

## Assembly passes appropriation

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Odisha Legislative Assembly has passed the Odisha Appropriation (Vote-On-Account) Bill, 2022 allowing the State Government to spend Rs 1.06 lakh crore from its consolidated fund during the first four months of the financial year 2022-23. While giving reply on a debate on the Bill, Finance Minister Niranjana Pujari said Rs 1 lakh crore has been allocated as Program ex-

penditure, Rs 89,620 crore as Administrative expenditure, Rs 3,210 crore as Disaster Response Fund and Rs 7,170 crore towards transfers from the State during the financial year 2022-23. Besides, Rs 10,000 crore has been allocated for the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and other extra budgetary resources, which will help the government. The proposed program budget size for 2022-23 is 33 percent higher than that of 2021-22, said Mr.Pujari. "Our dependence on Central trans-



fers has reduced with State's own revenue contributing about 58percent to the total revenue pool," he said. The estimated revenue surplus would be 2.7 per cent of GSDP. The estimated fiscal deficit would amount to 3 per cent of GSDP. The capital outlay in 2022-23 is Rs 40,011 crore, which is about 5.6 per cent of GSDP, he pointed out. He informed about allocations made under various schemes of the government for the year 2022-23. The Minister said no new scheme has been announced in the budget because provisions for only ongoing schemes can be made on Vote-On-Account. However, he said that the new schemes will be announced when the full-fledged budget will be placed in

the House.

After passing of the Appropriation Bill, the House was adjourned sine die. The Budget Session, which started on March 25, ended on Thursday. During the six-day session, five Bills have been passed, discussion on two adjournment motions were held, two statements were made and four Ordinances were laid in the House. Similarly, five CAG reports and 22 annual reports were also laid in the Assembly during the Budget Session.

## Ukrainian president Zelenskyy requests Australian armoured vehicles

CANBERRA(KCN): Ukrainian President Volodymyr

including armored vehicles and tougher sanctions.

shown to legislators in the Australian Parliament. Lawmakers



Zelenskyy appealed directly to Australian lawmakers Thursday for more help in its war against Russia,

Zelenskyy has been tailoring his message to individual countries through video appeals like the one

gave him a standing ovation at the start and end of his 16-minute address. He called for Russian

vessels to be banned from international ports.

"We need more sanctions against Russia, powerful sanctions until they stop blackmailing other countries with their nuclear missiles," Zelenskyy said through an interpreter. Zelenskyy specifically asked for Australian-manufactured Bushmaster four-wheel-drive armored vehicles.

"You have very good armed personnel ve

## Paralympics medallist Sundar appreciates the sports ecosystem of Odisha

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The Tokyo Paralympics bronze medallist Sundar Singh Gurjar appreciated the sports ecosystem of Odisha and termed Bhubaneswar

athletes after Neeraj Chopra, Sumit Antil and Devendra Jhajharia bagged medals in the Olympics and Paralympics.



as the best sports destination in the country.

Despite carrying an injury, Sundar took part in the 20th National Para Athletics Championship going on here in the state capital. However, he threw once in the F46 javelin event before recusing himself. Speaking on the sidelines, he said the javelin throw became the most sought-after discipline among the country's budding

"This time I am not fully prepared for the national meet. I am still recovering. I am here to enjoy the meet and pay a visit to Lord Jagannath Temple in Puri. Bhubaneswar is an amazing city as where ever you go you can find paintings of players on the walls. It also has the best sports infrastructure in the country," said Sundar. The para-athlete, who hails from Rajasthan, was also all praise for the state government. "I had participated in many para nationals but this time the arrangement is very good. All the participants are staying in one place which is a welcome move. Like my state, the Odisha government is also providing the best facilities to the players to excel," added Sundar.

## Crime Branch mum on motive behind Manas' murder

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Even as Crime Branch continued to interrogate the four accused in cameraman Manas Swain's murder on Wednesday, it is tight-lipped about the motive behind his killing and the contents of the memory chip that he was in possession of. Crime Branch officers interrogated prime accused Sarmistha Rout and her three associates Jhuna Bhoi, retired Odisha Information Service (OIS) officers Niranjana Sethi and Ranjan Nayak on the day. They were



### Message

Warm Greetings to the People of Barachana – Dharmasala dist.- Jajpur, Odisha on the eve of Utkal Divas.

**Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samantray**  
Barachana – Dharmasala, Jajpur  
Odisha

## Lavrov's India visit: US warns against circumventing sanctions against Russia; UK puts emphasis on improving ties with New Delhi

NEW DELHI(KCN): The US on Thursday said there will be consequences for countries attempting to "circumvent or backfill" American sanctions against Russia. US would not like to see a "rapid" acceleration in India's imports from Russia including energy and other commodi-

"Russia is going to be the junior partner in this relationship with China. And the more leverage that China gains over Russia, the less favourable that is for India, I don't think anyone would believe that if China once again breached the Line of Actual Control, that Russia will come running to India's defence." said Singh.



Singh added India's current import of Russian energy doesn't violate any of the American sanctions as the US had given exemption on the flow of energy from Russia, but at the same time added that Washington would like to see its allies and partners find ways to reduce their reliance on an "unreli-

able supplier". The US Deputy NSA, who played a key role in designing American sanctions against Russia, is in New Delhi since Wednesday on a two-day visit in the backdrop as Western pressure over India not criticising Russia over its attack on Ukraine is increasing. More senior officials from Europe are expected in near future.

His comments came on a day Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov reached New Delhi for his two-day India visit that could see discussions on a rouble-rupee payment mechanism for bilateral trade including New Delhi's purchase of Russian Oil. On the issue India's energy needs and the defence equipment Daleep Singh said the US stands ready to help India in meeting its requirement for energy and defence equipment. "So the conversation I've had here is that we stand ready to help India diversify its energy resources, much like is

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## Srimandir project violates norms, poses threat to Puri temple, says BJP MP in Parliament

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Bhubaneswar MP

Aparajita Sarangi raised the issue of violations of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act (AMASR Act) in the implementation of the ambitious Srimandir Parikrama Project in the Parliament on Thursday. Stating that AMASR norms do not allow any constructions within the 100-metre prohibited zone of the centrally-protected Shri Jagannath Temple at Puri, she said that work on the project is being carried out in gross violation of the rules, posing a threat to the

12th century monument.

"The temple of Mahaprabhu Jagannath is a priceless heritage for all Hindus and its protection is our responsibility. The Parliament had passed the

structions within 200 metres of the monument with permission from the National Monument Authority. It comes as a surprise for all Odias that the Odisha government has been carrying out massive digging



AMASR Act in 1958 which prohibits any kind of new construction within the 100-metre prohibited zone of a centrally protected monument and regulates con-

Sabha. Sarangi further said that although she is not against development and beautification of Srimandir and Puri, works being carried out in gross violation of norms and posing threat to the temple should be immediately stopped. She pointed out that when work on the Parikrama Project began, a consultative committee was formed by the Odisha government but no officer of ASI – the custodian of the temple - was made a part of this panel. "How can work on Srimandir be done without ASI being a

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# JSW conducts mega eye-checkup camp

- Mega camp to cover a population of 10,000 at the plant site and periphery
- 200 patients availing benefitted on a daily basis

**Paradip:** A mega free eye checkup camp is continuing at the JSW plant site under the aegis



of JSW Foundation. The camp is a convergence initiative with the District Public Health Administration.

The free eye checkup camp is currently on at Dhinkia, Nuagaon and Gadakujang villages for the benefit of its local residents. Bhumika Eye Hospital and Vision Spring voluntary institution have also collaborated with JSW foundation.

The camp kickstarted at Patana Primary School and Anganwadi center of Dhinkia Panchayat and now is being held at Mahala and Gobindpur villages.

Elderly and old age residents constitute the majority target for the eye checkup. People are required to go for a simple registration process by submitting their names through Aadhar card and thereafter avail the free treatment. It is found that about 80 percent of participants were detected for presbyopia.

The patients are being given freelenses for

specific problems after the examination. Those who need advance eye care are referred for advanced treatment.

