

Odisha CM provides Rs 220 crore monetary assistance to SHGs in Balasore

Balasore(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik today provided Rs 220 crore monetary assistance to women self help groups (SHGs) in Balasore district. Around 60,000 women of 5,600 SHGs in Balasore were given the financial assistance by the state government under 'Mission Shakti'. During his official visit to north Odisha district, CM Patnaik launched various

development projects amounting to Rs 1,806 crore. He inaugurated projects worth Rs 374 crore and laid foundation stones for Rs 1431 crore-projects. He also inaugurated a newly constructed Railway Over bridge at Somnathpur in the district. While providing monetary aid to SHGs under Mission Shakti, he exhorted women to turn entrepreneurs. He advised them to take the

empowerment programme to next level. Speaking on the occasion, CM Patnaik stressed on 'one panchayat, one product'. "If each panchayat can produce a specific product, it will facilitate market and also create a unique identity for each panchayat," the CM said expressing hope that women will script a history in industrial



development of the state. He announced that women will be provided Rs 50,000 crore loan without interest in next five years under Mission Shakti. Patnaik said that

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Balasore is a leading district in almost all fields including education, literature, industries, agriculture and infrastructure. The launching of projects in the district will take the trend of development further. Attending the programme, Industries and Energy Minister Pratap Deb, Odia Language, Literature and Culture Minister Ashwini Patra and Balasore MLA Swarup Das

highlighted the developmental projects carried out under leadership of CM Naveen Patnaik. They said that significant work is being done in Balasore district covering all areas starting from medical college to roads, drinking water, healthcare programmes. The women in the district have created new identity through Mission Shakti programme.

Vigilance Unearths 160 Cr DA

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Creating a new record, Odisha Vigilance has unearthed disproportionate assets worth Rs 160 crore including seizure of Rs 7 crore cash from top four cases during 2022, so far. Speaking to media persons, Director Vigilance Yeshwant Kumar Jethwa said the Odisha Vigilance, so far, has registered 270 cases, of which 75 are DA cases, 114 trap cases and rest other corruption cases. Of the 270 cases, nearly 60 cases registered against class I officers, which is the highest in the last 5 years.



assistant engineer, MI, Bhanjanagar, Ganjam in April while Rs 1.40 crore seized from Ashish Kumar Das, SE, RW Division, Malkangiri in March this year. Similarly, Rs 1.13 crore was seized by the Odisha Vigilance during house searches against Dr. Sukant Jena, Gynecologist, Charichhaka CHC in February. Moreover, Rs 1.06 crore seized from Gaya Santara, deputy manager, IDCOL yesterday.

"As far as cash seizures are concerned, we have had record seizures in 2022. The top 4 cash seizures in DA searches in the history of Odisha vigilance have happened in 2022 with seizure of Rs.7 crores," he said.

A total cash seizure Rs 3.41 crore seized from Kartikeswar Raul,

In trap cases also, the highest cash seizure in the history of Odisha vigilance has happened in this year, Shri Jethwa

stated. "Last year we had detected and registered the highest number of DA cases in the country and this year too we hope for a similar performance," the Director Vigilance told Media.

As far as prosecution is concerned, 87 convictions have been reported in this year so far with about 50 percent conviction rate. The vigilance has also prioritized completion of investigations and submissions of charge sheets especially in old cases. Investigations in all trap cases of 2021 and earlier have been completed, he informed.

Further, the Vigilance Director said the vigilance is committed to take strong actions against corrupt practices with focus on higher ranks.

"We also plan to better our performance through enhanced application of technology in detection

and investigation, more effective tracking of databases related to accumulation of assets, both physical and digital, be it land, buildings, currency, deposits or even crypto assets, to identify DA and take action as per law under the PC Act," added Shri Jethwa.

Meanwhile, the anti-corruption wing of Odisha Government has arrested Gaya Santara, a deputy manager, Idcol, Ampa Valli Limestone Mines, Simagoda, Koraput on a DA case. Gaya was found in possession of disproportionate assets worth over Rs.10 crore.

During raid, the vigilance has found bank deposits worth Rs.4.44 crore, Rs. 1.06 crore cash, 1kg 96 gm gold, silver-7 kg 500 gm, two multi-storied buildings, 13 plots in important locations and two four wheelers & four two wheelers from the deputy manager.

Govinda Sahu's death inside jail is suspicious; CBI probe needed: Dharmendra Pradhan

Bhubaneswar(KCN): While mystery has shrouded the alleged suicide of Mamita Meher murder case accused Govinda Sahu in jail, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan today said the death of an inmate inside a prison is suspicious and questionable. "Death of a person inside a jail is highly suspicious and questionable. This is not a good sign. The mismatch and confusion over the DNA test report of deceased Mamita Meher has made the matter more serious," said Pradhan. "The authorities and officials of the concerned departments are answerable for the death. The purview of the investigation should be as per the law," he said. "What's more suspicious is that as to how the death occurred inside the jail. The state government should carry out an impartial probe into the case to uphold its transparency," the Union Minister said.

Gayatribala Panda shortlisted for Sahitya Akademi Award in Odia Poetry category

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Eminent Odia litterateur Dr Gayatribala Panda was shortlisted today for Kendra Sahitya Akademi Award in Poetry category for her poem compilation 'Dayanadi' for the year 2022. Panda will be given cash award of Rs 1 lakh, a shawl and a citation (engraved copper plaque) at a special function to be held on a later date. Her literary work 'Dayanadi' was published by Pakshighar Prakashani in 2017. Previously, the litterateur had also won the Kendra Sahitya Akademi award for her Odia poem compilation named 'Gaan' meaning 'the village' in youth writer category for the year 2011. Notably, the Kendra Sahitya Akademi announced its annual awards in 23 different languages, including seven books of poetry, six novels, two short stories, three



plays/dramas, two literary criticisms, one each of autobiographical essays, collection of articles and literary history. However, award in Bengali language will be announced later, a press release issued by the Akademi in this regard stated. The 23 books were selected on the basis of recommendations made by a panel of jury of three members in the languages concerned in accordance with the procedures laid down for the purpose. Kendra Sahitya Akademi awards relate to books first published during five years immediately preceding the year of announcement of the Award (i.e between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2020).

Young Lady gets back her arm...

Successful forearm reimplantation at AIIMS Bhubaneswar

Bhubaneswar,(KCN): A 25 years young lady, Barsha Das from Krushnaprasad Block of Puri district has witnessed another life by Doctors of AIIMS Bhubaneswar. Team of Doctors from the national institute have successfully replanted the completely separated left forearm. The process took around 10 hours. Barsha Das came to the emergency department of AIIMS Bhubaneswar on 9th Dec, 2022 at around 9 pm with traumatic amputation of left forearm below elbow. As per history given by patient, she was working at her home and

her dupatta got stuck in the rice cutting machine along with her left hand at around 4 pm following which she was taken to local government hospital along with the amputated hand where primary treatment was given, bleeding was secured and dressing was done. The amputated part was wrapped in a ganjee pad and was kept in an ice bath by the person who attended her in the local hospital.

The patient was immediately planned for reimplantation and was taken up for surgery on the same night at around 11:30 pm by a Team lead by Dr. Sanjay Kumar



Giri (Head of Burns & Plastic Surgery). The team consisted of Dr. Santanu Suba, Dr. Priyanka Pant, Dr. Akanksha Rajpoot, Dr. Vishnu from Plastic

surgery department, Dr. Nikhil and Dr. Manjoy from Orthopaedics, Dr. Jayant Mitra, Dr. Hrushikesh and Dr. Shailaja from Anaesthesia department assisted by

nursing officer Babulal & Jaswant Singh.

At first, the team of Doctors took out the amputated part from the fridge and started bench dissection, all the vital

structures identified and tagged 3 cm bone were shortened. Then the patient was taken into the operating room and anaesthesia given. Amputated stumps

opened and debridement was done and all the vital structures were isolated. After that, the amputated part was attached to the body by first two bony fixations, then arterial circulation was established along with vein, followed by two major nerves that were repaired along with muscles and skin, said Dr. Sanjay Giri.

The surgery went up till 8 am in the morning and the patient was then shifted to ICU. After the tenth postoperative day, we took the patient to the operating room again as the skin around the elbow was not good. Under anaesthesia, we had removed all the

devitalised skin and covered it with skin graft. Today it is around two weeks following the incident. At present the limb is viable, added Dr. Giri.

Today Executive Director Dr. Ashutosh Biswas visiting the young lady in the ward applauded the effort of Doctors of AIIMS for the heroic job. Dr. Biswas also praised Barsha for her bravery and assured her a prosperous future. CTA among others Medical Superintendent Dr. S N Mohanty, DDA(I/c) Rashmi Ranjan Sethy also praised the Doctors.

