



## BJP MPs seek Goyal intervention

New Delhi(KCN): A delegation of BJP MPs from Odisha on Wednesday sought personal intervention of Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Piyush Goyal to resolve the issues on alleged mismanagement and corrupt practices in the paddy procurement operations in the State.

The MPs have submitted a memorandum to the Union Minister alleging gross irregularities in the paddy procurement process by the Odisha Government. "We, the public representatives of Odisha with deep concern, would like to draw your attention over the scuttling of paddy procurement in Odisha by the State Government causing great distress to

Odisha farmers," the MPs said. Earlier, the MPs had written to Mr.Goyal in March 2021, based on which a fact-finding team of senior officials from Department of Food & Public Distribution (DFPD) was sent to Odisha to oversee the process of paddy procurement operation. The team visited various districts from March 21 to 25 and its observations and recommendations/ suggestions were also



submitted. The observations of the team about paddy procurement operation in Odisha are serious in nature and points out the malice/corrupt and fraudulent practices prevalent in Regulated Markets Committees (RMC)/ Primary Agriculture Credit Societies (PACS)/Paddy Procurement Centres (PPCs), they said. "The issues pointed out by the fact finding team about shortcomings in the paddy

procurement operations in Odisha are still persistent and continue to mar the procurement process," they alleged. According to the memorandum, in all

gible for the scheme. In its compliance report to the findings of

## Congress demands answers from PM over alleged land deals near Ram Temple, seeks probe

NEW DELHI(Cong): The Congress Wednesday demanded answers from Prime Minister Narendra Modi into

Rahul Gandhi led the party's charge, saying on Twitter that "Hindutva robs under the guise of religion". Over the past few

news report which claimed that MLAs, mayor, relatives of commissioner, SDM and DIG bought land in Ayodhya after the

Mallikarjun Kharge also sought to raise the issue but as he stood to speak the House was adjourned sine die.



reports of relatives of BJP leaders and government officials allegedly "usurping" land near the upcoming Ram Temple in Ayodhya, and said the matter should be thorough probed.

days, he has often invoked the term 'Hindutva' to attack the BJP. "Hindu follows the path of truth. Hindutva robs under the guise of religion," he said in a tweet in Hindi, tagging the

Supreme Court announced the verdict in the Ram-janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute, clearing the way for construction of the Ram temple. Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha

Congress general secretary and chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala termed it a "land scam", saying there is an "open loot of land inside Ayodhya city by people connected to the BJP".

"Respected Modi ji, when will you open your mouth on this open loot? The Congress party, the people of the country and Ram Bhakts are asking these questions. Is this not treason? Is it anything less than treason? The BJP is now running the business of

## Minister invites industrialists to invest in Rajasthan

Kolkata (KCN): Shanti Kumar Dhariwal, Minister for Urban Development & Housing,

Sanjay Saboo, SSN Kaul of CII, Sanjay Saboo, RS Tomar, Sitaram Agarwal, Suresh Poddar



also addressed and shared their good experience in Rajasthan and said there is no Inspector Raj. MSME need not take any licence for 3 years. Narayan Jain famous Income Tax Advocate presented the book "How to Handle Income Tax Problems" written by him with Dilip Loyalka to Shri Shanti Kumar Dhariwal, Minister for Urban Development & Housing, Govt of Rajasthan. Jain informed him that he originally belongs to Churu in Rajasthan. The first

edition of the book was inaugurated by Dr Manmohan Singh and later on by Shri Pranab Mukherjee and other Finance Ministers also. The Minister appreciated for the sincere efforts of authors Jain and Loyalka for writing the book in simple language and in Question Answer form.

Bishambhar Newar, BL Dugar, Pawan Paharia, Rajendra Bardia, Rakesh Nahar and others were also present on the occasion.

## Over 5 lakh houses under Awaas+ ineligible: Odisha government

BHUBANESWAR (KCN): The State government has ad-

defalcation of funds and other lapses in the flagship rural

State for Rural Development

Sadhvi Niranjan Jyoti on Tuesday, December 21, 2021, informed the Lok Sabha that Odisha had registered 13,20,945 households under Awaas+ survey of which only around 7,46,422 households remain eligible after due verification by the State.



mitted to the Centre that over five lakh households registered under Awaas+ for assistance under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMAY) were ineli-

gible for the scheme. In its compliance report to the findings of

Union Minister of

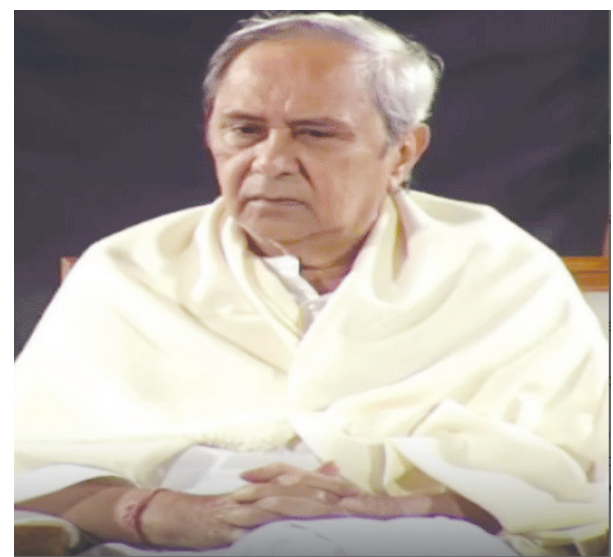
The Central team had detected that most of the ineligible households in the Awaas+ list have pucca houses. Earlier, the State Panchayati Raj Secretary DK Singh

## Livelihood Assistance @ 1K Each

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on

ciary covered under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana

Scheme (SFSS). Speaking on this occasion, the Chief Minister said "You are aware that the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the whole world including Odisha since last year. Fortunately, we have been able to tackle the pandemic in Odisha with your help."



Wednesday launched distribution of livelihood assistance of Rs 1,000 to each benefi-

(BSKY), National Food Security Act (NFSA) and State Food Security

The State Government's efforts to save people's lives have been very successful. However, the pandemic has affected the economic and social well-being of all people, especially the poor. So,

the livelihood assistance has been announced to help the poor people, he said. All BSKY beneficiaries in the State will get this assistance. About 96 lakh families in the State will be benefited from it. The State Government will spend Rs 960 crore from its own resources for this purpose, said Mr.Patnaik. He has asked officials to complete the distribution process in seven days. The State Government has yesterday released Rs 350 crore to all 30 districts. CONTINUED ON: P-7





### Uncertainty

Amiya Kumar Sahoo

In the time of uncertainty  
And keeping in view of our diversity  
We all stand together with ability  
Support each other silently  
For survival by lessening insecurity

It may be general or pandemic fear  
Our coping mechanism through protective gear  
Helped us to remind us the creator  
Mind spins its own logic  
Taught us the survival tactic  
Made us to realize the thin line  
Between existence and non existence  
Up till now we were thinking smart  
Fiddled with nature by our act  
When nature showed its fury  
Now everyone is in hurry  
It is reflection of our tampering  
With the fine balance amongst different being  
When the balance got lost  
We are moving from pillar to post

There are thousands of galaxies  
We are just a miniscule in the process  
Thinking as if, the greatest beings  
A constant fear pushed us to the corners

Thousands are lost and gone  
Time has come to express our gratitude  
As we all are still alive and breathe  
By the grace of Divine force  
Let's pray for each other  
For our near and dear  
For entire globe all together  
Our combined prayer not only heard  
But also be answered  
We could see a fearless world  
Joint Secretary, Revenue, Deptt,

### Lover

Shreeta Sikruti Kuanr

You are brighter  
Than my crayons  
And darker than my thoughts



Denser than my tears  
And volatile as my anger

I love you  
Among all of the strokes I took  
In an attempt  
To amplify my pain  
In your absence by the window  
Where we made love

And to me you are the hymn  
The poet died writing to

I'm puzzled  
And so is this poem  
No beginning no end  
The story of us  
Stays the same  
And I cannot lie over my stare  
I wished to paint you  
With flowers in your hand  
And giggle over your lips  
You were a poet to me  
And I wanted to die as  
A poem in your arms  
Following your trails and turns  
I wished to look back, but  
I was more of Orpheus  
I thought of the Lover's  
I loved, love and will love you

If you cry over my laughter  
If you laugh over my cry

I'll paint you  
Like the lily on spring lake  
Dividing my pain into segments  
And crushing my skin  
To let my heart beat with you.

