 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM for recovery of amount dues and Reserve Price & EMD alongwith other details are given below:-
Last date and time for submission of bid on 16.01.2022 at 2.00 PM. Date and Time of E-Auction:- 17.01.2022 Between 11:00 A.M to 4:00 PM with unlimited extensions of 5 minutes each
The Borrower's / Guarantors' / Mortgagor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name of Borrower & Guarantor	Identified Properties Details	(A) Reserve Price (B) Earnest Moeny (C) Increase Sealed bid Amount	(A) Date of Demand Notice (B) Type of Possession Notice (C) Plus Further Interest and other Incidental Chages There after	(A) E-Auction Date & Time (B) Date of Inspection of the property (C) Contact Details with the Branch
Borrower - Smt Madhuri Temrekar W/o Shri Vivek Temrekar	owner of property - Smt Madhuri Temrekar W/o Vivek Temrekar, Residential No. 201, 2nd Floor, Navjot Apartment, Saket Colony, Village Titurdi, Distt Durg (C.G.) Area 1211 sqft. surrounding North- common belcany South- Open Land, East- Street, West- Flat No. 3202	(A) 23,59,000/-	(A) 13/05/2019	(A) 17.01.2022 Time 11 AM to 4 PM
		(B) 2,35,900/-	(B) 23/07/2019 (Physical Possession)	(B) 16.01.2022 Time 11 AM to 2 PM
		(C) 25,000/-	(C) 24,74,781/-	(C) Mr. T.K. Meshram, Mob.: 9511649800

TERMS & CONDITIONS : 1 The secured assets will not be sold below the Reserve Price. 2. The auction sale will be Online E-Auction / Bedding through website https://mstcecommerce.com on 17.01.2022 between 11.00 AM to 4.00 PM as per time mentioned above against above property (IST) with unlimited extension of 5 minutes each. 3. Intending bidders should required to register themselves with the portal and obtain login ID and Password well in advance which is mandatory for e-bidding. 4. Intending bidders are advised to go through the website https://mstcecommerce.com for detailed terms and conditions of auction sale before submitting their bids and taking part in e-auction sale proceeding. 5. Bids shall be submitted through online only in the prescribed format with relevant details. 6.Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) for the above property shall be deposited through RTGS/ NEFT Fund transfer to Credit of Account No. as mentioned on 16.01.2022 and for any property related query may contact Mr. T.K. Meshram, Chief Manager, Mob- 9511649800. 7. A copy of the bid form along with the enclosure submitted online (mentioning UTR No) shall be handed over to the Authorised Officer / Branch Manager, UCO Bank, Kohka, Bhlai Or Soft Copies of the same be forwarded by E-mail to: kohka@ucobank.co.in. 8. The bid price shall be equal to / or more than the Minimum Reserve Price (MRP) but must be in multiples of Rs. 25,000/- (Rupees Twenty Five thousand only). Please note that the first on line bid (H1) that comes in the system during the online forward auction can be one increment higher than the highest of the bids received upto last date of submission of the bids i.e. higher than the start price by one increment or higher than start price by multiple of increments. During auction, the subsequent bid that comes in to outbid the H1 rate will have to be higher than the H1 rate by one increment value or in multiple of the increment values. 9. The successful bidder shall have to pay 75% of the bid amount (including earnest money already paid) immediately on closure of the E-auction Sale process on the same day of the Sale in the same mode as stipulated in Clause 6 above. The balance 75% of the purchase price shall have to be paid within 15 days of acceptance / confirmation of sale by the undersigned to the successful bidder. 10. If the successful bidder failed to deposit the bid amount as per schedule noted above, the amount deposited by bidder shall be forfeited. 11. The EMD of unsuccessful bidder(s) will be returned on the closure of the e-auction sale proceedings. 12. The sale is subject to confirmation by the Bank, if the borrower / guarantor pays the bank in full the amount dues before sale, no sale will be conducted. 13. The intending bidder should make discreet enquiries as regards to the property to any authority besides the banks charges and should satisfy themselves about the title, extent, quality and quantity of the property before submitting their bid. 14. The undersigned has the absolute right and discretion to accept or reject any bid or adjourn / postpone / cancel the sale / modify any terms and conditions of the sale without any prior notice and assigning any reason. 15. The purchaser shall bear the stamp duties, charges including those of sale certificate registration charges, all statutory dues payable to Government, taxes and rates and outgoing both existing and future relating to the property. The Sale certificate will be issued only in the name of successful bidder. 16. The sale is subject to conditions prescribed in the SARFAESI Act /Rule 2002 and the conditions mentioned above. 17. In case of sole bidder, the bid amount quoted in his bid form must be improved by at least one bid incremental value, lest the sale shall be cancelled / deferred. 18. For detailed Terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in https://ibapi.in. (O/S Govt. Dues Encumbrances, if any: Not Known)
THIS PUBLICATION IS ALSO A 15 DAYS NOTICE TO THE ABOVE MENTIONED BORROWERS / GUARANTORS / MORTGAGORS
Date: 02/01/2022 Place: Bhlai (C.G.)
Authorised Officer, UCO BANK, KOHKA, Bhlai, Dist.Durg (C.G.)

BRIEF

Juvenile held

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has apprehended a juvenile with the help of a civil services aspirant for allegedly robbing mobile phones. A robbery incident was reported at Bhajanpura police station where two persons on a motorcycle robbed a mobile phone. The PCR staff saw a person on a scooter chasing a motorcycle. He saw a PCR van. He identified his mobile phone recovered from possession of apprehended juvenile.

Candidate list

Kolkata: BJP released a list of 180 candidates for the election to three civic bodies in West Bengal to be held on January 22, party spokesman Samik Bhattacharya said. The party fielded women candidates IN 14 of the 41 seats in Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation. The figure was 42 of the 106 wards of Asansol Municipal Corporation and in Chandannagar it gave tickets to nine women contestants out of the total 33, he said.

Seeks report

New Delhi: The NHRC said it has sought a report from the Bihar government on the action taken against doctors of a jail for their alleged negligence in the treatment of an undertrial prisoner who died in 2018. In a statement, the National Human Rights Commission said it has considered a report from Inspector General (IG), Prisons and Reform Services, Bihar, on the payment of Rs 3 lakh as compensation in the case of mentioned death.

Approves ordinance

Bhubaneswar: Odisha government approved an ordinance to confer land rights on slum dwellers and decided to implement revised scale of pay for school and college teachers as per the seventh Pay Commission recommendations ahead of the rural, urban body and cooperative poll in the state. The decisions were taken at a cabinet meeting which gave its nod to a total nine key proposals related to various departments.

Student killed

Ghaziabad: A 23-year-old LLB student was found dead inside a well in Madhuban Bapu Dham colony of Kavi Nagar Police Station area. The man, identified as Kushagra Chowdhary, was a second year student at an institute in Sector 23, Sanjay Nagar. Chowdhary had gone missing after leaving his home to get his bike repaired.

Land retrieved

Jammu: Sixty-six acres of prime land worth crores of rupees was retrieved from encroachers here, officials said. Teams of the revenue department launched an anti-encroachment drive at different locations in Maira Mandrian, Jammu North, Jammu South, Marh and Bhalwal and retrieved around 66 acres (526 kanals) of state land from encroachers, they said.

'Some positive development over AFSPA in 2022'

Guwahati, Jan 01 (PTD):

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Saturday said "some positive development" regarding Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, which is in vogue in the state, is expected during the year.

Sarma, a senior BJP leader of the north east, however, did not specify any time frame.

He also said militancy was in the wane on the state, with all tribal militant groups already coming forward for talks though the demand for discussion on sovereignty remained the main hurdle in resolving the issues with ULFA(I). The Army, he said, has virtually withdrawn from Assam, except for six-seven districts and when AFSPA comes up for renewal later this year, the state government will take a "pragmatic decision".



Himanta Biswa Sarma at newly opened library at Janata Bhawan in Guwahati on Saturday.

As far as AFSPA is concerned, Assam will see some rationalising in 2022... How and when we don't know. But I am an optimistic man. We are looking at 2022 as a year of hope. There will be some positive moment regarding AFSPA, he told reporters here. The AFSPA has often been termed as

"draconian" by political parties of the north east because of the special powers it grants to the Indian Armed Forces to maintain public order in "disturbed areas" and its withdrawal has been demanded by civil society groups and rights activists. It was imposed in Assam in November 1990

and has been extended every six months since then after a review by the state government. The demand for repeal of AFSPA from the north east came to the fore in December last year after 13 civilians were gunned down by the Army in a botched anti-insurgency operation in Nagaland and another person was killed in subsequent violence. The demand was made to the Centre even by the chief ministers of Nagaland and Meghalaya. The Act is in force in Assam, Nagaland, Manipur (excluding Imphal Municipal Council Area), Changlang, Longleng and Tirap districts of Arunachal Pradesh, and areas falling within the jurisdiction of the eight police stations of districts in Arunachal Pradesh bordering Assam, besides Nagaland and Assam itself.

NC, PDP workers protest after detention of their leaders

Sajad Lone said right to protest is intrinsic in democracy

Srinagar, Jan 01 (PTD):

Scores of activists of the National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) took out separate protest marches here on Saturday after authorities allegedly detained top leaders of the parties ahead of a proposed sit-in against the draft proposals of the Delimitation Commission. The protest call was given by the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) an amalgam of various mainstream political parties in Jammu and Kashmir including the NC, the PDP, CPI(M), Peoples Movement and Awami National Conference. NC activists, including party spokesperson Imran Nabi



Protest over Delimitation Commission in Srinagar on Saturday.

Dar and youth wing president Salman Sagar, took out a protest march from NC headquarters Nawa-i-Subah here. The party activists tried to move towards Gupkar Road but were stopped by the police outside the party office.

We wanted to take out a peaceful protest march against the Delimitation Commission's draft proposals, but were stopped by the police. They did not

even allow us to hold a sit-in, Dar said. The NC Spokesperson alleged the police dragged the party activists back to Nawa-i-Subah. PDP activists also took out a protest march demanding restoration of Articles 370 and 35-A which were revoked by the Centre on August 5, 2019.

The PDP activists were stopped by the police near GPO and later dispersed peacefully.

Exchequer money keeping them warm: Mayawati's jibes BJP

Lucknow, Jan 01 (PTD):

Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Saturday took a veiled jibe at the BJP leaders saying the money in the exchequer was keeping them warm even in the cold weather.

She also said the BSP has its own style of functioning and it does not want to "copy" other parties. Her response comes two days after Union Home Minister Amit Shah said 'Bahanji', apparently referring to Mayawati, was yet to come out of cold.

"Elections are around the corner and she has not come out for campaigning. It seems that she is already afraid," Shah had said during the Jan



Mayawati

Vishwas Yatra in Moradabad, Aligarh and Unnao.

In her rebuttal, Mayawati told reporters, "When the Congress and BJP are in power, be it at the Centre or in states, they hold public meetings one after the other just a couple of months before the elections. "The money in the government exchequer, meant for the poor, is keeping them warm. But,

when these parties are not in power, they are just like us. They do not hold public meetings, attend inaugural ceremonies or lay foundation stones before the elections."

Regarding the crowd at rallies being organised by the rival parties, Mayawati said, "Half of them are government employees and the others are ticket seekers. We are seeing this in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab."

The BSP chief said her party was of the poor and the oppressed, and not of the capitalists.

"I am aware of the fact that if I copy other parties and hold public meetings one after the other, my people will not be able to bear the cost," Mayawati said.

At 24, Trinamool Congress eyes national stage

It wants identity without baggage of being Congress offshoot

Kolkata, Jan 01 (PTD):

Twenty-four years after Mamata Banerjee formed the Trinamool Congress on January 1, 1998 to unseat the Left Front from power in West Bengal, her party has transcended the geographical boundaries of the eastern state and now attempts to expand its footprint across the country to pose a direct challenge to the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

With the Congress in shambles, the TMC, which Banerjee floated after quitting the Congress, is attempting to grab that space by challenging the grand old party, branding it as "war-weary" and accusing it of failing to put



Trinamool Congress members observe foundation day in Tajpur on Saturday.

up a fight against the BJP.

At the same time, the party is positioning itself as the "real Congress" and the only outfit to oppose the saffron camp tooth and nail, after its landslide victory in this year's assembly elections in West Bengal despite the

and political backgrounds, mooting to change the party's constitution, and its name for a pan-India appeal before it takes a plunge into a massive nationwide campaign for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Banerjee's clarion call for opposition unity to remove the BJP from power has not stopped her from expanding her centre-left party in various states. In the last six months, her party has opened units in Goa, Haryana, Tripura and Meghalaya.

The party, which hardly had any meaningful existence in Meghalaya, has emerged as the main opposition party in the northeastern state after 12 of the 17 Congress MLAs led by former chief minister Mukul Sangma joined the TMC.

Reproductive choice dimension of personal liberty: Delhi HC

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

The Delhi High Court has permitted a 28-week pregnant woman to undergo medical termination of pregnancy on account of substantial foetal abnormality and said that reproductive choice is a dimension of personal liberty which is enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution. Justice Jyoti Singh, while allowing the woman's plea to undergo the procedure, stated that allowing the pregnancy to continue would have a deleterious impact on the petitioner's mental health and she cannot be deprived of the freedom to take a decision to continue or not to continue with the pregnancy in view of the medical board's opinion. The judge

observed that the lack of compatibility of the foetus with a healthy and normal life was looming large as in view of the medical experts, the child would require cardiac surgery in the initial stage of life as well as repeat cardiac surgeries in late adolescence or adulthood, leaving his/her entire life dependent on the clinical condition and quality of medical care. It further noted that the child would be exposed to intra and post-operative complications and may lead to further complexities which would adversely impact the quality of the life and the opinion of the experts that the child was likely to have an average physical growth came with a caveat that the surgical repair is successful.

TN CM seeks people's cooperation to contain Omicron

Chennai, Jan 01 (PTD):

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin on Saturday sought people's cooperation to entirely eliminate the pandemic and informed that his government will soon roll-out a COVID-19 vaccination drive targeting the 15 - 18 years age group. Utilising the New Year's day to make a fervent appeal to the people of the State to resort to COVID appropriate behaviour and strictly adhere to the government instructions besides follow SOPs on preventing Coronavirus and its variants, the Chief Minister said his government's efforts were all oriented towards ensuring a safe and healthy life for the people. It is the expectation of all of us that this year 2022 be very good and in order to be good we should not forget past les-



Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin at function for launch of new police commissionerate in Chennai on Saturday.

sons, Stalin said in a video message to the people. We have recovered from the first and second wave of Coronavirus infection and in fact I took up the reins as Chief Minister and also the responsibility for your well-being when the pandemic was at its peak during the second wave, the Chief Minister said. His first task as the CM was to contain

the second wave and his ministerial colleagues, officials and staff of various departments including health and family welfare and civic bodies and police stood by him in his efforts. My government was able to contain the pandemic in a short span of time and cooperation from the public was a major factor, Stalin said in the message.

Over half of complaints of crimes against women received from UP

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

Nearly 31,000 complaints of crimes committed against women were received by the National Commission for Women (NCW) last year, the highest since 2014, with over half of them from Uttar Pradesh. There was a 30 per cent rise in complaints of crimes against women in 2021 as compared to 2020 when 23,722 complaints were received. Of the 30,864 complaints, a maximum of 11,013 were related to the right to live with dignity that takes into account the emotional abuse of women, followed by those related to domestic violence at 6,633 and dowry harassment at 4,589, according to official NCW data. The most popu-



Rekha Sharma

lous state of Uttar Pradesh recorded the highest number of complaints of crimes against women at 15,828, followed by Delhi at 3,336, Maharashtra at 1,504, Haryana at 1,460 and Bihar at 1,456 complaints. According to the data, the highest number of complaints related to the right to live with dignity and domestic violence were received from Uttar Pradesh.

CTET EXAM



Applicants sanitise their hands as they arrive to appear for Central Teacher Eligibility Test (CTET) examination, in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh on Saturday.

Lakhs mark 204th anniversary of Koregaon Bhima battle

Pune, Jan 01 (PTD):

Undeterred by the rising number of COVID-19 cases and the pandemic-related restrictions, lakhs of people paid tributes at the Jaystambh military monument in Pune district of Maharashtra till Saturday afternoon to mark the 204th anniversary of the Koregaon Bhima battle amid tight security.

In contrast to the 203rd anniversary of the historical battle last year, which was a low-key affair due to the pandemic curbs, lakhs of people have visited the Jaystambh pillar, which is decorated with the insignia of the Mahar Regiment, in Perne village. As per the Dalit narrative, the Jaystambh is the symbol of the victory



People gather to pay homage at Victory Pillar at Bhima Koregaon, in Pune district, Saturday.

over casteism as the British forces that fought the Peshwas at Koregaon Bhima on January 1, 1818, comprised largely of soldiers from the Dalit Mahar community, who waged a

"war for freedom" from 'casteism' of the Peshwas, who were Brahmins. "By this afternoon, the number of people visiting the Jaystambh increased steadily.

BRIEF

Two wounded

■ Minneapolis: Two people were shot and wounded following an apparent altercation at the Mall of America in US, sending shoppers scrambling for safety and placing the Minneapolis mall on temporary lockdown, authorities said. One man suffered a gunshot wound to the leg during the shooting that happened on the third floor of the mall and another person was grazed, police said. Shoppers ran for cover and the mall was evacuated.

Cocaine seized

■ San Salvador: El Salvador's navy seized two semi-submersible boats carrying 4.1 metric tons of cocaine off the country's Pacific coast. President Nayib Bukele said the cocaine was worth almost USD 104 million. It was the largest seizure so far in Bukele's administration, which began in June 2019. The navy detained five Colombians and two Ecuadorians found aboard the two vessels. Much of the illegal drug flow headed for the US.

Brazil survey

■ Sao Paulo: As world leaders rely on public health specialists to inform their decisions about whether and how to vaccinate children against the coronavirus, Brazil's government is asking the online public for guidance. In recent weeks, President Jair Bolsonaro has staked out a position against immunising kids aged between 5 and 11, and his administration took the unusual step of creating a platform, the president's supporters have engaged.

Palestinian shot

■ Ramallah: Israeli troops shot and killed a Palestinian man as he ran toward a bus stop in the occupied West Bank wielding a knife in an attempted stabbing attack, the military said. It said Amir Atef Reyhan got out of a car at a junction and advanced toward a group of Israeli civilians and soldiers waiting at the bus stop. He was shot before reaching them.