DRM, Sambalpur inspected Belsonda & Arang Mahanadi station



Sambalpur(KCN): Divisional Railway Manager, Sambalpur, Shri Vineet Singh inspected Belsonda & Arang Mahanadi Railway Stations in

Titlagarh- Arang Mahanadi section of Sambalpur Division on 20.12.2022. He took stock of various passenger amenities and facilities provided at the

stations and inspected ongoing developmental activities in these stations. He interacted with the staff and advised them to follow safety rules in all respects.



Dr Pabitra Mohan Samantaray, Editor in Chief, Paryabekhyak and The Kalinga Chronicle Group with Prof (Dr) Rabinarayan Satpathy, Director, Sri Sri Ravishankar University on his Mother's Ekadashaha Ceremony (11th Day Rituals) at Bhubaneswar

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Barbil Municipality to tackle dust pollution in the areas

Barbil(KCN): Barbil Municipality has stepped forward to mitigate dust pollution in the wake of the implementation of Graded Response Action Plan in the city. It has engaged seven manual road sweepers, water sprinklers and identified sites for dumping construction and demolition waste and formed a team for inspection. All avenue roads are being cleaned daily or on alternate days. "Bikas Dash one resident of Barbil said with the beginning of festivities, there is a need to be extra careful and avoid chances of environment pollution that may cause serious health problems. Though manual cleaning will resolve the problem for the time being, but will not solve the problem permanently. Municipality should engage mechanical sweepers in two shifts preferably wet sweeping can address the pollution to great extent.



As heard Barbil Municipality has a plan to pave all central verges and side berms with different types of grasses and plants. Antismog gun for spraying water should procure

on as and where basis along with more water tanker sprayer to use for water sprinkling on trees and shrubs along the main roads using treated water. said another resident Saroj Mohapatra. It is to note that residents had expressed their discontent on the issue. However, Municipality is taking prompt action to combat dust pollution which definitely reduce their panic said Basant Mahanta of Sundura basti resident.

Hockey Invitation for All CMs

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday announced that the Chief Ministers of all the states will be invited to

2036. He also assured the State Government's to provide all necessary help to include holding



witness the Hockey World Cup-2023 events in Odisha.

Addressing an all-party meeting here, he complimented the Union Government, especially Prime Minister Narendra Modi, for the cooperation of the Centre in the preparation of the Hockey World Cup. "The honour of Odisha and the whole country is involved in organizing the Hockey World Cup of Hockey," he said while urging everyone to work together and ensure the success of the event.

The leaders of various political parties participated in the discussion and expressed their gratitude for the government's efforts towards the development of sports, saying that hosting the World Cup for the second time in a row has increased Odisha's reputation throughout the world. Attending the meeting, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan praised the state government for such an arrangement and urged everyone to work together so that 100 Olympians can emerge from Odisha on the occasion of the centenary celebration of the formation of a separate Odisha province in

hockey world cup twice in a row in the school curriculum, involving citizens for the cleanliness of both Bhubaneswar-Rourkela, promoting local sports and branding the Rourkela-Bhubaneswar railway for hockey. Participating in the discussion, the Congress Legislature Party leader Narsingha Mishra proposed to build hockey stadiums in all the districts of the state. Among others, Congress leader Santosh Singh Saluja, Biju Janata Party Vice Presidents Prasanna Acharya and Debi Prasad Mishra, BJD Organization Secretary Pranab Prakash Das, BJP State President Sameer Mohanty, CPI General Secretary Ramakrushna Panda, MLAs Taraprasad Bahinipati and Laxman Munda, CPI leader Alikishore Patnaik, State President of Socialist Party Ravi Behera, State President of AAP Nishikant Mahapatra, State President of RJD Hemant Kumar also participated in the discussion. Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra, Secretary to CM V K Pandian, Secretary Sports & Youth Services R Vineel Krishna and others were also present at the meeting.

Gold Award for Odisha Excise

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Excise has bagged the prestigious "Digital India Gold Award" for ease of doing business. Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India has decided to honor the State Excise for their innovative digital program 'eAbkari', thanks to the efforts of Excise Commissioner Ashish Singh. Mr. Singh, a hyperactive Top Cop has been engaged in scaling up State Excise and in tune with 5T initiatives of Government of Odisha, Excise Department has switched over to the digital work place "eAbkari" with the technical support of NIC since 2019-20. It is developing and implementing more than 30 online modules as on date bringing transparent, hassle free, real time, seamless and timely service delivery eliminating physical touch points, reducing discretion and providing faceless service at door steps. This has led to proper monitoring and strengthening of enforcement activities, curbing of illicit and spurious liquor, timely service delivery at different levels, proper supply chain management with regulation of production and manufacture and

above all, change of public perception and transformation in the Department of Excise. Settlement of all kinds of excise shops through e-Lottery process, timely issue and renewal of all licenses, brand/label registration with 100% online payment, detection and arrest in Excise and NDPS cases more than two times that of previous years. Similarly grant of all permits, passes, shifting and transfer of ownership of shops, enforcement monitoring modules like DPR, CCIS, SIR and mobile app development for tracking of raid spots and excise shops are the glaring examples of substantial process reengineering and adoption of new technologies in the Excise realm. These initiatives have led towards transparency, timely service delivery and transformation in the Department of Excise making it more responsive which has successfully passed the scrutiny of Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India and finally bagged the prestigious "Digital India Gold Award" for ease of doing business to be conferred by the President of India on 7 January, 2023.

55 Trauma Care Centers Bhubaneswar(KCN): In an aim to provide emergency medical care to road accident victims, the State Government has accorded in-principle approval for establishment of 55 more Trauma Care Facilities (TCFs) in the ex-



isting health facilities across the State. Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Shalini Pandit on Thursday issued a notification in this regard. Government of Odisha is keen to strengthen the Emergency Medical Care (Trauma Care) in case of fatality rate due to road traffic accidents.

In the direction of the Supreme Court, the State Government has already established 33 TCFs through a notification dated 26.10.2018.

As per the operational guidelines on capacity building for developing trauma care facilities along National Highways issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, the preventable deaths because of road accidents are to be brought down to 10 per cent by developing a pan-India trauma care network in which no trauma victim has to be transported for more than 50 kilometres and a designated trauma centre is available at every 100 km

For further strengthening Government has empanelled 18 corporate hospitals with level-I trauma care facility in the State for providing cashless treatment to trauma victims due to road traffic accidents in the first 48 hours. In obedience to the directions of the Supreme Court, the Government has such facilities along the 25 National Highways. With the decision to establish 55 more Trauma Care Centres, one trauma care facility will be available within 50 km. The Department of Health & FW is taking steps to assess the gap in infrastructure, manpower, equipment and instruments and fulfil them to strengthen the new Trauma Care Facilities.

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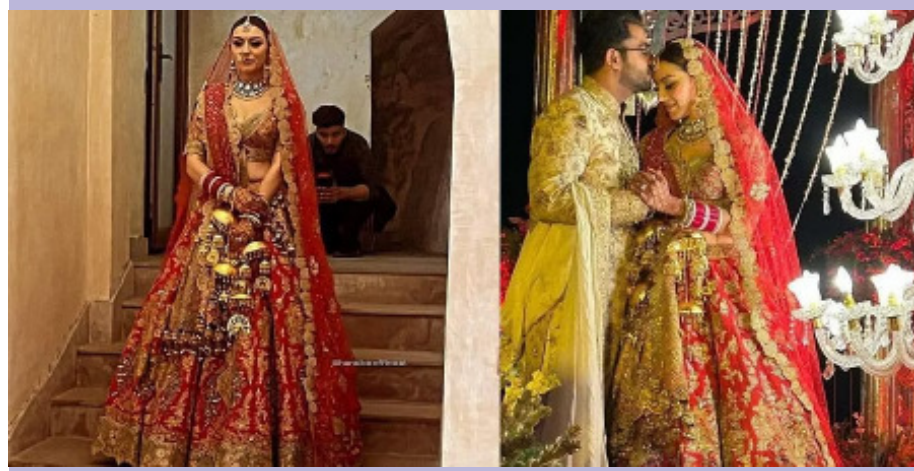
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Hansika Motwani gets married to beau Sohael Kathuriya in Jaipur; check out photos, videos here



JAIPUR(KCN): Actress Hansika Motwani



and her beau Sohael Kathuriya have tied the knot in Jaipur's Mundota Fort and Palace. Videos showcasing the grand wedding have also gone viral on fan pages. Fireworks lit up the Sunday night sky during the 'varmala' ceremony. Hansika and Sohael

were also seen holding hands after the ceremony in one of the videos. According to reports, the marriage vows were as per Sindhi customs. Although their wedding festivities were a private affair, many photos and videos have gone viral on social media.

