

West Bengal winner in India Today Group Most Improved Big State Award

Kolkata (KCN): Digitisation of services at the grassroots & award-winning welfare schemes have changed the face of governance in the state. Bengal wins India Today #State



Of The States Award for most improved

nance Chief Secretary Shri

said, "I'm delighted to know that WB has

been adjudged as the winner in the Most Improved Big State in the Governance category by the India Today group.

It is a matter of great honour, prevalence and also pride for the entire state and the Administration that West Bengal has been able to come to this position.

This is all possible due to the dynamic leadership of Our Honourable CM Mamata Banerjee who for the last 10 years since 2011 has been spearheading the governance of the state."

Nanda Sir No More

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Padma Shri awardee and centenarian teacher from Jajpur,

rated, Mr. Prusty was shifted to Sum Hospital here. He died at the age of 104, the

literacy in the area. On November 9, he was conferred with the prestigious

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Home Minister Amit Shah, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan and many leaders paid condolences to the departed soul.

Sharing his picture with the teacher on microblogging site twitter, PM Mr. Modi said, "Pained by the demise of Shri Nanda Prusty Ji. The much respected "Nanda Sir" will be remembered for generations due to his efforts to spread the joys of education in Odisha. He drew the nation's attention and affection a few weeks ago at the Padma Awards ceremony. Om Shanti."

Mr. Patnaik said he has saddened to know



Nanda Kishore Prusty passed away here in a private hospital on Tuesday. He had contracted Covid-19 and was admitted to a Covid hospital in Jajpur district. As his health condition deteriorated,

family sources said. The centenarian teacher belongs to Kantira village under Sukinda block of Jajpur district. Mr. Prusty was loved by one and all for his selfless dedication towards eradicating ill-

Padma Shri award for his contributions in the field of education. Nanda Sir, who was a class-7 pass out, spent several decades of his life providing free education to children and adults in Jajpur in Odisha.

No Opening of Ratna Bhandar

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Clearing all speculations on reopening of the inner part of Ratna Bhandar of Shree Jagannath

taken so far on opening the inner treasury chamber of the Sri Mandir.

As per the sub-section 1 of section 6 of

special order in this regard following certain terms and conditions, Mr. Jena said in his reply to a question asked by BJD Lawmaker Aswini Patra. The Minister said that an experts' team of the Archeological Survey of India (ASI) had inspected the Bhitara Ratna Bhandar on April 4, 2018 to find out whether there is a need of preservation and repair of the chamber.

The team had then suggested further inspection of the inner

part of the Bhitara Ratna Bhandar during Rath Jatra when the sanctum sanctorum is devoid of deities. However, no decision has been taken to open the chamber, he said.

During the inspection, the 16-member committee opened the locks of Bahar Bhandar Ghar after observing the statutory protocol. They examined the Bahar Ratna Bhandar and Bhitara Ratna Bhandar (where unused items of deities are stored)



Temple, Minister Law, Pratap Jena on Tuesday informed Odisha Legislative Assembly that the no decision has been

Shree Jagannath Temple Act 1960, the inner treasure chamber can be opened only after the State Government issued a

Rotary Seva Samman to unsung Heroes

Kolkata (KCN): Rotary International pre-sented Rotary Seva Samman awards to unsung

Rotary was the architect of this commendable programme. Social Activist Narayan Jain,

Alokananda Roy and Agnimitra Paul, also graced the occasion. Purajit Roy, President Rotary Club of Mega City, Sushil Agarwal, President Rotary Club of Calcutta New Alipore, KS Adhikari, IPP, Pawan Paharia, PP, Prof. Pradyot Banerjee, JK Sharma, B L Dugar and many senior members also actively participated to make the programme successful.

Concern for Calcutta Members Ramakant Burman and Mrs

commendable services in the field of Solid Waste Management and Environment. Mr Satnam Singh Ahluwalia was awarded for his contribution in social service. He provided 36 Lakh meals to people during Corona Pandemic. Other awardees were Bharat Sevashram Sangha, Ramakrishna Mission, Dr Fuad Halim, Dr Sanjay Kumar Gupta, Dipen Upadhyay, Project



Heroes in different fields of life for their outstanding contribution to the society. Dignitaries on the occasion included Swami Nityakamananda ji Maharaj of Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Biswatmananda ji Maharaj of Bharat Sevashram Sangha Vivek Gupta, MLA, DG Elect Ajay Law, Dr Kunal Sarkar, Mamta Binani, President Concern for Calcutta. Rajendra Khandelwal, Past Dist Governor-

Chairman Advisory Board, Concern for Calcutta was a



member of the Jury. Other members of Jury were PC Sarcar Jr, Jimmy Tangree,

Vineeta Burman of Greentech Environment P Ltd were awarded for their

Life Force, Dr Raja Dhar, Kolkata Gives Foundation and Prayas.

Logjam Continues in Assembly

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Logjam continued to prevail in the Odisha Legislative Assembly for the sixth consecutive day as both opposition and ruling party members created a ruckus in the House forcing the Speaker to adjourn proceedings for three times on Tuesday.

As soon as the House assembled for the day at 10.30 AM, opposition BJP and Congress members rushed to the well holding placards and banners. They sought slogans retreating their demand for removal of Minister of State (MoS) for Home, Dibya Shankar Mishra over Mamita Meher murder case.

Wearing black gamucha, BJP members beat gongs and bells in a mark of protest. Congress legislators showed placards demanding removal of Mishra from the council of ministers.

The Treasury Bench members also joined the bandwagon as they sprinkled 'Ganga Jal' on

the opposition members seeking good sense to prevail upon them and come for the discussion after shunning their egos. This is for the first time that the treasury bench members agi-



tated in the Well of the House.

As the gong sound and slogans rent the air in the House, Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro adjourned the proceeding till 4 PM after his repeated appeal to members including the BJD members, to return to their seats failed.

The situation also remained the same in the post-lunch session as the opposition MLAs continued their

Odisha BJP MLAs post letters to CM Naveen Patnaik



BHUBANESWAR (KCN): Even as the blame game between the Opposition and ruling BJD over deadlock in the functioning of the Assembly during the winter session continues,

BJP legislators on Monday posted letters to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik requesting him to reply to questions on the Mamita Meher murder case and resolve the im-

passe in the House. After ensuring the House does not function, the saffron party lawmakers marched to the office of Chief Post Master General here to post a letter each

addressed to the Chief Minister seeking his reply in the Assembly to questions raised by people of the State on his government's alleged role in the murder case.

Celebration of the National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand, the Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great and Thailand's Father's Day by the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata On 5 December 2021

Kolkata (KCN): Celebration of the National Day of the Kingdom of Thailand, the Birthday Anniversary of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej The Great and Thailand's Father's Day by the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata On 5 December 2021, Mr. Kasemsan Thongsiri, Acting Consul General of Thailand in Kolkata, presided over an online celebration activity on

agriculture development has been recognised internationally and was at the origin of the celebration of the "World Soil Day" on 5 December of every year by the United Nations. His Majesty's legacies still dwell on the hearts of the Thai people up to these days, hence the commemoration of the "Father of the Thai Nation". The Acting Consul General of Thailand went next to enumerate activities of the Royal Thai Con-

keep Thailand-India people-to-people connection going uninterrupted despite the COVID-19 pandemic across the globe. -2- With people-to-people connection comes tourism. Mr. Thongsiri stated in this connection that the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata has resumed its visa granting. This is the Royal Thai Government's welcoming gesture to all Indian nationals. In the meantime,