### Sooner is Better .....



Jennice Mishra

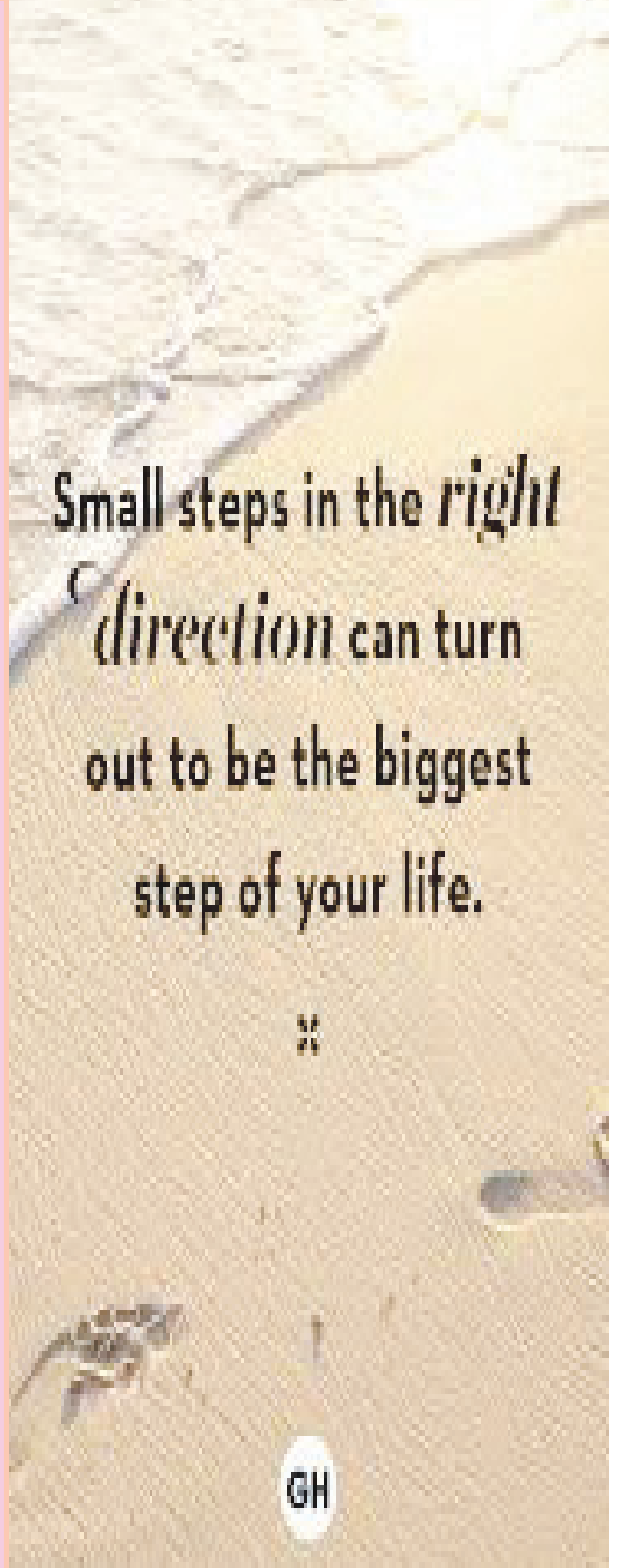
Have you ever felt the pain  
Or it's just the absence of pleasure...  
Have you ever experience something  
Dying inside you  
Or it's just the deprivation of  
Sensory stimulus...

Yes life sometimes put you in  
That crossroad ....  
Where nothing is important and  
No body matters ....

Love, faith, dream, conviction  
Everything shatters....  
You question your very existenc.  
Still no answer ....

That's the point to be reached my dear  
If you are lucky enough...  
Sooner is better ....

Std-XI, DAV Public School,  
Pokhariut, Bhubaneswar.



Small steps in the right  
direction can turn  
out to be the biggest  
step of your life.

## See a Rare Watercolor of a Black Woman Living in Edinburgh in the Late 18th Century

A small watercolor recently acquired by the National Galleries of Scotland could be one of the earliest known portraits of a Black per-

son by a Scottish artist, notes a statement. Painted by David Allan between the mid-1780s and early 1790s, the work on paper—titled Edinburgh Milkmaid With Butter Churn—depicts a woman in a white and blue dress. She stands alone, barefoot, in the center of an Edinburgh street, resting one hand on her hip while locking eyes with the viewer. Based on the large vessel at her feet, scholars have concluded that the portrait's subject was likely a servant or milkmaid. Clues regarding her name and other identifying details are scarce, but experts are researching the work and hope to uncover more information about it in the months to come, BBC News reports. Biographical details about the portrait's painter are more readily available. Born in the Scottish town of Alloa in 1744, the artist relocated to Italy in 1767, remaining there for the next decade or so, according to the National Galleries (a consortium of five Scottish museums). His most famous paintings from this period depict scenes from classical antiquity, including Cleopatra Weeping Over the Ashes of Mark Antony (1771) and Hector's Farewell From Andromache (1773), reports Shanti Escalante-De Mattei for



ARTNews. A man in a blue striped suit, carrying a long metal rod and a bucket, walks in front of a burning building David Allan, An Edinburgh Fireman, circa 1785 Courtesy of the National Galleries of Scotland While abroad, Allan developed a knack for sketching bustling street life in urban hubs such as Rome and Naples. Upon his return to Scotland in 1779, he became one of the first artists to paint scenes of Scottish life from "across the social hierarchy," per the statement. Allan settled in Edinburgh and dedicated him-

self to creating watercolors and aquatints of ordinary Scottish people. His Edinburgh Characters series, begun in 1788, features indi-



vidual portraits of soldiers, coalmen, fishwives, lacemakers, salt vendors, firemen, maids and other workers, posed with the tools of their trade and framed against the backdrop of the contemporary city. The artist often used these generic "characters" to populate his panoramic renderings of Edinburgh's busy streets, including High Street From the Netherbow (1793). Despite Allan's propensity for drafting generic "types" of people, curators believe that the recently acquired watercolor was based on a real model. As researchers say in the statement, the milkmaid's detailed facial features and clothing indicate that the work is "clearly a portrait of a specific person." Edinburgh Milkmaid With Butter Churn is currently undergoing restoration but will eventually go on display at the National Galleries. "We are so pleased to bring this remarkable, rare and extraordinary watercolor into Scotland's national collection," says curator Christopher Baker in the statement. "It is an incredibly striking and special work, one which we believe will be enjoyed by many and, we hope, lead to new research on its background and most importantly the story of the woman depicted." A side-profile, full-length portrait of a woman with a red kerchief, carrying a basket of fish on her back and standing on a beachfront David Allan, An Edinburgh Fishwife, circa 1785 Courtesy of the National Galleries of Scotland Researchers encourage anyone with useful information about the watercolor or the sitter's identity to contact the National Galleries.

### Nora McGreevy

People of color appear frequently in European early modern fine art but are often relegated to marginal or subservient roles. Milkmaid is somewhat unique in that its subject takes center stage in the composition. The woman pictured in Allan's watercolor could have been one of the many people of African descent who settled in Europe during the 18th century as a result of the transatlantic slave trade. Scottish scholars have been slow to reckon with their country's participation in the slave trade, wrote Alasdair Lane for NBC News last year. But many Scots made their fortunes through the capture, sale, deportation and exploitation of African people throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, notes the National Library of Scotland. After Scotland united with England in 1707, Scots played an influential role in British colonies, particularly Guyana and Jamaica. As historian Stephen Mullen writes for the Centre for the Study of the Legacies of British Slavery, "[W]ealth poured into Scotland from the labor and suffering of enslaved Africans in Jamaica." By the time that Allan painted this work in the late 18th century, many formerly enslaved people in Scotland were fighting for their legal rights in the courts—including Joseph Knight, who was enslaved in Jamaica but moved to Scotland, reports Martin Hannan for the National. Knight won his freedom in a landmark case against his one-time enslaver, John Wedderburn of Balindean. After two appeals, the Scottish Supreme Court ruled in favor of Knight, effectively deeming slavery illegal in the country in 1778, according to the National Records of Scotland.



maica." By the time that Allan painted this work in the late 18th century, many formerly enslaved people in Scotland were fighting for their legal rights in the courts—including Joseph Knight, who was enslaved in Jamaica but moved to Scotland, reports Martin Hannan for the National. Knight won his freedom in a landmark case against his one-time enslaver, John Wedderburn of Balindean. After two appeals, the Scottish Supreme Court ruled in favor of Knight, effectively deeming slavery illegal in the country in 1778, according to the National Records of Scotland.



## CLASSIFIED

### CAUTION

Readers are advised to make appropriate enquiries while responding to advertisements in these columns. The Kalinga chronicle publication does not vouch for any claims made by the Advertisers. The Printer, Publisher, Editor and Owner of The Kalinga Chronicle Publications shall not be held responsible/ liable for any consequences, in case such claims are found to be false.