Talking about their D-day look, the beautiful bride wore a classic red lehenga while the groom complimented her look by opting for an ivory sherwani.

The bride and groom had already served major fashion goals during their pre-nuptial functions. After having a 'Mata Ki Chowki' in Mumbai, the couple flew to Jaipur for other functions. They hosted a Sufi night, a pre-wedding all-themed party, a Haldi ceremony, and a Mehendi ceremony.

After opting for a simple look for her Mehendi ceremony, Hansika experimented with the heavy for her Sufi night.

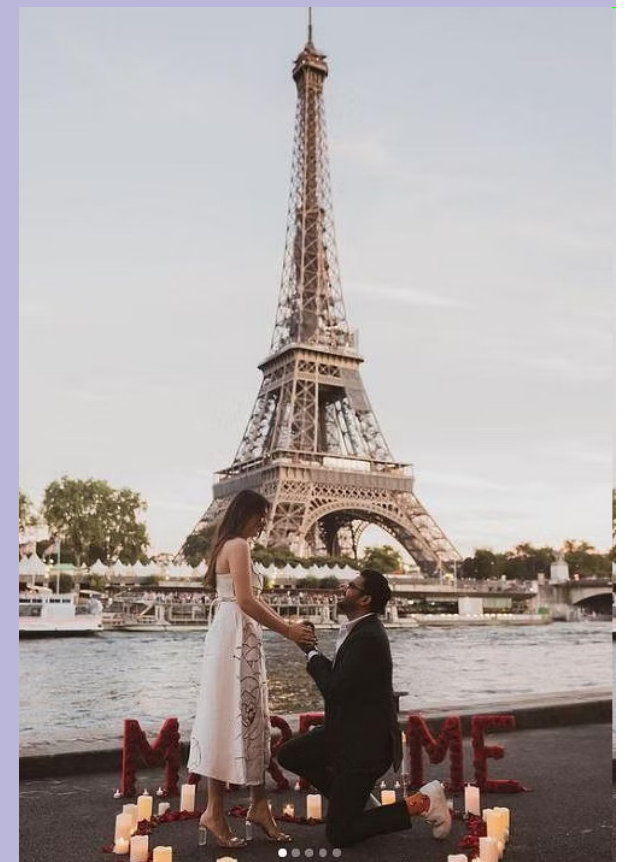
She wore a white sharara with mirrorwork all over it. She accessorized her look with heavy jewellery including a 'passa', traditionally adorned by Muslim brides.

She had a dream proposal in Paris in November, photos of which posted on the couple's social media handles had kept the fans' interest high.

If reports are to be believed, Hansika and Sohael are childhood friends and have been dating for several years.

The couple's dreamy Paris proposal.

The couple's dreamy Paris proposal. Hansika debuted on TV as a popular child art-



ist in a popular show 'Shaka Laka Boom Boom' and went on to be part of the blockbuster 'Koi Mil Gaya' alongside Hrithik Roshan and Preity Zinta. She made her debut as a lead actor in Puri Jagannadh Telugu directorial 'Desamuduru', which also earned her a Filmfare.

She went on to do Telugu movies like 'Desamuduru', 'Kantri' and 'Maska'.

She has appeared in Tamil films such as 'Mappillai' and 'Engayum Kadhal'. She will be next seen in 'Partner', '105 Minutes', 'My Name Is Shruthi' and 'Rowdy Baby'.

Rowel Star- The new shining Star of the Rajasthan Music Industry

Mumbai (KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj): The Rajasthan music industry is going leaps and bounds, celebrating the new singing star Afjor Khan aka Rowel Star. This new generation of Rajasthan singers is making headlines for his outstanding singing style and making the world shake legs with his unique Rajasthan songs.

Afjor Khan, popularly known as Rowel Star on Social Media, has created a sensation in the Rajasthan music world with his mesmerizing voice and affective tone. "I am an ardent fan of Guru Randhawa and take his inspiration for my songs. I want to create some unique mix of folk songs with blending hip-hop and wanted to give something new to the music world, says Rowel Star." He recently gave his voice to two new songs, "Tera Shoot" & "Nahiyo Jeena", making the Rajasthan cultures a step ahead in this ever-evolving music world. The shoot of these songs has recently been completed in Dubai and will be out very soon to rock the floors!

About his upcoming projects, Rowel Star will be seen sharing the floors with renowned Rajasthan Singer Sumsa Supari.

They together have shot the song recently



in Dubai in various amazing locations. The song will be out soon and published on the YouTube channel Sumsa Supari Films.

Rowel Star's songs, Maro Sajaniyo,

Bannasa ke Mijaj, and Jai Jasol Maa album are the most popular and trending, creating a sensation on his YouTube channel and blessing him with millions of views and subscribers.

Born and raised in a small village in the Panawara district of Barmer, Rajasthan, Afjor has been fascinated by the music culture since he was five. He was sent to his maternal house at Sindhari for schooling. During his school days, he sang songs and attracted many ears listening to his soulful voice. His teacher once gave him a chance to sing a song on Republic Day, which grabbed praise from the entire school.

It was the year 2007 when Afjor Khan won the hearts of millions for singing the famous Rajasthan song of those days, "Maharana Pratap", which rolled out tears from listeners' eyes. His soulful voice created a huge impact on people's minds. Afjor won the gift price of Rs.1500/- for his singing.

After the impressive response to his performance, there was no looking back for Afjor Khan, and his journey of becoming Rowel Star has kick-started!

Alia Bhatt to make Hollywood debut with Gal Gadot-starrer film 'Heart of Stone'

Mumbai (KCN): Bollywood star Alia Bhatt will be making foray into Hollywood with Netflix spy thriller film "Heart Of Stone".

In her debut project in the West, Bhatt, who is receiving critical acclaim for her latest Hindi release "Gangubai Kathiawadi", will be starring alongside "Wonder Woman" actor Gal Gadot and Jamie Dornan.

Netflix India announced Bhatt's casting on its official Twitter handle.

"Starting our day by announcing (and



SCREAMING!!!) that @aliaabhatt is going to be starring in Heart of Stone, an International spy thriller along with @gal_gadot and @jamiedornan,? the post read.

Tom Harper will be directing "Heat of Stone" from a script penned by Greg Rucka and Allison Schroeder.

According to the official logline, the film revolves around Rachel Stone (Gadot) an intelligence operative, the only woman who stands between her

powerful, global, peace-keeping organization and the loss of its most valuable? and dangerous? asset.

The film is produced by Skydance's David Ellison, Dana Goldberg, and Don Granger, along with Mockingbird's Bonnie Curtis and Julie Lynn, and Pilot Wave's Gadot and Jaron Varsano.

Harper, Rucka and Patty Whitcher serve as executive producers

Details about Bhatt's character are currently under wraps.

The Coolest Winter Foot Care Tips



Shahnaz Husain

Your feet take care of your entire body. Do you take care of them?

When it comes to skin and body care, our feet tend to be overlooked.

The chilling winds of the winter season tend to make your feet dry which can be hard on the feet. The skin on your feet is typically drier than the rest of the body, primarily because there are no oil glands underneath it to keep it naturally hydrated.

Certain factors such as friction, pressure, diseases such as eczema and advanced diabetes, and even old age can make your skin increasingly dry.

Dry skin eventually leads to cracked heels. And, ignoring the cracks will only worsen the situation.

It is important to take certain

precautions to ensure that your feet stay warm and dry.

This is particularly important to those people in higher risk groups, such as diabetics, those with poor circulation, who have medical conditions such as Raynaud's disease, or who may be more susceptible to damage from falls.

Ultimately, your feet take the full pressure of your life.

It is your responsibility to at least pamper them occasionally to keep them silky and smooth. With just a little bit of care, you can be more comfortable and confident with your pretty feet.

Here are the best foot care tips for winter:

1. The skin of the feet is commonly thick and dry and you need to take a regular foot care regime dedicatedly to beautiful and glowing feet

Fill a foot tub with warm water and add ½ cup of Epsom salt to it. You can add some honey for an added layer of moisturization

Soak your feet in



this preparation for a few minutes until the water turns cold. Use a soft foot brush to scrub your feet lightly when the skin is soft enough from the soak. Dry your feet after the soak, and put on a thick foot cream or an oil-based lotion to seal in the moisture.

2. Your feet have a blood supply that is affected by climate. "As the temperature fluctuates the skin is left hot or cold. When your feet feel cold, it means the skin's blood supply to the top layers of the skin has been reduced to preserve heat.

A brilliant way to restore the heat is to use a foot cream in circular motions from the heel up to the toes.

This will not only warm your feet but also moisturize them at the same time."

3. An organic pedicure uses natural oils and products containing natural substances. Nowadays, foot spa treatments have also gained in popularity. They can be combined with pedicures. Foot spa includes exfoliation and massage, to reduce fatigue, tone the muscles, improve blood circulation and induce relaxation.