Around 200 people are undergoing eye examination per day. The authorities stated that the camp would cover around 10,000 patients over the course of one-month period at its site and periphery.



The camp will be held in different parts of Nuagaon and Gadkujang panchayats in the coming days will continue till the last week of April.

Similar camps are in pipeline for Sandhakud and Nehru Bangla area of Paradip municipality in near future.

Dhinkia villagers like Bibhu Ranjan Das, Prashant Raut, Lizarani Bardhan, Arakhita Gochayat, Pitambar Gochayat of Dhinkia expressed their joy for being provided with free spectacles. The villagers have widely praised JSW Foundation for the initiative.

# 25 years of long journey has given a lot of pain but staying with the children, dedicated colleagues and parents has given a lot of satisfaction and pleasure

Bhubaneswar(KCN): For completing 25 years of long journey, Dr. Prakash was felicitated with a shawl, memento, saplings and citation. To note,



years with an eminence & unparalleled contribution to the field of education and its related areas the eminent educationist social activist Dr. Prakash Chandra Panigrahi is being felicitated. In a special glittering function organized for the purpose at the multipurpose activity hall of the DAV Public School,

assignment of the Public Relation work from the year 2001 to 2010 now posted as the sr. faculty at DAV Public School, Kalinga Nagar, Bhubaneswar. Along with this, as the founder member and presently the president of the leading socio-cultural organization of the state Niladrivihar Youth & Cultural

Regional Officer of DAV Institutions, Odisha Zone-1 Dr. K.C. Satapathy, Asst. Regional Officer Dr. Sujata, Chairmen and principals of different DAV Schools were joined as the Guest of Honours during the occasion. Along with a successful educationist Dr. Prakash has also widely acclaimed as a prolific actor,



starting with his educational career in the year 1995 from DAV Public School, Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar Dr. Prakash along with

Association (NYCA) he has also admired as an prominent social activist of the locality for the outstanding contribution to the

organizer and social worker as well. In response to the felicitation Dr. Prakash opined that the 25 years of long journey was not the bed of roses, given a lot of pain but staying with the loving & affectionate children, dedicated colleagues and staff members and respected parents has given a lot of satisfaction and pleasure and given the credit of this honour to the Regional Officer of DAV Institutions, Principal of his Present institution Bipin Kumar Sahoo, family members, relatives, friends and near and dear ones.



Chandrasekharpur joining as the Chief Guest the eminent sculpture artist Padma Vibhushan Sudarshan Sahoo

an excellent teaching career and in other educational related parts had also successfully accomplished the

field of culture and social service for long 27 years. Along with others, the senior cardiologist Dr. Madhabananda Kar,

# Governor of Assam confers Honorary D.Litt. to Sajjan Bhajanka, Founder Trustee, Heritage Group of Institutions



Kolkata (KCN): A proud moment for the entire Heritage Group of Institutions, Kolkata to witness the momentous occasion when Honorable Governor of Assam and the Visitor of Royal Global University, Guwahati, Prof. Jagdish Mukhi conferred the Honorary D.Litt. to Shri Sajjan Bhajanka, Founder Trustee, Heritage Group of Institutions, Kolkata and Chairman, Century Plyboards (India) Ltd. today i.e. 30th March, 2022, on the First Convocation

Ceremony of Royal Global University. Honorable Governor of Assam Prof. Jagdish Mukhi conferred this prestigious honor to Shri Bhajanka for his outstanding contributions in the fields of Industry, Social Service and Education. The Convocation ceremony was also addressed by Prof. Yogesh Singh, Honorable Vice Chancellor Delhi University as the Guest of Honour. "We feel proud to state that such an honor to Shri Sajjan Bhajanka, Founder Trustee, Kalyan Bharti Trust is a

prestigious gift on completion of 20 years of Heritage Group of Institutions," said Shri P. K. Agarwal, Chief Executive

Officer, Heritage Group of Institutions, Kolkata who was present in the Convocation ceremony as an invited guest.

# World water Day celebrated at Sudarsan H.S. School, 42 Mouza

Cuttack Red Cross Principal Dushmanta Mohapatra. In this

Chief guest Eminent Social worker Dr. Kalimulaha, guest

Lili Das, all students present made the program a grand



program NSS Program officer Bichitrana Pati read Mangalacharan with address to the honorable guest.

of honour degree college lecturer Dr. Bijaya Kumar Pattanik joined and Lecture Dr. Rajendra Kumar Pati, Lecture

success. Lastly Youth Red Cross Incharge Prafulla Kumar Das paid thanks to all. Attachments area

# Gita Chanting Competition organized by Chinmaya Mission Kolkata

Kolkata (KCN): The prize distribution ceremony for Inter-school Srimad Bhagwad Gita Shloka Chanting Competition was held on 27th March 2022 at Birla Academy of Art and Culture, Kolkata. This competition was organized by the



Vihar of Chinmaya Mission Kolkata on 5th December 2021. Students of the Heritage School, Kolkata under Group B received the 1st, 2nd & the 3rd prize. In this group first prize won by Chetna Pani and Tanisha Gupta of class V received rupees 3000 each, second Prize won by Niharika Baid of Class V received rupees. 2000 and third Prize won by Anukrita Panigrahi of class III received rupees 1000 as cash award. All winners were awarded with cash prizes, trophy and certificates

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**Vikrant Massey's 'Cargo' to be screened at South by Southwest festival in US**



**MUMBAI(KCN):** Vikrant Massey-starrer "Cargo" will have its North American premiere at the 2020 edition of South by Southwest (SXSW) festival. The science fiction film, written and directed by Arati

Kadav, also features Massey's "Mirzapur" co-star Shweta Tripathi and actor Nandu Madhav. The story revolves around a lonely demon Prahastha who has been working on a spaceship for years for the Post Death

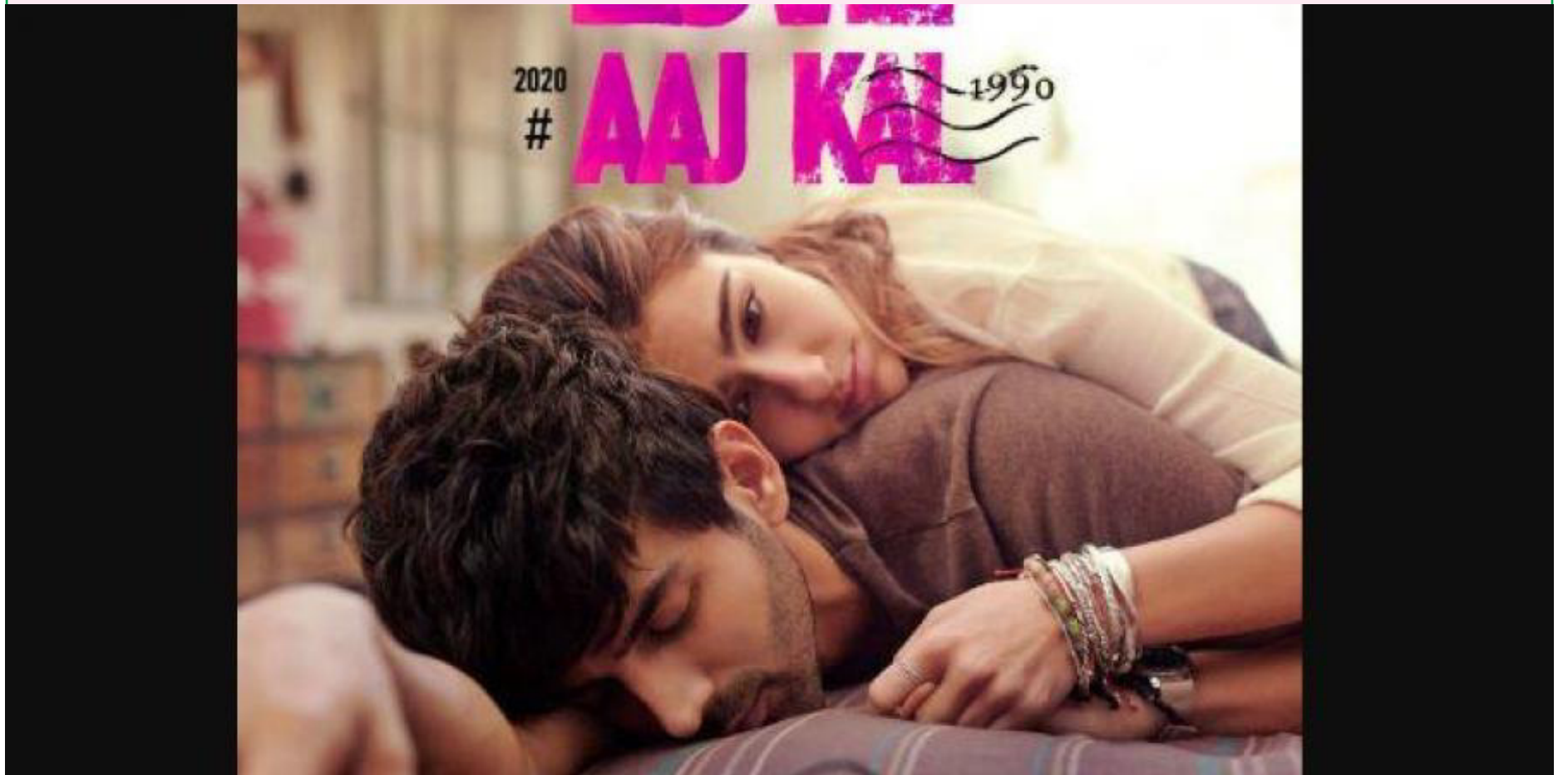
Transition services with the help of a female astronaut where dead people are recycled for rebirth. "Cargo" will be screened under the Global section of the film festival which will run from March 13 to 21.