Jorasanko Thakur Bari, Rabindra Bharati Museum, to permanently house the exhibition elaborated by the Thai Consulate entitled "Tagore's Visit to Siam: Prelude to the Modern-Day Chapter of Thai-Indian Relations". The said exhibition narrates Rabindranath Tagore's visit to Siam in 1927 and its related highlight activities, such as the royal audience with His Majesty King Rama VII of Siam,



the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata in the year 2021, ranging from visits to Andaman and Nicobar Islands to donation of 1 portable X-ray machine and 1 anaesthesia Boyle's machine to a public hospital in Gaya, Bihar, "Land of the Lord Buddha". Moreover, the Consulate reiterated its success of its online activities, in conformity with the "New Normal" guidelines, such as the "Thai Festival 2021 - Online Edition" at the end of August 2021, as well as office made Thai culinary video shows "Aaharn-Aahaar" and "Learn Thai to Impress" short videos, which received tremendous participation and popular feedback from thousands of pan-Indian public audience. These online activities are the testimony of Thailand's love towards Indian people, and are innovative ways to

while hoping that the commercial flights between Thailand and India resume soon, the Acting Consul-General invited everyone to stay safe and keep informed of latest developments regarding COVID 19 related regulations in both countries. Finally, as reminded in the speech, 2022 marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Thailand and India. Activities in celebration of this occasion are expected to take place to further strengthen Thailand-India cultural ties, apart from their excellent political and economic relations. Mr. Kasemsan Thongsiri mentioned the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata's ongoing flagship project, the establishment of the "Thai Gallery" at

meetings and calls on princes and dignitaries in charge of education, apart from visits to Buddhist temples and many important sites in Bangkok, old capital Ayutthaya and adjacent province Saraburi. The exhibition also explains how this visit of Tagore could be considered a prelude to the many more enriched cultural ties between Thailand and India up to the present day. The Royal Thai Consulate-General in Kolkata, the Acting Consul General ended his remarks with his wishes for a good health of both countries Head of State, as well as prosperity, wealth and good health for both Thai and Indian peoples, despite the difficult time and challenge of the century we are currently facing. Royal Thai Consulate - General, Kolkata, 5 December 20.

Police arrested a Mason in connection with Cyber fraud

Barbil (KCN): One marbal Mason arrested by Godipokhari village

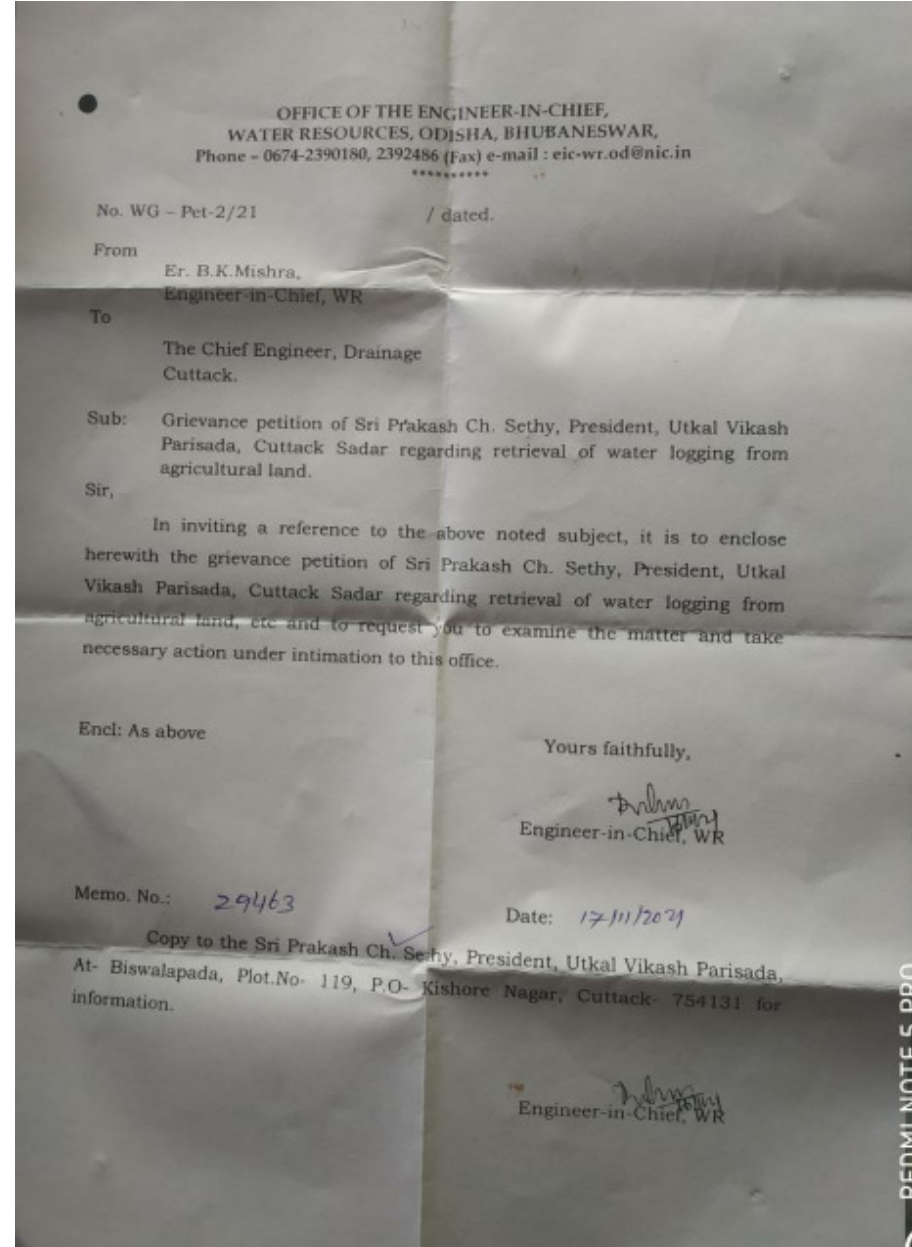


Turumunga police in Keonjhar arrested in connection with cyber fraud. As per report one Md Salaluddin of Jharkhand area had

been working as a Janaseva Kendra taking the plea of receive money from his owner. As the Mason known to Bibhuti, he gave his account number to Sallaluddin. He too used to receive lakhs of money frequently through his account as he said. One day Bibhuti found his account is blocked. While contacting bank, he came to know that his account was being used to receive some black money operated by cyber fraud and Bank has blocked his account. Knowing this, Bibhuti approached police station and explained the story happened with him. Based on his complain police arrested Md Salaluddin and investigating the matter.

Grievance petition of UVP regarding water logging the action taken

Cuttack (KCN): Prakash Ch. Sethy examine the matter Grievance petition regarding retrieval and take necessary



of cuttack sadar leading Social Organisation Utkal Vikash Parisad (UVP) president Er.

of water logging from agricultural land at Kishorenagar Barahpata the action was taken by the water resources Odisha. The Engineer-in-Chief, Water Resources, Bhubaneswar wrote letter vide letter number.WG-Pet-2/21,29463 on dated 17/11/2021 to The Chief Engineer, Drainage Cuttackto

action under intimate to this office. Moreover such type social work done with all local real issues of public bring notice to popular government and doing blood donation camp, award to real scholars, awareness for Corona pandemic by Er. Prakash Ch. for the betterment of society.

Overall Efficiency Shield goes to Kharagpur Division of SER Kolkata (KCN): South Eastern Railway (SER) celebrated the 66th Railway Week, 2021 in the city today. Ms. Archana Joshi, General Manager, SER graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Shri Atulya Sinha, Additional General Manager, Shri Vijay Kumar Panjiar, Senior Deputy General Manager along with all the Principal Head of the Departments attended the function. The Divisional Railway Managers of Kharagpur, Adra, Chakradharpur & Ranchi were also present on the occasion. As many as 164 selected railway officers & staff including Group Awardees were felicitated in recognition of their outstanding services and devotion to duty during the year 2020-21. The Overall Efficiency Shield was awarded to Kharagpur Division for the best all round performance. Efficiency Shields in 28 other categories were awarded to different divisions, workshops and stations. Ranchi station has been adjudged as the Best Kept Station. Ms. Joshi while addressing the gathering mentioned about SER's contribution towards the growth of Indian Railways and complimented the railway employees for their sincere efforts and commendable performance. The General Manager stressed on making all out efforts to attain the satisfaction of passengers and freight customers. She also appreciated the cooperation extended by the different Associations and Trade Unions. Rescheduling of Howrah - Chennai coromandal express from today Kolkata(KCN): The South Eastern Railway authority has informed that due to developmental work in South Central Railway, the 12841 Howrah-Chennai Coromandal Express has been rescheduled to leave Howrah at 4.20 pm instead of 3.30 pm from today till December 23, 2021.