Halts work

■ Cairo: The World Food Programme has suspended its operations across Sudan's province of North Darfur following recent attacks on its warehouses, a decision expected to affect about 2 million local people. A statement released by the UN food agency said all three of its warehouses in the area were attacked and looted. More than 5,000 metric tons of food apparently were stolen, the group said.

Pak vaccinating

■ Islamabad: Pakistan announced that it achieved the target of fully vaccinating 70 million people by the end of this year. Planning Minister Asad Umar who is the head of the National Command and Operation Center (NCO), the chief national body tackling the pandemic, tweeted that 46 per cent of eligible people had been inoculated so far.

US and Russia face differences ahead of Ukraine talks



Map of Ukraine magnified.

Wilmington, Jan 01 (AP): After tough talk between Presidents Joe Biden and Vladimir Putin over the Russian troop buildup on the Ukraine border, both sides insist they are hopeful that a pathway to easing tensions could open during diplomatic talks set for January.

But with less than two weeks to go before senior US and Russian officials are to meet in Geneva, the chasm is deep and the

prospect of finding an exit to the crisis faces no shortage of complications.

Biden told reporters that he advised Putin when they spoke by phone a day earlier that the upcoming talks could only work if the Russian leader 'deescalated, not escalated, the situation' in the days ahead. The US president said he also sought to make plain to Putin that the US and allies stood ready to hit Russia with punishing sanctions if the Russians further invade Ukraine. 'I made it clear to President Putin that if he makes any more moves into Ukraine we will have severe sanctions,' Biden said. 'We will increase our presence in Europe with NATO allies.'

Pakistan loads fuel in Chinese assisted nuclear power unit

Islamabad, Jan 01 (PTD):

Pakistan has completed the loading of fuel at its Chinese-assisted Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3 to celebrate three decades of cooperation with its all-weather ally China, according to a media report here on Saturday.

Pakistani authorities, after getting a formal permit from the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA), completed the fuel loading process of the second 1,100-megawatt nuclear power plant, the state-run Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) reported. It said that the ceremony to mark three decades of cooperation between China and Pakistan in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as of



Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3.

the fuel loading of Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-3, commonly known as K-3, was attended by top officials of nuclear energy related organisations from the two countries.

The report said that K-3 is in the final stages of

commissioning and after operational and safety tests, the plant is expected to begin commercial operation by the end of March 2022.

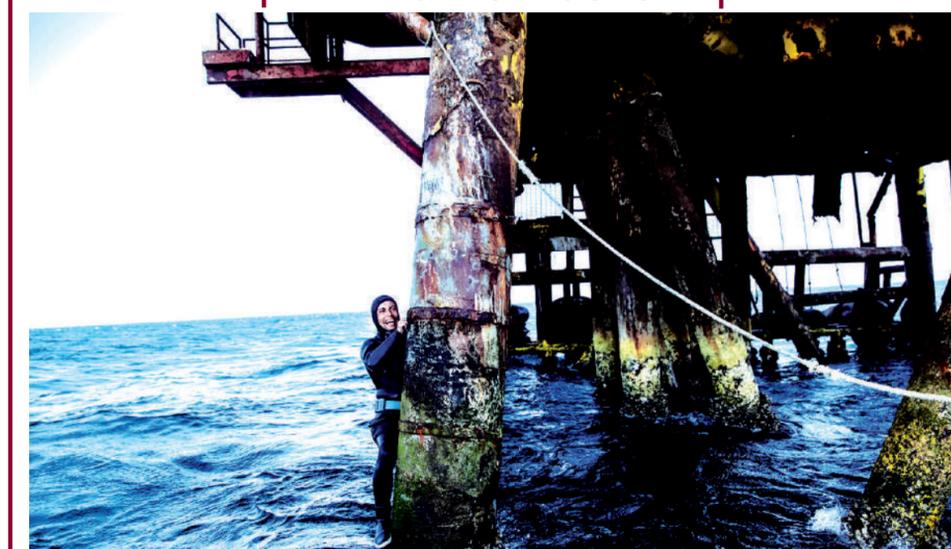
A new era in the nuclear power development programme of Pakistan com-

menced with the signing of the 'Agreement for Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy' between the governments of China and Pakistan in 1986, according to the report.

However, the first concrete step in the remarkable journey was taken 30 years ago when China National Nuclear Corporation (CNNC) and Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) signed the contract for construction and installation of a 325-megawatt Pressurised Water Reactor (PWR) at Chashma on December 31, 1991, it said.

The cooperation strengthened with the construction of three more nuclear power plants at Chashma Nuclear Power Generation Station (CNPGS) site.

DIVING INSTRUCTOR



Diving instructor Diego Garcia Vargas, founder of Chelonia Dive Center, laughs while trying to pull a rope from an old oil platform as he guides a group dive in Los Organos, Peru.

Lee says Singapore to bring in much-needed migrant workers

Singapore, Jan 01 (PTD):

Singapore will bring in much-needed migrant workers and ensure international talents feel welcome and are able to complement Singaporeans, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Saturday.

Singapore taps labour, skilled manpower and professionals mostly from Bangladesh, China, India and the Philippines.

"We will also press on to bring in much-needed migrant workers and ensure international talents feel welcome and are able to complement Singaporeans, the Channel News Asia reported, citing the Prime Minister's New Year message, laying out the recovery path for the COVID-19-battered economy.

Lee added that 2022 will be a "time of transition" as the economy steadily recovers and the city state reconnects with the rest of the world. Expecting the gross domestic product (GDP) to grow by 3 to 5 per cent next year, Lee said Singapore's economy should grow in step with global economic recovery, barring fresh disruptions.

The government is planning ahead to achieve longer-term goals, he added. For instance, it will press on with industry transformation efforts to enhance existing strengths, and help companies restructure and workers upgrade their skills.

As we brace ourselves for the impact of Omicron, we can be quietly confident that we will cope with whatever lies ahead," he said. Lee said that the government's immediate tasks go beyond managing COVID-19, noting that Singapore must generate new growth, new jobs and prosperity in a post-pandemic economy.

Much will depend on a stable global and regional environment, and central to this are the relations between the US and China.

The differences between the two powers remain many and deep, but their recent high-level engagements and practical cooperation on climate change are encouraging, the channel quoted Lee as saying.

Japan's emperor prays for pandemic dead in New Year message



Japan's Emperor Naruhito (C), Empress Masako (L) and their daughter Princess Aiko (R) in Tokyo.

Tokyo, Jan 01 (AP):

Japan's Emperor Naruhito offered prayers for those who died during the pandemic, taking to video for the second straight year for his New

Year's greeting on Saturday, having cancelled public palace gatherings to curb coronavirus infections. Sitting before a bonsai tree with his wife Masako, Naruhito praised and thanked doctors and

other health care workers, and expressed concern for countries lacking access to vaccines and adequate hospital systems. By treasuring more than ever the connections among people, sharing our pain and supporting each other, I hope from the bottom of my heart that we will overcome these hard times, he said. Japan has recorded more than 18,000 COVID-19-related deaths, but the pace of deaths has fallen in recent months. Naruhito also voiced worries about the fast-spreading omicron variant.

Before the pandemic, the imperial palace in central Tokyo would open at the start of each year to cheering, flag-waving crowds.

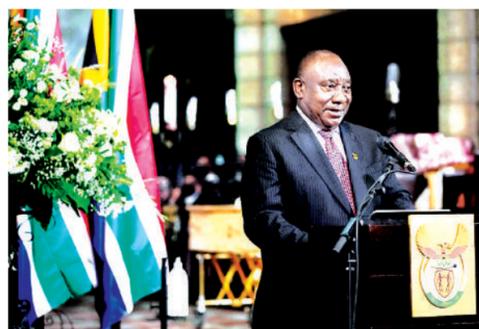
Requiem praise for South Africa's Desmond Tutu

Cape Town, Jan 01 (AP):

A funeral service is underway in Cape Town, South Africa, for Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning equality activist who was revered in Africa for his role in ending apartheid.

When we were in the dark, he brought light, Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby, the head of the worldwide Anglican church, said in a video message shown at a requiem Mass celebrated in Tutu's honour Saturday at St. George's Cathedral.

For me to praise him is like a mouse giving tribute to an elephant, Welby said. South Africa has given us extraordinary examples of towering lead-



South African President Cyril Ramaphosa speaks during the requiem mass of Desmond Tutu in Cape Town on Saturday.

ers of the rainbow nation with President Nelson Mandela and Archbishop Tutu.... Many Nobel winners' lights have grown dimmer over time, but Archbishop Tutu's has

grown brighter. Tutu's small plain pine coffin, the cheapest available at his request to avoid any ostentatious displays, was the centre of the service, which also is featuring

African choirs, prayers and incense.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa is to give the eulogy at the service. Following the funeral, Tutu's casket is to be taken away for cremation and his ashes interred at the cathedral's columbarium. Tutu died last Sunday at age 90.

Under apartheid, South Africa's white minority cemented its grip with a panoply of laws based on the notion of race and racial segregation, and the police ruthlessly hunted down opponents, killing or jailing them.

With Nelson Mandela and other leaders sentenced to decades in prison, Tutu in the 1970s became the emblem of the struggle.

Jaguar released in Argentina to help endangered species



Jaguar named Jatobazinho, taken after it was released back into the wild at Ibera National Park in Argentina.

Ibera, Jan 01 (AFP):

A jaguar named Jatobazinho was released into a national park in Argentina as part of a program to boost the numbers of this endangered species. This was the eighth jaguar freed this year into Ibera National Park but the first adult male, said the environmental group Rewilding Argentina, which is behind the project. Jatobazinho weighs about 90 kilos (200 pounds) and has brown fur peppered with black spots. He first appeared at a rural

school in 2018 in Brazil, looking skinny and weak after crossing a river from Paraguay.

The big cat spent a year in an animal refuge in Brazil until he was sent to a jaguar reintroduction center operating since 2012 in Argentina's northeast Corrientes province, where the species had been extinct for 70 years. Sebastian Di Martino, a biologist with Rewilding Argentina, said that as the jaguar needed to be nice and relaxed as it left its enclosure and entered the wild.

Colorado fire victims begin new year surveying destruction

■ Scientists say climate change is making weather more extreme

Superior, Jan 01 (AP):

Hundreds of Colorado residents in US who had expected to ring in 2022 in their homes are instead starting off the new year trying to salvage what remains of them after a wind-whipped wildfire tore through the Denver suburbs.

Families forced to flee the flames with little warning returned to their neighborhoods to find a patchwork of devastation. On some blocks, homes reduced to smoking ruins stood next to ones practically unscathed by the fires.

'For 35 years I walked out my front door, I saw beautiful homes,' Eric House said. 'Now when I walk out, my home's standing. I walk out my front door and this is what I see.' At least seven people



Todd Lovrien looks over the fire damage from the Marshall Wildfire at his sisters home in Louisville.

were injured, but remarkably there have been no reports of any deaths or anyone missing in the wildfire that erupted Thursday in and around Louisville and Superior, neighboring towns about 20 miles (32 kilometers) northwest of Denver with a combined population of 34,000.

More than 500 homes were feared destroyed and now homeowners face the difficult task of rebuilding amid a global shortage of supplies brought on by the

two-year pandemic. 'In the way the economy is right now how long is it gonna take to build all these houses back?' asked Brian O'Neill, who owns a home in Louisville that burned to the ground.

Despite the devastation, she said they intend to rebuild the house she and her husband have had since 1998. They love that the land backs up to a natural space, and they have a view of the mountains from the back.

DIRECTORATE OF TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING, INDRAVATI BHAWAN, NAVA RAIPUR ATAL NAGAR Raipur (C.G.)

FORM -X
(See Rule 14(1))

Notice of Publication of Sahaspur Lohara Development Plan (Draft) 2031

No. 75 /135/TCP/2021 Nava Raipur Atal Nagar, Date 29/12/2021

Notice is hereby given that the Draft of Development Plan for Sahaspur Lohara Planning Area has been published in accordance with the provision of sub-section (1) of section 18 of the Chhattisgarh Nagara Gram Nivesh Adhiniyam, 1973 (No. 23 of 1973), a copy thereof is available for inspection at -

- (1) Office of Divisional Commissioner(s) Durg (C.G.)
- (2) Office of Collectorate, Kabirdham (C.G.)
- (3) Office of Assistant Director, Town And Country Planning, Kabirdham (C.G.)
- (4) Chief Municipal Officer, Nagar Panchayat, Sahaspur lohara (C.G.)

If there be any objection or suggestion with respect to the said draft plan, the same may be submitted in writing to the Office of Town And Country Planning, Kabirdham before the expiry of thirty days from the date of publication of this Notice in the Chhattisgarh Gazette for due consideration.

Place : Nagar Panchayat meeting Hall Sahaspur Lohara
Date : 03.01.2022

SCHEDULE

- Existing land use map and narrative report.
- Narrative report explaining the provision of the draft development plan supported by maps and charts.
- Note indicating the phasing of implementation of the draft plan and stating the manner in which permission to development to be obtained.
- Note indicating an appropriate estimate of the cost of land acquisition for public purposes, and the cost of works involved in the implementation plan.

(Jay prakash Maurya) (I.A.S)
Director Directorate, Town And Country Planning
Indravati Bhawan, Nava Raipur
Atal Nagar, Raipur (C.G.)

G-66362/1



CENTRAL Chronicle

Established 1974 Volume 47 No. 90

Stop appeasing China for talks

China 'renamed' 15 places including residential areas, mountains, rivers and a mountain pass situated in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which it claims as its own territory called 'South Tibet'. The government of India just issued formal statements in response. This is not the first time China has 'standardised' names of places in Arunachal Pradesh. The first batch of changed names were issued in 2017 for six places in the state. The central government needs to stop appeasing China for further talks. According to Lian Xiangmin, an expert with the China Tibetology Research Centre in Beijing, more such 'standardisation' of names is to come. History shows that Chinese claim over Arunachal Pradesh is related to legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet. India's policy appears to be fostering enmity with Pakistan and appeasing China and consists of some bizarre miscalculations by the central government's policymaking institutions. Meanwhile, the Congress party questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'silence' on China's renaming the places in Arunachal Pradesh. China's claims initially extended only to Tawang, a part of Arunachal Pradesh, where the sixth Dalai Lama was said to have been born. Since the 2000s, however, China has been claiming Arunachal Pradesh in its entirety, a surprising claim given that independent India has been exercising sovereignty over it since 1955 (it became a union territory in 1972 and a state in 1987). It is worth noting that China's stance is directly motivated by its desire to put a lid on Tibetan nationalism (which it believes is fueled by support from India). Arunachal Pradesh is also strategically located at the confluence of the international borders of the China, Myanmar and Bhutan, giving it strategic importance. This extension of territorial claims and increasing aggression indicate a concerted strategy of widening the PRC's ambit of influence and control, consistent with its stance on the East and South China Sea disputes. Beijing's border disputes with India thus represent a wider strategic shift in its thinking, far removed from Deng Xiaoping's 'keep your head down' policy, through which it seeks to revive its ancient glory as the Middle Kingdom.

History mentions that most well known of Czarist Russia's military explorers, Col Bronislav Grombchevsky was sighted in Tibet had Lord Curzon, the Governor General of India most worried. In 1903 Curzon decided to send a military expedition into Tibet led by Grombchevsky's old antagonist, Col Francis Younghusband. From Xigatse, Younghusband made a leisurely march into Lhasa. The British got the Tibetans to agree to end their isolation and having extracted trade concessions withdrew in 1904, the way they came. In 1907 Britain and Russia formally agreed that it was in their interests to leave Tibet 'in that state of isolation from which, till recently, she has shown no intention to depart.' Later the Chinese captured Tibet bordering Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh has a very interesting population mix. Only less than 10 percent of its population is Tibetan. Indo-Mongoloid tribe's account for 68% of the population. The rest are migrants from Nagaland and Assam. As far as religious affinities go, Hindus are the biggest group with 37 percent, followed by 36 percent animists, 13 percent Buddhists. In all there are 21 major tribal groups and over 100 ethnically distinct sub-groupings, speaking over 50 distinct languages and dialects. The population of about a million is spread over 17 towns and 3649 villages. With the exception of a few villages of Monpa's that live north of the McMahon Line, it is an ethnically compact and contiguous area. The formidable Himalayas were always culturally a part of India and formed a natural barrier against ingress from the north, whether Tibetan or Chinese.

Tax evasion highlights Kannauj

The Income Tax department last week raided multiple premises linked to perfume traders and others in Uttar Pradesh as part of a tax evasion investigation. The raids before assembly election period have resulted in political slugfest. But the raids also highlight tax evasion by domestic industrial units like those concentrated in Kannauj district. For centuries Kannauj, in Ganga belt, has been crafting oil-based botanical perfumes called attar using time-tested distillation methods. Sought after by both Mughal royals and everyday folk in ancient India's fragrance-obsessed culture, Kannauj attar scented everything from wrists to food, fountains to homes. Although attars fell out of fashion in the 20th century, Kannauj perfumers continue to ply their craft the same old-fashioned way recently awakening a new generation, at home and abroad, to the allure of its scents. Attar is old-world perfumery. Rooted in the Latin per and fume, perfume got its start with humans crushing and infusing botanicals directly into oil or water. Unlike modern perfumes, which have alcohol as a carrier or solvent because it's inexpensive, neutral, and easily diffused, attars traditionally use sandalwood oil, making them unctuous and highly absorbent. The scent of a droplet lingers pleasantly on the skin, sometimes for days.

Kannauj produces these, as well as the enigmatic mitti attar, which evokes the scent of earth after a rainfall thanks to baked alluvial clay in the distillation. Shamama, another coveted invention, is a distilled blend of 40 or more flowers, herbs, and resins that takes days to make and months to age. Kannauj has been concocting attar (also known as itrr) for over 400 years, more than two centuries before Grasse, in France's Provence region, emerged as a perfume juggernaut. Known locally in Hindi as 'degh-bhaphka', the artisanal method uses copper stills fueled by wood and cow dung. Like many smaller Indian cities, Kannauj is wedged somewhere between past and present. Time here doesn't move on, it simply piles up. Duck into the narrow lanes of Bara Bazaar, the main market, and Kannauj reverts fully to medieval times. In this labyrinth, long-time shops are crammed with finely cut glass bottles holding attar and ruh, or essential oil, each smelling better than the last. These days, Kannauj is facing a reckoning due to widely practiced tax evasion culture in India. Hope that Kannauj contributes to modern economy.