Vikrant, who most recently featured alongside Deepika Padukone in "Chhapaak", said it makes him "proud" that the film has been chosen for the prestigious film gala. "Cargo" is one of the first Indian sci-fi

films to be there. And I feel blessed for receiving so much applause not just from the country but across the world. People have loved Chhapaak, they have embraced it with open arms and now 'Cargo' being selected

at this big a platform. I feel really fortunate," the actor said in a statement. "Cargo", which had its India premiere at the 2019 MAMI Film Festival under the spotlight section, is produced by Arati, Navin Shetty, Shlok Sharma and Anurag Kashyap.

**First look of Imtiaz Ali's Love Aaj Kal two released**



Kartik Aryan and Sara Ali Khan are the new romantic pair in Imtiaz Ali's Love Aaj Kal. Yes, the film's titled just that, not Love Aaj

Kal 2 or Aaj Kal. In a poster, we get a glimpse of their characters, Veer and Zoe, nodding off on top of each other. The poster also re-

veals the film's timeline, which will run from 1990 to 2020. "Meet Veer and Zoe, captured in their element. It's in these

simple, candid moments that love plays peekaboo, right? Love Aaj Kal," Imtiaz wrote. "Meet Veer and Zoe. Come get wound up

in our whirlwind wonderland Love Aaj Kal trailer out tomorrow," Sara added. The new Love Aaj Kal was shot in

Himachal Pradesh, Mumbai, and Rajasthan. The sequel also stars Randeep Hooda. The film is slated for Valentine's Day release.

**No proof to link Netflix's '13 Reasons Why' to high US suicide rates: Study**

**NEW YORK(KCN):** Contrary to the findings of a 2019 study that associated the Netflix series "13 Reasons Why" with an increase in monthly suicide rates among youth after the show's release, a new analysis finds no evidence to draw such a link.

The reanalysis, published in the journal PLOS ONE, revealed that after controlling for the dramatic increase in adolescent suicide in recent years, the show's release had no clear effect. "Our reanalysis casts

considerable doubt on the show having an effect on boys," said study author Dan Romer and research director of the Annenberg Public Policy Centre (APPC) from the University of Pennsylvania in the US. The reanalysis found that the increase in the suicide rate for boys observed in the original study by Jeffrey Bridge and colleagues for three months after the series' release was no longer evident after controlling for the ongoing trend in adolescent suicide.

In addition, the increase seen during the first month of the release began the month prior to the release, making it difficult to attribute the rise to the show. The reanalysis found no effects in the subsequent months of that year. The original time-series analysis of suicide rates found an additional 195 suicide deaths among boys ages 10 to 17 during the nine months following the series' release, on March 31, 2017, but did not find a similar result among adoles-

cent girls. Romer said he questioned that finding for two reasons: "First, contagion would be expected to be stronger for girls than boys because this show focuses on the suicide of a high school girl. Second, the prior analysis didn't take into account strong secular trends in suicide, especially in boys from 2016-2017." When the first season of the Netflix show appeared in 2017, it created widespread concern that its graphic portrayal of a teenage girl's suicide

would lead to imitation among vulnerable young people, especially adolescent girls. The first such study found evidence of a jump in suicides among boys ages 10 to 17 in the three months following the show's release, but no effect for girls. Romer said that analysis relied on a forecasting method to project the likely trend in suicide for 2017. But that forecast failed to anticipate the actual trend. A second study by different researchers, published in JAMA Psychiatry had a similar problem, Romer said. That study found an effect in boys and girls 10 to 19 years old in the three months following the series' release. But it similarly failed to control for the secular trend in suicide, again making it difficult to separate the effects of the show from the trend. APPC's reanalysis did find a modest rise in the suicide rate among adolescent girls during the first month following the release of "13 Reasons Why," but it was not statistically reliable, the researchers said.

## Utkal Divas :- The Pride of our State

Every state in India has its own colour, flavour and attractions. The culture and heritage of one state is different from another. One state that has occupied an important place in the development and history of India is Odisha. Odisha has a long and rich history. The people had to struggle a lot to acquire their independence and identity. To

celebrate the fight and achievements of the people Utkal Divas or Odisha day is observed on April 1 every year. To day Odisha celebrates its 86<sup>th</sup> Foundation Day. In 1936 it was the first state that was formed on linguistic basis. Earlier it was the part of Bihar. On April 1, 1936 the Odisha state became the separate province around a decade before India achieved Independence from the British Colonisation. The state was established as a separate British India Province and the Day is celebrated as Odisha Day to encourage the remembrance of the same and foster a spirit of unity among all Citizens of the State.

The entire indulges in merrymaking on this day with decorated office, shops. Odisha is the 3<sup>rd</sup> state in India in terms of tribal populations. It has been ruled by numbers in history. The last ruler of Odisha was Mukunda Dev. He was defeated and killed during the invasion during 1568. The people of the state had to fight for long to regain their identity, based on linguistics difference. On the



1<sup>st</sup> of February on that year, the

**Uma Shankar Prasad**

British rule announced that Odisha as a discrete region. It was the efforts of people like Utkal Gaurav Madhusudan Das, Maharaja Shri Ramchandra Bhanjdeo, UtkalmaniGopabandhu Das, Raja BaikunthanathDey, Maharaja Shri Krushna Chandra Gajapati, Fakir Mohan Senapati, GangadharMeher, and Gourishankar Ray played a significant role in gaining a separate identity for the State Odisha.

During 1936 The Governor General of India was Earl of Willingdon. He was the person who put the seal on the official documents and declared that Odisha was going to be a separate political identity. On eve of this Day The state Government organizes several cultural events for the people. It is the perfect platform that will enable people from all sections to come together and celebrate the importance of the great state.

The vital role to restore the identity of Odisha was Madhusudan Das, nationally esteemed and addressed as "Utkal Gaurav" was the moving spirit for about half-a-century in the political, economic and social life of Odisha. He was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Son of his father Choudhury Raghunath Das and Parvati Devi, was born on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 1848 in a remote village Satyabhamapur in the district of Cuttack. His mother's character imprint on his personality. He was first graduate, first M.A and the first ADVOCATE OF Odisha. Madhusudan

Das as the moving spirit of the UtkalSammilani, advocated for industrialization, growth of local crafts and spread of technical training as essential measures to remove poverty. His leadership and hold over the Utkal Union Conference during 1903 to 1920 was highly beneficial to the cause of the Odia-speaking people. The conference drew closer like-minded persons devoted to the cause of political unification. His immense contributions towards the State and Nation would be admired forever and he will continue to remain as a source of motivation for the younger generations.