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Ajay Devgn and Kajol are two of a kind

Wife and husband and duo Kajol and Ajay Devgn are poles

Tanhaji is Ajay's centennial film in Bollywood. "We

lieve that hard work pays off." At a time when

more than necessary. He keeps me grounded and makes

On the use of 3D technology, the actor says, "The technol-

younger generation is robbed of Indian history. "Not much has been written about unsung warriors such as Tanhaji in school textbooks. My children have not even read about him. During the British era they did not let people read about Indian warriors. Our textbooks have not changed much since then. So, I decided to do this film. The least we can do is respect our heroes. Maybe it will bring about a change in our country. But such films require an audience connect. So, we made it a commercial film with lots of music, action and drama."



apart in their behaviour. While he is quiet and speaks in monosyllables, she is animated and happy-go-lucky. The couple is currently in a celebratory mode as they recently marked their 21st wedding anniversary and are now busy promoting their upcoming film Tanhaji together. The duo is making a comeback on screen after a decade.

Their last film together Toonpur Ka Superhero in 2010 was also made under their own banner—Ajay Devgn Films.

Aditya Roy Kapoor, Disha Patani sizzle in new 'Malang' poster

A new poster of Mohit Suri's Malang featuring Aditya Roy Kapur and Disha Patani is out. The poster highlights an intimate moment between the stars, framed against a surreal background.

Suri shares, "Passionate, exciting, energetic, mad, love is all this and more. Aditya and Disha's love depicts their liberated and Malang state of mind in this poster. I'm looking forward to seeing how the audience perceives it."

Malang was shot in Mauritius, Goa and Mumbai. Produced by T-Series, Luv Films and Ankur Garg, and Northern Lights Entertainment, the film is slated to release on February 7, 2020.

There was strange inherent comfort with Brad Pitt: Leonardo DiCaprio

LOS ANGELES(KCN): Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio

the film, which was well-received across the globe.

working with Brad was this strange inherent comfort and



says working with Brad Pitt on Quentin Tarantino's "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood" was an incredible experience.

The actor said they both clicked instantly and were on the same page while portraying their respective characters in

DiCaprio played an ageing, out-of-work actor, Rick Dalton, in the film set in 1960s' Hollywood, while Pitt essayed the part of his stunt double and confident Cliff Booth.

"What was very interesting about

ease that we really both clicked into day one. It didn't need a lot of prep work. We talked about the script, and we instinctively knew that dynamic and relationship, and who these guys were to one another," the actor, 45, told Deadline.

me realise that I am going overboard at times," says Kajol on how their marriage works.

The couple reveals that their children Nysa and Yug have not watched the film yet. "They don't like my movies because they feel I weep too much. They feel that I cry in happy scenes too," says Kajol. Ajay laughs and adds, "Nysa doesn't discuss much about films but Yug calls me Tanhaji Malsure when I reach home. Even when I call him he says 'Hello Tanhaji'."

ogy that we've used has been done for the first time in India by Indians. I formed my own company for this. The CGI has been done completely by us. I have always tried to experiment with new techniques. Our director Om Raut had done all the research before we embarked on the path. In fact, we met Tanhaji's family and they would be on the sets every day. We recreated the sets as such locales are not available in the current situation."

The 50-year-old further rues how the

Common man has always been the hero: Vikrant Massey

MUMBAI: Actor Vikrant Massey says for him the common man is the hero in real life and he aims to showcase the same on-screen.

The actor believes "aam-aadmi" has been ignored by the film industry for too long and through his movies he wants him to take the centre stage.

"This is the time of common man. The person cleaning the drain is a common man, the common man are out on streets fighting.

"The common man has always been the hero and they have been ignored for too long. I am an actor, I can act and what I can do through my work is, become their voice," Vikrant told PTI in an interview here.

Coming from a lower-middle class family, Vikrant says he has had his fair share of struggles in life, and he has come out stronger.

"I was told I am a TV actor and I won't get to work in films. When I came here (films) I was told I can only be a hero's friend, but I am the

protagonist and the so-called hero. I have lived a journey. Like Amol in 'Chhapaak' is a common man, who left his job and is walking on this path. There are people, these are characters, who for me are the heroes."

The actor says he has always drawn inspiration from the society as he is not a trained performer.

"I travel a lot. I want to bring on-screen all my experiences. I am still learning, I am very young, what I see around me, I try to bring it on screen.

"I hope audiences like me, they laugh and cry with me and take away something from the characters I play.

I am not attempting to change the world, I want people to get aware of their own self, and relate to the characters I play," he adds.

Vikrant is looking forward to "Chhapaak", featuring Deepika Padukone as an acid attack survivor.

The film, directed by Meghna Gulzar, is inspired the life of Laxmi

Agarwal. The actor, who was earlier supposed to collaborate with Meghna on "Raazi", says he is happy to have got the opportunity to be part of her latest venture.

"The response has been positive so far and we are looking forward to January 10, when it releases. It's an opportunity for any aspiring artiste to work with Meghna, Deepika and on a story as such. I am fortunate to be a part of this film."

Vikrant says with "Chhapaak" their aim is to create awareness about acid violence.

"It is a heinous crime and no living being deserves this. No one has the right to have an impact or influence on anyone else's life in such a life-altering way.

"Through 'Chhapaak' our attempt is to talk about acid violence and we hope people take this film in the right way and there will be more awareness and discussion on this topic."

The film is scheduled to release on January 10.

Evolution of India's Trade Negotiations

Dammu Ravi

The numismatic evidence found in various ancient coastal towns of Romans, Sumerians and Egyptians suggest that ancient Indians were enduring traders. Chanakya's Arthashastra, of about 300 BC, mentions about vibrant spices trade links between India and countries in the West and Southeast Asia. During the 300 years of Colonial rule, the East India Company completely controlled India's external trade, allowing export of mainly raw cotton and spices and dumping finished products in the country.

Multilateral Trade under GATT The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of 1948 was the first multilateral agreement under UN aimed at boosting economic recovery by reducing barriers to trade.

Even though India was one of the 28 founding members of GATT, it was not a serious stakeholder in multilateral trade negotiations. The newly-born independent countries known as 'Third World Countries' had their priorities firmly rooted in development issues such as providing basic necessities to its people—food, clothing and shelter as also building institutions for preserving the hard-earned freedom. Evolution of India's Trade Negotiations Dammu Ravi Global Trade.

India's trade negotiating approach would need to take a broader long-term view of things to come in future. Increasing volume of trade is more important than trade deficit because trade need not be a zero-sum game. The combination of quality and price determines the staying power of a product in the market. India should consciously develop a wide-angle approach to the evolving global trade dynamics. The author is Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs. Email: dammu.ravi@nic.in In the eight GATT Rounds held in the later half of 20th century, India and developing countries were primarily concerned about safeguarding their agriculture interests against largescale agriculture subsidies of developed countries. They feared possible dumping of agricultural produce in international markets would cause market distortions, to the detriment of farmers in developing countries who were faced with challenges of subsistence living, erratic monsoons, low yielding, fragmented farming etc. Moreover, agriculture being a livelihood issue for a large number of people in developing countries, it was felt necessary to protect it from external competition. National Agriculture Market (NAM) proved to be a useful tool to garner awareness and build coalitions in the multilateral trade negotiations against unfair trade policies.