DEVOTEES SEEK BLESSINGS

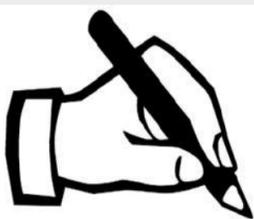


Buddhist devotees visit Kelaniya Temple for blessings during New Year's Day in Kelaniya, Sri Lanka on Saturday.

Saving India from COVID-19 omicron



RK SINHA



When the Coronavirus pandemic almost seemed to have been defeated and its havoc weakened, there was a sudden outbreak of a new variant that started spreading like wildfire. Its effects across the world, including India, have been devastating. With cases rapidly increasing, this variant has clutched 19 states so far. That is a dreadful situation. The situation is only getting graver with each passing moment as people from small cities and metropolitans have blatantly refused to follow the rules of wearing masks and social distancing. In markets, parks, restaurants, weddings, things have normalized to the status quo as they were in the Pre-Covid period. Will the country have no option but to go on complete lockdown again? That remains to be seen. At present, several states have imposed night curfews. Night curfew has also been implemented in the national capital Delhi. Omicron has also penetrated the states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, some North-Eastern states, and more. How will we compete with this behemoth challenge?

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) director, Dr Randeep Guleria, believes that the existing vaccines are effective against the disease. There is also a ray of hope in the form that it seems to be a minor disease, and as far as the vaccine is concerned, we should be safe by getting ourselves vacci-

nated timely. Of course, the next few weeks are going to be crucial. By then, the gravity of the situation would be clearer as to what extent the Omicron variant could be deadly. However, people who do not get vaccinated are at 100 percent risk. Existing vaccines will go a long way in reducing infection because if one has been vaccinated or has been infected before, they'll only spread about a third of the infection, while people who aren't vaccinated will probably spread 100 percent of the infection. For the time being, everyone must understand that the Covid-19 global pandemic is not over yet.

Now people should get immediately vaccinated. Those who still have not been able to get them for some reason or are not getting them on purpose should prioritize this. A few days ago, a corona warrior from the Municipal Health Centre of the capital city of New Delhi said that after the news of the outbreak of Omicron, the number of people getting vaccinated at his Daryaganj centre has started increasing rapidly. However, until its effects weren't revealed, people began to believe that they are no longer faced the threats of the Coronavirus. This mindset is extremely dangerous. It is beyond understanding to comprehend the real reason behind the reluctance of some people to avoid vaccinations. For the likes of them, our country witnessed the catastrophe caused by Covid-19 in the turbulent times of last

April and May. Millions of people became victims of the Coronavirus. We must learn from our past mistakes and understand that the only way to save lives is to get everyone vaccinated. Apart from the rural areas located in remote parts of the country, thousands and millions of people are not vaccinated even in cities and metros.

Given the situation created by Omicron, there is still no cure for a person who is not serious about getting vaccinated. God is his master. Vaccines are available for free, and yet some people remain clueless. That is a despicable act of sedition. Now, people of all ages should get vaccinated and follow the Coronavirus protocols. Even after the vaccine, it is necessary to wear a face mask. Swift and strict action should be taken against those who violate these guidelines. The government has moved heaven and earth to provide as much support and care as possible. The government has now decided to introduce booster doses to the people. That will be in addition to both doses of the vaccine administered to the people so far. The government has decided to introduce booster doses for people above 60 years of age or those seriously ill. Such people will be able to get these doses from 10th January onwards after the advice of their doctors.

Our healthcare and frontline workers have helped save millions of lives during the Coronavirus period and have taken on a huge responsibility. The government has decided to introduce a booster dose of the Covid vaccine for them. Corona vaccination is being started for children as well. All efforts being made by the government should be welcomed. But the Centre and the states should prepare now that if the situation is serious, there should be no shortage in the arrangement of oxygen cylinders and beds in hospitals for patients. The whole country bore witness when all our health services proved to be clumsy, inadequate,

and weak. The WHO had escalated what was then called the B.1.1.529 strain to a variant of concern, and assigned it the Greek alphabet omicron. Both the cases detected in India were before omicron's existence was known to the world outside of the science community. Face masks continue to be the best protection against any variant. However, correct use of these has to be repeatedly emphasised through public awareness campaigns. To be effective, these masks have to be properly fitting over nostrils to prevent viruses from going into the body. Double masks (cloth masks covered with surgical masks) are the most cost-effective protection and are almost comparable to N95 masks which may be expensive for many.

Several patients and their families were roaming around with money in their pockets and could not find the help needed. Let me say that during the Covid crisis many private hospitals very shamelessly looted needy and desperate people. They sold their conscience at a penny's worth. The government should under no circumstance spare such rascals who are the enemies of humanity. They should be given proper punishment. Is making money the only goal of these private hospitals? It is common knowledge that in some of the metropolitan cities of the country, money was/is taken from corona patients at the rate of Rs12,000 to Rs 15,000 per day. Are these hospitals miraculously transformed into five-star hotels? Will anyone put a stop to their arbitrariness? The regulations surrounding this should be tightened. The bigger picture is that in the coming time, the enthusiasm for assembly elections will increase rapidly in some states of the country. There will also be rallies and large-scale gatherings. Governments and common citizens have to take their steps very wisely. Only then will we be saved from the impending doom that lies in wait in the form of the Omicron variant.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Decision by ECI

After the conclusion of Uttar Pradesh visit the chief election commissioner has declared that assembly elections in five states will be held as per programme as the first dose of corona vaccine will be hundred percent completed in all the five states and all the protocols of COV will be followed meticulously. Election Commission of India (ECI) has issued such statement as the Allahabad High court had suggested to postpone the elections for one or two months due to fresh spreading of Omicron variant. In the recently concluded assembly elections various courts had passed the strictures against election commissioner for conduct of elections without following the protocols properly and even one high court had gone to the extent of holding election commission responsible for the deaths of corona patients and verbally ordered to register FIR against officials of Election Commission under section 302. The observations of court may be based on the mismanagement in respect of supply of oxygen, shortage of beds in the hospitals as well as shortage of medicines, disposal of dead bodies etc. Other protocols such as bearing of masks, to maintain the distance, use of sanitizer, measurement of body temperature, separate arrangements for corona infected persons etc will remain in force. Disposal of used items by Pollution Board properly with all safety measures. Opposition parties had demanded separate list of disabled as well as persons above 80 years who will cast their votes through postal ballot papers. In all polling stations there shall be available wheelchair for the help of needy persons and the maximum voters in one polling station shall be 1250. There shall be separate app for complaints and within short time action will be taken. So on the basis of above various arrangements made by the election commission it is a good and well conceived decision not to defer the elections in five states and the show must go on.

Yash Pal Raihan, Jalandhar

Training for civilians

NCC wings and Sainik schools will also play a very vital role in shaping the society in terms of discipline. It will be wonderful if all schools can have a certain wing to train students apart from the usual PT periods. Also, a fact to note out here is that the time has perhaps come to train all the civilians too in self-defence as border areas are prone to militancy threats. With unfriendly neighbouring countries posing threat and migrations, the demographic picture points to something bleak. Some states boasts of a easy going mindset with majority not doing any physical exercises or walks etc. We prefer to have a laidback attitude with no routines to keep ourselves physically fit. A physically fit person along with training in self-defence can take care of many. Each family can have a trained member who can then train the others. Some cities are witnessing many spurt in incidents of murder, robbery etc. These trainings, if imparted, will imbibe a sense of security and confidence amongst people which might help to thwart many avoidable incidents. The vulnerability will vanish and the perpetrators might have to think of new ways to lure people.

Purvi Pathak, via email

(RK Sinha is senior editor, columnist, and former MP.)



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Harsh Madhusudan@harshmadhusudan
Real estate is more than half of global wealth which is very roughly around half a quadrillion (\$500T). Within real estate 80% is residential and 10% each is commercial and agricultural. India's ~1M sq km agri land value flat roughly speaking last decade, 10x+ decade before that.

T. H. Houghton@sidin
Whenever anybody says "India will never forget that..." I am like bro between 1918-1920 between 12-18 million Indians died of Spanish Flu. According to one study 5% of all Indians died in the outbreak. FIVE PERCENT. You remembered or no? No. India is great at forgetting.



Omair Ahmad@OmairTAhmad
The saddest part of it is that frustrated, jobless, violence-prone young men are their core demographic; the destruction of the economy, of the hopes for the future, of civility, of the peaceful resolution of disputes, is the core strategic interest of our (mis)governing party.

David Frawley@davidfrawleywed
Our inner being lives in a timeless eternity, witnessing many births and many realms of existence in our journey through time. Let us remember our eternal origin and goal which remains at the core of who we are, and bring its transformative power into all that we aspire to.



James Wilson@jamewilson
Sitting in the home balcony and enjoying the morning.



Theresa Fallon@TheresaAFallon
China is becoming more like North Korea. Indeed, Mr Xi, in this view, may be even more isolated than the Swiss-educated Kim Jong Un, North Korea's dictator. Xi doesn't know the free world at all, I'm sure that Kim knows our world better.

D.Muthukrishnan@dmuthuk
Chartered accountants are very unhappy with government's decision of not extending IT deadline. They're venting out saying that they'll not vote for this government again. Their frustration is understandable. But in numeric terms, they're too small to influence voting outcome.

BRIEF

Becomes unicorn



Mumbai: Honasa Consumer, which sells its products under the labels of Mamaearth, The Derma Co and House of Brands, on Saturday said it has raised USD 52 million in the latest funding round led by Sequoia, valuing it at USD 1.2 billion, thus becoming the first unicorn in the new year. Honasa CEO Varun Alagh said their flagship brand Mamaearth is a leader in the D2C personal care segment.

Wheat exports

New Delhi: India's wheat exports jumped to USD 872 million during April-October period in the current fiscal on account of healthy demand, with Bangladesh emerging as the top destination, the commerce ministry said. In volume terms, wheat exports during the said period rose by more than 527 per cent to 3.2 Million Tonnes (MT) from 0.51 MT in the year-ago period. "India's wheat exports in the current fiscal (April-October) rose by 546 per cent to USD 872 million from USD 135 million reported during the same period of the previous fiscal," the ministry said.

Vistara CEO



New Delhi: Vinod Kannan took over as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Vistara airline on Saturday, a statement said. Kannan replaced Leslie Thing who was the CEO from July 16, 2017 to December 31, 2021. In its statement, Vistara said Deepak Rajawat has been elevated to take up the role of Vistara's Chief Commercial Officer from Saturday onwards. Kannan holds a degree in MBA.

Bank licence

Mumbai: The Reserve Bank said West End Housing Finance Ltd has applied for 'on tap' licence for setting up a small finance bank. In August, Cosmea Financial Holdings Pvt Ltd and Tally Solutions, too had applied for the licence. "In continuation to the press release dated August 30, 2021, the Reserve Bank of India has received an application under the guidelines for 'on tap' Licensing of Small Finance Banks dated December 5, 2019 from West End Housing Finance Limited," the RBI said.

Small cells

New Delhi: Industry body COAI said it fully supports the idea of deploying 5G 'small cells' on electric poles. The association noted that a key driver of effective 5G implementation is deployment of small cells which is a critical part of upgrading and expanding 4G networks.

Food aggregators begin to collect 5% GST

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):



Food aggregators like Swiggy and Zomato to collect and deposit tax at 5 per cent rate from this year, a move which will widen the tax base as food vendors who are currently outside the GST threshold will become liable to GST when provided through these online platforms.

Currently, restaurants registered under GST are collecting and depositing the tax. Also, cab aggregators like Uber and Ola have to collect 5 per cent Goods and Services Tax (GST) for booking 2 and 3 wheeler vehicles. Also, footwear irrespective of prices attracts 12 per cent tax.

Also to tackle evasion, the GST law has been amended to state that the input tax credit will now be available only once the

credit is appearing in GSTR 2B (purchase return) of the tax payer. Five per cent provisional credit, earlier allowed in GST rules, will not be permitted post January 1, 2022.

EY India Tax Partner Bipin Sapra said "this change will have an immediate impact on working capital of tax payers who are currently availing credit of 105 per cent of matched credit. The change will also mandate the procurements are

made from genuine and compliant vendors."

The other anti-evasion measures which came into effect include mandatory Aadhaar authentication for claiming GST refund, blocking of the facility of GSTR-1 filing in cases where the business has not paid taxes and filed GSTR-3B in the immediate previous month.

Currently, the law restricts filing of return for outward supplies or GSTR-1 in case a business fails to file GSTR-3B of preceding two months.

While businesses file GSTR-1 of a particular month by the 11th day of the subsequent month, GSTR-3B, through which businesses pay taxes, is filed in a staggered manner between 20th-24th day of the succeeding month.

Also, the GST law has been amended to allow

GST officers to visit premises to recover tax dues without any prior show-cause notice, in cases where taxes paid in GSTR-3B is lower based on suppressed sales volume, as compared to supply details given in GSTR-1.

Sapra said while the amendment is likely to curb the malpractice of passing of input tax credit through declaring in GSTR-1 without paying taxes in GSTR 3B, genuine differences in GSTR-1 and GSTR 3B like carry forward of unadjusted credit notes are likely to face unnecessary scrutiny.

The move is intended to curb the menace of fake billing whereby sellers would show higher sales in GSTR-1 to enable purchasers to claim input tax credit (ITC), but report suppressed sales in GSTR-3B to lower GST liability.

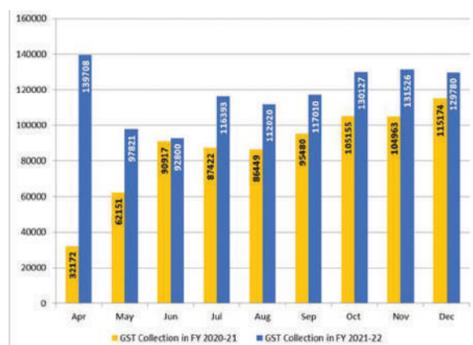
GST collection at Rs 1.29 lakh cr in December

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

GST revenues in December 2021 grew 13 per cent to over Rs 1.29 lakh crore, mainly due to pick-up in economic activity and anti-evasion steps, the Finance Ministry said on Saturday.

Though the collection was lower than Rs 1.31 lakh crore mopped up in November, December is the sixth month in a row when the revenues from goods sold and services rendered stood at over Rs 1 lakh crore.

"The gross GST revenue collected in December 2021 is Rs 1,29,780 crore, of which CGST is Rs 22,578 crore, SGST is Rs 28,658 crore, IGST is Rs 69,155 crore (including Rs 37,527 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 9,389 crore (including Rs 614 crore collected on import of goods)," the Finance Ministry said in a statement. The revenues for December 2021 are 13 per cent higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year (Rs 1.15



lakh crore) and 26 per cent higher than December 2019. The average monthly gross GST collection for the third quarter (October-December) of the current year has been Rs 1.30 lakh crore against the average monthly collection of Rs 1.10 lakh crore and Rs 1.15 lakh crore in the first and second quarters, respectively.

"Coupled with economic recovery, anti-evasion activities, especially action against fake billers have been contributing to the enhanced GST. The improvement in revenue has

also been due to various rate rationalisation measures undertaken by the Council to correct inverted duty structure," the ministry said.

It hoped that the positive trend in the revenues will continue in the last quarter as well.

There has been a 17 per cent reduction in the number of e-way bills generated in November 2021 at 6.1 crore as compared to 7.4 crore in October 2021, due to improved tax compliance and better tax administration by the central and state tax authorities.

Economy sets sail with growth hopes

Pandemic, inflationary headwinds remain

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

After navigating the turbulent pandemic waves, the recovering Indian economy is now sailing through uncharted waters of rising coronavirus cases, spiralling commodity prices and spiking inflation though the lighthouse of sustainable growth remains visible.

As 2022 begins, a raft of developments, ranging from Budgetary announcements to continuation of stimulus measures to monetary policy, will set the tone for the domestic economy, which is projected to grow more than 9 per cent in the current fiscal ending March 2022.

The country's continu-



ing massive vaccination drive and 'precaution' doses starting for select categories of people this month will provide a firewall against any steep spike in coronavirus cases amid the emergence of the Omicron variant.

Experts opined that the economy is expected to see a strong recovery in the coming months and even going past the pre-COVID levels unless the pandemic plays spoilsport.

In the 2021 April-June quarter, the economy recorded a whopping 20.1 per cent growth but then it came mainly on the back

of the base effect as GDP contracted 24.4 per cent in the year-ago period.

Nevertheless, an 8.4 per cent growth in the second quarter (July-September) was more meaningful as it indicated sustained recovery. The country's exports have picked up in recent months, which is also an indicator of substantial recovery in the economy.

Industry body Ficci President Sanjiv Mehta said that a likely growth of over nine per cent in the current fiscal ending March 2022 was good but more important would be to "achieve a sustained growth of eight per cent over a long period of time".

A sustained growth is needed for accelerating job creation, removing poverty and bringing in prosperity in the rural and semi-urban areas.

Indian tipplers becoming quality conscious

Kolkata, Jan 01 (PTI):

With growing urbanisation and rising income levels, Indian alcoholic beverages consumers are becoming more quality conscious rather than staying price-sensitive, a recent study has found.

With increasing international travels and exposure to foreign brands, their behaviour change is reflected in their purchase choices, which makes India an attractive market for global manufacturers and retailers, the joint study by Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) and solicitor firm PLR Chambers said.

According to the study, the country is one of the fastest-growing markets for alcoholic beverages, with an estimated market size of



USD 52.5 billion, and it is expected to grow at a CAGR (compound annual growth rate) of 6.8 per cent between 2020 and 2023.

While this data does not capture the size of the informal or illicit liquor mar-

ket, it does provide directions to the state excise departments to plan their revenue projection based on the consumption demand, it said. The data also demonstrates that by 2030, while 50 per cent of the con-

sumers would buy more of the same category of alcoholic beverages that they are consuming, 26 per cent are expected to move to higher brands and 24 per cent will spend on newer categories of alcohol.

In India, judicious use of consumer purchase data to design tax rates was a rarity in the past.

A lack of organised data collection and collation led to ad hoc and non-aligned changes in excise policies.

Recently, various states are taking bold measures to see the impact of the policy changes on consumption and revenue collection. In the case of West Bengal, a downward alignment of previously increased excise duties on India Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) is allowing consumers to access better quality products, the study said.