### AUTOMOBILE

**SALE**  
Kawasaki Bajaj in tiptop condition for sale. Contact: 2555328

**PURCHASE**  
Required a Marshal/Commandor / Boleto in good condition. Contact 2555763



### REAL ESTATE

**SALE**  
Flats ready for possession before Rathayatra at Puri near Seabeach for sale. Contact : 986-1078308

Residential plots at Pahala close to NH-5 and near Pata Railway Station, Bhubaneswar for immediate sale. Contact : 0674-2556733  
Residential plots at

### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENT TARIFF

Classified advertisements are released daily. The normal classified advertisement is charged @ Rs. 5/- per word up to maximum number of 50 words. Any extra word will be Rs. 8/- per word. The minimum charges for any classified advertisement is Rs. 100/-. The options for bold lettering and outlining are also available and are charged @ 7/- and 10/- per word respectively. Extra charges for photographs Rs.100/-. For Box No. Rs. 100/-

### HIRE

For hiring of Car / Jeep / Bus on monthly basis. Contact : 2555763



### BUSINESS

Saving 10,000/- for high return, extra earn and Foreign trip opportunity, 9238504001. Independent business work from home, training in Singapore, 9338014287.



### MATRIMONIAL

### BRIDE WANTED

Wanted bride for Khandayat Boy, 37plus, Caste no bar, 0674-2555763

### GROOM WANTED

Wanted Groom any service / business family for a Bramhin Girl. Contact 2555226

Gohira Chhak in front of CV Raman Engineering College beside NH-5, near Tamando. Contact : 9238891168

### PURCHASE

Simplex / Duplex building at BBSR contact : 9437002509

### ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Required Single / Double / Triple Stored North/East facing building at Puri. Contact 9437143483



### TOURS & TRAVELS

We provide luxury coach buses (16,25,32,41,52 seater) for Picnic, Excursion, Marriage. Maa Santoshi Travels, Contact : 9861079437  
For Luxury Passenger vehicle, Contact : Sagasity Tours & Travels, Acharya Vihar, Bhubaneswar, Ph. 2540219

### WANTED

Required Driver/Peon/Attendant/ Aya

Please Contact-8984600400

### ACCOMMODATION WANTED

Required double/Single/ Multi stored Bungalow type North or East Facing Independent building At-Nayapalli, Jayadev Vihar, V.S.S. Nagar, Mancheswar, Rasulgarh, Sallashree Vihar, Niladri Vihar.

Please Contact- 8338870595

## Phenomenal experience: Riteish Deshmukh praises Anil Kapoor, Anurag Kashyap's 'AK vs AK'

**NEW DELHI(K-CN):** Actor Riteish Deshmukh lauded Vikramaditya Motwane's 'AK vs AK' and termed the

blown!!! #AKvsAK is a phenomenal experience - @VikramMotwane take a bow my friend," tweeted

only you could do this, you are pure gold in this film but @HarshKapoor\_has outdone your entire performance in one

movie star and a film director who get into a public spat, following which the director retaliates by kidnapping the actor's



Netflix based film "a phenomenal experience". Deshmukh took to Twitter to share a poster of the movie, which features Anurag Kashyap and Anil Kapoor in lead roles. "Mind has been

Deshmukh. He then went on to heap praise on Kashyap, Kapoor, and his actor son Harshvardhan Kapoor who has a cameo in the film. "@anuragkashyap72 how good are you, @AnilKapoor Sir,

scene," the 'Housefull' actor's tweet further read. While Kapoor essays the role of a yesterday actor, Kashyap plays the role of a disgraced film director in the film. 'AK vs AK,' revolves around the story of a

daughter and films the search for her in real-time. The Netflix India Original film was released on the platform on December 24, which also happens to be Anil Kapoor's birthday.

## SC grants Ekta Kapoor interim protection from arrest in FIR over web series

**NEW DELHI(K-CN):** The Supreme Court granted interim protection to Ekta Kapoor.



preme Court on Thursday granted interim protection from arrest to TV producer Ekta Kapoor in an FIR against her for alleged objectionable content in her web series "XXX season 2". A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde granted in-

terim protection to Kapoor. She had moved the apex court after the Indore bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, in November this year, dismissed her petition seeking that a case filed against her for alleged objectionable content in web series "XXX season 2" be quashed. The High Court had dismissed a petition of Kapoor seeking quashing of a case registered against her for alleged obscenity in a web series produced by her. The complainant had alleged an episode of the series 'XXX uncensored' was obscene and caused annoyance to him, hurt his religious feelings and dishonored the Army. The case was registered at the Annapurna police station, Indore, under Sections 294 (Obscene acts and songs), 298 and 34 (Acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) of the India Penal Code and various relevant sections of the IT Act and the State Emblem Act.

## Appealing to fans' inner writers, Anupam Kher offers autographed book



**NEW DELHI:** Asking his fans to rejuvenate their inner writers, veteran actor Anupam Kher, offered

them to send his autographed book 'Your Best Day is Today' on Tuesday. Kher hopped on to Twitter and shared a

candid picture of him. Calling on his fans to give a suitable caption for the picture, he wrote "Mujhe meri ye tasveer pasand hai. (I

like this picture of mine) I will send an autographed copy of my latest book

#YourBestDayIsToday to the person whose caption for this pic I like the most!" Adding to the caption, he noted "Hindi or English - apka caption kisi bhi bhasha me chalega! Chaliye! Apne andar ke lekhak ko jagaiye!! (your caption will go in any language! Let's go! Wake up your inner writer,) with Hibiscus smiling face and heart-shaped smile emoticon.

## Warner Bros announces Chocolate Factory prequel titled 'Wonka' to release on March 17, 2023

(GNS Bureau) Moving ahead with

The project, which has a script from

Based on Roald Dahl's popular



"Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" prequel, titled "Wonka", Warner Bros has declared the release date of movie. As per media reports, Paul King of "Paddington" fame will tackle the movie, which will debut in theatres on March 17, 2023.

Simon Rich, will follow "a young Willy Wonka and his adventures prior to opening the world's most famous chocolate factory." David Heyman, whose credits includes the "Harry Potter" franchise and "Paddington", is backing the movie.

children's book "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory", the classic story follows a poor boy named Charlie, who is one of five youngsters to win a golden ticket to tour the world-renowned, yet highly secretive, chocolate factory run by Willy Wonka.

## Katrina's sister Isabelle Kaif to feature opposite Pulkit Samrat in 'Suswagatam Khushaamadeed'

(GNS Bureau) Isabelle Kaif to feature opposite Pulkit Samrat in Suswagatam Khush-aamadeed. Its a social entertainer with an

sister of actress Katrina Kaif, she took to Instagram to announce her upcoming project. She wrote, "Namaste - Aadaab Ab hogi

our chemistry is quite dhamakadaar. People on the set say that we look like a patakha together. Isabelle has brought fresh



underlying message on social harmony. In this film, Pulkit will essay the role of a Delhi boy, Aman, with Isabelle playing the role of Noor who hails from the city of Agra. Isabelle Kaif is a

jaldi aapse mulaqaat! So excited to share with you guys the first look of Suswagatam Khushaamadeed." Actor Pulkit Samrat said that, "I must say that

energy on the set. She's extremely hard-working and has impressed everyone on the set. She is stunning and brings a streak of innocence to her character. She has left me mesmerised."



## Hydrogen Fueled Life's Origins: Study

Today, life on Earth relies immensely on an external power source—namely, solar radiation—to provide the energy needed to forge bonds between atoms and assemble the complex organic compounds necessary for life.



Since photosynthesis didn't evolve until relatively late in the planet's history, scientists have long debated what source of energy the first organisms utilized, throwing everything from meteorites to lightning strikes into the proverbial ring. But the metabolism of the planet's first organisms may not have required an external source of energy. Under the conditions present in a hydrothermal vent, a core set of metabolic reactions unfolds spontaneously in line with the laws of thermodynamics, according to calculations published December 13 in *Frontiers of Microbiology*.

"The present data uncover a hitherto unique thermodynamic link between core biochemistry as a whole and the conditions of a geochemical environment known to have existed on the early Earth," writes biochemist John Allen, who has previously collaborated with the study's lead author William Martin but was not involved in this paper, in an email to *The Scientist*. He adds that the paper convincingly demonstrates that the chemical reactions plausibly performed by the earliest lifeforms near a hydrothermal vent release energy, and thus "will spontaneously move in the direction of synthesizing metabolic precursors."

See "Reconsidering Life's Origin" Hydrothermal vents, hot springs near fault lines on the ocean floor, were discovered 40

years ago, and soon after became recognized as environments conducive to the origin of life, as they are warm, rich with minerals, and contain physical and chemical gradients that facilitate reactions. In 2020, Martin and his group showed experimentally that, if kept in water in the presence of the nickel iron alloy awaruite overnight at 100°C, hydrogen gas (which is abundant in hydrothermal vents) will combine with carbon dioxide to form formate, acetate and pyruvate—the latter of which is one of the most central compounds of metabolism. Awaruite catalyzes the formation of pyruvate from hydrogen and carbon dioxide by acting as a reducing agent, allowing it to stand in for the suite of enzymes that usually construct the molecule stepwise in organisms.

The new work stems from Martin's curiosity as to "how big this problem of the origin of metabolism is. . . . How many reactions do we need to make all the basic components of life, from the elements on early Earth?"