The contribution of FAKIR MOHAN SENAPATI is also remarkable for identity of Odisha. He played a leading role in establishing the district identity of Odia language and literature. He is regarded as the father of Odia nationalism and the modern Odialiterature. He dedicated his entire life for the progress of Odia language in the later 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The story of Fakir Mohan is indeed the story of the "Renaissance" of Odia literature. He was the founder of an organization called 'UTKAL BHASA UNNATI BIDHANISABHA', which was started in 1867 to create a new awareness among the people of Odisha and to propagate Odia language. The role of Ram Chandra BhanjDeo to bring Odisha as a separate Province was also note worthy. He brought about significant changes in the sphere of language. He was the king of

Mayurbhanga, he had great love for the entire Odisha. UTKAL MANI GOPABANDHU was the builder of modern Odisha and was the source of inspiration for the people. He dreamed a society-free from poverty and ignorance where man could live with self-respect and would be able to develop his own consciousness. His immortal words still inspire theyounger generation. "Let my body mingle with the dust of this land, And let my country men walk along my back". PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS the illustrious son of Odisha born on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1884 in Ramchandrapur Village in the dist of Puri. He started untouchable movement and served for the depressed class. After the demise of MadhuBabu the entire burden fell on his head and the first phase of Mahatma Gandhi's tour to Odishawas arranged by him.

The contribution of Maharaja Shri Krushna Chandra Gajpati Narayan Deo of Paralakhemundi to bring ODISHA as separate province was noteworthy. He organised the annual session of the Utkal Union Conference at Paralakhemundi in 1914. In 1934 GajpatiKrushna Chandra placed the printed Memorandum before the authorities and strongly advocated for inclusion of the Odia portions of paralakhemundi in Odisha and Odisha for a separate province. They are the esteemed son's of the soil of Odisha for whom we proudly declared Odisha as a Separate province. In this 86<sup>th</sup> observation of Odisha Day I salute all these veterans for their immense contribution for ODISHA.

Columnist and Editor Margadarshi, Khorda

## Odisha to grow at 10.1% in 2021-22

Odisha Economic Survey 2021-22 report was tabled in Assembly. As per the report, Odisha is one of the fastest-growing states in the Country and is expected to grow at 10.1 percent in 2021-22 which is higher than National growth rate of 8.8 percent.

Industry sector is expected to grow strongly by 14.5 percent largely due to the stellar performance of manufacturing and mining and quarrying sub-sectors which grew at 14.3 per cent and 18.1 per cent respectively. Services sector is estimated to grow by 7.9 percent in 2021-22. Agriculture and allied sectors GSVA are likely to contract by 3.4 per cent in 2021-22 largely due to incidence of natural calamities like drought, unseasonal rain and cyclone JAWAD, GULAB and YAAS. The share of Agriculture & Allied in GSVA is 20.06 percent, Industry Sector share is 39.5 percent and share of service sector is 39.9 percent.

Per capita income has grown significantly at 16.8 per cent in 2021-22, to reach Rs. 1,27,383 from Rs. 1,09,071 in 2020-21. Further as per the Survey Report the unemployment rate of Odisha declined from 7.1 percent in 2017-18 to 6.2 percent in 2019-20 in comparison to 4.8 percent at National level.

The inflation rate in the state was also low at 2.7 per cent in 2021-22 (April-

January) compared to 5.3 per cent at all India level during the same period.

With sustained revenue collection and better expenditure management, the state has consistently reported a revenue surplus and maintained fiscal deficit within the FRBM Act mandated level of 3.5 per cent of GSDP. Revenue receipts in the state has increased significantly in 2021-22 (BE) at 17.2 per cent to reach INR 1,25,600 crore from INR 1,07,200 crore in 2020-21. The high share of developmental expenditures at 72.7 per cent (2021-22 BE) in total expenditure is a positive indicator and shows state's commitment towards overall socio-economic development.

Odisha is a power surplus state with power availability exceeding the demand. The total installed capacity of all power projects (including share of power from central and other sources) in the state was 8018.25 MW in 2020-21 in comparison to 7676.69 MW in 2019-20.

The urban population in the state was estimated at 84 lakhs in 2021 which was close to 18.5 per cent of the total population of Odisha. Bhubaneshwar, one of the two 'smart cities' in Odisha secured the fourth rank among the top ten capital cities in India, in the ease of living index, 2021, released by the

**Pradeep Kumar Panda**

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

In 2021, Puri became the first city in the country, to provide 'Drink from Tap' facility under the SUJAL mission of the government. It is also targeted to provide similar facility to all other Urban Local Bodies by 2025. Under the Buxi Jagabandhu Assured Drinking water to all Habitation (BASUDHA), the state is also providing universal coverage of piped drinking water supply to all rural people. The state has targeted to provide safe drinking water in all villages by 2024-25.

Health expenditure as percentage of GSDP in the state has increased from 1.19 per cent in 2019-20 to 1.59 per cent in 2021-22. The Neonatal Mortality Rate (NNMR), Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Under-5 Mortality Rate (U5MR) are continuously declining which indicates the improved health outcome in the State. As per NFHS-5 (2019-21) the prevalence of NNMR stood at 27, IMR at 36.3 and U5MR at 41.1 per 1000 live births declining from 28, 40 and 48 in NFHS-4 (2015-16) respectively. The state has taken several steps towards full immunization. As per NFHS-5 (2019-21), Odisha has notably immunized 90.5 percent of its children aged 12-23 months as against the national average of 76.4 per cent. The Maternal Mortality

Ratio dropping to 136 in 2017-19 from 180 in 2014-16.

Odisha government is actively engaged in building an empowered society. Through Mission SHAKTI, 70 lakh women are engaged in economic activities as members of 6.02 lakhs of Women Self Help Groups (SHGs). Gender empowerment of the State is also reflected in the recently concluded Panchayati Raj Election of 2022. 50 per cent of the seats reserved for women from Ward to Zilla Parishad level. As a result, 56 per cent women are chosen as village Sarpanch, 57 per cent as PS member, 66 per cent as PS chairperson, 55 per cent as Zilla Parishad Member and 70 per cent as Zilla Parishad President. Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at the elementary level is maintained at a high level over the past five years reaching 102.2 per cent for primary level and 98 per cent for upper primary. GER in higher education has increased from 16.10 in 2010-11 to 22.10 in 2018-19.

The incidence of absolute poverty has declined significantly in the state. Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) of NITI Aayog shows that in comparison to India (25.01 per cent), the MPI Head Count Ratio is higher in Odisha (29.35 per cent). But, the intensity of poverty is lower in Odisha (46.42 per cent) in comparison to all India level (47.13 per cent).

The Author is an Economist

## NCCR on Coast Erosion Care

New Delhi: Union Minister Earth Sciences, Jitendra Singh said that a total of 6,632 Kilometer long Coastline of the country including

extended by NCCR to Odisha for implementing shore line protection. In Odisha areas of Ramayapatna in Ganjam, Puri,

maps. A Report on "National Assessment of Shoreline Changes along Indian Coast" is released in July, 2018 and shared with

implemented by MoES and beach nourishment is implemented by Government of Puducherry. This helped in restoration of 1.5 km long city beach after 30 years and helped in improving tourism and fishing activities in addition to protection of coast during extreme cyclonic events.