Foreign owned assets in India increased by USD 37.3 bn

Mumbai, Jan 01 (PTI):

Foreign-owned assets in India increased by USD 37.3 billion in the September quarter while Indian residents' overseas financial assets rose by USD 31.9 billion during the same period, RBI data showed.

According to India's International Investment Position (IIP), the liabilities stood at USD 1,258.9 billion during the July-September quarter as compared to USD 1,221.6 billion at June-end 2021.

The assets stood at USD 927.1 billion at September-end, up from USD 895.2 billion in June quarter.

"Foreign-owned assets in India increased by USD 37.3 billion during the quarter whereas Indian



residents' overseas financial assets recorded lower rise of USD 31.9 billion, nearly three fourths of which came from build-up in reserve assets; partly reflecting the allocation of special drawing rights (SDRs) by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in August 2021," RBI said.

According to the data, net claims of the non-residents on India increased by USD 5.4 billion during the July-September period.

Euro currency marks 20 eventful years

Brussels, Jan 01 (AFP):

The euro on Saturday marks 20 years since people began to use the single European currency, overcoming initial doubts, price concerns and a debt crisis to spread across the region.

Euro banknotes and coins came into circulation in 12 countries on January 1, 2002, greeted by a mix of enthusiasm and scepticism from citizens who had to trade in their Deutsche marks, French francs, pesetas and liras. The euro is now used by 340 million people in 19 nations, from Ireland to Germany to Slovakia.

Bulgaria, Croatia and Romania are next in line to join the eurozone in the next few years -- though people are divided over the benefits of abandoning their national currencies.



The idea of creating the euro first emerged in the 1970s as a way to deepen European integration, make trade more simple between member nations and give the continent a currency to compete with the mighty dollar.

Officials credit the euro for helping Europe avoid an economic catastrophe during the coronavirus pandemic.

"Clearly, Europe and the euro have become inseparable," European Central Bank chief Christine Lagarde wrote in a blog post. "And for young

Europeans, who have only ever known the single currency, it must be almost impossible to imagine Europe without it," she wrote.

In the euro's initial days, consumers were concerned that its emergence had caused prices to rise as countries had to convert to the new currency.

Though some products -- such as coffee at cafes -- slightly increased as businesses rounded up their conversions, official statistics have shown that the euro has brought more stable inflation.

Media, entertainment revive to pre-pandemic level

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):



The Indian Media & Entertainment industry has revived to pre-COVID levels and is expected to grow to USD 55-70 billion by 2030 with a CAGR of 10-12 per cent, driven mainly by strong growth in OTT, gaming, animation and VFX, said a report.

The industry continues to showcase multimodal growth with digital video leading the consumption boom, which is outstripping all other segments, said a joint report from the CII and Boston Consulting Group (BCG).

India's M&E industry has significant headroom for growth basis global benchmarks and has been among the highest growth markets along with China globally,

said the report titled Blockbuster Script for the New Decade: Way Forward for Indian Media and Entertainment Industry.

TV ad volumes have bounced back to pre-COVID levels and are expected to continue growing in the future, driven by an increase in advertising on regional channels & growth in new advertisers, it said.

TV penetration in India has remained flat and ARPU's have also been steady, with both trends ex-

pected to continue in the medium term. "Subscriptions will be driven by the strong performance of regional channels and cost advantage vis-à-vis OTT," the report said adding cord cutting is nascent and is expected to be limited in the medium term.

Over the Indian OTT (Over The Top) segment, the report said it is currently in scaling stage with strong subscription growth and increased investments in premium & original content.

"More affordable data has led to an increase in internet access and digital payments, thereby improving access to OTT platforms and digital videos. The industry is one of the most competitive amongst

emerging markets with 40+ players representing all types of content providers, it said. According to the report, there is a remarkable surge in the SVOD (Subscription video on demand) over last few years and is expected to overtake AVOD (advertising-based video on demand) in the coming years. "This strong growth in subscription is due to various initiatives taken to expand the user base through bundling and pricing innovations, amply supported by significant investment in content," it said.

While talking about gaming, the report said though it is currently underpenetrated compared to the US and China but is expected to witness strong growth due to the mobile first phenomenon.

Power consumption rises 4.5% to 110.34 bn units in Dec

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

India's power consumption grew by 4.5 per cent in December to 110.34 billion units (BU) over the same period a year ago, according to power ministry data. In December 2020, consumption was 105.62 BU, up from 101.08 BU in December 2019.

Experts are of the view that power consumption as well as demand has grown at a steady pace in December with improvement in economic activities across the country.

However, they expressed concerns over rising cases of COVID-19 in the country which may compel states to impose local lock-

down restrictions, that may affect commercial and industrial power demand as well as consumption as had happened after the second wave hit the country in April 2021.

Peak power demand met or highest supply in a day rose to 183.39 GW in December 2021 compared to 182.78 GW in December 2020 and 170.49 GW in December 2019.

In November this year, the power consumption grew by 2.6 per cent to 99.37 BU. Last year in November, power consumption stood at 96.88 BU and in the same month in 2019, it was at 93.94 BU.

The country's power consumption had grown

by 3.3 per cent in October this year to 112.79 BU, compared to 109.17 BU in the same month last year.

Many states had imposed lockdown restrictions after the second wave of the pandemic hit the nation in April this year and affected the recovery in commercial and industrial power demand as states started imposing restrictions in the latter part of the month. Curbs were gradually lifted as the number of COVID cases fell.

Power consumption witnessed 6.6 per cent year-on-year growth in May this year at 108.80 BU, despite a low base of 102.08 BU in the same month of 2020.

'Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hai' team takes up entertainment level to Mars!

Exploring Space has always attracted the attention of many of us. Many Bollywood and Hollywood space movies have gripped the attention of audiences by showcasing extraordinary stories laced with marvelous visuals. And as it seems, &TV's one of the most popular shows, Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hai will take its viewers to Mars in one of its most entertaining upcoming tracks. It is for the first time that planet Mars will be depicted on Indian television, albeit with a comical angle making for a hilarious show. Popular actress Shubhangi Atre who essays the role of traditional and seedhi-sadhi Angoori Bhabi will be seen as the primary character in the sequence. Talking about her experience of shooting the sequence, Shubhangi



Atre (Angoori Bhabi) shares, "The concept of space is huge and interests a massive audience base. Right from childhood, I have also been fascinated to know and explore more about different planets. I have watched many movies and shows related to space and my excitement keeps growing each time

I hear about concepts related to space. When the makers spoke to me about the Mars sequence, it felt like a dream come true. I was literally teleported to Mars when I saw the set for the first time. It has been designed exceptionally and viewers will enjoy it as much as I have enjoyed shooting for the track.

The structure of Aliens, outfits, the atmosphere makes it one of the most exciting tracks. The comical angle to the sequence makes it even more interesting and entertaining ride to Mars for our audience." Watch Bhabhiji Ghar Par Hai at 10:30 pm airing every Monday to Friday only on &TV.

Gender biases are often seen not only in rural but in urban areas also and the short film, 'Love Raddi', is about the same, featuring Harshita Gaur and actor-director Aadeeb Rais.

'Sadda Haq' actress Harshita will be seen playing a dentist who is forced to face emotional abuse since childhood.

Harshita says: "My character, Sara Malik, is a young dentist, who although independent and intelligent, is subject to emotional abuse since childhood. The film highlights how even in well-to-do urban households, some parents continue to treat their daughters and sons differently." According to Harshita, the on-screen character is confident from the outside, but feels restricted and unable to speak up in actuality.

The actress, who feels a lot of young Indian girls will connect with her character, says: "What really attracted me about this particular short film when I was reading it was a very basic line, which said that sometimes when you speak up for yourself, you're

not just trying to fix the problem, but probably you are just trying to fix yourself. Speaking up is an act of courage and self-love."

The other lead actor, Aadeeb, says his character, Kabir Kohli, appears like the boy-next-door but slowly the audience will realise that there's a lot of unhealed pain and anguish within him.

He says: "Kabir Kohli has grown up seeing his mother being psychologically abused by his father and continues to be haunted by the trauma.

Harshita Gaur plays dentist in short film



Shaan, Neeti recreate Kishore Kumar's song 'Aate Jate Khoobsurat'

Singers Shaan and Neeti Nigam have recreated late legendary singer-actor Kishore Kumar's song 'Aate Jate Khoobsurat' from the movie 'Anurodh' while recording the title track of upcoming show 'Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey'. Speaking of the track, Shaan said: "I am a big Kishore Da fan and it's a great feeling to sing this legendary melody composed by Laxmikant Pyarelal and lyrics by Anand Bakshi. No matter how hard I try, I could never create the magic al-



ready created in the original, so I just sang to the brief and guidance of the music producer Dhruv." Neeti called it a wonderful start for the new year

and also a memorable experience. Its soul-stirring lyrics can turn the worst day into a better one effortlessly. "While recreating this iconic song, we kept in mind the need to create something memorable, inventive, and something which created a sense of warmth in the new year for everyone."

"The tone of the song had to be young, uplifting, and joyous while capturing the beautiful journeys of the variety of characters which this show will have."

She added: "Recording the title track for their upcoming show 'Kabhi Kabhie Ittefaq Sey' was a

'I'm single by choice'



'Choti Sarrdaarni' fame Piya Valecha says that she is single not by chance, but by choice.

"I am single not by chance, but by choice. Marriage is not a plan for me as of now. I will think of it in future once I find someone eligible for me. But for now, my work is my topmost priority," she says.

The actress, who previously featured in shows like 'Maddam Sir - Kuch Baat Hai Kyunki Jazbaat Hai', says she learnt to deal with challenging situations in 2021.

"The year 2021 was full of ups and downs for me. But I learnt to deal with challenging situations and stay focused... Keeping myself all positive and motivated," she says. "I learnt to take all the work opportunities and make them best for me," she



Proud moment for Saumya Kamble

Gaurav shares about preparation for the finale

The upcoming weekend episodes of Sony Entertainment Television's dance reality show India's Best Dancer 2 will be a visual delight for fans and viewers alike. The Saturday episode will welcome the 'Race to finale' with some dhamakedaar performances put forward by the Top 8 contestants! Leading into Sunday's episode which is the Mohalla Special, the nation will get the 'Best 5' contestants of this season who will dance their way to win the trophy of India's Best Dancer and become this season's #BestKaNextAvtar!

Contestant Gaurav Sarwan is known not only for his exceptional performances but also for his 'pol-kholoing' skills. As the finale is almost here, apparently the contestants are using different coping mechanisms to gear up for the big show.

Giving intel to the judges and the audience, Gaurav shares how everyone is coping up in different ways, "Zamroodh bhैया has started stress-eating, Saumya keeps giving herself pep-talk while practicing and Akash bhैया has now become subdued and is just solely focused on dancing and bettering his skill." Furthermore,

showing Gaurav's father's picture, Host Maniesh Paul revealed to everyone that while Gaurav has been trying to take body-building lessons from every guest on the show from Ayushman Khurana to Dharamendra Ji, the real inspiration for him should be his fit and fab father. Everyone will be shocked to see the image of Gaurav's father during his younger years.

Needless to say, Gaurav exhibited an extraordinary act with choreographer 'Rupesh' which got them a million kisses from the kiss gun, Sajda and chumeshwari from our E.N.T specialists aka Malaika Arora, Geeta Kapur and Terence Lewis.

Who from amongst the Best 8 contestants will reach the Best 5? To know more, be sure to tune in to India's Best Dancer 2, this weekend at 8.00 PM only on Sony Entertainment Television.

The upcoming weekend episodes of Sony Entertainment Television's dance reality show India's Best Dancer 2 will be a visual treat for fans and viewers alike. Gearing up for the 'Race to finale' on Saturday and announcing the Best 5 on Sunday during the Mohalla Special episode, the nation will soon find this season's #BestKaNextAvtar! In the forthcoming episode, the magnificent belly dancer Saumya Kamble along with her choreographer Vartika Jha will yet again stun everyone with their moves by performing on the song 'Jiya Jale'. While they collected mighty praises from the judges aka ENT (Entertainment, Newness, Technique) specialists - Malaika Arora, Terence Lewis and Geeta Kapur, the main highlight of the episode will be when host of the show, Maniesh Paul asks Saumya's to share his views about her daughter's performance. Proud with her daughter's performance and her journey so far on the show, Saumya Kamble's father shares, "Saumya will always be my IBD (India's Best Daughter)." Further, he also mentions that he would like to dance with his daughter on the stage to which judge Terence Lewis along with the contestants and choreographers joined them and together, they shook a leg on the famous song 'Zingaa'.

Sharing her excitement Saumya Kamble says, "I am feeling all kinds of happy today. Dancing together with him was something I never imagined! Everyone thinks that my father never smiles, but I would like to say that he is the best! He always pampers me and takes care of me. I am thankful to my parents for always being great support". To know more, be sure to tune in to India's Best Dancer 2, this weekend at 8.00 PM only on Sony Entertainment Television.



HOROSCOPE SUNDAY JANUARY 02

Aquarius: Jan 21 - Feb 18
You are ambitious, and quite unapologetic about the way you pursue your goals! You will work hard and push your way through if you have to. Not just that, you will see to it that you have all the skills and competency required to make it big. Success is never served on a plate, and you know it, says Ganesha.

Pisces: Feb 19 - Mar 20
For those in the creative, marketing or advertising fields, today will likely bring about an important milestone on their path to progress, says Ganesha. Your creativity and ingenuity will be at their peak. Remembering that confidence is the key to success will keep you from shying away from challenges, which when surmounted will bring you substantial gains.

Aries: Mar 21 - Apr 20
Today you will feel like displaying your power. If you find that people are awestruck when you pass by, take it that your labours are doing the trick. Otherwise, take it that you have to get things in better order. Ganesha says either ways you have more work to do.

Taurus: Apr 21 - May 21
This is not a day when you should be fooling around with your health. Do not take your health and fitness for granted, warns Ganesha. You will be feeling lazy and listless all day long. Chances are that you could fall ill on account of carelessness. Both physical exertion as well as mental stress should be meticulously avoided. From sunset onwards you can rest easy.

Gemini: May 22 - June 21
Interactions with member of the opposite sex may yield positive and pleasurable results today. Public servants will get the much-needed encouragement and moral support from bosses and family members. In academics, you will be able to solve whatever problem you set your mind to.

Cancer: June 22 - July 22
Today, you are likely to remain open-minded while dealing with others. However, it doesn't mean that you will always be soft on others. Later in the day, your approach may be different and stubborn. In the evening, you will enjoy the company of family and friends.

Leo: July 23 - Aug 23
Pack your bags, and don't forget the sunscreen and the shades. Look at the stars today - Ganesha foresees for you a strong prospect of going on a tour. If not an individual backpacking adventure, then an elaborate family holiday, but travel you shall. With Lady Luck smiling upon you all day long, getting work done to the satisfaction of all is not an issue.

Virgo: Aug 24 - Sept 22
Reflect on past glories and assemble the machinery for accomplishing more in the future. New relationships will mark the road to progress. You easy-going nature will help you get along famously with people.

Libra: Sept 23 - Oct 23
Today might be a good day to invest in that body armour you saw on the telly last night. At least find one that will shield you from being at the receiving end of your seniors and the daily grind of life. If you happen to be a job aspirant, be prepared to slog it out for your success. Put off auction bids and sealed tenders for a luckier day.

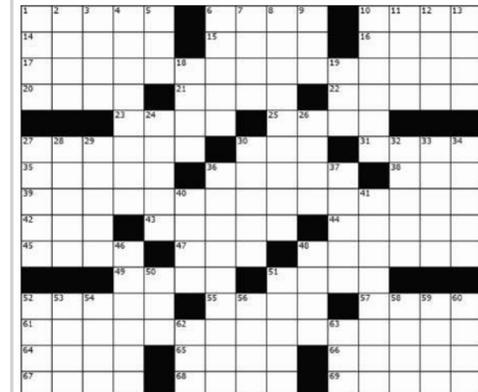
Scorpio: Oct 24 - Nov 22
House renovation is in the offing. You may furnish it with portraits and artefacts. Today, you may also feel like playing the stock market game and stake your bets, says Ganesha. Have a great time at home by hosting friends over.

Sagittarius: Nov 23 - Dec 21
A paradigm shift in your temperament and your looks is on the cards today. Your personality will get better as you do some chic attire, jewellery and a rather loud perfume today. You're a magnet today, says Ganesha, and will charm your way through a crowd of admirers who will clamour for your attention.

Capricorn: Dec 22 - Jan 20
Money will flow in from various quarters today, but it will also find its way out of your pockets. Keep a tab on your income and more on your expenses, says Ganesha. Situation at work may get a little trying, but you will overcome all problems by means of your innate and acquired skills, and past experience.

CROSSWORD

175



- ACROSS**
- South Florida city
 - Stars and Stripes
 - Italian wine region
 - Movie award
 - Bell-shaped flower
 - Once ___ a time
 - Physicist's fanciful quest
 - Appear to be
 - Gumbo vegetable
 - Mom's sisters
 - Mem. of the bar
 - Real-estate ad abbr.
 - Bike-wheel parts
 - Adversary
 - Astronaut Armstrong
 - Wigwam relative
 - Thanksgiving meal
 - Orange drink
 - Whodunit plot element
 - ___ for the course
 - Sedately dignified
 - Hay processing machine

- Thick piece
- Dirt + water
- Like B.B. King's music
- Supermarket shopper's reference
- Borscht ingredient
- Military decoration
- Tahiti, for one
- Line on a 49 Across
- Newlyweds' pledge
- Go up
- On the summit of
- ___ Sound (Washington State water)
- Moose relatives
- Poisonous snakes
- In union

- DOWN**
- Floor-washing tools
 - Phrase of understanding
 - Farmland unit
 - Cartographer
 - Anger
 - Happening by accident
 - Fib teller
 - Train conductor's cry
 - Exercise locale
 - Harvest season
 - Rotate
 - Whistle sound
 - Quaint hotels
 - High-chair users
 - Rowboat implement
 - Prompsters
 - Amaz of early TV
 - Stairway parts



Bumrah's elevation as 'stop-gap' ODI deputy ahead of Pant, Iyer is selectors' way of 'avoiding clutter'

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

It was a decision that not many saw coming but once it did, Jasprit Bumrah's elevation as India's ODI vice-captain, albeit as a stop-gap arrangement, seemed a perfectly justified reward for his terrific all-format consistency.

It won't be surprising if the Chetan Sharma-led selection panel felt inspired by Pat Cummins' recent elevation as Australia's captain while making this choice, a very interesting one considering that two proven IPL captains -- Shreyas Iyer and Rishabh Pant -- were in the mix to become KL Rahul's deputy for the bilateral series against South Africa.