Martin and his team had previously identified a core set of more than 400 metabolic reactions which would likely have been present in the Last Universal Common Ancestor (LUCA), the organism that gave rise to all extant life on Earth, and are needed to generate amino acids, nucleotides, and other essential cellular molecules. They next asked whether these reactions would have required an external energy source to proceed.

To find out, the team calculated the Gibbs free energy for each reaction—a thermodynamic measure of the energy needed for or released from a chemical reaction, assuming the surrounding temperature and pressure are kept stable and there are no external inputs. It turns out that under the conditions present in hydrothermal vents, "almost all of the reactions

Sophie Fessl

in the metabolism of the last universal common ancestor are downhill," says Martin—97 percent, to be exact. "That means there's a natural tendency of metabolism to unfold all by itself, under the right conditions from the elements," he continues. "You don't have to add any energy. The energy for life is within life itself."

For Allen, the findings are remarkable. "It means that you don't have to come up with ideas like lightning strikes. . . . The essential components of modern metabolism will assemble themselves from gases, primarily hydrogen and carbon dioxide, and in the atmosphere in the vicinity of hydrothermal vents." The hydrogen is key, Martin notes. "If we take hydrogen out, nothing works. If we add the amounts of hydrogen present today in modern hydrothermal vents, everything works," he says. In addition, the minerals within the vents' walls could have acted as catalysts for early metabolic reactions, as the awaruite did in previous experiments. "These first conditions want to unfold and go forward, but they won't unless the right catalysts are provided," he explains—such as awaruite, greigite, and magnetite, all of which form at hydrothermal vents and can donate electrons to accelerate reactions.

When the team mapped out how the reactions might interact, the results suggested that precursors for amino acids can be produced, as well as citric acid cycle intermediates and the first steps toward building other cellular components, including enzymatic cofactors and sugars. These reaction products could organize into self-catalyzing networks with the help of catalysts from the environment, says Martin, allowing a metabolic system to assemble, with all core reactions pushed along by hydrogen.

Eloi Camprubi-Casas, a biochemist at the Earth-Life Science Institute in Tokyo who was not involved in the work, tells *The Scientist* in an email that he regards this study as a "needed article in the origins field," adding that the findings suggest the few energy-requiring reactions identified by the team could have obtained the energy they need from the products of others, such as acetyl phosphates. In that way, these spontaneously synthesized molecules "could have acted as ATP primordial analogues."

Camprubi-Casas says he would have been interested in the energetics of forming nucleic acid strands in addition to the reactions studied, though he acknowledges that would have increased the amount of work "10-fold." Camprubi-Casas also says the study could have more thoroughly considered the possibility that products of some reactions could inhibit other reactions or compete for catalysts, "making both pathways incompatible at least in principle."

David Deamer, a biochemist at UC Santa Cruz who recently proposed a volcanic hot spring hypothesis for the origin of life but was not involved in the study, writes in an email to *The Scientist* that the "paper is impressive." He adds, "Particularly significant is that their argument is based firmly on thermodynamic principles that revealed how molecular hydrogen in solution could act as a reducing agent to drive multiple reactions related to metabolism." What is not yet addressed, he points out, is how the reactions were encapsulated in some form of microscopic compartment so that the developing networks could be maintained.

Sophie Fessl is a freelance science journalist. She has a PhD in developmental neurobiology from King's College London and a degree in biology from the University of Oxford. After completing...

## The Science Behind How Roundworms Spit

Steve Sando was peering through a microscope at a minuscule worm squirming to escape a light when he made a surprising discovery.



The type of worm he was observing, *Caenorhabditis elegans*, uses a muscular pump to swallow up tasty microbes from its surroundings. But when a worm was exposed to light, Sando noticed one day in early 2014, that suction reversed course—jetting liquid out of the worm's tiny, transparent throat. As he watched the little creature make this movement, the first thought that came to mind was, "Oh my god, it must be spitting," recalls Sando, then a doctoral student working under MIT molecular geneticist and neurobiologist Robert Horvitz. "I pulled my laptop out of the microscope and ran down the hall to show everyone in the lab." Before this, the model was that the smallest controllable unit of muscles is a single muscle [cell].

—Steve Sando, MIT

That was the first of many worm spits that Sando would watch under a microscope over the next eight or so years. By recording several hundred worms and carefully sifting through countless hours of footage, Sando and his colleagues revealed that individual muscle cells in the *C. elegans* mouth are able to carry out two tasks simultaneously by contracting in different patterns at different ends of the cell. "Before this, the model was that the smallest controllable unit of muscles is a single muscle [cell]" Sando says, so this finding "changes how we think about how animals generate behavior."

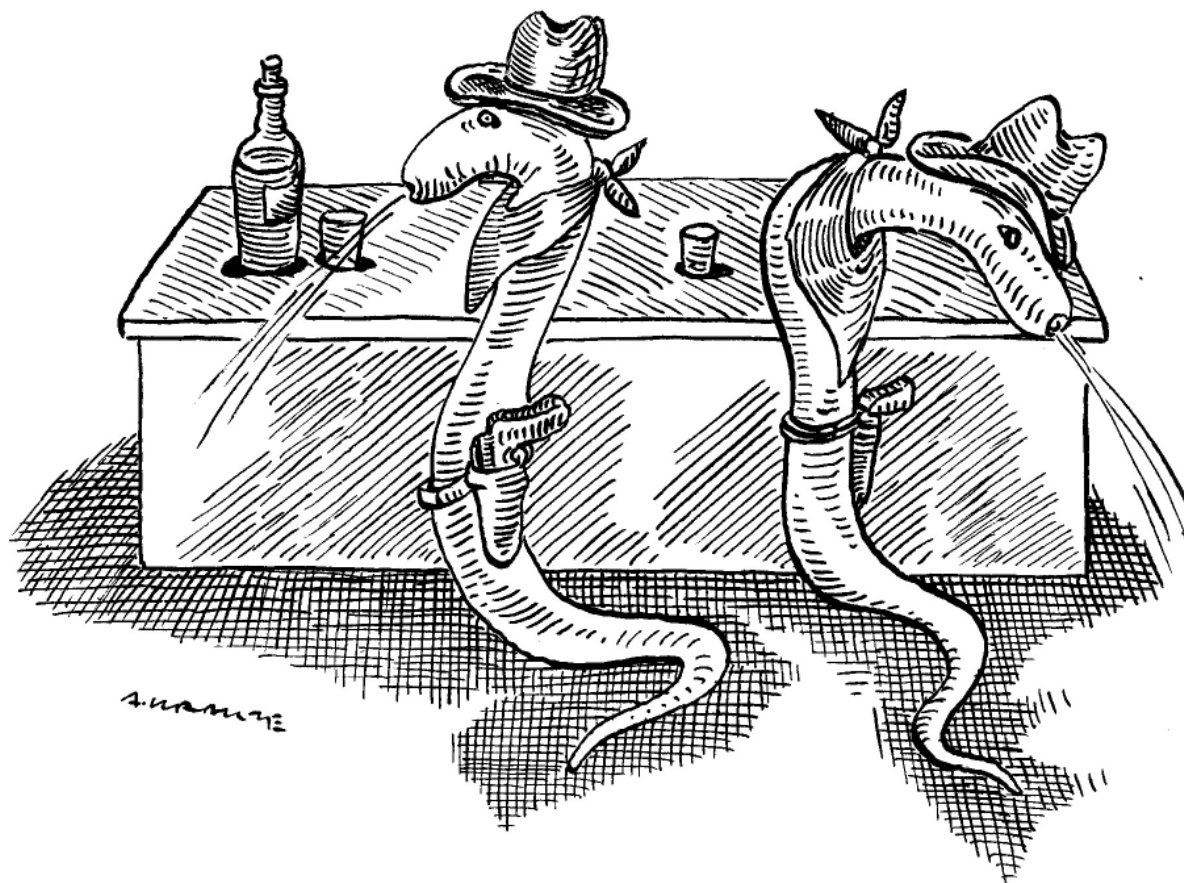
The work that set the stage for Sando's study had been initiated several years earlier by another former graduate student in the lab, Nikhil Bhatla. Bhatla was interested in a mystery that had pestered the *C. elegans* community for many years: How do these organisms detect and escape light, despite lacking light-sensing molecules? Curiously, he discovered, light not only changed how the worms moved, but also made them stop eating. He also found that the proteins controlling the worms' ability to evade light were encoded by genes related to

sequences encoding taste receptors in insects.

Through a series of experiments, Bhatla revealed that these genes also controlled the worm's response to bad smells—specifically, to the odor of hydrogen peroxide, which is generated when light hits biological tissue. "His ultimate conclusion was that the worms kind of 'taste' the light based on these molecules," Sando says.

Diana Kwon

that "if we squish them a little bit, maybe that'll slow them down and help us see what the muscles are doing," he says. This adjustment did the trick—it worked so well, in fact, that Sando pinpointed muscle motions that appeared to be spitting behavior in the first batch of flattened worms he observed under a microscope. "It was one of those really cool eureka moments," Sando says.