Odisha is under varying degree of erosion. This has been analysed from 1990 to 2018 and it is noted that about 33.6 Per cent of the coastline is under varying degree of erosion. In a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha today, Dr. Singh said, National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), an attached office of Ministry Of Earth Science (MoES) is monitoring the shoreline erosion since 1990 using remote sensing data and GIS mapping techniques. Accordingly technical support is being

Konark and Penth are having vulnerable stretches, for which technical support are extended by NCCR. Dr. Singh said, the reasons for coastal erosions include increase in frequency of Cyclones and Sea level rise and anthropogenic activities such as construction of harbours, beach mining and building of dams. He said, there are 526 maps prepared for entire Indian coast for identifying areas vulnerable to coastal erosion in 1:25000 scale along with 66 district maps, 10 State and Union Territories

various Central and State government Agencies and Stakeholders for implementing shore line protection measures. The digital and hard copy of all the Maps is released on 25th March, 2022. Dr Jitendra Singh said, the Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) had successfully demonstrated innovative coastal erosion mitigation measures at two pilot locations at Puducherry Beach Restoration Project and Kadalur Periya Kuppam, Tamil Nadu. The Submerged Reef has been

implemented. This helped in protection of three fishing Villages during extreme cyclonic events and restored lost beach that is being used for landing of fishing boats and other fishing activities. In addition, NCCR is also providing technical support to state governments of Kerala (Chellanam, Kollamkode, Poonthura, Varkala and Shangumugham) Andhra Pradesh (Vishakapatnam) and Goa for implementation of coastal protection measures at vulnerable stretches.

## Chain snatchers strike again, loot two women

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Two incidents of chain snatching at gun-point were re-

(50) - residents of BDA Housing Colony in Paikarapur Phase - II under

returned back and stopped the couple. One of them took out a gun and robbed

at Gothapatna area under Chandaka police limits on the day, two motorcycle-



ported in the city on Wednesday morning. In the first case, three motorcycle-borne miscreants snatched a gold chain from a woman at gunpoint near BDA Housing Colony in the city. Arunendra Nanda (60), a retired professor of Sunabeda Aeronautics College, and his wife Anima

Bharatpur police limits - were out on a morning walk when the incident took place at 6.15 am. The victims informed that when they were returning to their residence, nine persons on three motorcycles crossed them. Three of them on one motorcycle

Anima's gold chain. All the three miscreants were wearing masks and managed to flee even though some locals at a nearby tea stall attempted to stop them. A case has been registered and efforts are on to identify them, said Bharatpur police. In a similar incident

borne miscreants snatched a gold chain from another woman at gunpoint. The victim and two other women are out on a morning walk when the miscreants waylaid them and snatched the gold chain from her. A case has been registered at the Chandaka police station.

## Biden taps oil reserve for six months to control gas prices as Russia looks for alternative payment options

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden is ordering the release of 1 million barrels of oil per day from the nation's strategic petroleum reserve for six months, the White House said Thursday, in a bid to control energy prices that have spiked as the US and allies imposed steep sanctions on Russia over its invasion of Ukraine.

Biden was making the formal announcement later Thursday in remarks on his administration's plans to combat rising gas prices.

The White House says Biden will also call on Congress to impose financial penalties on oil and gas companies that lease public lands but aren't producing energy.

A Kremlin decree published by state media says "unfriendly countries" can continue to pay for natural gas in foreign currency through a

Russian bank that will convert the money into rubles.

President Vladimir Putin talked tougher Thursday, saying Russia will start accepting rouble payments for its gas supplies from "unfriendly countries" starting Friday and contracts will be stopped if buyers don't sign up to the new conditions.

He says to buy gas, customers "would have to open rouble accounts in Russian banks."

The decree Putin signed and published by state news agency RIA Novosti says a designated bank will open two accounts for each buyer, one in foreign currency and one in rubles.

The buyers will pay in foreign currency and authorize the bank to sell that currency for rubles, which are placed in the second account, where the gas is formally purchased.

## CAG Raps WR Projects Execution

Bhubaneswar: The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) has found several drawbacks in the execution of number of irrigation projects in the State. The State Government had initiated various irrigation projects (major, minor, mega lift etc.) at considerable cost with the objective of providing adequate and assured water supply for farming. However, as noticed in the audit, lack of adequate and assured supply of water through completion of irrigation projects has deprived the farmers of irrigation facilities, the CAG said in its latest audit report surface irrigation.

During the period (2014-19) covered by this performance audit, the CAG test checked five major Irrigation projects, nine mega lift points (MLPs) and 10 minor irrigation projects (MIPs) for which a sum of Rs 12,742.11 crore had been incurred up to March 2020.

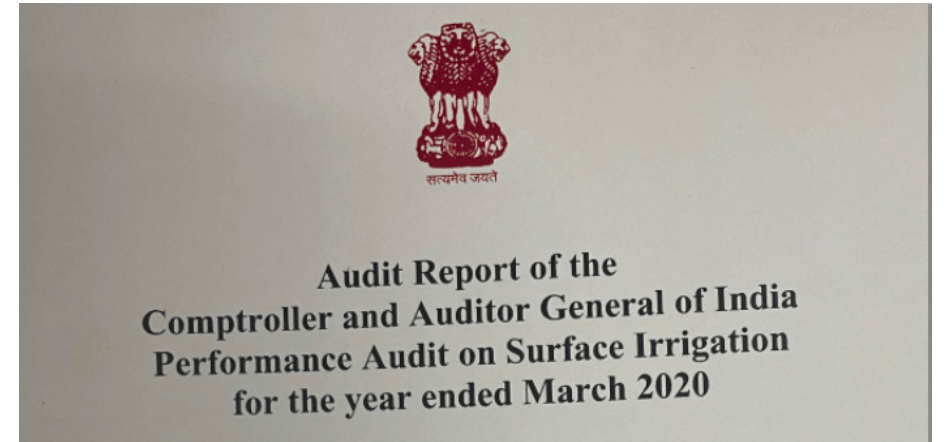
Other than nine MLPs, increase in cost of the projects ranged between 182 and 4,596 per cent. Despite escalation, only one major project i.e. The Upper Indravati Irrigation Project (UIIP) had been completed and other four major projects were in different stages of execution, said the re-

port, which was tabled before the State Assembly on Thursday.

"Performance Audit of Surface Irrigation revealed several deficiencies in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the

of Rs 12,742.11 crore in all of the test-checked projects, the irrigation potential (IP) achieved was 1,22,418 ha against the proposed IP of 5,02,842 ha which constituted only 24 per cent of the envis-

aged potential. The reasons for non-completion and non-achievement of IP in test checked projects are non-acquisition of land, deficient DPRs, defective survey and investigation, deficient design in execution of the projects, inadequate availability of water in the canals etc. Implementation of major projects is facing delays ranging from 13 to 43 years. The CAG has issued a set of recommendations to the Water Resources to improve the financial and administrative management. The Department needs to closely monitor financial management of the irrigation projects and fix responsibility on the executives for financial irregularities, it said. The State Government may evaluate



projects. The financial management of the test -checked projects was marred due to surrendering of funds resulting in non-completion of projects despite availability," it said.

The auditor said there were also instances of loss of central assistance, parking of funds without utilization, non-realization of government revenue, non-adjustment of advances and inadmissible payment of tax.

Projects were found deficient in preparation and execution of DPRs and incorrect calculation of Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of the projects. These led to modifications in design and scope of work and revision in cost estimates affecting the schedule of implementation of the projects.

Similarly, in spite of incurring expenditure

The auditor also recommended the Government to ensure commencement of project works after acquisition of land as stipulated in OPWD code. The Government may adopt a suitable mechanism for timely evacuation of the displaced persons immediately after payment of R&R assistance and fix accountability on officers responsible for delay in evacuation resulting in extra payments, it further suggested. Responsibility needs to be fixed on executives for improper survey and adoption of defective design causing slippage of embankment necessitating avoidable restoration works. Accountability of executives needs to be fixed by the Department for defective execution of works, the CAG further said.

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## Entry plea for Journalists

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Opposition BJP and Congress on Thursday demanded entry of journalists into Lok Seva Bhawan (State Secretariat) and Odisha Legislative Assembly Press Gallery and Lobby for coverage of news. Raising the issue during Zero Hour in Assembly, Congress Legislature Party leader Narasingha Mishra said, "Media is the fourth pillar of democracy. However, they have denied entry into the State Secretariat or Lok Seva Bhawan and Assembly lobby, which is detrimental to democracy."

"The State Government does not want its news to be published because they might not have any good news. That's why they have restricted the media

persons into the Secretariat," Mr.Mishra told reporters at the House.

Why has the government restricted entry of media into the Lok Seva Bhawan and assembly lobby? he asked. It is needed for a journalist to talk to the MLAs and collect information from them during the assembly sessions, the Congress Lawmaker added.