For a home pedicure you will need a nail brush, pumice stone or heel scrubber, nail clippers, emery board, cotton wool, cotton buds, massage cream, polish

remover, nail polish and a small tub for soaking the feet.

First remove old polish if necessary with the remover, using cotton wool.

Soak your feet in warm water, to which you should add some herbal shampoo and any vegetable oil, like sunflower oil or olive oil. You can also add coarse salt. Let the feet soak for 15 minutes. Then clean the nails with the brush. The brush should not be too hard. Use the pumice stone on the heels and side of the soles. Avoid metal scrubbers. You can also scrub the entire feet with a rough towel or loofah. When this is done, wash the feet in clean

water. Dry with a towel.

4. If your nails need cutting, better to use a nail clipper. Toe nails should be cut straight across. Avoid shaping toe nails as it can lead to ingrowing nails. Use the emery board to smoothen them. Do not cut the cuticles of the toe nails. Do not use sharp instruments to clean the nails. Apply almond oil and push back gently with a cotton bud.

5. Love exfoliating your face, right? So, what's the problem with your feet, boo? Exfoliation removes dead skin cells and preps the feet to better absorb skin treatments.

Mix ground almonds with yogurt and some sugar.

Apply them on the feet. After 15 to 20 minutes, rub gently on the skin with circular movements. Pay attention to the heels. Wash off with water. Then massage the feet with olive oil or sunflower oil. Wipe off excess cream with a moist towel. Mix one tablespoon each of lemon juice and honey with 50 ml rose water. Apply on the feet. Lie down and relax for half an hour. Wash it off with plain water.

8. Rice flour is a wonderful exfoliator that also repairs cracked heels and rough skin on the feet. Mix 2 tablespoons of ground rice flour, ½ tablespoon of honey, and 4-5 drops of lemon juice to make a thick paste. Soak your feet in warm water with Epsom salt to soften the skin, apply a layer of the paste, and massage for few minutes to scrub the outer layer of skin. You can keep the paste on your feet for another 10 minutes to deep clean your skin. Wash the paste off with lukewarm

water, and apply a thick lotion to seal the moisture

Apply oil and massage on feet and nails. Pay special attention to the heels, applying more oil if needed. Use upward strokes for the toes towards the ankles. Wipe the feet with a moist towel.

Mix a little lemon juice with honey and apply on the feet. Wash it off with plain water after 15 minutes. This moisturizes and softens the skin.

If you wish to apply polish, put some cotton wool between the toes. Apply the nail varnish in broad strokes, from the base of the nail to the nail tips. After the first coat dries, apply the second coat of colour.

Once a week is more than enough but make that twice if you're cursed with super parched feet once a week is more than enough but make that twice if you're cursed with super-parched feet

The author is an international fame beauty expert and is popularly called the herbal queen of India

Biju Swasthya Kalyan Uojana (B.S.K.Y): A Health Cover Initiative

Health is a resource for physical, social and mental well being for living a life full of prosperity. Ensuing healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all in all ages is important for building prosperous societies. Healthy people are the foundation for healthy economies as healthy population live longer, are more productive and save more. So a nation needs to ensure healthy lives. Ensuring healthy lives for all requires a strong commitment by the states. The benefits of strong health initiatives out weighs the cost. Indian constitution under article 47 directs the states to raise the level of nutrition of standard of living of its

people and mentions the improvement of public health among its primary duties. On the health parameters, the odisha government has made a great improvement in comparison to other



BIJU SWASTHYA KALYAN YOJANA

states of India. Government of odisha has launched Biju swasthya kalyan yojana (b.s.k.y.) for the benefit of the people having biju health smart card. Till now more than 8 lakh people are benefited means they have been cured. This card is most useful for the poor people.

You know the life expectancy has crossed 69 years, under five mortality rate and the rate of disease incidence are declining. Many diseases like polio, chikungunya, worm

diseases, dengue and tetanus have been eradicated. Yet some of the poor marginalised and vulnerable are not able to avail quality health services. So it is in this context the state government has launched biju swasthya kalyan

yojana (b.s.k.y) health initiative so that the marginalised and the downtrodden are able to get health care benefits and medical treatment free of cost in any government or private empanelled hospitals. The family members are eligible for secondary and tertiary health care facilities. With raging corona virus outbreak in the world that adversely affected India as well as odisha healthcare system for all, is considerably difficult, where only 20% of the population have health insurance coverage. There is a large group that is missing out. The health care system in

odisha is run by both public and private sectors. Private hospitals provide health care but they have their own limitations. Public sector hospitals are overburdened under less staff position and shortage of drugs and equipments. The private health care system is responsible for providing majority of health care in our state as well as in our nation. But is very expensive such that middle class family may or may not afford the expense. According to the data published by national sample survey office, near about 55 million people of our nation are pushed into poverty every year because of funding for their

health care of their kith & kind. Out of this 38 million fall below poverty line due to spending more on medicines. To overcome inefficiencies and achieve a healthy nation with high standard of living and improved quality of life. Odisha government is continuously working to formulate health promoting laws. Our beloved chief minister believes on zero casualty. So he always says that no one should die due to lack of better treatment. Everyone's life is most important for him. This initiates to

design for providing comprehensive health care coverage to underlining commitment, which is leave no one behind. Biju swasthya kalyan yojana scheme helps for universal health coverage as well as it reduces poverty and

generate employment. By providing health coverage to all, it keeps the disease out of the door. It helps to achieve good health to harness the potential of demographic dividend.

Nabarangapur 9437788860



Transcript of New Zealand PM's un-parliamentary 'insult' raises USD 63,000 for charity

WELLINGTON: A signed transcript of a parliamentary ex-

the sum for New Zealand's Prostate Cancer Foundation.

her seat after answering a barbed question from

signed a copy of the transcript which was framed before being auctioned.

"The interest was greater than anyone dreamed," Seymour said in a statement, after having told AFP he had only expected the transcript to reach a fraction of the winning bid of NZ \$ 1 0 0 , 1 0 0 (\$63,200).

Ardern also "thanked everyone who placed a bid" and praised Seymour for being "a good sport", a compliment the ACT leader reciprocated. "When I suggested this to her, she immediately agreed," Seymour said. "I have been blown away by the kindness of bidders who are helping prick everywhere with their generosity," he added.



change in which New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern called a political rival an "arrogant prick" raised more than \$63,000 for charity when bidding closed Thursday in an online auction. "Can't say I expected this," Ardern posted on social media after what she described as her "faux pas with the old mic in parliament" raised

A microphone picked up New Zealand's premier muttering the insult, aimed at political opponent David Seymour, following a heated exchange between the pair during a parliamentary session last week. An exasperated Ardern was overheard saying "he's such an arrogant prick" as she retook

Seymour, leader of the right-liberalist party ACT.

Seymour petitioned the speaker of New Zealand's parliament to get an apology from Ardern, which meant her comment was entered into the official record, known as the Hansard.

Seymour came up with the idea of joining forces for a good cause and they both

Gobinda Sahu 'suicide': Too little surveillance at Odisha jail for high profile prisoner

BHUBANESWAR/BALANGIR: Even as the Crime Branch of Odisha Police began investigation into the alleged suicide of Gobinda Sahu on Wednesday, a preliminary probe suggests there was virtually little or no surveillance at

rested and jailed. On Tuesday, just two jail staff were on duty at Kantabanji sub-jail. One was guarding the gate while the warder was in charge of 71 inmates of the prison. The lone warder, Akshaya Mohanty, was placed under suspension for

CCTV camera. That area, according to jail officials, was isolated. Yet, it did not have adequate surveillance. Even warder Mohanty was not aware of the incident until an inmate flagged the matter around 10.30 am which has been admitted by the prison authorities. Sahu was a high-profile inmate because of the sensitive nature of the case. Yet he was not lodged separately from others. The jail did not have a special cell although the Odisha Model Jail Manual 2020 mandates that high-security prisoners should be separated from others.

Besides, Sahu was supposed to appear for trial at Additional District Judge Court at Kantabanji but till the court van arrived on Tuesday, no one had any clue where the prisoner was. Around 10.30 am, when the van reached and he was not seen around, there was a commotion and an undertrial prisoner spotted him behind the kitchen. With such scarce surveillance at the jail, Sahu's alleged suicide has only drawn a sharp reaction. His uncle Mahendra Sahu alleged that it did not appear to be a suicide

as there were too many loose ends. He demanded a CBI investigation into it. Sahu's brother-in-law Bhubaneswar Sahu said he had spoken to him at around 7.40 am and the accused sounded perfectly alright. "I spoke to him at 7.41 am for five minutes and he was fine. I briefed him about the legal status of his case. He had revealed to me that he was being tortured by police," he said. Meanwhile, the CB team started the investigation by seizing a towel, one pair of slippers, a kitchen cloth and a wooden log from the spot. Earlier, after post mortem, Sahu's body was handed over to his daughter Lipika Sahu for cremation. Two professors of the Departments of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, VIMSAR, Burla and another professor of Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital, Balangir conducted the post-mortem at Balangir. Meanwhile, a complaint by Sahu's wife Susama was transferred to Kantabanji police station by Kalahandi police. She had demanded a high-level probe into the case suspecting it to be a murder.