If sources close to the selection committee are to be believed, Bumrah being elevated as vice-captain is a message to both Pant and Iyer to show supreme all-format consistency, something that the Gujarat fast bowler has



mastered ever since he burst into the international scene back in 2016. "Look, this is just for one

series as Rohit (out injured) is almost certain to come back during the home leg against West

Indies and Sri Lanka. Then KL will again become the deputy," a BCCI source privy to selection matters told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"However, the selectors wanted to reward Jassi (Bumrah's nickname) for his consistency as well as cricket brain. That's why he was picked ahead of Pant and Iyer," he said.

Former chairman of selectors MSK Prasad said that since this was vice-captaincy for just one series, it was an easy decision for selectors.

"Jasprit is a very sensible young man with a lot of rationality. So why not reward him? I like this decision as why can't we make a fast bowler captain, if he is doing well in all formats?" Prasad said, when asked how he viewed the decision.

"Unless you give him an opportunity to be a part of the leadership group, you won't know what to expect of Jasprit. But having said that, I would also say that

possibly since it was a decision on vice-captaincy for one series, it was an easy call.

"Had it been for captaincy with both Rohit and Rahul unavailable, it could have been different," the former India keeper-batter added.

While Iyer guided Delhi Capitals to its maiden IPL final in 2020, Pant, who was his deputy, took over the reins in 2021 and lost in the second Qualifiers after finishing on top during the round robin stage.

According to Prasad, the IPL leadership is different from leading the national side and being successful in one isn't an indicator that the player will be successful in the other.

"In IPL, a team might have four to five guaranteed superstars with different drifts and pulls. Then you need to manage at least a couple of domestic players, who may or may not withstand the pressures of franchisee cricket.

'Ruturaj will do wonders for Indian team'

Mumbai, Jan 01 (PTD):

Chief selector Chetan Sharma has heaped praise on in-form opener Ruturaj Gaikwad, who has been selected for the upcoming ODIs against South Africa, saying that the Maharashtra batter would "do wonders" for the national team.

The Indian team is scheduled to play three one-day internationals against South Africa on January 19, 21 and 23 at Paarl and Cape Town respectively.

The team for the same was picked on Friday by the Sharma-led selection panel.

"Look, absolutely (he has) got the opportunity at the right time. He was in the T20 team and also now he is in the ODI team, wherever his place can be made, selectors are thinking he will go and do wonders for the country," Sharma said at the team selection press conference. The 24-year-old Ruturaj, who hails from Pune, was the leading scorer in the 2021 Indian Premier League, after he amassed a staggering 635 runs and played a key role in Chennai Super Kings winning the title.

According to Sharma, Ruturaj was rewarded for his stellar performance.



"We have selected him (Ruturaj). Now it is up to the (team) management to see when he can play in the XI, when he is required and how to go about the combination, these things we will coordinate.

"But, at present, he (Ruturaj) was in the T20 side also against New Zealand and he is in ODI

now. He is doing well and he is rewarded for that," added Sharma, himself a former India pacer.

After his IPL high, the opener continued his dazzling form in the Vijay Hazare Trophy too and was the leading scorer there, aggregating 603 runs from five matches with 168 as his highest score.

Spain and Argentina cruise to opening wins at ATP Cup

Sydney, Jan 01 (AP):

Argentina's Diego Schwartzman and Spain's Roberto Bautista Agut led their respective teams to comfortable victories Saturday on the opening day of the 16-team ATP Cup tournament.

Argentina beat Georgia 3-0, while Spain easily accounted for Chile by the same margin in the opening ties of the team-based tournament being played across two Sydney stadiums.

World number 13 Schwartzman defeated Georgia's Nikoloz Basilashvili 6-1, 6-2, after compatriot Federico Delbonis won by the same score against Aleksandre Metreveli to give Argentina an unassailable 2-0 lead from the singles matches.

Maximo Gonzalez and Andres Molteni then gave the Argentines a clean sweep defeating Georgian pair Saba Pertseladze and Zura Tkemaladze 6-1, 6-2 in the doubles tie to give

Argentina a 3-0 win.

In the day's other tie, World No.20 Pablo Carreno Busta gave Spain an early lead as he rallied from being a break down in both sets to defeat Chile's Alejandro Tabilo 6-4, 7-6 (7-4).

Roberto Bautista Agut appeared in excellent form as he disposed of Chile's world No.17 Cristian Garin 6-0, 6-3 to seal the tie for Spain.

Alejandro Davidovich Fokina and Pedro Martinez clinched a clean sweep for Spain with a 7-6 (3), 4-6, 10-7 win over Chile's Tomas Barrios Vera and Tabilo.

Even without Rafael Nadal, who's preparation for the Australian Open has been disrupted by a positive test for coronavirus, Spain showed why they are among the favored teams at the tournament.

"Today was a good start for me, a very solid game, really happy. I like these conditions," world No.19 Bautista Agut said.

Conway century boosts NZ against Bangladesh

Mount Maunganui, Jan 01 (AP):

After a brief interruption Devon Conway continued his prolific run-making in test cricket with an innings of 122 which guided New Zealand to 258-5 at stumps Saturday on the first day of the first cricket test against Bangladesh.

South Africa-born Conway erupted onto the international scene in 2021 at the age of 29 with a double century in his first test innings and since has been a stand-out in all three formats. Within the space of four tests he now has scored a double century, a century and two half centuries: 501 runs at an average of 83. He also averages 75 in one-day internationals and 50 in Twenty20s.

A broken hand suffered at the T20 World Cup in November put a brief stop to his accumulation of runs and records. He quickly picked up on Saturday where he left off, placing New Zealand in a strong position at stumps after losing the toss.



Devon Conway celebrates his century during play on day one of the first cricket test between Bangladesh and New Zealand at Bay Oval in Mount Maunganui, New Zealand, Saturday.

Rusty when he commenced his innings after New Zealand lost captain Tom Latham in the fourth over when it was 1-1, Conway navigated the difficult first hour, then flourished, reaching his century after tea from 186 balls.

He seemed impregnable until he was finally out for 122 in the over before the second new ball was taken, to the relatively be-

nign spin bowling of Bangladesh captain Mominul Haque. Stretching forward to an unthreatening delivery which turned down the leg side, Conway got a faint edge which carried to wicketkeeper Liton Das.

Through the day he had partnerships of 138 with Will Young (52), 50 with Ross Taylor who has out for 31 in his penultimate

test and 38 with Henry Nicholls who was 32 not out at stumps. Tom Blundell was out for 11 in the last over of the day.

I think (the pleasing thing) was just the partnerships we had throughout the day. It was nice to spend some time with Ross Taylor in the middle, Conway said.

It was nice to contribute, especially after not playing for such a long period of time.

It was challenging. The wicket was quite green this morning and we knew if we got through that tough period it would always get easier to bat on.

The score at stumps didn't fairly reflect the effort of the Bangladesh who worked tirelessly to support the decision of Mominul to bowl on winning the toss.

There was moisture in the Bay Oval pitch and Bangladesh seamers Taskin Ahmed and Shoriful Islam were ascendant in the first hour, sending back Latham and troubling Conway and Young.

Dennerby does not yell when Indian women players make mistakes



New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

Indian women's football team head coach Thomas Dennerby does not believe in yelling at his players when they make mistakes and he attributes that trait to his stint as a police officer in Sweden, where he learnt what holds more value in life.

Dennerby, who is guiding the Indian team in the upcoming AFC women's Asian Cup to be hosted by the country in February-March, feels that yelling at

players does work all the time. "If you're a coach that yells at the players every match at half-time, then over a period of time, the players also get sensitised to that and it stops having the desired effect," Dennerby said. "But if you do it on occasions when it is required, then it hits them when you do it. Do it only if you have a very good reason to be angry, otherwise don't do it. That's my opinion," he said in a release from All India Football Federation.

Beating India in T20 World Cup best moment of 2021 for Pak team: Babar Azam

Karachi, Jan 01 (PTD):

Pakistan captain Babar Azam has termed the jinx-breaking win over India in the T20 World Cup as the "best moment" for his team in the year gone by.

Summing up the year in a podcast released by the Pakistan Cricket Board on Friday, Babar said that losing to Australia in the semifinal stage of the same event was most disappointing for the entire side.

"That defeat hurt me the most this year because we had been playing so well and as a combined unit," he said.

Babar said beating India for the first time in a World Cup match was the high point for him in 2021. Pakistan defeated India by 10 wickets in the lopsided match. "It was a fantastic achievement for us as a team because we had not been able to beat India in the World Cups for so many years. It was our best moment of the year," he said.

He said the win over India also lifted the profile of the team and gave the players enormous confi-



PCB has advertised for power-hitting batting coach

Karachi: In a first, the Pakistan Cricket Board has advertised for the post of a power-hitting batting coach for the national team and also sought applications for five other coaching positions at its High Performance Centre in Lahore. The five coaching positions also include the post of High-Performance coach. An official in the board said that chairman Ramiz Raja was very keen for the Pakistan team players to adapt to modern day requirements of cricket and which is why the post of power hitting coach had been advertised. The PCB, after advertising the positions, said in a statement that it wanted to complete the process of hiring coaches in February.

dence which was visible in the T20 and Test wins in Bangladesh and later at home against the West Indies.

Babar said the Pakistan team progressed and

achieved a lot last year. "The biggest satisfaction was seeing young talent come through for us at crucial times. It is good we are now producing young talent," he pointed out.

Pollard returns to lead West Indies against England, Ireland

St. John's (Antigua), Jan 01 (AP):

Kieron Pollard is back from injury to captain West Indies for the upcoming Twenty20 cricket series against England.

West Indies plays England in five T20 internationals at Kensington Oval in Barbados from Jan. 22-30. Ahead of the England series, West Indies hosts Ireland in three one-day internationals and a one-off T20 between Jan. 8-16 at Sabina Park in Jamaica.

West Indies announced its squads Friday to take on England and Ireland.

We have tried to maintain the general makeup of the squads from the Pakistan tour before Christmas, with the captain and some senior players coming back in. West Indies head coach Phil Simmons said.

COVID-19 has also played a part in the final makeup of the squad. The challenges in the next couple months are getting the young players in both squads to not only improve on their skills but maintain the attitude and desire we saw in Pakistan." Pollard



missed the tour of Pakistan because of a hamstring injury at the T20 World Cup.

West Indies T20 squad against England and Ireland: Kieron Pollard (captain), Nicholas Pooran, Fabian Allen (England only), Darren Bravo (England only), Roston Chase, Sheldon Cottrell, Dominic Drakes, Shai Hope, Akeal Hosein, Jason Holder, Brandon King, Kyle Mayers, Rovman Powell, Romario Shepher, Odean Smith, Hayden Walsh Jr.

West Indies ODI squad against Ireland:

Kieron Pollard (captain), Shai Hope, Shamarh Brooks, Roston Chase, Justin Greaves, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Gudakesh Motie, Jayden Seales, Nicholas Pooran, Romario Shepher, Odean Smith, Devon Thomas.

Espanyol scores 2 late goals for 1st away win in Liga

Barcelona, Jan 01 (AP):

Ra I de Tom s and Javi Puado scored late goals as Espanyol fought back to win 2-1 at 10-man Valencia and earn its first away victory of the Spanish league season.

The match that closed out 2021 will be the last one to be played with 100% occupancy for at least a month in Spain. Health authorities have reinstated caps of 75% seating for games during January given the sharp rise in coronavirus cases. Spanish stadiums had gone back to full capacity at the start of October.

Valencia appeared to be on its way to winning after Omar Alderete headed the hosts in front in the 51st minute. But Espanyol tilted the match in its favor in the second half, and substitute Jofre Carreras proved key to its comeback. Carreras was fouled by Hugo Duro in the 82nd while trying to shoot in the area, and Duro was sent off with his second booking.

De Tom s converted the resulting penalty by sending it under goalkeeper Jasper Cillessen, who could have done more to stop the Spain striker from claiming his ninth league goal of the campaign.

England players should not miss international duty to play in IPL: Atherton

London, Jan 01 (PTD):

The English cricketers should not miss international duty at the expense of playing in the IPL, former England captain Michael Atherton has said in the wake of the team's disastrous Ashes campaign in Australia.

England have already conceded the five-match series Down Under against their traditional rivals after suffering heavy defeats in the first three Tests, the poor show attracting widespread criticism from former players.

"Players should not miss international duty to play in the IPL, nor be rested and rotated to allow them to play elsewhere. The carry-on during the winter, and at the start of the English summer, should not happen again," Atherton wrote in his column for 'The Times'.

With regards to the glitzy IPL, the former captain also had other suggestions to help improve England's performance in the international arena's

red-ball format. "The leading multi-format players are paid seven-figure sums, but, incredibly, the ECB washes its hands of them for two months of the year during the Indian Premier League.

"The players should be told that, while the ECB will be accommodating of the request to play in the IPL, a 12-month contract is exactly that, and the granting of a no-objection certificate to play in the IPL and other franchised competitions is contingent on it being in the best interests of the England team," Atherton said.

Some of the prominent England players who have played in the IPL from the current setup are Jos Buttler, Ben Stokes, Sam Curran, Moeen Ali, Eoin Morgan, Adil Rashid, Dawid Malan and Jonny Bairstow.

Atherton, who has captained England in 54 Tests from 1993 to 2001, felt Ben Stokes is a "viable alternative" to replace Joe Root as skipper for the five-day format.

NEW YEAR RUSH



People visit the Marble Rocks waterfall on the Narmada river on the first day of the new year, at Bhedaghat on the outskirts of Jabalpur, Saturday.

Over 1 lakh 10-year-old diesel vehicles deregistered

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

Over one lakh 10-year-old diesel vehicles were deregistered by the Delhi government on Saturday, leaving their owners with options of either retrofitting them with electric kits or selling them in other states after getting a no objection certificate, officials said. A senior Delhi transport department officer said that petrol vehicles older than 15 years will also be deregistered in the coming days.

The number of such old petrol vehicles is estimated to be over 43 lakh, including 32 lakh two wheelers and 11 lakh cars, he said. The transport department has warned that

if any deregistered 10-year-old diesel vehicle or petrol vehicle older than 15 years is found plying on roads, it will be impounded and sent for scrapping. Owners of 10-year-old diesel vehicles have now the option to retrofit them with electric kits or sell them in other states after obtaining a no objection certificate (NOC) from the transport department, the officials said.

"In compliance of the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) direction, the Delhi government has deregistered 1,01,247 diesel vehicles that completed 10 years on January 1, 2022. Owners of such vehicles can apply online for NOC if they want re-registration in

other states," said the officer said. The deregistered diesel vehicles include around 87,000 cars, and the rest include goods carriers, buses and tractors. The transport department has empanelled eight electric kit manufacturers for retrofitting old petrol and diesel vehicles, including two and three wheelers, that cannot ply on the roads due to the NGT directions.

The department is also in talks with other manufacturers of electric kits and more will be empanelled in the coming days, the officials said. Automobile experts said that retrofitting of old diesel and petrol cars and four-wheelers will cost Rs 3-5 lakh depending on bat-

tery capacity and range. The retrofitting of two and three wheelers will cost lesser depending on type of battery and manufacturers, they said. The empanelled electric kit of Etrio Automobile can be used for both petrol and diesel four wheelers. It comprises a 17.3 kW battery with a range of over 106 km.

The other empanelled manufacturers are 3EV Industries, Booma Innovative Transport Solutions Renewable, Zero 21 Renewable Energy Solutions, VELEV Motors India Pvt Ltd. All these manufacturers have electric kits with different battery capacity for two, three and four wheeled vehicles, the officials said.

'No property tax on residential properties up to 500 sq ft'

Mumbai, Jan 01 (PTI):

Property tax on residential units of up to 500 sq ft, located within the Mumbai municipal area limits, will be waived off, Maharashtra Government said on Saturday. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced the decision at a meeting of the urban development department earlier in the day, an official release said. The waiver comes ahead of Mumbai municipal corporation elections due next month.

The CM has asked the administration to implement the decision with immediate effect, the release said. It quoted Urban Development Minister



Uddhav Thackeray

Eknath Shinde as saying that the decision will benefit owners of over 16 lakh houses below 500 sq feet in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) limits.

Shinde said the Shiv Sena, which rules the BMC, has fulfilled an important assurance it gave

ahead of the 2017 BMC elections. Thackeray on Saturday chaired a virtual meeting with Shinde, Mumbai district guardian minister Aslam Shaikh, Mumbai suburban district guardian minister Aaditya Thackeray, Mayor Kishori Pednekar and Chief Secretary Debashish Chakrabarty.

An official said the BMC is expected to lose a revenue of Rs 468 crore following the waiver.

BMC in 2021-22 had estimated property tax collection of Rs 6,738 crore but could mobilise Rs 4,500 crore due to the covid pandemic and lockdown. In 2021-22, the BMC has projected the property tax collection of Rs 7,000 crore.

'Set up makeshift hospitals, form teams to monitor patients'

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

To tackle a possible surge in COVID-19 cases, the Centre advised all states and Union territories to initiate the process of setting up makeshift hospitals and to constitute special teams to monitor patients in home isolation.

In a letter to all chief secretaries, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said it is imperative to re-emphasise the significance of timely and swift upgradation of health infrastructure in all states and UTs.

"This becomes all the more important since with the sudden increase in

cases, we may start seeing a stressed health infrastructure," he said.

To address potential surge in cases with a view to ensure preparedness, the Centre has asked states to initiate creation of field or makeshift hospitals to augment availability of health infrastructure.

"This can be done with coordination with DRDO and CSIR as well as the private sector, corporations, NGOs, etc. This will aid the process of rapid creation of field hospitals or temporary hospital set-ups," Bhushan said.

The Centre also said that states may also consider leveraging hotel

rooms and other accommodations linked with the COVID dedicated hospitals in government and private sector to cater to patients having mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19, as was also done in some states during the earlier surge in cases.

"A large number of positive cases may be eligible for home isolation. These cases would require effective follow up and a clearly defined mechanism for prompt shifting to a health facility in case of deterioration in their health situation," Bhushan said.

He said it is particularly important that all states should monitor their home isolation protocol

and its actual implementation at the field level.

"Special teams be constituted to monitor all home isolation cases, call centres/control rooms must aid outbound calling for monitoring such patients and ensuring that all such cases can be shifted to an appropriate health facility through dedicated ambulances," he added.