Joining Mr.Mishra, BJP Chief Whip Mohan Majhi said, "It is true that the journalists are maintaining neutrality. The Covid-19 situation has also improved a lot and the Centre has also revoked the restrictions imposed during the pandemic."

Mr.Majhi demanded that journalists be allowed to enter the Assembly Press Gal-

lery and Lok Seva Bhawan to cover news as soon as possible.

While journalists are invited to political programmes, there is



no point in barring media persons to the government programmes and administrative buildings. What the State Government is trying to cover up by doing this? The BJP leader asked.

Commenting on this issue outside the House, Information and Public Relation Minister Raghunandan Das said this matter comes under the pur-

view of the Home Minister.

"The Home Minister has not made any specific statement on this issue in the House. Such restrictions

were there at the national level too. I hope this issue will be resolved soon," Mr.Das said. Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the state government has imposed restrictions on entry of journalists into the Secretariat or Lok Seva Bhawan and the order still continued even though the situation has improved significantly.

# Andhra Pradesh Governor Honours Actress and Social Activist Trupti Sahoo

Khordha (KCN): Odia film and serial actress Trupti Sahoo received the best actress and social activist awards for her social welfare activities during the outspread of Covid-19 by the hands of His excellency Biswabhusan Harichandan Hon'ble Governor of Andhra Pradesh at Geeta Govinda Sadan. The felicitated programme organized by Prerna International Green Army. The prestigious event began with the tradition of playing the National Anthem followed by the felicitation of the awardee's who made a mark by being involved in social awareness and aiding activi-

ties ever since the pandemic. Speaking on the occasions the Governor Biswa Bhusan Harichandan advice and has urged Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik to identify a suitable place and allot land in the Barunei Foot-hills for the proposed memorial to commemorate the paika rebellion. Odisha has a glorious past and odia people have demonstrated their valor during the pre independence struggle and have left on indelible mark in the history of India as Paika rebellion. He further said that the paika rebellion is registered at the first rebellion against the might of Brit-



ish force. Much before the sepoy mutiny in 1857. The country is observing 200 years of the rebellion remembering the courage and dedication of Odia soldiers. In this occasions the Governor of Andhra Pradesh Biswabhusan Harichandan inaugurated the logo of Prerna International Green Army. Chairman Prerna Dr. Dillip Srichandan preside over the meeting. The guest of the occasions former President Kendra Sahitya Akademi Ramakanta Rath, Odisha Bira Mahasangha President Dr. Prakash Srichandan, Achievers Foundation President

# MP Youth Congress activists lock recruitment board's gates over 'paper leak'; 20 held

BHOPAL: Madhya Pradesh Youth Congress (YC) activists on Thursday locked the main gates of the building housing state's Staff Selection Board (SSB), earlier known as Vyapam, here seeking an impartial probe into alleged leak of Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) paper last week. Police said they arrested 20 Youth Congress members and leaders, including their state chief Vikrant Bhuria, who were later released after furnishing securities. The protesting activists alleged they were ill-treated by the police, a charge denied by the law enforcement agency. During the protest, the YC activists shouted slogans against Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan over what they claimed leak of the question paper related to TET held on March 25. Assistant Commissioner of Police (MP Nagar) Nagendra Singh Bais denied that



the protesters were ill-treated. He said the protesters locked the gates of SSB building and squatted. "We requested them to end their protest at the gates, but when they did not do so, we arrested them," Bais said. On March 28, a section of aspirants who wrote the Teacher Eligibility Test demanded that online TET be cancelled after a purported screenshot of the question-cum-answersheet went viral on social media. The protesters had held placards with the message 'Cancel MP-TET 2022. They had also petitioned officials seeking action. Vyapam (Vyavsayik Pareeksha Mandal), whose name was recently changed to Madhya Pradesh Karmachari Chayan Aayog (Staff Selection Board), had got embroiled in a controversy due to alleged rigging of exams for medical college admissions and government jobs spanning several years. The scam in Vyapam came to light in 2011. The CBI had taken over the investigation into the mega recruitment and admission scandal after a Supreme Court order in 2015.

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# State Asks For Enforcement Drive

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Taking serious note of rise in numbers of road accidents, related fatalities and traffic rule violations in the State, Principal Secretary Transport & Commerce Bishnupada Sethi on Thursday asked all Collectors, Superintendents of Police, DCPs and Regional Transport Officers to conduct a special enforcement drive for one month in all districts from tomorrow to make people aware of this menace. In a letter Mr.Sethi said as reported by the State CID & Crime Branch during the year 2021 there is an increase in fatalities by about 7.24pc compared to 2020.

During 2021, while as many as 10,984 road accident cases were reported in the State in which 5081 people died, 9782 people were injured, he said.

There has been a steady increase in the number of fatalities in Odisha due to road accidents from 3931 (year 2014) to 5081 (year 2021), an increase of about 29% during the period.

It was the direction of the Supreme Court Committee to reduce fatalities by 50% by 2020 taking the year 2014 as base, he said.

He said according to the information received from the CID & Crime Branch on road accidents for the year 2021 and 2020 there is growth in fatalities by more than 25 pc in the districts like Gajapati, Jharguda, Boudh and Rayagada. More than 200 fatalities have also occurred in the Districts such as Keonjhar, Ganjam, Sundargarh, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Khorda and Cuttack.

"These Districts should take required steps for reduction of accidents and fatalities," he said. The Principal Secretary said vide this Department letter no. 726 Dt. 31.01.2022 it was directed to conduct a special enforcement drive for one month throughout the State by the RTO and Police with the objective to detect traffic

rule violations and thereby reducing accidents and fatalities.

However, it could not be implemented properly due to elections for Panchayati Raj Institu-



tions and ULBs. He further directed to hold meetings of the District Road Safety Committees regularly and hold discussion as per the guidelines issued vide this Department letter no. 2968 Dt. 23.03.2021. He also asked officials to go for stringent enforcement against speed violation, drunken driving, helmet law violations, use of mobile phones while driving and penalize those found committing infringements of traffic rules. The Collectors are requested to submit a report indicating the reason within fifteen days as to why the fatalities have increased in the districts.



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# SC to hear on April 12 case relating to dispute between Spicejet and Kal Airways on payment of interest

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday said it would hear on April 12 the matter relating to a dispute between low-cost airline SpiceJet and media baron Kalanithi Maran and his Kal Airways over payment of interest in connection with a

top court on February 14.

The bench was hearing SpiceJet's appeal against the November 2, 2020 order of the high court, asking the airline to deposit around Rs 243 crore as interest in connection with the share-transfer dispute with its former promoter, Maran, and Kal Airways.

Prior to this, on November 7, 2020, the apex court had stayed the Delhi High Court order asking SpiceJet to deposit around Rs 243 crore as interest in connection with the share-transfer dispute.

SpiceJet and its promoter Ajay Singh were asked to deposit around Rs 243 crore as interest payable on Rs 579 crore, which the high court had, in 2017, asked the airline to deposit under the 2018 arbitration award in the share-transfer dispute.

The high court had granted six weeks to SpiceJet to make the payment and the deadline for the same, according to a September 2 order, expired on October 14, 2020. After this, Maran and his firm had moved the high court for attachment of the entire shareholding of Singh in Spicejet and taking over the management for the non-payment of Rs 243 crore.

The top court had taken note of Spicejet's appeal and passed the interim order, staying the high court order.

Maran and Kal Airways had moved the high court over the share-transfer dispute with SpiceJet, demanding that 18 crore

warrants redeemable as equity shares be transferred to them.

On July 29, 2016, the high court had asked both parties to settle the dispute under arbitration.

It had directed SpiceJet and Singh to deposit Rs 579 crore in the high court's registry.

SpiceJet was permitted to furnish a bank guarantee for Rs 329 crore and make a cash deposit of the remaining sum of Rs 250 crore by the high court.

The apex court, in July 2017, had dismissed SpiceJet's appeal against the high court order.

On July 20, 2018, the arbitral tribunal had rejected Maran's claim of damages of Rs 1,323 crore for not issuing the warrants to him and Kal Airways but had awarded him a refund of Rs 579 crore plus interest.