Kantabanji sub-jail where the main suspect in Mamita Meher murder was lodged. Sahu had been arrested by Odisha Police after they launched an investigation into Mamita's disappearance in October 2021. Family members of the 24-year-old teacher of Sunshine English Medium School, set up by Sahu, had earlier alleged that she mysteriously disappeared after accompanying Sahu, the school's managing committee president, in his car to Bhawanipatna on October 8. The police after investigation had concluded that the murder had been pre-planned and executed by Sahu. He was subsequently ar-

dereliction of duty. In fact, the sub-jail had a staff strength of seven but two had gone on leave. Of the rest five, two were on duty on Tuesday morning shift. The Kantabanji sub-jail has seven wards, six for male inmates and the rest for females. Besides, the jail had installed 12 CCTV cameras to keep an eye on the prisoners. Interestingly, the CCTV cameras did not adequately cover the backside of the jail where Sahu is alleged to have taken the extreme step. Prison Directorate officials acknowledge that the crime scene – backside of the kitchen where the alleged suicide took place – had trees which apparently blocked view of the

India, China hold 17th round of military talks on eastern Ladakh; no visible outcome

NEW DELHI: In the backdrop of fresh tensions over the clash between their troops in the Tawang sector, India and China on Tuesday held the 17th round of high-level military talks on the eastern Ladakh border stand-off but there was no indication of any forward movement in resolution of the remain-

ing issues.

A joint statement released on Thursday said both sides exchanged views in an "open and constructive" manner to resolve the "relevant issues" and described the talks as "frank and in-depth".



It said the two sides agreed to stay in "close contact", maintain dialogue through military and diplomatic channels and work out a mutually-acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest.

The corps commander-level talks took place over a month after Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping shook hands and exchanged pleasantries at the G20 summit in Bali.

People familiar with the military dialogue at the Chushul-Moldo border meeting point on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) said it began around 9:30 am and continued for 10 hours.

It is learnt that the Indian side insisted on resolving the issues at the remaining friction points of Demchok and Depsang in eastern Ladakh as soon as possible.

"Building on the progress made after the last meeting (16th round) on July 17, the two sides exchanged views on the resolution of the relevant issues along the LAC in the Western Sector in an open and constructive manner," the statement said.

"They had a frank and in-depth discussion, keeping in line with the guidance provided by the state leaders to work for the resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest which would help in restoration of peace and tranquility along the LAC in the Western Sector and enable progress in bilateral relations," it said.

In line with a decision taken at the 16th round of military talks, the two sides carried out disengagement from Patrolling Point 15 in the Gogra-Hotsprings area in September.

"In the interim, the two sides agreed to maintain the security and stability on the ground

in the Western Sector," the joint statement said. "The two sides agreed to stay in close contact and maintain dialogue through military and diplomatic channels and work out a mutually acceptable resolution of the remaining issues at the earliest," it noted.

The Corps Commander-level talks, instituted to resolve the eastern Ladakh row, took place 11 days after Indian and Chinese troops were engaged in a clash in Yangtse area of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector.

In a statement in Parliament on December 13, Defence Minister Singh said the Chinese troops tried to "unilaterally" change the status quo in the Yangtse area of Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang sector but the Indian Army compelled them to retreat by its firm and resolute response.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Monday said the Indian Army will not let China change the status quo along the LAC "unilaterally" and its current deployment along the frontier was not seen before.

When asked about the Tawang incident, Bagchi said he would not like to comment and referred to the statement made by Singh on the matter.

To another question on whether similar incidents happened in the past in the region, he said there were incidents when Indian troops stood firm and "you are aware of that. We have been emphasising that our soldiers will stand firm to guard our frontiers."

Replying to a separate query on whether the Tawang incident was flagged by the Indian side at the military talks, Bagchi said he would not like to speculate as he does not have a confirmation on it.

India has been maintaining that its ties with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border areas.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake area.

The ties between the two countries nosedived significantly following the fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year on the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area. The disengagement in the Pangong Lake area took place in February last year while the withdrawal of troops and equipment in Patrolling Point 17 (A) in Gogra took place in August last year.

Plastic waste clogs and scars Bhubaneswar's beautification drive

BHUBANESWAR: When the state capital is undergoing a major makeover ahead of the Hockey World Cup next month, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has found no solution to the rampant use of single-use plastic, that has turned into a garbage menace. The civic body that has been running against time to give a new look to the city has not been able to check the usage of single-use plastic, which is scarring the beautification drive ahead of the quadrennial event.

Almost all major roads and streets including residential areas in the city are littered with

polythene and single-use plastic items that make up for 70 per cent of the trash generated every day.

Moreover, the plastic waste has clogged the Gangua Nullah, GGP canal, as well as the natural storm water channels here, turning them into mosquito breeding ground. Many stretches of the NH-16, that has been included in the priority road network for World Cup beautification project, can also be found littered with these non-biodegradable plastic waste.

However, any substantial crackdown to discourage vendors, traders and residents from using single-use plastic

items is yet to be started by the BMC, in spite of the fact that the World Cup is just three weeks away. Acting on the single-use plastic ban order in the state in July, the BMC had framed a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to strongly enforce the rule. The SOP had provision of fine ranging from Rs 200 to Rs 50,000 against violators flouting the new norms. The SOP also has provision of necessary legal action and criminal proceedings against the offenders. However, sources in the BMC said around Rs 3.5 lakh fine has been collected in the last six months, while legal action against repeated offenders have

remained virtually nil. The curb on single-use plastic seems to have helped in addressing half of city's waste management problem, but BMC's failure in implementing the ban has started to raise questions. BMC commissioner Vijay Amruta Kulange said strong enforcement drive will start soon to crackdown on the violators. "We have given sufficient time in awareness programmes. Traders and vendors found violating the norms will now be fined Rs 5,000," he said and added that the crackdown will also be launched on illegal supply of the banned items in the city.

Govt coming up with excuses to stop Bharat Jodo Yatra, says Rahul Gandhi Covid not over yet, mask up, don't be complacent: PM Modi after review meet

NUH (Haryana): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said the government is coming up with "excuses" to stop the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', days after Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya wrote to him to consider suspending the march if Covid protocols could not be followed.

The yatra, which started in Kanyakumari on September 7 and will conclude in Kashmir, is in Haryana, after covering Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

"This yatra will go to Kashmir. Now, they have come out with a new idea. They wrote me a letter that Covid was spreading, stop the yatra," Gandhi said while addressing a gathering in Ghasera village in Haryana's Nuh district.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra led by him entered the state through Nuh on Wednesday after its Rajasthan leg. "Now, they are coming up with excuses to stop the

is switched off in Parliament," Gandhi said, and added that "this is why we had to take out this yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir."

The yatra has been going on for more than 100 days and in this people from all faiths, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, and men, women, and children have taken part, he said at Ghasera, which is also known as Gandhi gram as Mahatma Gandhi had visited it during the Partition and asked Muslims not to migrate to Pakistan.

The yatra has spread the message of love and brotherhood, the Congress leader said, reiterating that he is "opening a shop of love in the market of hate." "When a farmer faces a problem, entire India protects him, if a labourer faces any difficulty, then the entire country helps him out. We want such an India... We do not want RSS, Narendra Modi's hate-filled India. Nobody wants it," he said.

This country is not of the coward but of the brave, and this was shown by the yatra, which has completed 3,000 km, Gandhi said.

"I did not walk alone. Thousands of people walked with me," he said.

This yatra has shown that this country is not scared of anyone and "the day this country stands together, hatred and violence will come to an end," the Congress leader said.

The march started with the slogan 'woh todenge, hum jodenge', "but we have to go a step ahead and say, hum 'unhe todne nahin denge' (we will not allow them to break)", Gandhi said.

Senior Congress leaders including Randeep Singh Surjewala, Bhupinder Singh Hooda, K C Venugopal, Kumari Selja, Haryana Congress chief Udai Bhan and Swaraj India chief Yogendra Yadav were also present in the yatra.

The yatra on its second day in Haryana started from Malab village in Nuh and several people, including children, joined it as it passed through Ghasera and Sohna in Gurugram district. It will halt for the night at Lakhwas Sohna before moving to Faridabad district on Friday.