"A mechanism wherein citizens can call and get ambulance and a bed in a transparent manner needs to be operationalised. The call centres, district or state-level dashboards/portals can play an important role in organising the same," he said.

Nitish's son five times richer than him

Patna, Jan 01: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar owns movable and immovable assets worth Rs 75.36 lakh, while his son Nishant is almost five times richer than him. As per details of assets of the chief minister and his cabinet colleagues uploaded on the Bihar government website on December 31, Kumar has Rs 29,385 in cash and nearly Rs 42,763 deposited in the bank, while his son Nishant has Rs 16,549 in cash and Rs 1.28 crore in Fixed Deposit (FD) or deposits in various banks. Kumar has movable assets worth Rs 16.51 lakh whereas the total value of his immovable assets is around Rs 58.85 lakh. His son owns movable properties worth Rs 1.63 crore and the value of his immovable assets is around Rs 1.98 crore.

LASER SHOW



Laser show at Bandra-Worli sealink on the New Years eve, in Mumbai.

MP COVID-19 vaccination

'36 lakh school children in 15-18 age group to be covered'

From Monday

Bhopal, Jan 01 (PTI):

The vaccination against COVID-19 of 36 lakh schoolchildren in the 15-18 age group in Madhya Pradesh will begin from Monday, with plans afoot to administer doses to 12 lakh beneficiaries in this segment on the first day, a senior health official said.

There are 36 lakh registered schoolchildren in the 15-18 age group in the state and the vaccination drive for them will start

from January 3, Madhya Pradesh Immunisation Officer Dr Santosh Shukla told PTI on Saturday.

"We have plans to administer doses to 12 lakh children on Monday. The state had earlier set a record of 30 lakh doses in a single day. However, with children we can't be hasty. After covering schoolchildren, we will target school dropouts," he explained. Meanwhile, Shukla said 98 per cent of eligible beneficiaries, or 5.22 crore out of 5.49 crore, have got the second dose of the vaccine in the state.

Gujarat govt launches intrastate flight services

From Surat
Chopper joyride at Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad, Jan 01 (PTI):

The Gujarat government on Saturday launched intrastate air services connecting Surat to four other cities and a helicopter joyride in Ahmedabad. The daily intrastate flight services, connecting Surat to Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Amreli, will be operated by Surat-based Ventura AirConnect, at a launch price of Rs 1,999 per ticket on all these routes, an official said.

A chopper joyride from Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad will be operated by AeroTrans Services, a city-based air charter service company,



A helicopter takes off from a helipad next to the Sabarmati river during the launch of the helicopter joyride service, in Ahmedabad, Saturday.

on weekends, he said. Gujarat Civil Aviation Minister Purnesh Modi inaugurated the services.

The flight services, launched in collaboration with the state government, will help the elderly and physically-challenged citizens during emergencies, and will aid indus-

tries and tourism, the official said.

The flight time from Surat to Bhavnagar will be 30 minutes, while the duration to Amreli will be 45 minutes and 60 minutes to Ahmedabad and Rajkot, it was stated.

As per a release issued by AeroTrans Services, the

helicopter joyride from riverfront to Narendra Modi stadium in Ahmedabad will last for nine minutes, with five passengers travelling each trip, costing Rs 2,360 per person per ride. Another route for the joyride will be from riverfront to Science City and back, which will start from mid-January 2022, it said.

Speaking on the occasion, Modi said the Centre had developed more than 15 airports in the state. Air strips in smaller towns such as Deedsa, Keshod, Amreli, Morbi, Palitana, Rajpipla, Ankleshwar and Mesana will be developed to improve air connectivity.

Apart from the new services, the government also plans to connect Ahmedabad and Bhuj with a 50-seater airplane, the minister said.

Lockdown not under discussion: Maha



Rajesh Tope

Aurangabad (Maha), Jan 01 (PTI):

The imposition of lockdown in the state was not being discussed at present, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope said here on Saturday. Maharashtra on Friday reported 8,067 new coronavirus cases, 50 per cent more than the day before. Disaster management minister Vijay Wadetiwar had said the day before that the "stage of fresh lockdown" was nearing, but the decision will be

taken by the chief minister. "Decision of lockdown is not under discussion currently. The government will take decision about restrictions by taking into consideration the case positivity rate, hospital bed occupancy and oxygen consumption," Tope told reporters. "If the daily (medical) oxygen requirement crosses 700 metric tons, then the state will go into lockdown automatically," he said. Tope was here to attend a function to mark the 39th anniversary of the Mahatma Gandhi Mission educational trust. "Currently we have imposed some restrictions on social gatherings. If it brings the virus spread under control, well and good. Otherwise we will have to impose stricter restrictions," the health minister added.

UP POLLS

Akhilesh promises free power supply for irrigation, households

Lucknow, Jan 01 (PTI):

Ahead of the crucial Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday promised 300 units of free electricity to households, if voted to power.

The former chief minister also promised free electricity for irrigation purposes. Wishing the people a happy New Year, Yadav tweeted in Hindi, "2022 will be a new year

with new light for a new Uttar Pradesh. Three hundred units of electricity for households (domestic consumers) will be given for free and electricity for irrigation will be free."

A similar promise was made by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in September 2021. The Arvind Kejriwal-led party had promised 300 units of free electricity to all domestic consumers, waiver of outstanding bills of 38 lakh families and 24-hour power supply.

ASLI AYURVED

Sugarfree Immunity

CHYAWAN-FIT SUGARFREE* CHYAWANPRASH

No Sugar, No Honey

Useful in protecting diabetics against diseases

Rakhe Tandurust...Rakhe Fit...

Doctor's Consultation: 844 844 4935 | www.baidyanath.co



BRIEF



People ride a boat during sunset on the first day of the new year, in Kolkata, Saturday.

Idol broken

Coimbatore: A life-size idol of Lord Krishna was found vandalised in the early hours of Saturday in the city prompting local BJP leaders to seek immediate action against the miscreants. Morning walkers noticed broken pieces of the idol strewn across the place at Bharati Park in the city and immediately alerted police. Local BJP leaders, including the party's district president R Nandakumar, arrived at the spot and demanded the police must take action against "communal forces" being supported by a few "anti-Hindu" organisations that are reportedly involved in the act.

Denied entry

Mangaluru: Six Muslim girl students of the government women's PU College in Udupi have alleged that the principal is not allowing them to wear 'hijab' (headscarf) in the classrooms. The students also complained that they are not being allowed to talk in Urdu, Arabic and Beary languages. The girls stood outside the classroom for three days in protest. The students claimed though their parents approached the principal Rudra Gowda for talks, he refused to hold discussion on the issue.

Terrorist killed

Srinagar: A terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday, police said. The encounter took place in Jumagund area of the north Kashmir district. "One unidentified terrorist killed in an encounter at Jumagund area of Kupwara. Army & Police are on the job. Further details shall follow. @JmuKmrPolice," the Kashmir Zone Police said on Twitter.

Major fire

Kolkata: A major fire gutted a godown of a chemical factory here, where paint, thinner and other related items were stored, an official said. Eighteen fire tenders were pressed into service to douse the flames, which had also spread to a neighbouring hosiery factory, he stated. It took fire tenders around three hours to bring the blaze under control, he said.

Arms factory

Banda: An illegal arms and ammunition manufacturing factory was uncovered following a raid here and five people were arrested, police said on Saturday. The raid was conducted on Friday night based on a tip-off, SHO of Chilla police station Narendra Pratap Singh said. "Eight illegal arms and equipment used in making them have been recovered from the factory," he said.

Weather High 24 Low 13

FATAL MISHAP

Stampede at Vaishno Devi leaves 12 dead

During New Year rush Jammu, Jan 01 (PTD):

Twelve people lost their lives and over a dozen others were injured in a stampede at the famous Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir in the early hours during a heavy rush of devotees on New Year.



Bodies of Mata Vaishno Devi shrine stampede victims being kept at a Community Health Centre at Katra, in Reasi district, Saturday morning.

This is the first such tragedy at the shrine, located atop the Trikuta hills - about 50 km from here - that attracts lakhs of people every year. The incident occurred between 2.30 AM and 2.45 AM on Saturday near a relatively narrow passage at gate number 3 outside the sanctum sanctorum of the hilltop shrine where devotees usually arrive round the clock after trekking from the Katra base camp, a distance of nearly 13 km. A high-level inquiry was

ordered into the stampede by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha to be headed by Principal Secretary (Home) Shaleen Kabra with Divisional Commissioner Jammu Rajiv Langar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh as its members. Condolences poured in from all quarters and Prime Minister Narendra

Modi spoke to Sinha and Union ministers Jitendra Singh to take stock of the situation. According to eyewitness accounts, the number of devotees was allegedly beyond the permitted level with flagrant violation of COVID-19 norms, and some of the survivors accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of "mismanagement".

High-level inquiry ordered

A high-level inquiry was ordered into the stampede by Lieutenant Governor (L-G) Manoj Sinha to be headed by Principal Secretary (Home) Shaleen Kabra with Divisional Commissioner Jammu Rajiv Langar and Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh as its members.

'Death due to mismanagement'

According to eyewitness accounts, the number of devotees was allegedly beyond the permitted level with flagrant violation of COVID-19 norms, and some of the survivors accused the Jammu and Kashmir administration of "mismanagement". The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board, however, denied the charges saying all necessary arrangements were made in view of the expected rush. Most of the deaths have taken place due to suffocation, police said, adding among the deceased seven are from Uttar Pradesh, three from Delhi and one each from Haryana and J-K.

Relief announced

The JK administration has announced a relief of Rs 10 lakh to the deceased and Rs 2 lakh to the injured which will be paid by the Shrine board. The PMO tweeted that "an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh each from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of those who lost their lives due to the stampede at Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan. The injured would be given Rs 50,000: PM @narendramodi".

Deployment of first regiment of S-400 to be completed next month

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

The Indian Air Force is likely to complete the deployment of the first regiment of the S-400 Triumf missile systems at an airbase in Punjab by February, military officials said on Saturday. They said the process of deployment of the missile system has begun and it will take at least six more weeks to complete the deployment. The first regiment of the missile system is being deployed in such a way that it can cover parts of the border with China in the northern sector as well as the frontier with Pakistan.

items as well as its peripheral equipment to the site of the deployment is going on," said an official. In total, India will get five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems from Russia.

In October 2018, India had signed a USD 5 billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, despite a warning from the Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may invite US sanctions. The Biden administration has not yet clarified whether it will impose sanctions on India under the provisions of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) for procuring the S-400 missile systems.

CM ADDRESSES SECURITY FORCES

'Naxals on back boot, large part of Bastar free of their menace'

Raipur, Jan 01:

Claiming that a major portion of the Bastar region was now free of naxal insurgency, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Saturday hailed the security forces for their successes against the rebels. He was addressing a gathering of state police and paramilitary personnel on the occasion of New Year at Police Parade Ground here. His government has changed Chhattisgarh's image as an insurgency-affected state, Baghel said. I am happy that our police have been doing excellent work in naxal-affected areas. Naxalism is not just a law and order problem, but also a political and so-



cial problem. Security forces have set up camps in Maoist strongholds which pushed the rebels on the back foot, the chief minister was quoted as saying in an official release. Now the forest-dwellers, mostly tribals (in naxal-affected areas), consider security personnel as their friends and understand that security personnel have been deployed there for their own safety. "This all could become

possible because the police are helping locals, and development works, including the construction of roads, bridges and culverts, are taking place. A major portion of Bastar has got rid of the naxal menace, Baghel said. Earlier, when it came to Chhattisgarh, people outside the state spoke only about naxalism, "but our government has changed this thinking and this image of the state," he said.

Three of family die after motorcycle rams into truck

Janjgir-Champa, Jan 01:

About the mishap

Three cousin brothers were killed when their speeding motorcycle crashed into a parked truck in Janjgir-Champa district, police said on Saturday. The accident occurred on national highway no 49 near Banari area under the Janjgir police station limits late on Friday night, said Janjgir station house officer (SHO) Umesh Sahu. The trio, identified as Deepak Patel (19), Parmeshwar Patel (17) and Tarun Patel (16), died on the spot due to the impact, he said, adding that the deceased were residents of Janjgir-Champa.

The accident occurred on national highway no 49 near Banari area under the Janjgir police station limits late on Friday night. The trio, identified as Deepak Patel (19), Parmeshwar Patel (17) and Tarun Patel (16), died on the spot due to the impact, he said, adding that the deceased were residents of Janjgir-Champa.

GST collection at Rs 1.29 lakh crore

New Delhi: GST revenues in December 2021 grew 13 per cent to over Rs 1.29 lakh crore, mainly due to pickup in economic activity and anti-evasion steps, the Finance Ministry said on Saturday. Though the collection was lower than Rs 1.31 lakh crore mopped up in November, December is the sixth month in a row when the revenues from goods sold and services rendered stood at over Rs 1 lakh crore. "The gross GST revenue collected in December 2021 is Rs 1,29,780 crore, of which CGST is Rs 22,578 crore, SGST is Rs 28,658 crore, IGST is Rs 69,155 crore (including Rs 37,527 crore collected on import of goods) and cess is Rs 9,389 crore (including Rs 614 crore collected on import of goods)," the Finance Ministry said in a statement.

PM-KISAN SCHEME

PM releases Rs 20,946 cr to farmers; over Rs 1.8 lakh cr transferred so far

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday released Rs 20,946 crore to 10.09 crore farmers across India as the 10th installment of financial aid under the PM-KISAN scheme and said there was a need for innovation in agriculture along with promotion of natural farming. Under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme, a financial benefit of Rs 6,000 per year is provided to the eligible farmer



families, payable in three equal installments of Rs 2,000. The PM-KISAN scheme was announced in the February 2019 Budget. The first installment was for the period December 2018 to March 2019. Addressing a virtual

event for release of the amount, Modi said that the scheme is a big support for farmers and the Centre has transferred all installments on time directly into bank accounts of beneficiaries, without any involvement of middlemen.

'Covid cannot impede India's development'

Amid growing concerns over spread of Omicron, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India needs to accelerate pace of development in the new year and will not allow the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic to dampen the growth process. He stressed that the country will continue to fight the pandemic with "full caution and vigilance", and also take care of the national interest.

LONG WAIT FOR DEVOTEES



Devotees wait in queues to pay obeisance at the Golden Temple on the first day of the New Year 2022, in Amritsar, Saturday.

MASSIVE SURGE

Delhi records 2,716 new Covid cases

Positivity rate jumps to 3.64 %

6,347 new Coronavirus cases in Mumbai

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTD):

In a massive surge, Delhi on Saturday recorded 2,716 fresh Covid cases, the highest single-day rise since May 21, and one death while the positivity rate mounted to 3.64 per cent, according to data shared by the city's health department.

Mumbai: Mumbai on Saturday reported 6,347 new COVID-19 cases in 24 hours - a 12 per cent increase from yesterday and a massive spike from the 3,671 cases reported two days ago. One death linked to the coronavirus has been recorded in the past 24 hours, Mumbai's municipal corporation said. The frightening surge in Covid cases in the country's financial capital - which was the worst-affected city for large parts of the second wave - have triggered a number of restrictions on movement and gatherings in public places, including 5 pm - 5 am night curfews at beaches and parks.

cent and 2.44 per cent respectively, as per official figures. The daily case count on Saturday breached the 2000-mark after a gap of over seven months, as 2,716 new cases were logged with an increased positivity rate of 3.64 per cent, as per the latest health bulletin. This rise is the highest since May 21 when 3,009 cases were recorded with a positivity rate of 4.76 per cent, while 252 deaths were also reported on that day.

The huge spike in fresh cases in the span of the last few days in Delhi is being recorded amid a significant jump in cases of new Omicron variant of Covid in the city.

Four killed in landslide, more feared trapped at mining site

Bhiwani (Hr), Jan 01 (PTD):



A view of the site of a landslide incident at Dadam mining area of Bhiwani district, Saturday.

Four people have been killed and many others are feared trapped following a landslide at Dadam mining site here on Saturday. Police said around half-a-dozen dumper trucks and some machines were buried under the debris caused by the landslide which occurred around 9 am in Tosham block. Haryana Home Minister Anil Vij said several rescue teams have been pressed into service for the rescue work. Vij gave information about the death toll in a tweet. I am deeply saddened over the incident that took place at the min-

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team from Ghaziabad, State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) from Madhuban and an Army unit from Hisar have been called. So far four people have died, said Vij in a tweet. Bhiwani Chief Medical Officer Raghuvir Shandilya had earlier said that Toofan Sharma (30), a native of Bihar and Binder (23), who hailed from Baganwala in Haryana's Jind district, have died in the incident. Deputy Superintendent of Police (Siwani) Manoj Kumar said four to five people may still be trapped under the debris. operation is being run by the administration.

Paddy safe from unseasonal rains in procurement centers

● **Nodal officer submitted report**

Central Chronicle News

Korea, Jan 01: Paddy procurement has started in the state from December 1 and procurement is going on while making sure all the arrangements for the convenience of the farmers in the procurement centers.

On the basis of the forecast of rain in Surguja division by the Meteorological Department, instructions were given by Collector Shyam Dhawade to protect the paddy stacked in the

procurement centers from getting wet from rain.

In compliance of which the stacked paddy was completely covered with tarpaulin and cap cover in all the committees.

Taking cognizance of the priority, Collector Mr. Dhawade has also taken a report with photo from the nodal officer regarding the preservation of paddy in all the procurement centers and damage due to unseasonal rains.

Nodal Officer District Co-operative Central Bank informed that there are 30 service cooperative societies in Korea district,



under which paddy is being procured in the Kharif marketing year 2021-22 through 41 procurement centers.

He said that there was no loss or damage to the paddy due to the unseason-

al rains received last day and today. Paddy procurement is going on in the district on support price for the Kharif marketing year 2021-22.

Paddy is being procured smoothly from farmers in

41 procurement centers of the district in the ongoing paddy procurement since December 1.

Priority is being given in selling paddy to small and marginal farmers and so far, 6 lakh 30 thousand 690 quintals of paddy has been purchased from 15 thousand 417 farmers in the district under the guidance of Collector Dhawade, in which till now 1 lakh 87 thousand 614 quintals of paddy have been lifted by the miller.

On the instructions of Collector Dhawade, purchases are being made in the ratio of 80:20 from

small-marginal and big farmers in the district.