But solving that mystery raised more questions. Bhatla noticed that although *C. elegans* stopped eating in the presence of light, the muscles of its feeding tube, or pharynx, would briefly resume rapidly moving in a pump-like motion, just as if it was gobbling down a meal. Following this movement, the worms would occasionally blow bubbles out of their tube-like mouths.

ANDRZEJ KRAUZE

Sando says he wanted to get a closer look at this strange behavior. He decided to slightly flatten the worms before viewing how they moved in response to light. The thinking was

After confirming that this behavior was indeed spitting—using tiny plastic beads to show that liquid was being expelled from the worms' mouths—Sando and his colleagues published that initial finding in 2015. They then spent years analyzing videos of slightly squished worms spitting in slow motion to try to pinpoint the exact muscle movements behind this behavior. Typically, when a worm eats, three muscle cells within the pharynx contract and relax rapidly to propel food into the body. The researchers found that when the worms spat, the front portion of each muscle cell contracted, holding the mouth open, while

the back portion continued a pumping motion, expelling food from the worm's mouth.

A roundworm exposed to light spits out the oil it ingested earlier.

ELIFE, 10:E59341, 2021

Further experiments revealed that these movements were controlled by a single neuron within the pharynx. Using fluorescence imaging to measure levels of calcium ions, which help regulate the activity of neurons and muscles, the group observed that calcium levels stayed high at the front of a muscle cell and low at the back during spitting. Sando, now a postdoc at MIT, and the rest of the team published their latest results this July.

"The finding of a compartmentalized signal in a muscle [cell] was completely unexpected to me," says Manuel Zimmer, a neurobiologist at the University of Vienna who was not involved in the work. This study reveals that, "even from a very elementary behavior like feeding, if you look at it carefully and quantitatively, you can actually learn a lot about basic neuronal mechanisms." Zimmer adds that he'd like to know why worms spit at all in response to the hydrogen peroxide generated by light—and whether such behavior might have any benefit to the organism's survival. Whether or not this phenomenon of different, simultaneous actions by a single muscle cell exists in other, larger animals or is unique to *C. elegans* remains an open question. Aravinthan Samuel, a biophysicist at Harvard University who was not involved in the study, notes that in organisms with fewer cells, those cells tend to be more sophisticated—so it is unlikely that muscle cells in bigger organisms such as humans would split their actions in this way.

Broadly speaking, however, this study is a significant step toward understanding how neuronal circuits work, Samuel adds. To date, there has yet to be a complete neurophysiological model of even simple behaviors, he says, but "these guys have a big piece of that puzzle with this, and it's a step toward real models of real brains."

Diana is a freelance science journalist who covers the life sciences, health, and academic life. She's a regular contributor to *The Scientist* and her work has appeared in several other publications, including *Scientific American*, *Knowable*, and *Quanta*. Diana was a former intern at *The Scientist* and she holds a master's degree in neuroscience from McGill University. She's currently based in Berlin, Germany.



## Annual Budget Exercise Begins

Bhubaneswar: With an expectation of bigger growth, the Odisha Government has started its preparation for Annual Budget for the upcoming financial year 2022-23.

While the country is expected to have a growth of 8.5 Percent during 2022-23, as per International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections, Odisha is expected to have 9 Percent growth during next financial year. Principal Secretary, Finance, Vishal Kumar Dev has been engaged in Pre Budget Consultations with various Departments as these Departments have already presented their requirements.

Team Finance led by Mr.Dev has been consistently monitoring revenue collection with a specific focus on arrear revenue. And due to sustained efforts collection of both tax and non-tax revenue is on rise and it is expected that State's own revenues are to register moderate growth in 2022-23.

GST Compensation to bridge the gap between protected revenue and actual revenue will continue till June 2022.

Considering these factors the spending is expected to increase by about 17 Percent in Financial Year 2022-23 over current Financial Year's revised estimate, officials say.

While as part of Public Financial Management (PFM) reforms, Odisha Government had introduced a new budget making process being adopted since 2020-21, these principles will be adopted for Annual Budget Making Process for 2022-23.

The Budget Estimates for the year 2022-23 are likely to be presented in the State Assembly during the month of February, 2022.

Minister, Finance will deliver the Budget Speech at the time of Annual Budget presentation highlighting the major initiatives and achievements during the previous year, Government policies and priorities for the coming year and targets under various major

### Odisha: Driving license and registration certificates in electronic mode from January 1

BHUBANESWAR: No driving license (DL) and registration certificate (RC) in the State will be issued in smart card and paper format from January 1. But DLs and RCs issued in smart card and paper document



isting smart card paper for the electronic self-printable documents.

"As the DLs and RCs will now be provided in electronic form, the 2006 notification issued by Odisha government prescribing the fees for issue of various documents is now rescinded with effect from January 1," it stated. The State government had entered into an agreement with New Delhi based Smart Chip Ltd in 2006 for the introduction of smart card-based DL and RC on Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis. The agreement that expired in July was extended up to December 31.



earlier will be treated as valid. As per the amended Motor Vehicles Rules and considering the post smart chip scenario, the State government has decided to issue DL and RCs in electronic self-printable PDF format for the convenience of people. In a notification issued on Tuesday, the Commerce and Transport department stated a fee of Rs 140 will be levied in place of ex-

ing the fees for issue of various documents is now rescinded with effect from January 1," it stated. The State government had entered into an agreement with New Delhi based Smart Chip Ltd in 2006 for the introduction of smart card-based DL and RC on Build Own Operate and Transfer (BOOT) basis. The agreement that expired in July was extended up to December 31.

schemes for the Budget year 2022-23 as well as in the medium term, an official said.

Therefore, the ACS, Principal Secretary and Secretary of all Departments have been requested to send the soft (word file) copy of the materials for Budget Speech in both Odia and English, to the Finance Department on or before 5 January, 2022.

They have been asked to send the copy highlighting the achievements of the last five years and proposed policy along-with physical targets under various major Schemes during 2022-23, official sources said.

The Departments have also been urged to highlight the achievements with physical targets and financial targets in the terms of completion of projects along with improvement in delivery of services.

On 22 February 2021, Minister Finance Niranjan Pujari had presented an Annual Budget of Rs 1.75 lakh crore for the year 2021-22 in the Assembly. Of which, Rs 85,000 crore was allocated as administrative expenditure, Rs 75,000 crore under programme expenditure, Rs 3,050 crore for disaster response

fund and Rs 6,950 crore towards transfers from the State.

Again on 1 December Mr.Pujari had tabled the Supplementary Budget Rs 19,833 crore for 2021-22 in the Legislative Assembly, which later received approval of the State Legislature.

As the fiscal condition of the State is in a very good position and revenue collection is an increasing trend, the State may go for a bigger jump in the total outlay for the year 2022-23, feels experts.

The State Government has initiated very big infrastructure projects in the recent past. So, sufficient amount of funds would also be allocated for this purpose in addition to various social welfare programs being launched by the Government in the meantime, they said.

### Odisha panchayat polls: HC directs govt to redraw notification on PRI reservation

CUTTACK: The Orissa High Court on Wednesday directed the State government to undertake the fresh exercise of drawing a draft notification on the reservation to offices of Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members and complete the process for coming up with the final list so that the notification for the panchayat elections is issued on January 8. The State government had planned to issue the notification for the elections on December 27 to ensure that the panchayat election process is completed before the tenure of all the PRIs ends on March 10, 2022.

The court issued the direction while disposing of a batch of petitions which had raised issues concerning the manner of determining the percentages of seats of panchayats on the quotas for SC, ST and OBC categories.

On December 6, 2021, the Supreme Court of India had on grounds of non-compliance of "triple test" directed the State Election Commission (SEC) in Maharashtra to desist from proceeding with the election programme already notified in respect of reserved seats for the OBC category only in the concerned local bodies. Citing the SC's December 6, 2021 order the division bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice A K Mohapatra said: "Although there is a Commission already set up by the Government of Odisha, satisfying the first of the triple test, the second of the triple test do not stand fulfilled as of date. In other words, there cannot be reserved seats for sarpanches for the OBC category". "Therefore, in view of the developments in terms of the orders by the Supreme Court, there will have to be a fresh exercise of drawing a draft notification and publishing it for inviting objections". According to the order, Advocate General AK Parija had stated before the Court that the State government will now come up with a fresh draft notification which will be published on December 27, inviting objections by January 3 and the final list will be communicated by January 7, 2022, for final notification for the panchayat elections on the next day.

## This couple has set up an entire garden with Holland Danziger white chrysanthemums alone



KARIMNAGAR: Despite being a small village in Gannervaram mandal, a visit to Mylaram in Karimnagar district would definitely shock anyone as the rural area is filled with beautiful flower gardens.

Now, a couple belonging to Mylaram has managed to set up an entire garden with Holland Danziger white chrysanthemums alone. As a result, compliments are pouring in

for them from all quarters. They are also making good profit by selling the special variety of chrysanthemum that they procured from Pune for various functions.