Maran, the owner of Sun TV Network, then moved the high court against the arbitration award.

The matter pertained to a dispute arising out of non-issuance of warrants in favour of Maran after the transfer of ownership to Singh, the controlling shareholder of SpiceJet.

The dispute started after Singh took back control of SpiceJet in February 2015 amid the airline facing a financial crisis.

Maran and Kal Airways had transferred their entire 35.04 crore equity shares in SpiceJet, amounting to a 58.46 per cent stake in the airline, to its co-founder Singh in February 2015 for just Rs 2.

**Lavrov's India visit: US warns against circumventing sanctions against Russia; UK puts emphasis on improving ties with New Delhi**

Continued from page-1

the case for defence resources over a period of time," he added.

Talking about the Quad grouping and cooperation, Singh said there has been recognition in the coalition that China is a strategic threat to a free, open and secure Indo-Pacific.

"If you set that against the reality that China and Russia have now declared a no limits partnership, and that Russia has said that China is its most important strategic partner, by extension, that has real implications for India," Singh said. The US Deputy NSA said the impact of the Russian aggression if not checked will be devastating.

"Think of the chilling effect that would cause the uncertainties that would be raised, the signal that would be sent to autocrats all over the world that might wish to exert their own sphere of influence, bully their neighbours, perhaps right on India's doorstep. And those are costs that we are not willing to accept," he said.

When asked about the consequences of an attempt to circumvent the sanctions, Singh said "that's the subject of private discussions that I am not going to share publicly." The US is having an "honest dialogue" with the government officials on the Ukraine crisis, Singh said.

"The truth is that there are core principles at stake in our judgement. Core principles that underpin peace and security all over the world, the principle that you can't redraw borders by force, the principles that you can't subjugate the will of the free people, that countries have the right to set their own course and choose their own destiny.

"And (Vladimir) Putin is violating all of those principles. And that's why we're imposing these sanctions. That's why we're supporting Ukraine's fight for freedom," Singh said.

The US official said the democracies must stand up to protect the core principles that underpin peace and security all over the world.

"When democracies don't stand up in solidarity and defend those principles together, the costs and risk to all of us become that much larger," he said.

Meanwhile, Foreign Secretary Liz Truss reached India today on Thursday as part of a wider diplomatic push following Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine last month.

The British high Commission, New Delhi in a stamen on Foreign Secretary's visit said, "In a meeting with India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, the Foreign Secretary will say Russia's invasion of Ukraine underlines the importance of democracies working closer together to deter aggressors, reduce vulnerability to coercion and strengthen global security." She wants to counter Russia's aggression and reduce global strategic dependence on the country ahead of key NATO and G7 meet-

## IndiGo increases pilots' salaries by eight per cent as regular overseas operations resume

NEW DELHI: IndiGo on Thursday announced that pilots' salaries have been increased by eight per cent in view of the continuous steady flight operations.

Full regular international flight services resumed in India after the COVID-19 outbreak



on March 27.

Full regular domestic flights resumed in the country on October 18 last year.

"Now, as we have established continuous steady operations, on behalf of our managing director, the board of directors and the senior leadership team, I am pleased to announce an upwards revision of eight per cent in the salaries of all our pilots with effect from April 1," said Ashim Mittra, senior vice-president (flight operations), IndiGo, in a communique to the pilots.

The human resources team of the airline would share the revised salary structure in the coming weeks, he noted.

"Further, as we look forward to a positive revenue environment and hopefully we do not witness any further interruptions to operations, we also plan to implement an additional 6.5 per cent revision with effect from November 1," Mittra said.

ings next week, said the British High Commission.

Strengthening ties with India is more important than ever before in the context of the crisis in Ukraine, visiting British Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said on Thursday.

Her comments came shortly after holding extensive talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

Truss said the Ukraine crisis highlighted the need for like-minded nations to work together and that developments in that country will have far-reaching implications for the globe.

"Strengthening relationship with India is more important than it has ever been precisely because we are living in a more insecure world, precisely because we have (Vladimir) Putin's appalling invasion of Ukraine," she said.

"I think it is very significant that sanctions are applied on Russia," she said addressing the India-UK Strategic Futures Forum along with Jaishankar.

In her opening comments at the talks, Truss said it is important to respect the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and international law.

In his remarks, Jaishankar talked about the progress in the implementation of the Roadmap 2030 that was adopted in May last year to further broadband ties.

Ahead of the talks, the British High Commission in a statement said Truss will convey to Jaishankar that Russia's invasion of Ukraine underlines the importance of democracies to work together to deter "aggressors" and reduce vulnerability to "coercion".

There has been a flurry of visits by foreign dignitaries to India in the last few days.

US deputy national security adviser Daleep Singh arrived in India on Wednesday while Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov landed in the capital this evening.

According to the statement by the British High Commission, Truss wants to "counter" Russia's aggression and reduce global strategic dependence on the country ahead of key NATO and G7 meetings next week.

"Deeper ties between Britain and India will boost security in the Indo-Pacific and globally, and create jobs and opportunities in both countries," Truss is quoted as saying in the statement. "This matters even more in the context of Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and underlines the need for free democracies to work closer together in areas like defence, trade and cyber security," she said.

The India-UK relationship was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the India-UK virtual summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Boris Johnson in May last year.

In the summit, the two sides adopted a 10-year-roadmap to expand ties in the key areas of trade and economy, defence and security, climate change and people-to-people connections among others.



share-transfer issue.

On February 14, Kal Airways and Maran had told the apex court that they were not agreeable to two proposals to settle their dispute with SpiceJet on payment of interest in connection with the share-transfer issue as the low-cost airline owed them around Rs 920 crore in pursuance of an arbitral award.

A bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana, while observing that the endeavour should be to settle the dispute, said it would hear the matter on April 12.

SpiceJet, in its first offer, had proposed that it would pay Rs 300 crore towards a full-and-final settlement of the dispute or secondly, of the bank guarantee of Rs 270 crore deposited with the Delhi High Court, it would give Rs 100 crore for now and an order will be passed by the apex court urging the high court to expeditiously decide the case related to the arbitral award.

"They (Kal Airways and Maran) have considered the offer made by my friend (senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing in the matter on behalf of SpiceJet). But they have not found them acceptable," senior counsel Maninder Singh, who was assisted by Karanjawala and Company, had told the **Crime Branch mum on motive behind Manas' murder**

Continued from page-1

questioned together.

Sarmistha, the editor of Bhubaneswar-based web-channel Sampurna and her associate Jhuna revealed before the investigators that to evade arrest they frequently changed their locations. They might also be taken to Dayal Ashram, a shelter home for elderly people in the Capital city run by Sarmistha, before their four-day remand period ends. Meanwhile, Manas' post-mortem report revealed that he was thrashed with blunt objects and his ribs were fractured due to the brutal assault.

"The doctors at SCB Medical College and Hospital's Forensic Medicine and Toxicology Department have opined that Manas died due to thoracic injuries (chest trauma) and the complications thereon," said a senior Crime Branch officer. His autopsy report has also revealed he sustained other external and internal injuries.

**Srimandir project violates norms, poses threat to Puri temple, says BJP MP in Parliament**

Continued from page-1

part of the whole process," she asked. Besides, heritage impact assessment study and ground penetrating radar survey were not done before the work began, the MP added. "This matter is related to our Lord Jagannath and emotions of 4.5 crore Odia people," she said. Seeking the intervention of the Culture Ministry on the issue, Sarangi said that development work should be carried out with strict adherence to the AMASR norms. "We will support all development work but norms should not be violated. NMA permission is a must. The work being carried out now within the prohibited zone should be immediately stopped as it is a violation of the AMASR Act," she said.

As a part of the Parikrama project, public amenities are being set up within the 75-metre radius of the ancient temple. On Wednesday, the MP had met the Director General (DG) of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) V Vidyavathi in New Delhi on the issue.

**Ukrainian president Zelenskyy requests Australian armoured vehicles**

Continued from page-1

hicles, Bushmasters, that could help Ukraine substantially, and other pieces of equipment," Zelenskyy said.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison had earlier told the president that Australia would provide additional military assistance including tactical decoys, unmanned aerial and unmanned ground systems, rations and medical supplies. He did not quantify the assistance or say how much it cost.