World Trade Organization India, along with 76 countries, was a founder member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995 which subsumed the Uruguay Round GATT negotiations from 1986-1994.

India believes that a fair, equitable, justiciable and predictable rules-based multilateral trading system embodied in WTO is in the best interest of developing and Least Developed Countries (LDCs). The Dispute Settlement Body, a lynch-pin of WTO, makes trade rules enforceable and effective. India sought correction in the highly imbalanced trade negotiations under the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), reasoning that since developing countries were unfamiliar of the long-term implications of the negotiated formula on agriculture under AoA

during the Uruguay Round of negotiations, correction was necessary. Under AoA, the domestic support policies, subject to reduction commitments, were calculated by the total Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS) on the



base years of 1986-88. Accordingly, input subsidies known as 'Amber box' have been calculated for exclusion from reduction commitments at less than 5% of the value of production for developed countries and less than 10% for developing countries. India and other developing countries have argued that developed countries have taken undue advantage of the huge domestic support provided under other boxes namely, 'Green' and 'Blue' that have been tacitly kept outside the reduction commitments. Efforts to bring balance in AoA negotiations remained unsuccessful till date.

Trade and Development It was not until the beginning of the 21st century that WTO recognised the causal link between trade and development. This recognition led to the launching of the 'Doha Development Round' in 2001 putting 'development' at the centre of global trade. India articulated the popular view underlining the urgency in lifting millions out of poverty in developing and LDCs, and trade could be an effective catalyst for development. But irreconcilable differences in positions amongst member countries made it hard to bridge meaningful gaps in the Doha Round of negotiations on many vital areas, including on agriculture subsidies. However, India scored a major victory at the Bali Ministerial Conference in 2013 when it successfully negotiated a 'permanent peace' clause on domestic support for agriculture as a trade-off for agreeing to WTO Agreement on Trade Facilitation. The 'permanent peace' clause allows India to pursue its agriculture domestic support programs, without the risk of being challenged in the WTO Dispute Settlement Body, until the issue is resolved collectively by all members. India's accession to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of 1948 was the first multilateral agreement under UN aimed at boosting economic recovery by reducing barriers to trade. Even though India was one of the

28 founding members of GATT, it was not a serious stakeholder in multilateral trade negotiations. 16 YOJANA October 2020 April 2017 also proved beneficial to it for improving logistics efficiencies and bringing down trade costs

Development Round remains unfinished and new issues run the risk of undermining the 'development' agenda. India needs to maintain a delicate negotiating balance on reform of WTO without undermining the principle of Special & Differential Treatment and the development-centric agenda of WTO. Tariff and Non-Tariff Barriers Understanding how tariffs and non-tariffs impact trade is crucial for trade negotiations. The rationale for high tariffs is to protect domestic industry from external competition and enhance revenue collection for the State. WTO member countries had bound their tariff rates for each line of product; developed countries bound 99% of their tariff lines to below 5% rates and developing countries bound their rates to 98% but with varying peak rates, within which they can maintain flexible applied rates. Member countries list their commitments in their schedule and offer them on Most Favoured Nation (MFN) basis as per GATT Article 1 i.e., "preferences to be offered to all members on an equal basis in a non-discriminatory manner". This flexibility was considered necessary for developing and LDCs to withstand global trade distortions caused by sudden surge in imports of certain products. India brought down its applied rates significantly from an average 100% rates in the 90s to currently around average 15% for industrial products and 25% per cent for agriculture products. Several lines kept under Open General Licensing system (OGI), not meant for trading in support of MSMEs, were finally abolished in 2005.

The game of tariffs in trade negotiations has always been deceptive. While developed countries have seemingly cut down their tariffs, they have surreptitiously erected nontariff barriers in the form of standards, regulations, licenses, port restrictions, testing etc., ostensibly to deny market access to others and protect their domestic industry. WTO Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) have defined rules on standards but these are not enforceable. As Standards are voluntary in WTO, countries tend to take advantage of the ambiguity in the Article 20 of GATT that allows governments to restrain imports in order to protect human, animal or plant life or health, provided they do not discriminate or use it as disguised protectionism. For developing countries coping up with these high standards is hard as they add up costs. Moreover, tendency to often shift goal posts makes the game even more challenging. Trade negotiators would need to be particularly adept at tackling these unseen walls in global trade. India's Share in World Trade India's share in the world merchandise exports at the time of our independence in 1947 was 2.2%; it dropped to 0.5% in 1983 and marginally raised to 0.7% in 2000. (To be Continued)



Reform of WTO Presently, talk on reform of the WTO has gathered momentum in the wake of unilateral measures and counter-measures imposed by mostly USA and China. Developed countries are seeking to graduate few emerging countries like India, China, Brazil, South Africa etc. from the status of 'developing countries' by withdrawing Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT). The principles of S&DT enshrined in GATT and adopted into the WTO system, was based on the premise that developing countries and LDCs, faced with developmental challenges, require certain buffer to cope with external competition. India strongly opposed this distorted view arguing that development parameters of developing countries are not even remotely close to those of developed countries and putting them in the same basket as developed countries is unfair. Another challenge in WTO for developing countries is effort by plurilateral groups to push for new issues on the WTO Agenda for rulemaking such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, MSME and gender. For India and developing countries, Doha

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Tariff and Non-Tariff Barriers Understanding how tariffs and non-tariffs impact trade is crucial for trade negotiations. The rationale for high tariffs is to protect domestic industry from external competition and enhance revenue collection for the State. WTO member countries had bound their tariff rates for each line of product; developed countries bound 99% of their tariff lines to below 5% rates and developing countries bound their rates to 98% but with varying peak rates, within which they can maintain flexible applied rates. Member countries list their commitments in their schedule and offer them on Most Favoured Nation (MFN) basis as per GATT Article 1 i.e., "preferences to be offered to all members on an equal basis in a non-discriminatory manner".

This flexibility was considered necessary for developing and LDCs to withstand global trade distortions caused by sudden surge in imports of certain products. India brought down its applied rates significantly from an average 100% rates in the 90s to currently around average 15% for industrial products and 25% per cent for agriculture products. Several lines kept under Open General Licensing system (OGI), not meant for trading in support of MSMEs, were finally abolished in 2005.

The game of tariffs in trade negotiations has always been deceptive. While developed countries have seemingly cut down their tariffs, they have surreptitiously erected nontariff barriers in the form of standards, regulations, licenses, port restrictions, testing etc., ostensibly to deny market access to others and protect their domestic industry. WTO Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) have defined rules on standards but these are not enforceable. As Standards are voluntary in WTO, countries tend to take advantage of the ambiguity in the Article 20 of GATT that allows governments to restrain imports in order to protect human, animal or plant life or health, provided they do not discriminate or use it as disguised protectionism. For developing countries coping up with these high standards is hard as they add up costs. Moreover, tendency to often shift goal posts makes the game even more challenging. Trade negotiators would need to be particularly adept at tackling these unseen walls in global trade. India's Share in World Trade India's share in the world merchandise exports at the time of our independence in 1947 was 2.2%; it dropped to 0.5% in 1983 and marginally raised to 0.7% in 2000. (To be Continued)

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Indian Foreign Policy in the Times of the Pandemic

Harsh Vardhan Shringla

Indian foreign policy must also contend with non-traditional security challenges in newer domains such as Space, the Cyberworld and in the biological domain. All crises are followed by periods of growth. This crisis too will create opportunities and we would like to be in a position to benefit from them. One of our foreign policy priorities is to make India, in the words of the Prime Minister, the "nerve centre of global supply chains". This is also in line with the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

Aatmanirbharta is not about seeking self-centred arrangements. It is not about turning the country inwards or about economic isolationism. Its essential aim is to ensure India's position as a key participant in global supply chains. Through building capacities at home we also intend to contribute to mitigating disruptions in global markets. The network of Indian missions and posts around the world, in consultation with various stakeholders, is identifying export and

investment opportunities for our businesses in various countries.