About 40 per cent of flowers that arrive at the Karimnagar market come from the garden of Mutyala Ramana Reddy and Rajani. According to the couple, they grow all these flowers in an organic manner, without using any chemical

components. Dr Kurella Vittalacharya: Telangana's 84-year-old marvellous Mr Words

They have also set up a polyhouse on the five-acre plot with the subsidies provided by the State government. Though both the farmers, who have completed their postgraduate education, faced some hardships during the initial days, their business picked up pace and they started receiving

good revenue soon. "Our aim is to provide as much organically-raised flowers as possible to customers in Karimnagar. We have started receiving orders from other districts as well. People are now interested in buying local-grown flowers," says Rajani. Apart from flowers, they also cultivate brown rice and sell desi milk. By investing just Rs 3 lakh, they have already earned a profit of Rs 8 lakh.

## Odisha: 4 foreign returnees test positive, containment back

BHUBANESWAR: Containment measures returned to the State Capital on Tuesday, December 21, 2021, after four foreign returnees tested positive for Covid-19 in the last 48 hours.

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) declared two houses in Jayadurga Nagar area of Bomikhal in the city as micro-containment zones after two returnees from United Kingdom (UK) tested positive for the

BMC will supply essentials and ensure medical assistance to members of the houses. A dedicated medical expert has also been engaged to monitor the health condition of the family members of the two persons during the containment period.

Apart from the two UK returnees, the civic body has also decided to declare houses of two Nigeria returnees who tested positive for Covid-19 on the day, as micro-containment



zone. They will also be admitted to the SUM DCH and the genome sequencing for Omicron conducted as per norms. Singh said in view of detection of two cases of Omicron, the BMC has proposed SUM to create a separate ward for treatment of those detected with the new virus though genome sequencing of their test samples is yet to be conducted to detect if they are infected with Omicron. Similarly, another house in VSS Nagar was also declared as micro-containment zone following detection of multiple Covid cases. "The move was essential to contain transmission in the city," said BMC Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Singh. The civic body had put them under isolation after their return on December 16. As per BMC's order, no person will be allowed to move in or out of the two houses declared as micro-containment zone till further orders. After testing positive on Sunday, the duo was admitted to SUM Dedicated Covid Hospital (DCH), while their contact tracing has been completed by the civic body.

zone. They will also be admitted to the SUM DCH and the genome sequencing for Omicron conducted as per norms. Singh said in view of detection of two cases of Omicron, the BMC has proposed SUM to create a separate ward for treatment of those detected with the new variant. Notably, over 1,000 persons from abroad, including 360 from 'at risk' countries have returned to the Capital since November 16.

However, around 300 samples of returnees from 'at risk' countries had tested negative, while the rest had been under minimum eight days isolation. Preventive measures Two houses in Bomikhal and one in VSS Nagar declared micro-containment zones Two UK returnees residing in Bomikhal were put under isolation on December 16 After testing positive, the duo was admitted to SUM DCH BMC will supply essentials to people residing in the houses



## Omicron will not cause economic derailment: Ameya Prabhu

Kolkata (KCN): NAFA Capital managing director and financial wizard speaks with Kailashnath Adhikari, MD, Governance Now Covid-19 came as a rude shock and hit the world with

railment." However, sounding a word of caution, Prabhu said that going forward disruptions like new Covid variants, climate change and animal diseases infecting humans due

blockchains is that everything is traceable." On cryptocurrency, he said whenever a new form of payment is brought in there is always resistance from incumbents. But regulations need to be brought in to prevent their misuse in crime or terrorism. "Cryptos are here to stay. The problem is not cryptos, but their misuse."

On being asked which sectors of the Indian economy will be leading the surge, he said anything related to consumers will fuel growth. There is a lot of space for new brands.

He said digital platforms for service and delivery will be extremely critical irrespective of the line of the business and infrastructure push by the government. He underlined the importance of setting up a good team in a business and said a good sector with a bad team will always fail but a good team in a bad sector might succeed. "Honesty, integrity, quality, depth of the team, the ability of the team to de-risk their product, not only have an IQ but also EQ are very important," he said and added that businesses must have softer aspects of dealing with ESG (environment, social and corporate governance) with a 360-degree approach which he said is the core philosophy

of his own company. "Building sustainability-focused business is an opportunity. Key concerns will be how to build reducing our carbon footprint, how to build with ESG focus, how to build protecting tribal and indigenous resources and protecting wildlife and without drawing too much water. Businesses in India will do well. Key is the process management and having the ability to de-risk situations in the country," he said.

Prabhu, who is designated Young Global Leader 2021 by the World Economic Forum, says, "Most businesses fail. An entrepreneur has to face many challenges and failures. He must have the ability to deal with situations when he may not only face uncertainties but also situations when he is not able to pay salaries."

Asked if Indian investors are ready to value a future business model, he said the valuation matrix of a company cannot be the same when the company starts and when it is in a steady state of growth.

In the case of tech companies where valuations are high, he said making a profit is a problem. "Tech companies have to mature. The fact that these companies are listed is good. Markets will bring discipline,

greater disclosure." He however said that Indian startups are maturing, they are coming of age. There will be some successes and there will be some failures. "For a listed company, a retail investor is God and should be treated like that," he said. His company, NAFA Capital, together with IDF Eurasia will start a US \$100 million distressed assets fund. The collaboration will focus on distressed retail loans (credit card, mortgage, home, car loans receivables). Prabhu, who started his career as a writer and gradually got into financial services, said the lockdown gave him the time to write his book, 'The Rock Babas and Other Stories'. The book, he said, is a call for hope. It is about the need to realise that instead of fighting wars, finding differences against one another, proving one-upmanship over each other, we should identify things that unite us. The book has a positive message to unite to work together and make this planet a better place.

## Child Artists mesmerised the audience with their wonderful performances on the occasion of the Third Anniversary of "Tare Jamin Prathisthan"

New Delhi (KCN): The Tare Jamin Foundation, a leading social voluntary organisation in Delhi, organised their third Anniversary at the Subhadra Kala Mandap of the Shri Jagannath Temple located at Tyagarajanagar, New Delhi on 19th December, 2021 (Sunday) with great enthusiasm under strict adherence to the Covid19 guidelines and protocols.

Dr. Himansu Sekhar Mahapatra, Professor and Head of the Department of Nephrology at Atal Bihari Bajpayee institute of Medical Science and Dr R.M.L. Hospital, New Delhi, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest of the function, lauded the various people-oriented programmes, which were organised by Tare

Jamin Prathisthan and wished them success in their future endeavours. Another Guest, Scientist Rupashree Das underlined the importance of social welfare in terms of hygiene, cleanliness and health awareness at the community level, highlighting the key role which can be played by the non-governmental organisations.

The event, held under the supervision of the Organisation's Chairman, Bishikeshan S, was graced by the Professor and Head of the Department of Jaipuria School of Commerce Dr. Tapan Kumar Nayak, Senior Journalist, Laxmi Narayan Beborla, social activist, Rajender Kaur and the President, of the Vijayini Foundation Rita Patra. The meeting also consoled the sad

untimely demise of Shri Rabi Kalara, the pioneer of Tare Jamin Prathisthan.

On this occasion of the third anniversary of their organization, Tare Jamin Prathisthan honoured the guests with various work of handicrafts, made by the students of the organisation. A colourful cultural programme under the supervision of Rita Patra, President, Vijayini Prathisthan, was excellently presented by the child artists of the organisation. The Associate Professor of A.I.I.M.S., Raipur, Dr. Ramchandrani, Isa Kapoor, Pradumna Palei, The Joint Secretary, of Shri Jagannath Temple, Tyagraj Nagar also graced the programme, which was compered by Pratima Sharma.



several disruptions, halting economies and destroying livelihoods. While research for the new variant, Omicron, thought to be less lethal than Delta is under way, its emergence has raised serious concerns. However, with the economy on the rebound, Ameya Prabhu, financial wizard and managing director of NAFA Capital, feels that Omicron will not cause an adverse impact. In a free-wheeling conversation with Kailashnath Adhikari, MD, Governance Now, during the webcast of the 75th episode of the Visionary Talk series held by the public policy and governance analysis platform, the investment banker said, "Omicron will not cause economic de-

to loss of animal habitats will be increasing and Covid should be looked upon as preparing us as a global economy and humanity.

"The Indian economy has picked up and growing. Markets are also doing well," he said. However, the MSME sector is facing many challenges. "A big business is like a river that needs many small tributaries and streams which feed into it. SMEs are the tributaries that need to be strengthened," said Prabhu. He said new technologies like blockchains will have to be brought in to benefit the MSME sector, reduce the cost of finance, and reduce the risk for financial institutions and banks. "The beauty of

## West Bengal teen fighting SMA Type 2 takes to ImpactGuru.com to raise Rs. 5 Crores for treatment

Kolkata (KCN): Nothing is more difficult than managing the livelihood of the family all alone without any support from your partner. West Bengal based Lipika faces this difficulty

Currently, Lipika is raising funds of INR 5 crores on crowd funding platform ImpactGuru.com towards the treatment for her daughter which is her only family.

feet. Smriti is also prone to lung infections easily every time she has a viral cough or cold.