They have been facilitated by buying paddy in lump sum from small farmers. So far 12 thousand 367 small marginal farmers have been procured in the district and paddy has been purchased from 3 thousand 49 big farmers.

Help is also being provided by the farmers in gunny bags in the purchase of paddy. During the paddy procurement period till now, 2 lakh 10 thousand 323 gunny bags have been provided by the farmers with their consent.

Paddy worth crores drenched in water

Central Chronicle News

Dhamtari, Jan 01 Thousands of quintals of paddy procured and stored in 31 centers have got drenched in water, due to unseasonable rains which lashed the region this week. Though plastic caps were used to cover the paddy purchased, but due to persistent rains the sacks got wet.

In the district paddy procurement at a support price of Rs 2500 was inaugurated from Dec 1. In last 29 days, a total of 22.28 lakh

quintals from 96 societies have been procured across the district.

Immediately after the purchase, it has to be lifted but due to non clearance from MARKFED, it was not lifted within the stipulated period.

11.99 lakh quintals of paddy is still lying jammed in other societies awaiting lifting, but has got wet due to the rains.

Meanwhile due to mud and dampness in the premises of the centers, paddy procurement in the centers has been halted for three to four days.

Special Gram Sabha meeting to be held on Jan 5

Central Chronicle News

Simga, Jan 01: Despite the order of the Collector, the special Gram Sabha could not be held against the NoC given to the under-construction APL plant, discussion was to be held. The adjourned meeting will be held on Jan 5.

The matter is under consideration in the High Court, the citizens of Ringni had demanded a special Gram Sabha by applying to the District Collector Baloda Bazar in

the public darshan program regarding the no-objection certificate illegally given to the under-construction APL Apollo plant in village Ringni Kesda.

On the orders of the Collector, SDM Simanga directed the Gram Panchayat Ringni Sarpanch and Secretary to hold a special Gram Sabha meeting to discuss the no-objection certificate given to APL Apollo Company. On December 29, in the special Gram Sabha meet-

ing at Ringni, except the above subject, the Sarpanch and the Secretary were discussing other subjects and were misleading the villagers that we were not aware of the instructions of SDM Simga and then the villagers showed them the copy of the order.

SDM Simga TR Maheshwari immediately reached Ringni and inquired about the situation and SDM Maheshwari said that the Gram Sabha itself is an independent entity

and according to the rules, they have the right to take a decision, but the above matter is pending in the High Court under Public Interest Litigation, their decision will be valid.

In the above context, District Panchayat member Renuka Abhinav Yadu said that the work is not being done according to the rules and orders of the government, without the approval of the Gram Sabha, it is not recognized, its construction works should be stopped only

after the approval in the Gram Sabha.

It is worth mentioning that ever since the formation of APL Apollo Company has started, the villagers of Ringni are protesting. The suppression of public opinion with the help of the administration is a violation of fundamental rights. The villagers are angry with the attitude of the plant. It has to be seen what is the decision in the Gram Sabha to be held on January 5.

'Assistant teachers strike not timely'

Central Chronicle News

Balod, Jan 01: Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, on his recent visit to the region, condemned the recent political turmoil in the State and blamed a certain sect of people in adding to controversies. He also attacked the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party, in supporting the trespassers of law and order in the State.

He also took a jibe on former Dr. Raman Singh on his prevailing silence on Seer Guru Kalicharan's derogatory remarks against Mahatma Gandhi. Speaking on the ongoing



strike by Assistant teachers, the Chief Minister said that the strike of assistant teachers is not justified at all, as they were on paid leave during the COVID 19 pandemic and have also been regularized as per norms.

He condemned the

strike saying further the strike comes in a time when the schools are open long after corona period. The future and education of the students should not be played with, he said urging the striking teachers to end their protest with priority.

Rajim Mata Jayanti will be held at the fair venue



Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Jan 01: Due to the weather, the social brothers have taken the decision to reshuffle the venue of the state level social conference organized on 7th January at the fair festival site.

It is noteworthy that on the suggestion of Public Works and Home Minister Tamradhwaj Sahu, the decision to celebrate Bhakta Mata Rajim Jayanti celebrations and social convention organized on 7th January at the new fair site in Chaubebandha Road was taken by the State Sahu Sangh and the District Sahu Sangh.

In this context, Mr. Sahu inspected the new fair site and gave necessary directions to the District Collector. But from the last three days, the sudden change in the weather changed, due to the hail, the entire venue is drenched with mud and swamps everywhere.

The officials of the State and District Sahu Sangh reached the new fair site today and saw that the rain water is filled from place to place and is full of swamps and mud, after that by holding a meeting at the rest house, it has been decided unanimously that the program will be organized on January 07 at the

festival venue in front of Shri Rajiv Lochan Mandir.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will attend this program as the chief guest, along with this, the Home Minister and all the MPs and MLAs of the society have also been invited in this program. State Sahu Union General Secretary Atal Ram Sahu, Vice President Haldhar Sahu, District Sahu Sangha Gariaband President Bhuneshwar Sahu, Dhamtari District President Dayaram Sahu, Rajim Bhaktin Mandir Committee President Dr. Mahendra Sahu, Joint Secretary of State Sahu Union, Lalaram Sahu,

Ishwari Sahu, General Secretary of District Sahu Union, Dilip Sahu, Joint General Secretary Khoman Sahu, Sohan Sahu, Ghanshyam Sahu, Gopal Sahu, Convener of Youth Cell Raju Sahu, Media In-charge Trilok Sahu, City President Bhavani Shankar Sahu, Patron Bhole Sahu, Ramkumar Sahu, Rajim Bhaktin Mandir Committee Vice President Gangaram Sahu, Nandu Sahu were present. On the occasion of site inspection, SDM Avinash Bhoi, TI Santosh Bhuarya of Rajim Nagar, Manish Sahu, Sub Engineer of PWD Rajim, were present.

Workshops on community mental health organized

Under the 'Aao Baat Kare' program by UNICEF

Central Chronicle News

Jagdalpur, Jan 01: Take a red balloon, fill all your worries & tensions in it to the optimum, and just blow it in the air; do some Shammi Kapoor dance, clap & communicate. Simple and interesting isn't it? The team of the NGO, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti under the project called "Aao Baat Kare" (Come Let's talk) by UNICEF, C'garh, in such playful manners conducted workshops on community mental health. It took place in Jagdalpur's Krishi Mahavidyala's Auditorium and Bijapur's Zila Panchayat's conference hall from Dec 28-30.

The workshop focused on the mental health of not just adults but right from infants, children, adolescents to old age people along with special concerns on pregnant women in rural areas also. Questions ranging from what is mental health, difference between mental and physical health, how mentally unhealthy people are different, what is to be



done for them? etc, all were discussed and answered in the workshop. Through examples, it was explained how to detect a person suffering from poor mental health.

After that, with help of various playful activities mentioned above, the steps to be taken in order to cure it and how it can help in building a better society were told. A huge audience comprising of Yuvodaya and Bijadutir volunteers, school teachers, villagers, Anganwadi workers, and Mitansins all participated in this workshop enthusiastically. They were elated by it and shared getting to know about mental health which they never knew before in anyways. They mentioned never having any discussion on mental health but as they know

now what it is, they understood its importance and different aspects. From now onwards, they will be able to detect people with poor or weak mental health and help them for bettering of society as a whole. Danish Hussain, Manisha Motwani, Yogesh Purohit, and a few others were the trainers who gave the training in a smooth manner in these workshops. Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti's Secretary Manas Banerjee also shared words on mental health during this.

Following this, Bastar District's Deputy Assistant Director of Social Welfare Department, Vaishali Madarkal said that it is necessary for all people to be mentally healthy. For this, an awareness campaign will be conducted in

the entire Bastar district from now onwards.

To be mentioned, the NGO, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti which works on mental health with help from Babu Trust, Pune, and fundings from Paul Hamlyn Foundation has been partnered by UNICEF, Chhattisgarh for this project's implementation on the ground. In it, the active support of Yuvodaya and Bijadutir Volunteers and District Administration is being given. The Ngo focuses on the "Psychosocial Model" rather than the "Biomedical Model" for the treatment of people suffering from mental health issues. The "Biomedical model" supports to be the cure of the disease through medicines but the "Psychosocial model" on mental health supports to be the cure of the cause through active involvement of the community's people as support. The NGO from the past four years is constantly putting efforts to motivate and aware the community's people for it.

80000 quintals of paddy lying in open!

Central Chronicle News

Rajim, Jan 01: The unseasonable rains here have brought no respite to paddy procured recently here in the region. About 80000 quintals of paddy procured from farmers in government procurement centers are lying under the open sky and a good part of it has already drenched in the rains and efforts to save the grains would yield no results, as plastic covers have been used to protect the stored grains.

Seven procurement centers have been set up under District Co-operative Central Bank branch Rajim. As on 29 December, 1 lakh 69 thousand 520 quintals of paddy worth Rs.33 crore have been pur-



chased. Till now, rice millers are lifting paddy from these procurement centers for custom milling. But the speed with which the paddy should be lifted is not happening. Due to this, 79,690 quintals of paddy is stuck in these procurement centers.

From this it can be estimated that out of the pur-

due to not covering half of it, it is visible open.

This procurement center has maximum 16 thousand 606 quintals of paddy jam from seven procurement centers. 11 thousand 500 in Arand, 13 thousand 725 in Pokhara, 12 thousand 613 in Basin, 8 thousand 664 in coma, 11 thousand 511 in Rajim, 5 thousand 532 quintals in Shyam Nagar are stuck waiting for transportation, which remains a big challenge for the administration to save it from the rains.

On the other hand, District Collector Nilesh Kshirsagar visited Shyam Nagar procurement center and directed the in-charge to cover it properly with taalpatri to save it from rain water.

Collector directs to conduct immediate assessment

Korba, Jan 01: District Collector R Sahu instructed all the revenue officers to immediately assess the damage caused to crops and houses due to unseasonable rains on the previous day. She also took information from the officials about saving the paddy kept in the paddy procurement centers from getting wet due to untimely rains.

The Collector directed that the paddy in the collection centers should be kept covered with cap cover or tarpaulin to avoid getting wet in the rain and arrangements should be made for drainage of water in the centres.



Toll free number have been issued for information about loss in linseed, rye, mustard crops due to unseasonable rain, under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, these three crops have been notified

for Rabi 2021 in Korba district. The Toll free numbers are 1800-4190-344, 1800-116-515 and 1800-209-5959. The information about the damage caused to these crops due to untimely rains can also be given to the field officials of the Agriculture Department.

Farmers have also been advised by the Agriculture Department to keep the barn kept in the barn covered with polythene and to monitor the pest in pulses, oilseeds and vegetable crops. Agricultural experts have advised the farmers to spray rule-based insecticides on the appearance of pest infestations in the crops.

AFFIDAVIT

I **Ajay Roy**, age -55, S/o Late NK Roy, R/o Kranti Nagar, Gali No. 4, Vidya Nagar, Bilaspur, Teh. Bilaspur, District Bilaspur (C.G.), do hereby make the following statements:

1. That the above name and address is true and correct.
2. That in some of my documents my name in English is registered as **Ajoy Roy**.
3. In some other documents my name in English is registered as **Ajay Roy**.
4. And in some of the documents, my name is registered as **Ajay Kumar Roy**.
5. So the three names viz. **Ajoy Roy, Ajay Roy and Ajay Kumar Roy** are the names are one person and that is mine and not that of any other person.
6. So it is support of the same that I am submitting this affidavit.

CERTIFY

I do hereby solemnly affirm that the statements made above from SI. No. 01-05 are true to the best of my knowledge and to which I got it certified and signed as on 31/12/2021 in Bilaspur and signing in the affidavit as per my will.

Witness **Shri Pramod Verma** DEPONENT **Ajay Roy**



CENTRAL Chronicle

Since 1974 Volume 9 No. 272

Stop appeasing China for talks

China 'renamed' 15 places including residential areas, mountains, rivers and a mountain pass situated in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, which it claims as its own territory called 'South Tibet'. The government of India just issued formal statements in response. This is not the first time China has 'standardised' names of places in Arunachal Pradesh. The first batch of changed names were issued in 2017 for six places in the state. The central government needs to stop appeasing China for further talks. According to Lian Xiangmin, an expert with the China Tibetology Research Centre in Beijing, more such 'standardisation' of names is to come. History shows that Chinese claim over Arunachal Pradesh is related to legitimacy of Chinese rule over Tibet. India's policy appears to be fostering enmity with Pakistan and appeasing China and consists of some bizarre miscalculations by the central government's policymaking institutions. Meanwhile, the Congress party questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'silence' on China's renaming the places in Arunachal Pradesh. China's claims initially extended only to Tawang, a part of Arunachal Pradesh, where the sixth Dalai Lama was said to have been born. Since the 2000s, however, China has been claiming Arunachal Pradesh in its entirety, a surprising claim given that independent India has been exercising sovereignty over it since 1955 (it became a union territory in 1972 and a state in 1987). It is worth noting that China's stance is directly motivated by its desire to put a lid on Tibetan nationalism (which it believes is fueled by support from India). Arunachal Pradesh is also strategically located at the confluence of the international borders of the China, Myanmar and Bhutan, giving it strategic importance. This extension of territorial claims and increasing aggression indicate a concerted strategy of widening the PRC's ambit of influence and control, consistent with its stance on the East and South China Sea disputes. Beijing's border disputes with India thus represent a wider strategic shift in its thinking, far removed from Deng Xiaoping's 'keep your head down' policy, through which it seeks to revive its ancient glory as the Middle Kingdom.

History mentions that most well known of Czarist Russia's military explorers, Col Bronislav Grombchevsky was sighted in Tibet had Lord Curzon, the Governor General of India most worried. In 1903 Curzon decided to send a military expedition into Tibet led by Grombchevsky's old antagonist, Col Francis Younghusband. From Xigatse, Younghusband made a leisurely march into Lhasa. The British got the Tibetans to agree to end their isolation and having extracted trade concessions withdrew in 1904, the way they came. In 1907 Britain and Russia formally agreed that it was in their interests to leave Tibet 'in that state of isolation from which, till recently, she has shown no intention to depart.' Later the Chinese captured Tibet bordering Arunachal Pradesh. Arunachal Pradesh has a very interesting population mix. Only less than 10 percent of its population is Tibetan. Indo-Mongoloid tribe's account for 68% of the population. The rest are migrants from Nagaland and Assam. As far as religious affinities go, Hindus are the biggest group with 37 percent, followed by 36 percent animists, 13 percent Buddhists. In all there are 21 major tribal groups and over 100 ethnically distinct sub-groupings, speaking over 50 distinct languages and dialects. The population of about a million is spread over 17 towns and 3649 villages. With the exception of a few villages of Monpa's that live north of the McMahon Line, it is an ethnically compact and contiguous area. The formidable Himalayas were always culturally a part of India and formed a natural barrier against ingress from the north, whether Tibetan or Chinese.

Tax evasion highlights Kannauj

The Income Tax department last week raided multiple premises linked to perfume traders and others in Uttar Pradesh as part of a tax evasion investigation. The raids before assembly election period have resulted in political slugfest. But the raids also highlight tax evasion by domestic industrial units like those concentrated in Kannauj district. For centuries Kannauj, in Ganga belt, has been crafting oil-based botanical perfumes called attar using time-tested distillation methods. Sought after by both Mughal royals and everyday folk in ancient India's fragrance-obsessed culture, Kannauj attar scented everything from wrists to food, fountains to homes. Although attars fell out of fashion in the 20th century, Kannauj perfumers continue to ply their craft the same old-fashioned way recently awakening a new generation, at home and abroad, to the allure of its scents. Attar is old-world perfumery. Rooted in the Latin per and fume, perfume got its start with humans crushing and infusing botanicals directly into oil or water. Unlike modern perfumes, which have alcohol as a carrier or solvent because it's inexpensive, neutral, and easily diffused, attars traditionally use sandalwood oil, making them unctuous and highly absorbent. The scent of a droplet lingers pleasantly on the skin, sometimes for days.

Kannauj produces these, as well as the enigmatic mitti attar, which evokes the scent of earth after a rainfall thanks to baked alluvial clay in the distillation. Shamama, another coveted invention, is a distilled blend of 40 or more flowers, herbs, and resins that takes days to make and months to age. Kannauj has been concocting attar (also known as itrr) for over 400 years, more than two centuries before Grasse, in France's Provence region, emerged as a perfume juggernaut. Known locally in Hindi as 'degh-bhaphka', the artisanal method uses copper stills fueled by wood and cow dung. Like many smaller Indian cities, Kannauj is wedged somewhere between past and present. Time here doesn't move on, it simply piles up. Duck into the narrow lanes of Bara Bazaar, the main market, and Kannauj reverts fully to medieval times. In this labyrinth, long-time shops are crammed with finely cut glass bottles holding attar and ruh, or essential oil, each smelling better than the last. These days, Kannauj is facing a reckoning due to widely practiced tax evasion culture in India. Hope that Kannauj contributes to modern economy.

DEVOTEES SEEK BLESSINGS

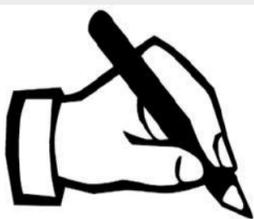


Buddhist devotees visit Kelaniya Temple for blessings during New Year's Day in Kelaniya, Sri Lanka on Saturday.

Saving India from COVID-19 omicron



RK SINHA



When the Coronavirus pandemic almost seemed to have been defeated and its havoc weakened, there was a sudden outbreak of a new variant that started spreading like wildfire. Its effects across the world, including India, have been devastating. With cases rapidly increasing, this variant has clutched 19 states so far. That is a dreadful situation. The situation is only getting graver with each passing moment as people from small cities and metropolitans have blatantly refused to follow the rules of wearing masks and social distancing. In markets, parks, restaurants, weddings, things have normalized to the status quo as they were in the Pre-Covid period. Will the country have no option but to go on complete lockdown again? That remains to be seen. At present, several states have imposed night curfews. Night curfew has also been implemented in the national capital Delhi. Omicron has also penetrated the states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, some North-Eastern states, and more. How will we compete with this behemoth challenge?

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) director, Dr Randeep Guleria, believes that the existing vaccines are effective against the disease. There is also a ray of hope in the form that it seems to be a minor disease, and as far as the vaccine is concerned, we should be safe by getting ourselves vacci-

nated timely. Of course, the next few weeks are going to be crucial. By then, the gravity of the situation would be clearer as to what extent the Omicron variant could be deadly. However, people who do not get vaccinated are at 100 percent risk. Existing vaccines will go a long way in reducing infection because if one has been vaccinated or has been infected before, they'll only spread about a third of the infection, while people who aren't vaccinated will probably spread 100 percent of the infection. For the time being, everyone must understand that the Covid-19 global pandemic is not over yet.