Accusing the government of selectively picking on the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh at a press conference here said Mandaviya's letter to Rahul Gandhi over following Covid protocols in the march was based on concerns raised by three BJP MPs and not on the advice of experts or scientists.

"If there is advice of experts or any protocol is to be followed on the advice of any medical health, public health or scientific institution, it becomes our responsibility to follow that. We will oppose a political protocol but not a scientific protocol," he said Congress general secretary in-charge communications Ramesh said Mandaviya in his letter to Gandhi cited concerns raised by three BJP MPs over the spread of coronavirus.

"The letter is not based on any scientific advice or advice from experts, but on basis of letters of MPs, and the health minister suddenly writes to Rahul Gandhi," Ramesh said.

He asserted that each "Bharatyatri" taking part in the yatra is fully vaccinated and "many have also got a booster dose."

"There has not been a single case of Covid in the Bharat Jodo Yatra so far," he said.

NEW DELHI: Amid a spurt in Covid cases in China and some other countries, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday cautioned people against complacency and urged them to wear masks in crowded places, while also directing officials to strengthen surveillance measures, especially at international airports.

At a high-level meeting, Modi reiterated that "Covid is not over yet" and advised states to audit Covid-specific facilities to ensure operational readiness of hospital infrastructure, including oxygen cylinders, PSA plants, ventilators and human resources.

Prime Minister Modi urged everyone to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour, including wearing masks in crowded public places, at all times, especially in view of the upcoming festive season, according to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

He also urged that precautionary doses may be encouraged especially for vulnerable and elderly groups.

During the meeting to assess the COVID-19 situation in the country, the preparedness of health infrastructure and logistics, the status of the vaccination campaign in

the country and the emergence of new variants and their public health implication, Modi directed officials to ramp up testing and also genomic sequencing efforts.

States have been asked to share a larger number of samples with the designated INSACOG Genome Sequencing Laboratories (IGSLs) for genome sequencing on a daily basis, the PMO said. This will

support the timely detection of newer variants, if any, circulating in the country and facilitate undertaking requisite public health measures, it said.

'Step up surveillance, wear masks': Union Health Minister Prime Minister Modi cautioned against complacency and advised strict vigil.

He reiterated that "Covid is not over yet" and directed officials to strengthen the ongoing surveillance measures, especially at international airports, the state-

ment said.

Modi stressed the need to ensure that the entire Covid infrastructure at all levels is maintained at a high level of preparedness in terms of equipment, processes and human resources.

The prime minister also advised states to audit Covid-specific facilities to ensure operational readiness of hospital infrastructure, including oxygen cylinders, PSA plants, ventilators and

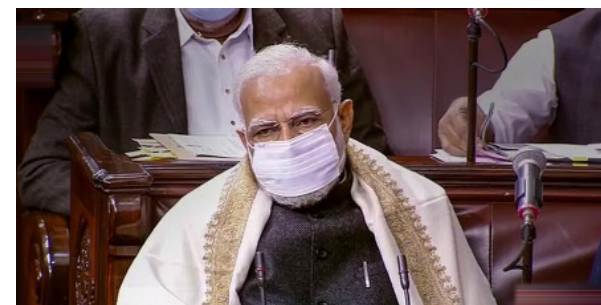
with average daily cases falling to 153 and weekly positivity down to 0.14 per cent in the week ending December 22.

However, 5.9 lakh daily average cases have been reported globally in the last six weeks.

Modi was informed that there is adequate availability with regard to medicines, vaccines and hospital beds. He also advised regular monitoring of prices and availability of essential medicines.

Covid danger lurks again, put on your masks, warn experts. Highlighting the globally appreciated work of frontline healthcare workers, Prime Minister Modi exhorted them to continue working in the same selfless and dedicated manner, according to the statement.

The meeting chaired by Modi was attended by Home Minister Amit Shah, Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur, Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare Bharati Pravin Pawar, Principal Secretary to Prime Minister PK Mishra, NITI



yatra. Wear masks, stop the yatra, Covid is spreading, these are all excuses," he said.

Union Health Minister Mandaviya on Tuesday wrote to former Congress president Gandhi and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot to consider suspending the yatra if Covid protocols could not be followed.

Targeting the BJP, which is in power at the Centre and in Haryana, Gandhi said it is scared of the truth. "Hindustan ki shakti say, Hindustan ki Sachai say, yeh log dar gaye hai, yeh sachai hai (they have got scared of power and truth of the country. This is the truth)," the former Congress chief said, adding that "we do not want RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi's hate-filled India."

They are trying to spread fear and hatred in the country, he alleged.

Understand the character of Modi, when anyone stands against him, be it, farmers who protested against the now-repealed three farm laws, he starts running in the opposite direction, Gandhi alleged. "You recognise (him). Whenever anyone stands against him, Modi does not face him, (he) runs away and leaves the field," Gandhi said.

The BJP government is also trying to suppress the (opposition) Congress' voice in Parliament and this is also a reason why this yatra was taken out, Gandhi said.

The Winter Session of Parliament began on December 7 and will end on December 23, a week ahead of schedule. "If we want to speak in Parliament or raise an issue such as the Rafale jet matter, demonetisation, GST (Goods and Services Tax) or regarding hatred spreading in the country, do you know what happens? The mic is switched off...keep on speaking, (but) no one will hear," he said.

"The TV camera's direction is changed and the (Lok Sabha) speaker's face is visible and the mic

International B2B trade show from December 22

BHUBANESWAR: Over 150 exhibitors will take part in the Odisha Mining, Buildcon and Wood International Exhibition 2022, an exclusive international B2B trade show on global mining, construction and allied industry, to be held here from December 22 to 24. The international expo will feature products for mining, technology, construction and architecture.

Building material, wood and wood-working products will also be on display at the exhibition to be organised on 20,000 square metre space by the Futurex Trade Fair and Events Pvt Limited with support from the Ministry of MSME and All Odisha Contractors Association. The total number of products to be on display at the expo will be more than 1,000, said the organisers. The list of participants at the expo will include MR

Crushers, Propel, Volvo, Gainwell, Utkal Agro, Equipage Infracore, Electrotherm, Puzolana, Dynapac, Sany, Kobelco and Divine Empire among others.

"After organising successful international trade shows in SAARC, African and Middle-East countries for the last 12 years, we are organising the expo in Odisha and have received phenomenal support from the state in

this regard," said director of Futurex Group Namit Gupta.

The 2022 edition of this international exhibition will focus on numerous innovations and trends influencing the mining and construction equipment and furniture production sectors, he said. Contractors Association president Prabhat Das, Futurex project manager Soumo Roy and other delegates also spoke.



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Meta purges 23 million bad pieces of content on FB, Instagram in India in Nov

NEW DELHI: Meta on Thursday said it took down over 19.52 million pieces of content across 13 policies for Facebook and over 3.39 million pieces of content across 12 policies for Instagram in the month of November in India.

Between November 1-30, Facebook received 889 reports through the Indian grievance mechanism, and the company said it provided

review was needed, we reviewed content as per our policies, and we took action on 218 reports in total. The remaining 160 reports were reviewed but may not have been auctioned," Meta added. On Instagram, the company received 2,368 reports through the Indian grievance mechanism.

"Of these, we provided tools for users to resolve their issues in 1,124 cases," the company informed.

Of the other 1,244 reports where specialised review was needed, Meta reviewed content and took action on 850 reports in total. The remaining 394 reports on Instagram were reviewed but may not have been auctioned.

Under the new IT Rules 2021, big digital and social media platforms, with more than 5 million users, have to publish monthly compliance reports. "We measure the number of pieces of content (such as posts, photos, videos or comments) we take action on for going against our standards. Taking action could include removing a piece of content from Facebook or Instagram or covering photos or videos that may be disturbing to some audiences with a warning," said Meta.

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tools for users to resolve their issues in 511 cases.

These include pre-established channels to report content for specific violations, self-remediation flows where they can download their data, avenues to address account hacked issues etc, said Meta in its monthly report in compliance with the IT (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

"Of the other 378 reports where specialised

Reliance Retail buys B2B wholesaler METRO India for Rs 2,850 crore

NEW DELHI: Reliance Industries Ltd's (RIL) retail arm Reliance Retail Ventures Limited (RRVL) on Thursday signed definitive agreements to acquire a 100 per cent equity stake in METRO Cash & Carry India Pvt Ltd. ('METRO India') for a total cash consideration of Rs 2,850 crore, subject to closing adjustments. The acquisition by the conglomerate run by billionaire Mukesh Ambani seeks to strengthen its dominant position in India's mammoth retail sector.

The transaction is subject to certain regulatory and other customary closing conditions and is expected

METRO India, we are selling a growing and profitable wholesale business in a very dynamic market at the right time. This, on one hand, will benefit both our customers, and our employees, for whose loyalty and performance we are very grateful, and on the other hand, it will enable METRO to focus on accelerating growth in the remaining country portfolio."