Encouraging global business lockdown, India provided these drugs and medical supplies to more than 150 countries. Through initiatives such as Operation Sagar, Operation Sanjeevani, the deployment of medical Rapid Response Teams in several countries, the linking of health professionals and the pooling of health capacities, and supply of essential medical products, we reinforced our credentials as providers of net health security and first responders.

We deploy large amounts of resources through development partnerships. It is a practical demonstration of our belief in "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas". The Indian model of developmental cooperation is comprehensive and involves multiple instruments including grants-in-aid, line of credit and capacity building and technical assistance. It ranges from commerce to culture, energy to engineering, health to housing, IT to infrastructure, sports to science,

disaster relief and humanitarian assistance to restoration and preservation of cultural and heritage assets. Last but not least, providing timely, effective and efficient public services to our citizens and to our Diaspora is a major priority. More than a million Indians have returned to India through the Vande Bharat Mission by land, sea and air.

This is the largest such logistical exercise undertaken in the recent past and highlights the ever present requirement of preparing for and responding to contingencies. The pandemic is leaving a lasting imprint on all domains, including on the way we engage with the world. In this fast evolving environment, Indian diplomacy has shown the necessary agility and adaptability to effectively respond to the emerging challenges, while also cementing India's credentials as a responsible and constructive member of the global community. ?

Our relationship with Russia has not only deepened in traditional areas of coopera-

tion like defence, space, nuclear, science and technology etc., but has expanded to include non-traditional and new areas of co-operation like energy, investments and co-operation

between states. Entities that seek to diversify their manufacturing locations to consider India is a key foreign policy priority. India has demonstrated through the current crisis that it is a responsible member of the global community. We believe in taking a far-sighted view that will stand us in good stead in the post-pandemic world. The pandemic produced an explosion in demand for drugs such as Hydroxychloroquine (HCQ) and Paracetamol produced in India. We were able to supply, after ensuring adequate domestic stockpiles, large volumes of these drugs to friends and consumers across the world. In the face of daunting logistical challenges imposed. (Concluded)

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PAC completes 100 years, President to inaugurate celebration in Central Hall of Parliament

NEW DELHI: President Ram Nath Kovind will inaugurate the centennial year celebration of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in the Central Hall of

occasion. Chowdhury, while speaking to the reporters, said that the President will release the centennial souvenir of PAC. "An exhibition showcasing

Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Maldives have confirmed their par-

sources and assess outcomes of programmes, schemes and projects of the Central government. "The PAC will also deliberate on the implementation of recommendations of



Parliament on Saturday. Besides top dignitaries, representatives of a number of countries will take part in the commemoration meeting, said the PAC chairman and leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury. He said that vice president M Venkaiah Naidu and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will address the gathering on the

the century-long journey of the committee will also be inaugurated by the President during the inaugural session," he said. Union Ministers, Members of Parliament, presiding officers of legislative bodies in the country will also take part in the commemoration programme. Representatives of Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Eswatini,

participation in the commemoration event at the Central Hall, added Chowdhury. The PAC will deliberate on a four-agenda theme on the working of the Committee over two days, which will include discussions on the functioning of PAC in present times, challenges and the way forward. The PAC will also seek to collect information from non-governmental

its reports, including adherence to timelines and mechanism for strict compliance. The members will also dwell upon the issue of PAC as a development partner, with a focus on strengthening of systems and promoting good governance. Also, on the agenda for the discussions will be the impact of PAC, ensuring citizens' right to due process and value for taxpayers' money," said Chowdhury.

India is on its way to achieve population stabilisation, says Minister of State for Health

NEW DELHI: India is on its way to achieve population stabilisation, Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar informed the Lok Sabha on Friday. She said the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) has declined to 2.0 in 2019-20 which is below replacement level, while 31 out of 36 states and Union territories (UTs) have already achieved the replacement level fertility. The modern contraceptive usage has increased to 56.5 per cent and the Unmet Need for Family Planning has declined to 9.4 per cent, according to NFHS 5 findings, Pawar said in a written reply. The Crude Birth Rate (CBR) has declined to 19.7 in 2019. "Family planning is a target free programme, and the government provides services based on voluntary and informed choice," she said. A National Population Policy was formulated in the year 2000 with long term objective of attain-

ing population stabilisation by 2045. In response to a question on whether the government proposes to bring a leg-

Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Assam) and six north-eastern states (Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur,

Compensation scheme for sterilisation acceptors which provides compensation for loss of wages to the beneficiary and also to the service provider team for conducting sterilisation was initiated, she said.



isolation for two child policy, the minister said, "There is no such proposal." She said the government is implementing various schemes which have been instrumental in reining in population growth. Listing a few of them, she said Mission Parivar Vikas is being implemented in 13 states for substantially increasing access to contraceptives and family planning services. These are seven high focus states (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar,

Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland and Mizoram). The MoS further said the current contraceptive basket comprising condoms, combined oral contraceptive pills, emergency contraceptive pills, intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD) and sterilization, has been expanded with inclusion of new contraceptives namely injectable contraceptive (Antara programme) and Centchroman (Chhaya).

"Post-partum intrauterine contraceptive device (PPIUCD) services are provided post delivery and the scheme for home delivery of contraceptives by ASHAs at doorstep of beneficiaries has been taken up." "Besides, Family Planning Logistics Management Information System (FP-LMIS), a dedicated software, has been launched to ensure smooth forecasting, procurement and distribution of family planning commodities across all the levels of health facilities," Pawar said. According to the Report of the Technical Group on Population Projections (TGPP) July 2020, chaired by Registrar General of India (RGI), the projected population of the country, in the year 2030 is 1.47 billion, she added.

IREDA Pacts with THDCIL

New Delhi: To provide its techno-financial expertise in developing Renewable En-

diligence of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency & Conservation projects for

help THDCIL to accelerate their footprints in the Renewable Energy space,

tions will enable us to contribute for meeting the targets of the Paris Agreement. Also,



ergy projects, Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with THDC India Ltd (THDCIL). The MoU was signed by Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman & Managing Director (CMD), IREDA and Shri Rajeev Kumar Vishnoi, CMD, THDCIL. Under the MoU, IREDA will undertake Techno-Financial due

THDCIL. IREDA will assist THDCIL in developing an action plan to create and acquire Renewable Energy projects for the next 5 years. IREDA will also extend its techno-commercial expertise to THDCIL for Environmental & Social (E&S) due diligence of RE projects as per the internationally accepted E&S standards. Speaking on the occasion CMD, IREDA said: "This MoU will

who already has portfolio of Solar & Wind energy projects apart from Hydro and Thermal. It will facilitate knowledge transfer, which will contribute to driving sustainable development of the country through Green Energy." Shri Das also underlined: "Realizing the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, to reduce carbon emissions to 45% by 2030 in India, these collabora-

these efforts can stimulate green investments and create lakhs of jobs." This is the sixth MoU signed by IREDA within one year for providing its consultancy services for developers of RE and Energy transition. Earlier, IREDA had signed MoUs with SJVN, NHPC, TANGEDCO, NEEPCO and BVFCL to extend its Techno-Financial expertise for Green Energy projects.