"You have our prayers, but you also have our weapons, our humanitarian aid, our sanctions against those who seek to deny your freedom and you even have our coal," Morrison said. Australia has already promised or provided Ukraine with 91 million Australian dollars (\$68 million) in military assistance, AU\$65 million (\$49 million) in humanitarian help and 70,000 metric tons (77,200 U.S. tons) of coal. Earlier Thursday, the government announced Australia was imposing an additional 35% tariff on all imports from Russia and Belarus starting April 25. Oil and energy imports from Russia will be banned from that date. Exports to Russia of Australian aluminum ore will also be banned.

Sanctions have been imposed on more than 500 individuals and entities in Russia and Belarus. The sanctions cover 80% of the Russian banking sector and all government entities that handle Russian sovereign debt.

Jeremy Fleming, who heads Britain's electronic spy agency Government Communications Headquarters, used a speech in the Australian capital Canberra on Thursday to praise Zelenskyy's "information operation."

Fleming said Zelenskyy had been highly effective at countering Russia's massive disinformation drive spreading propaganda about the war.

Russian President Vladimir Putin had apparently "massively misjudged" the invasion, he said.

"We've seen Russian soldiers, short of weapons and morale, refusing to carry out orders, sabotaging their own equipment and even accidentally shooting down their own aircraft," Fleming said.

### Manchester United to play Crystal Palace in Melbourne as Premier League resumes tours

MELBOURNE: Manchester United will play Crystal Palace at Melbourne Cricket Ground in July, organisers said Thursday, as Premier League teams resume pre-season tours which stopped when COVID hit. Cristiano Ronaldo and his United team-mates are set to meet A-League club Melbourne Victory on July 15 and Palace four days later at the 100,000-capacity MCG, with bumper crowds expected. "It has been two years since the club has been able to travel on an international pre-season tour so we can't wait to get going and reconnect with our fans in Australasia. Our matches in Melbourne will be a wonderful opportunity for international fans to see their favourite players up-close in an exciting schedule of games," said United COO Collette Roche. United are expected to confirm later Thursday that they will also play Liverpool at Bangkok's 51,000-capacity Rajamangala National Stadium on July 12, in a clash dubbed the "Red War" by Thai media and fans. When Liverpool played Victory at the MCG



in 2013, 95,000 fans streamed through the turnstiles and organisers are tipping similar crowds when United visit Melbourne for the first time since 1999. "It's a great opportunity to showcase our club, Melbourne Victory, to the world and a chance for our members and fans to see a special organisation and a club with such a big history," said Victory coach Tony Popovic.

The tour will come after a miserable season for United, who will likely have a new manager in charge by then following the interim appointment of Ralf Rangnick. Reports say that United have held talks with Ajax coach Erik ten Hag, with Paris Saint-Germain boss Mauricio Pochettino and Spain's Luis Enrique also reportedly in the frame.

### Casper Ruud topples Alexander Zverev to reach Miami Open semifinals

MIAMI: Casper Ruud beat Alexander Zverev 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 to reach the Miami Open semifinals on Wednesday and compound a difficult start to the year for the world number four. The Norwegian will meet Argentine surprise package Francisco Cerundolo for a place in Sunday's final after the 23-year-old, playing in his debut ATP Masters event and ranked 103rd in the world, made the last four when Italian Jannik Sinner was forced to retire because of a blister on his right foot at 4-1 down in the first set. Cerundolo is lowest ranked Miami semi-finalist in tournament history, surpassing Sebastien Grosjean who was ranked 74th in 1999. Ruud will compete in a hard court semi-final at this level for the first time after reaching the same stage on clay at the Masters 1000 events in Monte Carlo, Madrid and Rome in the last couple of years. For Germany's Zverev, however, an early exit in Indian Wells was followed by more disappointment in Florida. Ruud, the sixth seed from Norway came into the tournament having never won a match in Miami but found himself up against the inconsistent second seed, who recovered impressively from a shaky start only to run out of steam by the end of an entertaining tussle at Hard Rock Stadium. Ruud was serving superbly in the opener with Zverev really struggling to get a foothold and the 24-year-old German found himself in trouble

at the start of the second set. He crucially, however, managed to stave off an early break after falling 15-40 down on his own serve and when Ruud netted soon after, the 2018 Miami finalist was able to finally get ahead at 3-1. Zverev was suddenly on fire and another break



helped send the match into a deciding set. Ruud received medical attention on his right foot before the start of the third but was showing no ill effects as he quickly broke for a 2-0 lead. The match had turned once again and it was the Norwegian who produced some blistering winners to seal his place in Friday's semis and leave Zverev, who is still waiting for his first title of 2022, crestfallen. The other semi-final match up will be decided on Thursday, when defending champion Herbert Hurkacz takes on Daniil Medvedev in the quarter-finals with the Russian set to return to number one in the world if he wins. Spanish sensation Carlos Alcaraz, 18, faces Serbia's Miomir Kecmanovic in the remaining quarter-final.

### IPL 2022, KKR vs PBKS preview: Kolkata promise bold play against power-packed Punjab

MUMBAI: Kolkata Knight Riders are expected to continue with their risk-taking approach despite mixed returns when

ture in the second half of the game. Kolkata's openers, Ajinkya Rahane and the attacking Venkatesh Iyer per-

three wickets, too has a key role to play upfront. The concern for Kolkata would be the form of spinner Varun Chakaravathy,

up their game against KKR. The eight overs from spin duo of Rahul Chahar and Harpreet Brar could also make a difference in the game.

Teams: Kolkata Knight Riders: Aaron Finch, Abhijeet Tomar, Ajinkya Rahane, Baba Indrajith, Nitish Rana, Pratham Singh, Rinku Singh, Shreyas Iyer (c), Ashok Sharma, Pat Cummins, Rasikh Dar, Shivam Mavi, Tim Southee, Umesh Yadav, Varun Chakaravathy, Aman Khan, Andre Russell, Anukul Roy, Chamika Karunaratne, Mohammed Nabi, Ramesh Kumar, Sunil Narine, Venkatesh Iyer, Sam Billings, Sheldon Jackson. Punjab Kings: Shikhar Dhawan, Mayank Agarwal (c), Arshdeep Singh, Kagiso Rabada, Jonny Bairstow, Rahul Chahar, Harpreet Brar, Shikhar Khan, Prabhsimran Singh, Jitesh Sharma, Ishan Porel, Liam Livingstone, Odean Smith, Sandeep Sharma, Raj Angad Bawa, Rishi Dhawan, Prerak Mankad, Vaibhav Arora, Writtick Chatterjee, Baltej Dhanda, Ansh Patel, Nathan Ellis, Atharva Taide, Bhanuka Rajapaksa, Benny Howell. Match starts at 7:30 pm



they on Punjab Kings in the Indian Premier League here on Friday. KKR head into Friday's game at the back of a three-wicket loss against RCB though managed to make the game close after a below-par total. Punjab began their campaign with a win but they would expect a better bowling effort after conceding more than 200 runs in their first game. South Africa speedster Kagiso Rabada is expected to play after completing his three-day quarantine and that will give a big boost to the Punjab attack. Batting at the Wankhede, where the track is relatively fresh, has not been easy as seen in the two games played at the venue so far. It may be early days in the two-month long IPL but the toss is already playing a significant role in the game's outcome with dew coming into pic-

ished cheaply against RCB and the duo would be looking to provide a strong start to the team. While skipper Shreyas Iyer, who has been in good form despite the failure against RCB, would be an important cog in the wheel, but would need support from the likes of Nitish Rana. For left-handed Rana, consistency would be the key. Apart from the duo, the responsibility in the middle order needs to be shouldered by Sam Billings, Sheldon Jackson and the big-hitting Andre Russell. The KKR line-up has batters who can tear into any attack and the management would hope that they all fire in unison against Punjab. On the bowling front, pacer Umesh Yadav was splendid in both the games with the new ball. Experienced Kiwi bowler Tim Southee, who replaced Shivam Mavi and picked up

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