The Reliance Group recently launched its fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brand "Independence" in Gujarat, for staples, processed foods, beverages and other daily essentials. The new brand, launched by Reliance Consumer Products, a subsidiary of RRVL, will take on established players such as Hindustan Unilever, ITC, Patanjali and Adani Wilmar.

Reliance is India's biggest brick-and-mortar retailer with over 16,600 stores, and a strong wholesale unit would further deepen its operations in India. Metro is a leading international specialist in wholesale and food retail in over 30 countries.

Metro Cash & Carry, its wholesale division, entered India in 2003 and currently operates 31 wholesale distribution centres across the country, serving business customers only. Its sells products such as fruits and vegetables, general groceries, electronics, household goods and apparel to clients like hotels, and restaurants as well as offices and companies, small retailers and Kirana stores.

Reliance Retail, the oil-to-telecom conglomerate's retail arm, is ranked 56th amongst the top global retailers with USD 18 billion in revenues. It is the world's second-fastest-growing retail company behind only South Korea's Coupang.

Indian retail is a Rs 60 lakh crore market with food and grocery constituting 60 per cent of it. Organised retail is expected to be 12 per cent of the entire retail segment.

Reliance already has a 20 per cent market share in the organised food and grocery business, with a store count nearly triple that of its nearest competitor 'More' in the segment.

The B2B segment is considered to be a low-margin business and multinationals such as Carrefour have exited from the country.

E-commerce major Flipkart Group has acquired a 100 per cent stake in Walmart India Pvt Ltd, which operates the Best Price cash-and-carry business. Earlier, in August 2020 Reliance announced a Rs 24,713-crore deal to acquire the retail business of the Kishore Biyani-led Future group.

The deal was to acquire 19 Future group companies operating in the retail, wholesale, logistic and warehousing segments. The deal was called off by Reliance Industries in April this year after it failed to get lenders' support.

international specialist in wholesale and food retail in over 30 countries.

Metro Cash & Carry, its wholesale division, entered India in 2003 and currently operates 31 wholesale distribution centres across the country, serving business customers only.

Its sells products such as fruits and vegetables, general groceries, electronics, household goods and apparel to clients like hotels, and restaurants as well as offices and companies, small retailers and Kirana stores.

Reliance Retail, the oil-to-telecom conglomerate's retail arm, is ranked 56th amongst the top global retailers with USD 18 billion in revenues. It is the world's second-fastest-growing retail company behind only South Korea's Coupang.

Indian retail is a Rs 60 lakh crore market with food and grocery constituting 60 per cent of it. Organised retail is expected to be 12 per cent of the entire retail segment.



to complete by March 2023.

Through this acquisition, Reliance Retail gets access to a wide network of METRO India stores located in prime locations across key cities, a large base of registered kiranas and other institutional customers, a strong supplier network and some of the global practices implemented by METRO in India, RIL said in a statement

METRO India, a wholly-owned subsidiary of German company Metro AG, started operations in India in 2003 as the first company to introduce a cash-and-carry wholesale business format in the country and currently operates 31 large format stores across 21 cities with about 3,500 employees. It also includes METRO India's real estate portfolio that includes 6 store-occupied properties.

The multi-channel B2B cash & carry wholesaler has reached over 3 million B2B customers in India, of which 1 million are frequently buying customers, through its store network and eB2B app, the company claims.

The acquisition, according to RIL, will also strengthen Reliance Retail's physical store footprint and ability to better serve consumers and small merchants by leveraging synergies and efficiencies across supply chain networks, technology platforms and sourcing capabilities.

In the financial year 2021/22 (FY ended September 2022), METRO India generated sales of Rs 7700 crore (• 926 million), its best sales performance since its market entry into India.

Speaking about this investment, Isha Ambani, Director, Reliance Retail Ventures Limited, said, "We believe that METRO India's healthy assets combined with our deep understanding of the Indian merchant / kirana ecosystem will help offer a differentiated value proposition to small businesses in India."

Steffen Greubel, CEO of METRO AG, said, "With

Former Niti Aayog VC Arvind Panagariya cautions against cutting trade ties with China

NEW DELHI: Amid demands for snapping trade ties with China for its transgressions on the border, former Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Arvind Panagariya has opined that cutting trade with Beijing at this juncture would amount to sacrificing India's potential economic growth.

Instead, Panagariya suggested that India should try to enter into free trade agreements (FTA) with countries such as the UK and the European Union to expand its trade.

"Engaging China in a trade war at this juncture will mean sacrificing a considerable part of our potential growth purely on economic grounds, it will be unwise to take any action in response to it (transgressions on the border)," the eminent economist said.

Indian and Chinese troops clashed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh on December 9

and the face-off resulted in "minor injuries to a few personnel from both sides", according to the Indian Army.

Panagariya, currently a professor of economics at Columbia University, said both countries can play the trade sanctions game but the ability of a USD 17 trillion economy (China) to inflict injury on a USD 3 trillion economy (India) is far greater than the reverse.

"Now there are some who want trade sanctions on China to 'punish' it for its transgressions on the border if we try to punish China, it will not sit back, as amply illustrated by its response to sanctions by even the mighty United States," he observed.

Panagariya pointed out that even a large economy such as the US has not been very successful with its sanctions either against China or even Russia.

"Its close ally, the EU, has had to pay a very high price for the sanctions against Russia (GDP: USD 1.8 trillion only). So, this is a very slippery slope," he observed.

The trade deficit, the difference between imports and exports, between India and China touched USD 51.5 billion during April-October this fiscal.

The deficit during 2021-22 had jumped to USD 73.31 billion as compared to 44.03 billion in 2020-21, according to the latest government data. According to the data, imports during April-October this fiscal stood at USD 60.27 billion, while exports aggregated at USD 8.77 billion.

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IOC selects Reliance Jio's managed network services for its petrol pumps

NEW DELHI: Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation's largest oil firm, has selected Reliance Jio's managed network services to connect a fifth of its petrol pump network. Jio will connect 7,200 IOC sites with SD-WAN managed service solution, zero-touch provisioning and 24x7 real-time monitoring, the firm said in a statement Thursday.

"Jio wins IOC order for providing SD-WAN solution that will power IOC's retail automation and critical business processes, such as payment processing, daily price updates, remote desktop protocol (RDP) software and network monitoring with enterprise-grade connectivity, Quality of Service (QoS) and 24x7 support across 28 states and 8 union territories," it said in a statement. JioBusiness, the enterprise arm of Reliance Jio Infocomm Ltd will be deploying and managing SD-WAN (Software Defined Wide Area Network) for IOC across its 7,200 retail outlets for a period of 5 years.

Speaking on the win, Prateek Pashine, Head Enterprise, Reliance Jio said, "We look

Explaining further, Panagariya said it so happens that for many products India imports, China is the cheapest supplier so New Delhi buys them from Beijing.

ALSO READ | Indian armed forces' bravery, valour in Galwan, Tawang commendable: Rajnath

It also happens that for goods India wants to export, China does not offer New Delhi the best price.

"So, we sell them to other trade partners such as the US. The fact that this results in a trade deficit with China and trade surplus with the US should be no reason for worry," Panagariya said.

To reduce the trade deficit with China, Panagariya suggested that the idea ought to expand trade faster with other trading partners rather than cutting it with Beijing through a blunt instrument such as trade sanctions.



"We should take advantage of India's excellent growth prospects for the next decade and concentrate on growing the economy bigger as fast as possible. Once we are the third largest economy, our sanctions threats are likely to carry greater credibility," he said.

Asked if can India tame its widening overall trade deficit, he said the appropriate indicator of external imbalance from the viewpoint of macroeconomic and financial stability is the current-account deficit as it measures the increase in our liabilities abroad.

ALSO READ | Tawang clash: India Caucus bats for robust ties with US

According to Panagariya, while movements in the current-account balance give him no reason for concern, as a fast-growing economy, it is even desirable for India to borrow up to 2 to 3 per cent of GDP abroad to finance its investments.

"We may end up with a current-account deficit between 2 to 3 per cent in the current fiscal years but this too is well within our tolerance limit and poses no threat to macroeconomic stability," he noted.

In 2020-21, India had a current-account surplus of 0.9 per cent of the GDP while in 2021-22, India had a current-account deficit of 1.2 per cent of the GDP.

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Speaking on the win, Prateek Pashine, Head Enterprise, Reliance Jio said, "We look

forward to support IOC's digital transformation journey by implementing the largest SD-WAN network in the country with our 'Made in India' managed network solution".

"Our extensive experience in large-scale deployments equips us with the technical expertise to support IOC in achieving higher performance benchmarks across their network and leverage Jio's connectivity at each of the 7,200 sites," he said.