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BAR Association Protesting Sub-Collector and Tahasildar Mistreatment of Advocate



Khordha (KCN): Members of Khordha District BAR Association today in protests against the alleged behavior by Sub-Collector, Tahasildar and other Executive Magistrate against the lawyer, causing harassment to litigants. The members

of the BAR Association submitted a memorandum to the Collector Khordha demanding the matter will be finalised within 7 days otherwise the Association will take further steps. The President of Khordha District BAR Association Ajit Kumar Pattnaik



said "We were hopeful that the matter would be resolved as the delivery of justice was the main aim of both the Executive Magistrate as well as lawyers. Our demand is that such incidents against lawyers should not recur." Vice-president of Khordha District

BAR Association Lotak Bindu Pattnaik Secretary Sanjaya Kumar Pattnaik, Former President and Senior Advocate Sisir Kumar Parida, Nrushingha Prasad Mishra and all the Advocates of Khordha District BAR Association were present.

Awareness Chariot of OSCPCR in Puri

Puri (KCN): The Mobile van campaign

Kanas High School and Delang Block,



on Child Rights as a part of 40 days campaign by Odisha state Commission for Protection of Child Rights has moved to various block headquarters and Grampanchayats at Puri today. The chariot moved from Nilachal Seva Pratisthan, Kanas to

Satyabadi Block. Mr. Manoj Kumar Tripathy, DCPO, Mr. Santosh Kumar Sahu, LPO, respective BDOs, CDPOs, BEOs of block along with lady supervisors, Anganwadi Workers, SHG Members were joined, welcomed the event and delivered their speech on child

protection and disseminated child rights and protection messages. The mobile van reached at District Headquarter at afternoon where Mr. Pradip Kumar Sahoo, Additional District Magistrate, Puri welcomed to the chariot and addressed to all stakeholders of district to extend cooperation for strengthening of child protection system. He conferred thanks to Chairperson, OSCPCR and all the collaborative agencies for implementing such a

beautiful event in Odisha. In this ceremony Ms Puspunjali Mohapatra, DSWO, Mr. Ramashanakar Patra, CWC Member, Mr. Manoj Kumar Tripathy, DCPO, Puri, Mr. Subhanarayan Satapathy, POIC, Ms. Snigdharani Sahoo, PONIC and other DCPU officials, ICDS personnels were attended. The chariot will move tomorrow towards Brahmagiri Block & Krushnaprasad Block for creating awareness on child protection.

Barbil police arrested three person in connection with diesel smuggling

Barbil(KCN):Three person were arrested by Barbil police in connection with smuggling of diesel. Police too seized one car vide No.OD



Pankaj Barik of Kansiya village under Kaniya Police station, Sanand Naik of Lanjigad village under Kaliyari Police station and Dushmant Naik of Tentoli village under Banarpal police station of Angul district were arrested in this connection. Other police officials C.R.Dash, K.K.Sethy, R.Nayak and N.Pradhan had also accompanied in the raid. Master and

33AE0069 and a diesel tanker vide regd no.OD10 2372. As per information, while doing patrolling by Barbil police led by ASI, Sunil Barla, they got information of the smuggling of diesel by some person near Reliance petrol pump, Serenda. They have brought one dieseltanker loaded about 7000ltr of diesel, escorted by a Breezicar. On investigation, they failed to show any document. Barbil police arrested



three others involved in the matter were arrested soon informed IIC Sushant Dash.

Take out time for yourself; prioritize "Me time" with Nimeasy

Kolkata (KCN): When was the last time that you sat down with a cup of coffee or tea, not worrying about the sink full of dirty dishes or an overflowing laundry basket or a dirty floor? NEVER. Most of us are so conditioned to feel guilty about taking a break from work that we forget to consider how it affects our mental health. Even if we plan to take a break, the burden of pending work constantly bugs our mind, and the guilt keeps consuming us. Be it at home or office, we have a habit of working persistently till the work is complete without taking a breather. This especially affects women who have been taught through generations that when tasks are pending, break is not an option. Though most of us are pro's at multitasking and managing personal and professional work, we must also make sure to focus on giving ourselves a break. With increase in stress levels amongst people, it's pretty straightforward that the focus on mental health is ignored. Our lifestyle has become so monotonous that we are lost in the daily routine and forget to take some time for ourselves. This is where the concept of Mindfulness comes into the picture.

Here are a few things that you can do: Calm yourself, Plan your work, Multi task your chores, Fitness, Self-care: Calm yourself: Make deliberate space for ME time in your daily routine. It may be just

chores: Take out time for activities that make you feel relaxed like cooking, reading a book, listening to music, watching TV or just sipping a cup of coffee and indulge yourself during the 30 minutes you set

short walks or quick runs. While it is very beneficial to walk or run in the mornings, a walk in the middle of the day can also be very therapeutic. Self-care: Add a selfcare routine to pamper yourself every day – paint your nails, put on that face mask or just add a few minutes to your bath routine. Rate your happiness on a 5-point scale every day and you will be amazed to see how these 30 minutes of ME time can increase your happiness index in just a month. Neha Verma, a Clinical Psychologist (HOD) at Fitterfly, a digital therapeutics company, while emphasizing the importance of Mindfulness says, "We are so caught up in the rut of life that we often forget to understand that we need to go slow to move fast. We live life as though there aren't enough hours in a day, but if we do each activity calmly and carefully, we will get it done quicker and with much lesser stress. Living each moment can make you feel fresh and relaxed and will increase your productivity as well. However, it is also essential to take a break from your routine to recharge and rejuvenate. The concept of ME Time needs to be reinforced in our lives to help us both cope and flourish."



30 minutes out of 24 hours to calm yourself from the work. But, it should be clearly defined so that you know when to spend time with yourself. Plan your work: Making a to-do list of work is important. Make a list of activities that you have to finish in a day that could be both house work and office work and don't forget to add some ME Time to the to do list. Daily chores are a taxing and never-ending task, so keep aside your work for some time and engage in something that will calm your mind. Multi task your

aside. Washing utensils is known to be a stress buster too, so if you have leftover utensils to be cleaned adapt the practice of soaking them. Soak your vessels in water with Nimeasy Dishwash Gel for 25 min and its Enzyme technology helps lift off the layer of tough food scum stuck to the bottom of utensils. Nimeasy's unique Liftoff Action helps reduce the need for scrubbing. This will save a big chunk of your 30 minutes personal time which can be used for something else. Fitness: Involve yourself in some kind of fitness. Go for a

Odisha Organic Covers 1.37L Ha

Bhubaneswar: While the Union Government has been promoting organic and natural farming across the country, Odisha has joined the bandwagon of Green Farming in a big way. Latest Report on organic and natural farming reveals that in Odisha more than 1.37 Lakh Hectare of such farming, which is on rise. Union Government through dedicated schemes namely National Program of Organic Produce, Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Paddati (BPKP) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development in North East Region (MOVCNDR) is promoting Organic farming. While Odisha has promoted organic farming through all the three national programs and covered 1,37,494 Hectares. Minister Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar in a reply said in Lok Sabha that farmers are provided financial assistance of Rs 31000/ ha / 3 years under PKVY and Rs 32500/ ha/ 3years under MOVCNDR for organic inputs such as seeds, bio-fertilisers, bio-pesticides, organic manure, compost/ vermi-compost, botanical extracts etc. In addition to above, support is also provided for group/ Farmers Producers Organization (FPO) formation, training, certification, value addition and marketing of their organic produce. Organic cultivation on either side of River Ganga under National Mission of Clean

Ganga(NMCG), natural farming, large area certification and support for individual farmers have also been introduced under PKVY to increase area under organic farming. Bhartiya Prakritik Krishi Padhati (BPKP), a sub scheme of Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) since 2020-21 is promoted for traditional indigenous practices. The scheme mainly emphasises on exclusion of all synthetic chemical inputs and promotes on-farm biomass recycling with major stress on biomass mulching, use of cow dung-urine formulations and plant based preparations. Under BPKP, financial assistance of Rs 12200/ ha for 3 years is provided for cluster formation, capacity building and continuous handholding by trained personnel, certification and residue analysis. Organic Farming has also been supported under other schemes viz. Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) and Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Network Project on Organic Farming under Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Individual and small organic farmers groups (5-50 farmers) may also get registered with State Agriculture Department and nearby Regional Council (RC) of Participatory Guarantee System- India (PGS-India) to certify their farm as organic under PGS. Assistance of Rs. 2700/ha for 3 years is provided for PGS Certification (Cost of Certification is directly reimbursed to Regional Council of PGS- India) At present organic farming is taken up in an area of 38.09 lakh hectares in the country including 6.19 lakh hectares under Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY), 1.23 lakh hectare under Namami Gange Program, 4.09 lakh hectare under BPKP (Natural Farming), and 26.57 lakh hectares under National Program for Organic Production (NPOP).