"There exists a treatment for Smriti's condition and the doctors at Peerless Hospitex Hospital and Research Center have said a medicine named Risdiplam by

and if she is left with any more money, she buys her daughter's medicines and support equipment. For the past many years, she has been fighting a double battle - poverty as well as helplessness.

"I am requesting you to please contribute to Smriti's



in day to day life as she struggles to meet the needs of her family. In spite of being the only breadwinner of the family, Lipika has always made sure that the family gets all the required basic needs that are necessary for an individual. Lipika's world came crashing down when her daughter was diagnosed with Spinal Muscular Atrophy Type 2, a rare genetic order that weakens the muscles of a child and prevents basic stuff like eating, sitting and walking.

13 y/o Smriti started losing muscle strength a few months after her birth. She couldn't move her arms and legs and faced difficulty in swallowing food. Due to her condition, her spine has curved dangerously and the little girl can't stand straight. She always wears support equipment (back brace) and has been wheelchair-bound for so many years now. One look at her and you won't fail to notice her deformed and unusually long legs and

Roche that can give her a new life. She will also need surgery to treat Scoliosis (curvature of the spine). But Smriti's treatment will be prolonged and she'll need multiple bottles of this medicine." acknowledges Lipika. Lipika is currently working as a house help to earn for the living which is also her only source of income. With the little money she earns, she feeds her daughter

ImpactGuru fundraiser. If she gets this medicine, she can live a normal life, go to school and play with kids. But without it, her spine will continue getting curved, so much so that her body will bend down completely. Please contribute as much as you can and spread Smriti's story on every social media platform", appeals Lipika, Smriti's Mother.




# 2021-2022

## ADMISSION OPEN

### Maharishi Public School, Baripada

# STD-NURSERY TO VIII

## ENROLL YOUR CHILD TODAY

(Special discount for new admission before 15.03.2021)

**Find the Difference**

- Small Classes
- Experienced, trained & loving teachers.
- Individual attention to each child.
- Regular meditation and yoga.
- Unique exam system, evaluation & Principles etc.

25% reservation as per RTE Act (2009)

**MAHARISHI PUBLIC SCHOOL**  
Baghra Road, Baripada  
For details  
Contact :  
Call-9438102188, 06792-255227  
Time : 8.00 A.M. to 12.00 noon  
E-mail- mps.bpd@gmail.com

**f** Find us on  
Facebook.com/Mps, Baripada



## Singapore Airlines not to accept bookings for VTL flights till January 20

MUMBAI: Southeast Asian carrier Singapore Airlines on Wednesday said it

mechanism till January 20 next year.

The development, which comes in the wake of the Singapore government's directive to suspend new ticket sales on designated VTL flights for entry into Singapore during this time, will, however, not affect the existing bookings, SIA said in a



will not accept bookings for all its flights under Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL)

statement. VTL flights allowed quarantine free

## Zee Entertainment, Sony Pictures Networks India sign definitive agreements for merger

NEW DELHI: Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt Ltd (SPNI) and Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) on Wednesday said they have

shareholders of SPNI and the promoter founders of ZEEL. This is aimed at enabling the combined company "to drive sharper content cre-

subsidiary, will be through a subsidiary, the statement said. "After the closing, SPE will indirectly hold a majority 50.86 per cent of the com-

Ravi Ahuja said, "Today marks an important step in our efforts to bring together some of the strongest leadership teams, content creators, and

travel to the island-state for the fully vaccinated travellers.

SIA had commenced passenger flight services from eight Indian cities, including daily VTL services from Chennai, Delhi, and Mumbai from November 29, providing eligible customers with quarantine-free entry into Singapore.

Its low-cost subsidiary Scoot also started operating non-VTL services from Amritsar, Hyderabad, and Tiruchirappalli.

"With effect from 2359 hours (Singapore Time) on December 22, Singapore Airlines will stop accepting new bookings for all Vaccinated Travel Lane (VTL) flights into Singapore that are scheduled between December and January 20, 2022 (both dates inclusive)," Singapore Airlines said in the statement.

SIA customers with a confirmed booking on a VTL flight are not affected by this directive and may proceed with their travel, the airline said.

It also said that there is no change to existing VTL or test requirements, and travellers with existing bookings may enter Singapore quarantine free as long as they meet all VTL requirements.

**Congress demands answers from PM over alleged land deals near Ram Temple, seeks probe**

Continued from page-1

'Andher Nagri, Chaupat Raja' in Ayodhya," he told reporters.

"When will it be investigated? Will it be investigated?" he said, demanding the prime minister explain his position.

"It is clear here that the brother-in-law of BJP mayor sells land worth Rs 18 crore to Ram Mandir Trust in 5 minutes. Rs 25 lakh worth land is sold in 79 days to Ram Mandir Trust for 2.5 crores. Lands which private people cannot sell are also taken away from the donations made by the Ram Mandir Trust," he alleged.

"Modi ji, why are you silent on the way BJP MLAs, BJP Mayors and others holding key positions are usurping land from the weaker sections and Dalits," Surjewala said.

The Congress leader alleged that there is no sin graver than BJP leaders and officials "taking away" properties around the Ram temple complex in Ayodhya.

"Prime minister, will you get an inquiry conducted or will you give protection to all of them! Now your credibility is at stake," he said.

**Over 5 lakh houses under Awaas+ ineligible: Odisha government**

Continued from page-1

had submitted a compliance report before the Ministry, admitting, "The State has detected 5.05 lakh ineligible beneficiaries from the Awaas+."

Acknowledging the Central team's finding that incomplete houses were shown in Awaasoft, Singh said, "Two beneficiaries in Ghasipura block had roof cast their houses but did not fix doors and windows."

The Central team's observation that dedicated cooking area with kitchen platform and toilet were found missing in two cases and in some cases the funds allocated for housing and toilet were misutilised for other purposes.

The State government said the beneficiaries will be sensitised. The Central team visited the State for three days from February 9 to 11 this year following a directive from the then Union Minister of Rural Development Narendra Singh Tomar.

Seeking recovery of funds released to ineligible beneficiaries and criminal proceedings against officials responsible for committing fraud and swindling government funds, Ministry of Rural Development Secretary Nagendra Nath Sinha had shot off a letter to Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra to ensure that perpetrator of the fraud and their collaborators are dealt with sternly.

Nilekani-backed ShopX forays into consumer space with cashback app  
BENGALURU: Nandan Nilekani and Fung Group-backed B2B e-commerce company ShopX has forayed into the consumer space with the launch of its savings and cashback app.

"This mobile application is the saving solution for people who visit local markets to buy their daily essentials. Consumers can just scan any UPI code with ShopX at local partner stores and start their savings journey," Amit Sharma, CEO and Co-founder, ShopX, told TNIE. When a ShopX user makes a UPI payment at the SuperSaver store, they get direct discount on MRP and 2X reward points for each buy. The Indian offline retail opportunity currently stands at \$800 billion and it has shown significant recovery based on consumer sentiment.

**BJP MPs seek Goyal intervention**

Continued from page-1

tual procurement windows varied from as low as 40-43 days in some RMCs. Furthermore, recent protest by the employees of the PACS have delayed the opening of the Mandis, thereby causing the issued token to be lapsed. The 30 days token system being exploited leading to favoritism and many tokens belonging to small and marginal farmers getting lapsed. As Mandis are not being opened at all in some RMCs, irregular lifting of rice at Mandi has created an additional issue of storage of the grains for farmers.

Farmers are spending nights guarding their produce at the Mandis. In the scorching winter, this is extremely harassing for the farmers.

Most of the Mandis Managed by PACS/WSFIGs have limitation of storage space godowns, this is further aiding to the benefit of private millers who are lifting the paddy at lower cost.

The BJP MPs also made allegations about manual filling of weigh-slips, unequal distribution of paddy procured among different millers, unlawful procurement, non-existent of the quality control process and non-availability of required infrastructure.

"The entire procurement process was found to be miller driven. Surprisingly, the State Government has allowed millers to perform all the mandi operations viz. supply of used gunnies, transportation of paddy, loading and other mandi labour works. This is against the guidelines of GOI," they further alleged.

These poor paddy farmers are forced to forgo 6-8 kg of paddy per quintal to the brokers and agents; a practice which is locally dreaded as 'katni chhatni. Farmers are not getting their legitimate price due to such katni chhatni.

It is extremely unfortunate that the Government of Odisha is yet to act on the suggestions/recommendations as submitted by the Central team. Failure of Odisha Government in managing the Mandis and high dependence on private millers has led to lapses of issued tokens to the farmers resulting in non-realisation of fair price of their crop produce.

The BJP parliamentarians said this has also led to mass distress sale by the farmers and would have dire consequences for them white coping with pandemic/cyclone related losses.