This will be one of the largest deployments of SD-WAN solutions in India across any industry as well as in the oil and gas industry across Asia.

Currently, the solution deployment is in an advanced stage with 2,000-plus retail outlets already onboarded on Jio's SD-WAN set-up, he said.

WAN links are currently deployed by Jio in offices, factories, and warehouses in various geographies for customers across government, banks, and large and small businesses.

Unadkat and Mominul make memorable comebacks, Umesh and Ashwin shine on an up-and-down pitch

Dhaka: Every time Bangladesh started to build a partnership, either they would self-destruct or India would find a way to break through. Five of the first six partnerships read 39, 43, 48, 42 and 41. None of the top seven Bangladesh batsmen made less than 15, so everyone got at least some sort of start. But only one of them went on to make more than 26 – former captain Mominul Haque, who constructed a patient 84 on comeback. Only a couple of the disappointments could be put down to the pitch playing tricks or the ball doing a bit. The result was that after losing the toss, India ran

through Bangladesh for only 227 just over halfway into the third session on the first day of the second Test in Dhaka. Perhaps it was as well that India lost the toss, because stand-in captain KL Rahul said they were not sure what to make of the pitch. There had been variable bounce, exaggerated at times, in the couple of ODIs India had played here earlier this month, although runs had been scored in the second game. The pitch for this Test, moreover, had a nice green cover, much more than the one for the first Test in Chattogram had. Then again, the thin grass lining in Chattogram had only

served to prevent the placid pitch from breaking up. In the end, India took a punt on the grass and left out Kuldeep Yadav despite his eight-wicket haul in the first Test, instead handing Jaydev Unadkat his much-desired second Test cap, 12 years after his first. Unadkat had waited since 2010 for his first Test wicket; he had to wait another 23 deliveries into his first spell. With some luck, India could have struck much earlier than the 15th over of the innings from Unadkat. But Umesh Yadav, in particular, and Mohammed Siraj went past the edges of Najmul Hossain Shanto and Zakir



Hasan numerous times. There was hardly any swing, but there was plenty of movement off that was a somewhat damp track to start with. And even after the 70th over, the seamers would keep finding something off the pitch, even though the magnitude

would drop. It was Mirpur after all, though, so the zip wasn't quite there. But Unadkat found awkward bounce almost immediately with his height and high release. He began hitting the glove or the splice regularly, the leading edges began to pop up,

leaped and cut in alarmingly at Chattogram debut centurion Zakir Hasan, who had no time to get out of the way and lobbed it to the slip cordon. From hereon until the sixth wicket to fall, Mehidy Hasan Miraz,

and it seemed only a matter of time before the maiden Test wicket arrived. Soon enough, a short of a length delivery Bangladesh would threaten to develop a partnership and barring a Mushfiqur Rahim, all would bring about their own downfall. Shanto padded up to what he thought was an offbreak that would spin away. But R Ashwin had bowled it with the seam parallel to the stumps, and the ball barely spun. Shakib Al Hasan took on the left-arm spin of Axar Patel, but first ball after lunch, he decided to welcome Umesh back with a lofted boundary. This wasn't the pitch to be hitting on the up, that too right after a break, and the Bangladesh captain failed to clear

mid-off. Litton Das has been in fine nick of late, and he motored along at run a ball before clipping Ashwin straight to midwicket. As Bangladesh kept imploding, Unadkat earned himself his second Test wicket. In his time away from the Indian team, he has grown to work out truckloads of domestic batsmen on unresponsive pitches with one tireless spell after the other. Among his bag of tricks is to go round the wicket to the right-hander and try to move it away against the angle. He would get that delivery spot-on to Mushfiqur, who could do nothing more than nick it behind.

Playing entire WIPL in Mumbai being contemplated by BCCI

New Delhi: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is contemplating holding the Women's Indian Premier League (WIPL) in Mumbai completely, an experiment that will see an encore of last year's IPL, the league phase of which was totally held in the city. The decision has not been formal as yet but a member of the IPL Governing Council spilled the beans on the plans. "That is certainly an option. We have seen how successful the IPL was last year and we are certainly considering the proposal," a member of the IPL Governing Council told Cricbuzz on Wednesday ahead of the IPL mini-auction in Kochi. The five-team WIPL, being launched this year, is tentatively scheduled for March 3 to 26 with the IPL following it from April 1. That the Mumbai option is being explored seriously came to light when the BCCI officials



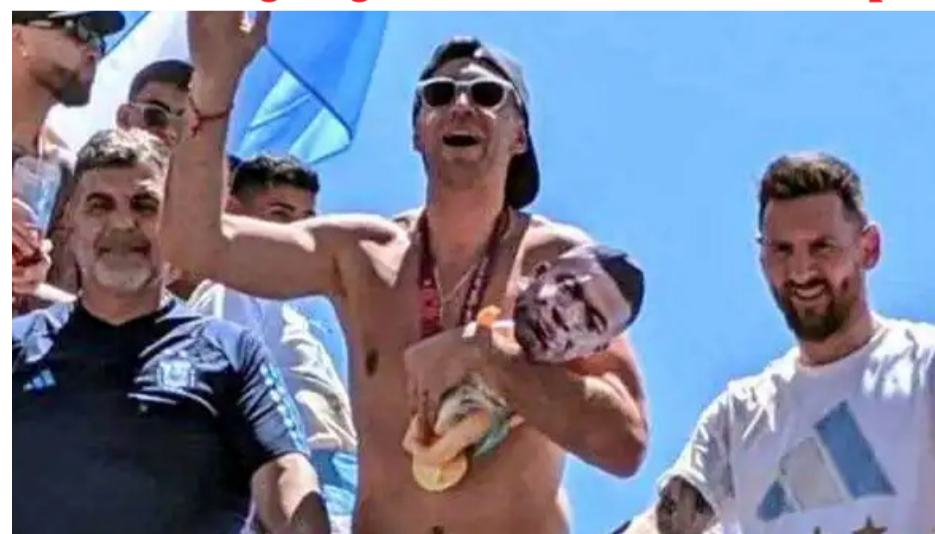
did some due diligence and inquired about the feasibility of staging it in the city with the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA). Multiple BCCI and IPL officials have got in touch with the MCA to see whether the experiment can be worked out. A reason for the exploration of Mumbai option is that it will curtail a lot of travel. The WIPL is still an unknown commodity and the BCCI is not sure how it will be embraced by the stakeholders - mainly the broadcasters and the franchises. While the tender for the media rights is out, the BCCI is yet to announce how it

will go about selling the teams. Half a dozen parties, including some popular IPL franchises have evinced serious interest but they want to see if the league will be financially viable, if not exactly profitable. The Mumbai plan is a new addition to the two other proposals that the BCCI was initially considering and discussed at the BCCI AGM in October. One is about selling the teams zone-wise and holding the matches at the non-IPL centres like Dharamsala/Jammu in North, Pune/Rajkot in West, Indore/Nagpur/Raipur in Central, Ranchi/Cuttack in East,

Kochi/Vizag in South and Guwahati in North-East.

The other option was to have the games at venues that currently host the IPL. Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Kolkata are the shortlisted centres. The AGM authorized the BCCI office-bearers and IPL Governing Council members to finalise the plan for the 22-game league and collectively the office-bearers and IPL officials seem to have added Mumbai option to the project. The format, according to the AGM note: "Each team will play with each other twice during the season. The team finishing at the top of the table after the end of league matches will directly go into the finals, while the team finishing second and third will play the eliminator after the end of the regular season. The winners of the eliminator will qualify for the final."

Emiliano Martinez MOCKS Kylian Mbappe alongside Lionel Messi during Argentina's FIFA World Cup win parade



New Delhi: Goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez mocked Kylian Mbappe during Argentina's trophy parade by holding a baby doll with the France star's face on it. Shockingly, Lionel Messi was alongside Martinez at the moment but the 35-year-old took no action as the pair

celebrated Argentina's win over France in the FIFA World Cup 2022 final from penalty shootouts. However, this was not the first time Martinez took a shot on Mbappe. Earlier, the Argentina players celebrated all night after the final match and were heard singing, "a

minute's silence for Mbappe, who is dead!". Earlier, it all began when Martinez had some stiff words for Mbappe who earlier this year claimed that South American football is not on the same level as European football. The forward said: "The advantage we have in

Europe is that we play among ourselves with high-level matches all the time, such as the Nations League."

"When we arrive at the World Cup, we are ready, whereas Brazil and Argentina do not have this level in South America. Football is not as advanced as in Europe. That's why at the last World Cups, it's always the Europeans who win."

After Mbappe's opinion on South American football, Martinez said, "He doesn't know enough about football. He never played in South America. When you don't have this experience, it may be better not to talk about it. But it doesn't matter. We are a great team, recognised as such."



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