Biocon partners with Tabuk Pharmaceuticals to commercialise its speciality generic medicines in the Middle East

BENGALURU: Biocon Limited, an innovation-led global biopharmaceutical company, on Tuesday announced a partnership with Tabuk Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Company (a fully owned subsidiary of Astra Industrial Group), a leading pharmaceutical company in the

and other Middle East countries. The partnership will pave the way for Biocon's expansion into the MENA region to include Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman and Iraq, in addition to Jordan and Lebanon. As part of the out-licensing deal with Tabuk, Biocon

our global presence with our portfolio of high quality, vertically-integrated generic formulations, to address unmet medical needs. We are extremely pleased to collaborate with Tabuk, whose deep expertise will help us build a solid foundation in key Middle East markets.

as Biocon, comes in as an evident choice to further support our mission in line with Saudi Vision 2030, regarding localizing speciality and value-added pharmaceutical products. As an innovation-led company we are driven by our purpose to enhance global healthcare through



Middle East and North Africa (MENA), to commercialise select speciality products in the Middle East. Under the terms of this agreement, Tabuk Pharmaceuticals will hold the marketing authorization for these products and will be responsible to register, import, and promote them in Saudi Arabia

will develop and manufacture the products, and Tabuk will commercialise them. According to a press statement, Siddharth Mittal, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Biocon Ltd, said, "Our partnership with Tabuk Pharmaceuticals is another significant step as we continue to expand

Mohammed Alhagbani, President of Astra Industrial Group, commented, "As part of our role and mission at Tabuk Pharmaceuticals to deliver unique health solutions and enhance the well-being of people in Saudi Arabia and countries we operate in, our partnership with as distinguished and renowned a company

high quality, affordable biopharmaceuticals. We are leveraging advanced science, innovative tech platforms and international research collaborations to develop therapies that can lower treatment costs, increase access and improve healthcare outcomes".

Global crypto market cap drops 2.28 per cent in one day; not a correction, say experts

BENGALURU: Global crypto market capitalisation witnessed a fall of

week, Bitcoin, Ethereum and Binance Coin have been trading in the

much anticipated and it does not look like a correction to me," said Sathvik

"For the past few weeks, cryptocurrency's price has been fall-



2.28% on Monday evening and stood at \$2.23 trillion. While Bitcoin was trading at \$48,482.76, a decrease of 0.81%, Ethereum was trading at \$4,066.31, a decrease of 2.33% from the previous trading, according to Coinmarketcap.com. For the past one

red. The total volume in D e F I (Decentralised Finance) is currently \$19.63 billion, 14.98% of the total crypto market over the last 24 hours. Crypto players point out that this fall is a sell off because of the holidays later this month. "These movements in December are

Vishwanath, co-founder and CEO, Unocoin. He added: "These seem to be a sell off because of the holidays later this month and also given that December was never a stable month in the past." In the Indian market (WazirX), Bitcoin was trading at Rs 39,71,001, 1.6% down at 8 pm on Monday.

ing because traders are moving away from riskier assets over worries about the Omicron and lower trading liquidity that tends to plague cryptocurrencies at weekends," said Manav Bajaj, Founder, Panther Quant. He suggested not to panic sell and that the market will recover soon.

Citroen latest to announce price hikes, C5 Aircross SUV to be costlier up to 3% from January

NEW DELHI(KCN): Automaker Citroen India on Tuesday said it will increase the price of its premium SUV C5 Aircross by

starts at Rs 31.3 lakh (ex-showroom Delhi). Some carmakers such as Maruti Suzuki and luxury automakers



up to 3 per cent from January next year to offset the impact of rising input costs. The effective price increase will be up to 3 per cent on the existing ex-showroom prices of the Feel and Shine variants of the model, the automaker said in a statement. A continued rise in the cost of commodities and ocean freight costs has necessitated this price increase of the vehicle, it added. The price of C5 Aircross currently

Audi and Mercedes-Benz have already announced a hike in vehicle prices from next month. The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki informed that the price hike planned for January 2022 will vary for different models, while Mercedes-Benz said its hike will be on select models by up to 2 per cent due to feature enhancement and rising input costs. ALSO READ | Maruti, Hyundai hit

supply bumps; joy ride for others in November Audi will increase the prices by up to 3 per cent across its entire model range owing to rising input and operational costs. Similarly Tata Motors, Honda and Renault are also mulling hiking prices of passenger vehicles from January next year, given the con-

tinuing rise in input costs. Tata Motors has also announced to hike prices of its commercial vehicles in the range of 2.5 per cent from January 1. Prices of essential commodities such as steel, aluminum, copper, plastic and precious metals have substantially increased over the last one year.

Logjam Continues in Assembly

Continued from page-1

protest inside the Assembly hall. Adjourning the proceedings for 30 minutes, Speaker called an all party meeting. However, the meeting failed again.

Amid uproar by the BJP and Congress members, the Speaker allowed Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi to move a resolution in the House to urge the Centre to declare Paika Bidroh as the first war of independence. The House also passed the resolution.

Congress had brought adjournment motion notice in the Assembly today for a discussion over the sensational Mamita murder case to which Parliamentary Affairs Minister Bikram Keshari Arukh was supposed to reply. Following the adjournment, members of all the three parties continued such protests outside the hall and inside the Assembly premises too.

The BJP MLAs seen performing puja to Lord Jagannath, Congress members staged protest holding the placards. The ruling BJD legislators, holding banners, staged dharna before the Mahatma Gandhi statue.

"Naveen Patnaik is in deep slumber like Kumbhakaran. The number of Dhritarashtras and Duryodhans in Odisha is rising. The CM has turned deaf ears to all that is happening around him, that's why we are beating gongs to wake him up," BJP deputy leader in Assembly, Bishu Charan Sethi told reporters outside the House.

"The same person had sacked several ministers in the past for very small mistakes. What happened today?" he asked.

Alleging the Chief Minister is not giving priority to the Assembly, Mr.Sethi said, "The Chief Minister is going to Kalinga Stadium to attend hockey programs through the road passing in front of the Assembly and not coming here. Why do you avoid Assembly? Are you involved in the case (Kalahandi)?"

Senior Congress member Taraprasad Bahinipati, who had sprinkled 'ganga jal and cow urine' inside the Assembly hall on December 4 in a bid to 'purify' it, alleged that the ruling BJD is creating uproar in the House. "It is the responsibility of the Chief Minister, who is leader of the House, to ensure smooth functioning of the Assembly. However, it is shameful that the ruling party members are disturbing the House," Mr.Bahinipati said.

On the other hand, BJD lawmaker Pratap Kesari Deb alleged that the opposition parties are doing drama for their political gain eyeing upcoming panchayat and urban polls.

"In one hand you (opposition) are giving adjournment motion and on the other hand, you are not ready to discuss the issue. We condemn such acts of opposition members," Mr.Deb said.

People have elected the members to the Assembly to discuss several issues including price hike, fertilizer shortage, farmers facing problems due to recent heavy rainfall. However, opposition members don't want the House to run and discuss these issues, he said. "That why we have sprinkled gangal jal on the opposition members praying that good sense prevail among them," the BJD leader said.