"We also request you to instruct Government of Odisha to follow the suggestions/recommendations of the Fact Finding Committee of DFPD, Government of India strictly which shall be instrumental in ensuring seamless and timely procurement of the farm produce and timely compensation to lakhs of farmers in the State of Odisha," the MPs wrote in the Memo.

**Livelihood Assistance@1K Each**

Continued from page-1

Stating the Covid-19 pandemic is still there, the Chief Minister has advised the people to follow Covid appropriate behavior such as wearing masks, social distancing and hand sanitization. He also advised not to visit outdoors unless it is necessary.

Notably, the Chief Minister had yesterday announced house repairing assistance of Rs 3,000 for those, who have availed houses under State schemes and Rs 5,000 for those who are waiting to get a house under PMAY. About 30 lakh families will be benefited and the State government will bear an additional cost of Rs 1444 crore for this move.

Opposition BJP and Congress have alleged that the BJD government is announcing these financial aid to woo voters ahead of the Panchayat election in Odisha.



### Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd

signed definitive agreements for their merger following conclusion of an exclusive negotiation period during which both parties conducted mutual due diligence.

In a joint statement, the two companies said they have "signed definitive agreements to merge ZEEL with and into SPNI and combine their linear networks, digital assets, production operations and program libraries".

The agreements follow the conclusion of an exclusive negotiation period during which ZEEL and SPNI conducted mutual due diligence, it added.

When the merger deal was announced in September, the two networks had stated that Sony would invest USD 1.575 billion and hold 52.93 per cent stake in the merged entity and Zee the remaining 47.07 per cent.

Under the terms of the definitive agreements, the statement said SPNI will have a cash balance of USD 1.5 billion at closing, including through infusion by the current

ation across platforms, strengthen its footprint in the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem, bid for media rights in the fast-growing sports landscape and pursue other growth opportunities", it added.

After closing, the new combined company will be publicly listed in India.

The closing of the transaction is subject to certain customary closing conditions, including regulatory, shareholder, and third-party approvals, the statement said.

As part of the agreement, Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc (SPE) will pay a non-competee fee to certain promoter founders of ZEEL, which will be used by them to infuse primary equity capital into SPNI.

This would entitle them to acquire shares of SPNI, which would eventually equal approximately 2.11 per cent of the shares of the combined company on a post-closing basis.

The payment of non-competee fee by Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc, of which SPNI is an indirect

combined company, the promoters (founders) of ZEEL will hold 3.99 per cent, and the other ZEEL shareholders will hold a 45.15 per cent stake," it added.

Under the definitive agreement, the promoter founders of ZEEL have agreed to limit the equity that they may own in the combined company to 20 per cent of its outstanding shares.

This construct does not provide them any pre-emptive or other rights to acquire equity of the combined company from the Sony Group, the combined company or any other party, the statement said.

ZEEL's chief executive Punit Goenka will lead the combined company as its Managing Director and CEO.

The majority of the board of directors of the combined entity will be nominated by the Sony Group and will include the current SPNI Managing Director and CEO, NP Singh, the joint statement said.

SPE Chairman of Global Television Studios and SPE Corporate Development,

film libraries in the media business to create extraordinary entertainment and value for Indian consumers.

SPNI MD and CEO, NP Singh, said the merger will create a company that's "best in class and will redefine the contours of the media and entertainment industry".

Goenka said, "The combined company will create a comprehensive entertainment business, enabling us to serve our consumers with wider content choices across platforms... This merger presents a significant opportunity to jointly take the businesses to the next level and drive substantial growth in the global arena."

Invesco Developing Markets Fund, which along with OFI Global China Fund LLC, together hold about 17.9 per cent stake in ZEEL, had opposed the merger deal.

The two entities have been pressing for an EGM of ZEEL to discuss various issues, including the removal of Goenka and are currently locked in legal battles.



## India vs South Africa series to continue even if there are isolated COVID cases among teams

NEW DELHI: The BCCI and Cricket South Africa have mutually agreed that the upcoming Test and ODI series between the two teams will continue even if there is an isolated case of COVID-19 among players or support staff and close contacts will not be forced into isolation, the host board's medical officer Shuaib Manjra has said.



India will start their three-match Test series against the Proteas on December 26 at the Centurion followed by Tests in Johannesburg (January 3-7) and Cape Town (Jan 11-15). The Tests will be followed by three ODIs on January 19, 21 and 23.

While there is a specific agreement that

BCCI can pull out of the tour in case situation in South Africa, both teams are ready for the eventuality that there will be we have seen that close contacts, even if they return negative

where the new variant Omicron was found, gets worsened, a senior official said that they are not contemplating any pull-out as of now. "We have discussed and agreed a protocol with India. Considering that all those within the ecosystem will be vaccinated, the positive case will isolate within the hotel room if clinically stable," Cricket South Africa provided Manjra's comments to PTI. "Contacts will continue playing and training with non-medical interventions strictly observed and tested daily," he added. It is understood that Rapid Antigen Tests will be carried out daily and

positive cases. But as long as proper precautions are taken, the series will continue. "The BCCI is very satisfied with the kind of bio-bubble that CSA has provided for the Indian team. Yes, we will definitely take a decision which is in best interests of our players and their families. "As of now, everyone is in the bubble and being tested regularly," a senior BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity. "The bone of contention was what happens to close contacts. You can have one player or support staff testing positive but in earlier times,

in RT-PCR, have to isolate themselves. When that happens, it becomes difficult to continue with the matches," the official said. The tour by India is very important for Cricket South Africa from a commercial rights point of view besides the massive broadcast rights money to be earned from the series. In Centurion, the Indian team is staying in a resort with lot of open spaces within the created bio-bubble so that players as well as their families are not confined to an enclosed space as it can happen in swanky five star hotels. The matches in this series will be played behind closed doors.

## India beat Pakistan 4-3 to win bronze medal in Asian Champions Trophy hockey

CHENNAI: In the end, it came down to keeping a sense of calm when some of the others were intent on not doing. Down to nine men for the last four minutes of the third-place match between India and Pakistan at the Asian Champions Trophy, Akashdeep Singh, one of the most experienced players in this side, cutely finished from close range to open up a 4-2 gap. Pakistan did halve the deficit but eventually ran out of time as the final hooter cut through the winter Dhaka air.



The India-Pakistan rivalry in hockey exists only in name. Even though the latter have won more clashes overall, the former's recent superiority has threatened to make this a no contest. Barring the 2-2 draw at the Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, India have tended to wipe the floor against the Green Shirts. In other words, they had the wood over them. That trend continued in the group stages, with India beating them 3-1 on Friday. Two minutes into the third-place encounter on Wednesday, that pattern threatened to play itself out again. Manpreet Singh & Co. had a raft of penalty corners and Harmanpreet Singh sounded the board to put India in front. What

followed next, though, was off the script. Pakistan grew into contest and scored two field goals to take the lead. In isolation, it was a big moment because Pakistan had seldom led India. Soon, the nerves started jangling from an Indian perspective. It was, one sensed, not what they expected. But to be fair to them, they didn't lose shape and knew chances would come. Led by the inspirational Manpreet, who ran the show from midfield, the World No 5 equalised on the stroke of the fourth quarter. Varun Kumar, the team's other penalty corner specialist, scored from a set-piece variation to give them the lead. Pakistan immediately went down the other end to engineer a few short corners but their Achilles Heel — scoring from such opportunities — came back to bite them. Even though India went down to nine, they engineered a breakaway to put the match beyond doubt to maintain their iron-like grip in these encounters to sign off for the year with a second third-place medal. Keeping in mind the bigger picture, coach Graham Reid will not lose too much sleep about the semifinal loss to Japan. For all intents and purposes, this was an experimental side, with quite a few players asked to show what they can do. Now they will go on a short break before regrouping at the Sports Authority of India's campus in Bengaluru in the first week of January.

## Real Madrid outbreak grows after Alaba, Isco test positive



MADRID: Real Madrid has added David Alaba and Isco Alarcón to its list of players with COVID-19, taking it to eight members of its first

team. Madrid added the defender and midfielder on Tuesday to the list that already included Luka Modric, Marco Asensio, Rodgyro,

Gareth Bale, Marcelo, and backup goalkeeper Andriy Lunin. None will be available for the Spanish leaders' match at Athletic

Bilbao on Wednesday. Bilbao will be without four players, including Spain goalkeeper Unai Simón and starting defender Iñigo Martínez.



# MAHARISHI PLAY SCHOOL

Nurturing awareness Moulding Future

## ADMISSION OPEN FOR

### PLAY GROUP (2+) to Onwards

A great Place to grow @ MPS

Call now for Application:

## MAHARISHI PUBLIC SCHOOL

N-3 B/14-15, IRC Village,  
Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar

PH. 2558884 / 2550786 / 8984600700 (M)

E-mail : maharishipublic13@yahoo.com



Find us on  
facebook.com/maharishiplayschool



FOLLOW US  
ON TWITTER  
twitter.com/maharishiplayschool