Now people should get immediately vaccinated. Those who still have not been able to get them for some reason or are not getting them on purpose should prioritize this. A few days ago, a corona warrior from the Municipal Health Centre of the capital city of New Delhi said that after the news of the outbreak of Omicron, the number of people getting vaccinated at his Daryaganj centre has started increasing rapidly. However, until its effects weren't revealed, people began to believe that they are no longer faced the threats of the Coronavirus. This mindset is extremely dangerous. It is beyond understanding to comprehend the real reason behind the reluctance of some people to avoid vaccinations. For the likes of them, our country witnessed the catastrophe caused by Covid-19 in the turbulent times of last

April and May. Millions of people became victims of the Coronavirus. We must learn from our past mistakes and understand that the only way to save lives is to get everyone vaccinated. Apart from the rural areas located in remote parts of the country, thousands and millions of people are not vaccinated even in cities and metros.

Given the situation created by Omicron, there is still no cure for a person who is not serious about getting vaccinated. God is his master. Vaccines are available for free, and yet some people remain clueless. That is a despicable act of sedition. Now, people of all ages should get vaccinated and follow the Coronavirus protocols. Even after the vaccine, it is necessary to wear a face mask. Swift and strict action should be taken against those who violate these guidelines. The government has moved heaven and earth to provide as much support and care as possible. The government has now decided to introduce booster doses to the people. That will be in addition to both doses of the vaccine administered to the people so far. The government has decided to introduce booster doses for people above 60 years of age or those seriously ill. Such people will be able to get these doses from 10th January onwards after the advice of their doctors.

Our healthcare and frontline workers have helped save millions of lives during the Coronavirus period and have taken on a huge responsibility. The government has decided to introduce a booster dose of the Covid vaccine for them. Corona vaccination is being started for children as well. All efforts being made by the government should be welcomed. But the Centre and the states should prepare now that if the situation is serious, there should be no shortage in the arrangement of oxygen cylinders and beds in hospitals for patients. The whole country bore witness when all our health services proved to be clumsy, inadequate,

and weak. The WHO had escalated what was then called the B.1.1.529 strain to a variant of concern, and assigned it the Greek alphabet omicron. Both the cases detected in India were before omicron's existence was known to the world outside of the science community. Face masks continue to be the best protection against any variant. However, correct use of these has to be repeatedly emphasised through public awareness campaigns. To be effective, these masks have to be properly fitting over nostrils to prevent viruses from going into the body. Double masks (cloth masks covered with surgical masks) are the most cost-effective protection and are almost comparable to N95 masks which may be expensive for many.

Several patients and their families were roaming around with money in their pockets and could not find the help needed. Let me say that during the Covid crisis many private hospitals very shamelessly looted needy and desperate people. They sold their conscience at a penny's worth. The government should under no circumstance spare such rascals who are the enemies of humanity. They should be given proper punishment. Is making money the only goal of these private hospitals? It is common knowledge that in some of the metropolitan cities of the country, money was/is taken from corona patients at the rate of Rs12,000 to Rs 15,000 per day. Are these hospitals miraculously transformed into five-star hotels? Will anyone put a stop to their arbitrariness? The regulations surrounding this should be tightened. The bigger picture is that in the coming time, the enthusiasm for assembly elections will increase rapidly in some states of the country. There will also be rallies and large-scale gatherings. Governments and common citizens have to take their steps very wisely. Only then will we be saved from the impending doom that lies in wait in the form of the Omicron variant.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Decision by ECI

After the conclusion of Uttar Pradesh visit the chief election commissioner has declared that assembly elections in five states will be held as per programme as the first dose of corona vaccine will be hundred percent completed in all the five states and all the protocols of COV will be followed meticulously. Election Commission of India (ECI) has issued such statement as the Allahabad High court had suggested to postpone the elections for one or two months due to fresh spreading of Omicron variant. In the recently concluded assembly elections various courts had passed the strictures against election commissioner for conduct of elections without following the protocols properly and even one high court had gone to the extent of holding election commission responsible for the deaths of corona patients and verbally ordered to register FIR against officials of Election Commission under section 302. The observations of court may be based on the mismanagement in respect of supply of oxygen, shortage of beds in the hospitals as well as shortage of medicines, disposal of dead bodies etc. Other protocols such as bearing of masks, to maintain the distance, use of sanitizer, measurement of body temperature, separate arrangements for corona infected persons etc will remain in force. Disposal of used items by Pollution Board properly with all safety measures. Opposition parties had demanded separate list of disabled as well as persons above 80 years who will cast their votes through postal ballot papers. In all polling stations there shall be available wheelchair for the help of needy persons and the maximum voters in one polling station shall be 1250. There shall be separate app for complaints and within short time action will be taken. So on the basis of above various arrangements made by the election commission it is a good and well conceived decision not to defer the elections in five states and the show must go on.

Yash Pal Raihan, Jalandhar

Training for civilians

NCC wings and Sainik schools will also play a very vital role in shaping the society in terms of discipline. It will be wonderful if all schools can have a certain wing to train students apart from the usual PT periods. Also, a fact to note out here is that the time has perhaps come to train all the civilians too in self-defence as border areas are prone to militancy threats. With unfriendly neighbouring countries posing threat and migrations, the demographic picture points to something bleak. Some states boasts of a easy going mindset with majority not doing any physical exercises or walks etc. We prefer to have a laidback attitude with no routines to keep ourselves physically fit. A physically fit person along with training in self-defence can take care of many. Each family can have a trained member who can then train the others. Some cities are witnessing many spurt in incidents of murder, robbery etc. These trainings, if imparted, will imbibe a sense of security and confidence amongst people which might help to thwart many avoidable incidents. The vulnerability will vanish and the perpetrators might have to think of new ways to lure people.

Purvi Pathak, via email

(RK Sinha is senior editor, columnist, and former MP.)



WHAT THEY TWEET!



Harsh Madhusudan@harshmadhusudan
Real estate is more than half of global wealth which is very roughly around half a quadrillion (\$500T). Within real estate 80% is residential and 10% each is commercial and agricultural. India's ~1M sq km agri land value flat roughly speaking last decade, 10x+ decade before that.

T. H. Houghton@sidin
Whenever anybody says "India will never forget that..." I am like bro between 1918-1920 between 12-18 million Indians died of Spanish Flu. According to one study 5% of all Indians died in the outbreak. FIVE PERCENT. You remembered or no? No. India is great at forgetting.



Omair Ahmad@OmairTAhmad
The saddest part of it is that frustrated, jobless, violence-prone young men are their core demographic; the destruction of the economy, of the hopes for the future, of civility, of the peaceful resolution of disputes, is the core strategic interest of our (mis)governing party.

David Frawley@davidfrawleywed
Our inner being lives in a timeless eternity, witnessing many births and many realms of existence in our journey through time. Let us remember our eternal origin and goal which remains at the core of who we are, and bring its transformative power into all that we aspire to.



James Wilson@jamewilson
Sitting in the home balcony and enjoying the morning.



Theresa Fallon@TheresaAFallon
China is becoming more like North Korea. Indeed, Mr Xi, in this view, may be even more isolated than the Swiss-educated Kim Jong Un, North Korea's dictator. Xi doesn't know the free world at all, I'm sure that Kim knows our world better.

D.Muthukrishnan@dmuthuk
Chartered accountants are very unhappy with government's decision of not extending IT deadline. They're venting out saying that they'll not vote for this government again. Their frustration is understandable. But in numeric terms, they're too small to influence voting outcome.

NEW YEAR RUSH



People visit the Marble Rocks waterfall on the Narmada river on the first day of the new year, at Bhedaghat on the outskirts of Jabalpur, Saturday.

Over 1 lakh 10-year-old diesel vehicles deregistered

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

Over one lakh 10-year-old diesel vehicles were deregistered by the Delhi government on Saturday, leaving their owners with options of either retrofitting them with electric kits or selling them in other states after getting a no objection certificate, officials said. A senior Delhi transport department officer said that petrol vehicles older than 15 years will also be deregistered in the coming days.

The number of such old petrol vehicles is estimated to be over 43 lakh, including 32 lakh two wheelers and 11 lakh cars, he said. The transport department has warned that

if any deregistered 10-year-old diesel vehicle or petrol vehicle older than 15 years is found plying on roads, it will be impounded and sent for scrapping. Owners of 10-year-old diesel vehicles have now the option to retrofit them with electric kits or sell them in other states after obtaining a no objection certificate (NOC) from the transport department, the officials said.

"In compliance of the National Green Tribunal's (NGT) direction, the Delhi government has deregistered 1,01,247 diesel vehicles that completed 10 years on January 1, 2022. Owners of such vehicles can apply online for NOC if they want re-registration in

other states," said the officer said. The deregistered diesel vehicles include around 87,000 cars, and the rest include goods carriers, buses and tractors. The transport department has empanelled eight electric kit manufacturers for retrofitting old petrol and diesel vehicles, including two and three wheelers, that cannot ply on the roads due to the NGT directions.

The department is also in talks with other manufacturers of electric kits and more will be empanelled in the coming days, the officials said. Automobile experts said that retrofitting of old diesel and petrol cars and four-wheelers will cost Rs 3-5 lakh depending on bat-

tery capacity and range. The retrofitting of two and three wheelers will cost lesser depending on type of battery and manufacturers, they said. The empanelled electric kit of Etrio Automobile can be used for both petrol and diesel four wheelers. It comprises a 17.3 kW battery with a range of over 106 km.

The other empanelled manufacturers are 3EV Industries, Booma Innovative Transport Solutions Renewable, Zero 21 Renewable Energy Solutions, VELEV Motors India Pvt Ltd. All these manufacturers have electric kits with different battery capacity for two, three and four wheeled vehicles, the officials said.

'No property tax on residential properties up to 500 sq ft'

Mumbai, Jan 01 (PTI):

Property tax on residential units of up to 500 sq ft, located within the Mumbai municipal area limits, will be waived off, Maharashtra Government said on Saturday. Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray announced the decision at a meeting of the urban development department earlier in the day, an official release said. The waiver comes ahead of Mumbai municipal corporation elections due next month.

The CM has asked the administration to implement the decision with immediate effect, the release said. It quoted Urban Development Minister



Uddhav Thackeray

Eknath Shinde as saying that the decision will benefit owners of over 16 lakh houses below 500 sq feet in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) limits.

Shinde said the Shiv Sena, which rules the BMC, has fulfilled an important assurance it gave

ahead of the 2017 BMC elections. Thackeray on Saturday chaired a virtual meeting with Shinde, Mumbai district guardian minister Aslam Shaikh, Mumbai suburban district guardian minister Aaditya Thackeray, Mayor Kishori Pednekar and Chief Secretary Debashish Chakrabarty.

An official said the BMC is expected to lose a revenue of Rs 468 crore following the waiver.

BMC in 2021-22 had estimated property tax collection of Rs 6,738 crore but could mobilise Rs 4,500 crore due to the covid pandemic and lockdown. In 2021-22, the BMC has projected the property tax collection of Rs 7,000 crore.

'Set up makeshift hospitals, form teams to monitor patients'

New Delhi, Jan 01 (PTI):

To tackle a possible surge in COVID-19 cases, the Centre advised all states and Union territories to initiate the process of setting up makeshift hospitals and to constitute special teams to monitor patients in home isolation.

In a letter to all chief secretaries, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said it is imperative to re-emphasise the significance of timely and swift upgradation of health infrastructure in all states and UTs.

"This becomes all the more important since with the sudden increase in

cases, we may start seeing a stressed health infrastructure," he said.

To address potential surge in cases with a view to ensure preparedness, the Centre has asked states to initiate creation of field or makeshift hospitals to augment availability of health infrastructure.

"This can be done with coordination with DRDO and CSIR as well as the private sector, corporations, NGOs, etc. This will aid the process of rapid creation of field hospitals or temporary hospital set-ups," Bhushan said.

The Centre also said that states may also consider leveraging hotel

rooms and other accommodations linked with the COVID dedicated hospitals in government and private sector to cater to patients having mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19, as was also done in some states during the earlier surge in cases.

"A large number of positive cases may be eligible for home isolation. These cases would require effective follow up and a clearly defined mechanism for prompt shifting to a health facility in case of deterioration in their health situation," Bhushan said.

He said it is particularly important that all states should monitor their home isolation protocol

and its actual implementation at the field level.

"Special teams be constituted to monitor all home isolation cases, call centres/control rooms must aid outbound calling for monitoring such patients and ensuring that all such cases can be shifted to an appropriate health facility through dedicated ambulances," he added.

"A mechanism wherein citizens can call and get ambulance and a bed in a transparent manner needs to be operationalised. The call centres, district or state-level dashboards/portals can play an important role in organising the same," he said.

Nitish's son five times richer than him

Patna, Jan 01: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar owns movable and immovable assets worth Rs 75.36 lakh, while his son Nishant is almost five times richer than him. As per details of assets of the chief minister and his cabinet colleagues uploaded on the Bihar government website on December 31, Kumar has Rs 29,385 in cash and nearly Rs 42,763 deposited in the bank, while his son Nishant has Rs 16,549 in cash and Rs 1.28 crore in Fixed Deposit (FD) or deposits in various banks. Kumar has movable assets worth Rs 16.51 lakh whereas the total value of his immovable assets is around Rs 58.85 lakh. His son owns movable properties worth Rs 1.63 crore and the value of his immovable assets is around Rs 1.98 crore.

LASER SHOW



Laser show at Bandra-Worli sealink on the New Years eve, in Mumbai.

MP COVID-19 vaccination

'36 lakh school children in 15-18 age group to be covered'

From Monday

Bhopal, Jan 01 (PTI):

The vaccination against COVID-19 of 36 lakh schoolchildren in the 15-18 age group in Madhya Pradesh will begin from Monday, with plans afoot to administer doses to 12 lakh beneficiaries in this segment on the first day, a senior health official said.

There are 36 lakh registered schoolchildren in the 15-18 age group in the state and the vaccination drive for them will start

from January 3, Madhya Pradesh Immunisation Officer Dr Santosh Shukla told PTI on Saturday.

"We have plans to administer doses to 12 lakh children on Monday. The state had earlier set a record of 30 lakh doses in a single day. However, with children we can't be hasty. After covering schoolchildren, we will target school dropouts," he explained. Meanwhile, Shukla said 98 per cent of eligible beneficiaries, or 5.22 crore out of 5.49 crore, have got the second dose of the vaccine in the state.

Gujarat govt launches intrastate flight services

From Surat
Chopper joyride at Ahmedabad

Ahmedabad, Jan 01 (PTI):

The Gujarat government on Saturday launched intrastate air services connecting Surat to four other cities and a helicopter joyride in Ahmedabad. The daily intrastate flight services, connecting Surat to Ahmedabad, Rajkot, Bhavnagar and Amreli, will be operated by Surat-based Ventura AirConnect, at a launch price of Rs 1,999 per ticket on all these routes, an official said.

A chopper joyride from Sabarmati riverfront in Ahmedabad will be operated by AeroTrans Services, a city-based air charter service company,



A helicopter takes off from a helipad next to the Sabarmati river during the launch of the helicopter joyride service, in Ahmedabad, Saturday.

on weekends, he said. Gujarat Civil Aviation Minister Purnesh Modi inaugurated the services.

The flight services, launched in collaboration with the state government, will help the elderly and physically-challenged citizens during emergencies, and will aid indus-

tries and tourism, the official said.

The flight time from Surat to Bhavnagar will be 30 minutes, while the duration to Amreli will be 45 minutes and 60 minutes to Ahmedabad and Rajkot, it was stated.

As per a release issued by AeroTrans Services, the

helicopter joyride from riverfront to Narendra Modi stadium in Ahmedabad will last for nine minutes, with five passengers travelling each trip, costing Rs 2,360 per person per ride. Another route for the joyride will be from riverfront to Science City and back, which will start from mid-January 2022, it said.

Speaking on the occasion, Modi said the Centre had developed more than 15 airports in the state. Air strips in smaller towns such as Deedsa, Keshod, Amreli, Morbi, Palitana, Rajpipla, Ankleshwar and Mesana will be developed to improve air connectivity.

Apart from the new services, the government also plans to connect Ahmedabad and Bhuj with a 50-seater airplane, the minister said.

Lockdown not under discussion: Maha



Rajesh Tope

Aurangabad (Maha), Jan 01 (PTI):

The imposition of lockdown in the state was not being discussed at present, Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope said here on Saturday. Maharashtra on Friday reported 8,067 new coronavirus cases, 50 per cent more than the day before. Disaster management minister Vijay Wadetiwar had said the day before that the "stage of fresh lockdown" was nearing, but the decision will be

taken by the chief minister. "Decision of lockdown is not under discussion currently. The government will take decision about restrictions by taking into consideration the case positivity rate, hospital bed occupancy and oxygen consumption," Tope told reporters. "If the daily (medical) oxygen requirement crosses 700 metric tons, then the state will go into lockdown automatically," he said. Tope was here to attend a function to mark the 39th anniversary of the Mahatma Gandhi Mission educational trust. "Currently we have imposed some restrictions on social gatherings. If it brings the virus spread under control, well and good. Otherwise we will have to impose stricter restrictions," the health minister added.

UP POLLS

Akhilesh promises free power supply for irrigation, households

Lucknow, Jan 01 (PTI):

Ahead of the crucial Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Saturday promised 300 units of free electricity to households, if voted to power.

The former chief minister also promised free electricity for irrigation purposes. Wishing the people a happy New Year, Yadav tweeted in Hindi, "2022 will be a new year

with new light for a new Uttar Pradesh. Three hundred units of electricity for households (domestic consumers) will be given for free and electricity for irrigation will be free."

A similar promise was made by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in September 2021. The Arvind Kejriwal-led party had promised 300 units of free electricity to all domestic consumers, waiver of outstanding bills of 38 lakh families and 24-hour power supply.

ASLI AYURVED

Sugarfree Immunity

CHYAWAN-FIT SUGARFREE* CHYAWANPRASH

No Sugar, No Honey

Useful in protecting diabetics against diseases

Rakhe Tandurust...Rakhe Fit...

Doctor's Consultation: 844 844 4935 | www.baidyanath.co