The Odisha Legislative Assembly has been witnessing uproar and disturbance since the beginning of winter session on December 1 over the lady teacher Mamita Meher murder case. Even though the Chief Minister had assured the House that his government is committed to give justice to the victim, the opposition continued their protest demanding removal of Minister Mr.Mishra.

No Opening of Ratna Bhandar

Continued from page-1

from the Bahar Bhandar Ghar only.

As per earlier statement of Mr.Jena in the House, the Ratna Bhandar had more than 120 kg of gold and 221 kg silver. According to the inventory prepared in 1978 when the Ratna Bhandar was opened last time, it had more than 12,831 'bhari' of gold and 22,153 'bhari' silver (One bhari equals 11.66 grams). However, the Government does not have any information about the value of the items in the storehouse.

Nanda Sir No More

Continued from page-1

about the death of Mr.Prusty. "His valuable contribution to the field of education and his lifelong sacrifice will remain an ideal for forever. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families," Mr.Patnaik said. "Deeply saddened by the demise of Nanda Kishore Prusty Ji. He was recently conferred with the Padma Shri for his pioneer contribution towards providing free education to the children in Odisha. Nation will always remember this noble soul for his selfless service. Om Shanti Shanti," Mr.Shah said in his message on twitter.

Mourning over the death of the teacher, the Union Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship said that the departure of Nanda Sir is an irreparable loss for the State as well as the country's education. "I am saddened by the loss of Padma Shri Nanda Kishore Prusty. The demise of Nanda Sir, who had been teaching little children for three generations without pay, is an irreparable loss not only for Odisha but also to the entire education field of India," Mr.Pradhan wrote on his Twitter handle.

2019 US Open champ Bianca Andreescu takes time off for mental break

WASHINGTON: Bianca Andreescu, the 2019 U.S. Open champion, will take a mental break from tennis and sit out the start of next season, including the Australian Open, saying Monday she wants to "re-set, recover, and grow" after a challenging two years that included getting COVID-19. The 21-year-old from Canada wrote in a posting on Twitter that she was affected mentally and physically by "multiple weeks in isolation quarantining" and that her grandmother's stay for several weeks in a

hospital's intensive care unit because of the coronavirus "really hit me hard." "I want to give myself extra time to re-set, recover, and grow from this (as cliché as that sounds) and continue to inspire by doing charity work, giving back and working on myself because I know by doing this, I will come back stronger than ever," she wrote. "I will therefore not start my season in Australia this year, but will take some additional time to reflect, train, and be ready for the upcoming 2022 tennis season."

ISL 2021-22: Kerala Blasters record first win of season, beat Odisha FC 2-1

VASCO: Kerala Blasters registered their first win of the season as they beat Odisha FC 2-1 in an Indian Super League (ISL) match at the Tilak Maidan Stadium here on Sunday. Alvaro Vazquez

remain on third with six points from three outings. Kerala started on the front foot, with Sahal Abdul Samad warming Odisha keeper Kamaljit Singh's gloves early on. Luna tried his luck from a

Gomes standing well outside his line. For Odisha, full back Hendry Antony attempted an audacious long-ranger which dipped at the top right corner but Albino was on hand to parry the ball over the bar.

yards, rounded the keeper and put the ball in the back of the net.

Vazquez could have doubled his and the team's tally in the 67th minute after being set up beautifully



(62nd minute) and substitute Prasanth Karuthadathkuni (85th) scored second-half goals to hand the yellow shirts their first victory in 11 months. For Odisha, Nikhil Raj -- in for Javi Hernandez -- pulled one back in second-half stoppage time. Attacker Adrian Luna was brilliant throughout the game and was instrumental in both Kerala Blasters' goals. Courtesy the result, Kerala rise to sixth in the table with five points from four games. Odisha, meanwhile,

free kick in the seventh minute, forcing Kamaljit to dive to his left and deny the Uruguayan. Odisha got their first real chance in the 12th minute when Aridai Cabrera bombed down the left flank and set Javi Hernandez up, but the Spaniard's effort fizzed over the bar. Kerala continued to have the upper hand as Thoiba Singh was booked for a challenge on Luna. Against the run of play, Javi Hernandez almost scored with a long-range effort after spotting Albino

At halftime, both teams were level but the men in yellow bossed proceedings. The second half started in the same vein with Kerala ruling the roost. Sahal looked in great touch from the off, dancing his way past defenders inside the box only to be thwarted, but the ball fell kindly for Luna whose effort went wide of the bar. Luna was in the thick of things again just after the hour mark, and this time his through ball found Vazquez who timed his run to perfection. The Spaniard ran 30

by Sahal, but his low effort was blocked by Kamaljit. Kerala suffered a setback when Albino went down after taking the goal kick and had to be taken off. India U-23 custodian Prabhsukhan Gill replaced him. Midfielder Prasanth's moment to saviour came five minutes to the final whistle when he dinked a perfectly weighed Luna ball past the keeper after a lovely run off the Uruguayan. Raj scored a late goal for Odisha but it did not matter in the end.

James Anderson to miss Ashes opener

BRISBANE: England has decided to rest senior pacer James Anderson for the first Ashes Test beginning here on Wednesday as part of

injury. With five Tests in six weeks the plan was to get him ready for the second Test in Adelaide," the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB)

both him and the management didn't want to take the risk of him playing after what had happened in 2019 at Edgbaston, when he broke down

week and work with the coaches at the Gabba rather than playing for the Lions." Anderson has to play a key role if England



their workload management. By not playing the series opener, the team management feels Anderson can be better prepared for the subsequent pink-ball Test in Adelaide. "Jimmy is fit to play, and is not carrying an

said in a statement. The decision also took into account England's "limited" preparations ahead of the first Test with the weather playing spoilsport. "With the limited build-up we have had so far on the tour,

on the first morning," the statement read. "He bowled at full capacity yesterday for just short of an hour and was in a good place physically. He will do the same again today at practice. He will stay with the Test group this

are to win the Ashes Down Under for the first time since 2010-11. He had taken 24 wickets at 26.04 when Andrew Strauss led England won the Ashes in Australia more than a decade ago.

KIIT & KISS Witness 20,000 Sports persons in two months

Bhubaneswar (KC-N): Thousands of del-

staying in KIIT & KISS campus and go-



egates from different walks of life visit KIIT & KISS to participate in various academic, cultural, and sport meets during the winter season every year. This year, over 20,000 sports persons, coaches, managers, and officials are visiting KIIT & KISS to participate in sports events only from November to December. During these two months, every day a large number of sportsperson and officials are coming and

ing back. It is incredible that despite the Covid-19 pandemic situation, so many players from India and abroad are coming and staying in KIIT & KISS. Several regional, national, international and university-level sports events have recently concluded or are going on in KIIT & KISS. These include 3rd Phase Kho-Kho Camp for U18 (M & W) for Khelo India Youth Games 2021, Santosh Trophy Foot-

ball (East Zone), BCCI U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy 2021-22 (Plate Group), Junior National Rugby 7s Championship (Under-18 Boys & Girls), East Zone Inter-University Football (Women), Coaching Camp of Maldives National Volleyball Team, Senior National

nis (Men), All India Inter-Zone Volleyball (Men & Women), All India Inter-University Athletics (Women), National Weightlifting Championship for Youth, Junior & Senior and National School Chess Championship (Boys & Girls), etc. Expressing his happi-



Rugby 7s Championship (Men & Women), All India Inter University Aquatics (Men & Women), East Zone Inter-University Football (Men), 4th National Para-Badminton Championship (Men & Women), All India Inter-Zone Ten-

ness over this, Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS, and MP, Kandhamal said, it is significant that more than 20,000 players are visiting KIIT & KISS as tourists. Their visit will enrich tourism in Odisha, he hoped.




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