

1st phase rural polls in Odisha today

Bhubaneswar (KC-N): Voting for the first phase panchayat elections in Odisha is

Heavyweights in whose areas polling is scheduled in the first phase include Chief

KV Singhdeo and Congress chief whip Tara Prasad Bahinipati.

37,245 police personnel to maintain law and order during the polling.



all set to be held on Wednesday. Popularity of several heavyweights from the ruling BJD as well as Opposition BJP and Congress will be at stake in the elections to be held in 22,379 booths in 1,669 panchayats across the State.

Minister Naveen Patnaik, Law Minister Pratap Jena, Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro, Health Minister Naba Kishore Das, Agriculture Minister Arun Sahu, senior BJD leaders Debi Mishra, Pratap Deb, former BJP state president

State Election Commissioner (SEC) Aditya Prasad Padhi on Tuesday told mediapersons that 67.51 lakh voters will exercise their franchise in the first phase. As many as 225 platoons of police force will be deployed with around

The fate of 726 candidates for 200 zilla parishad (ZP) member posts will be sealed in ballot boxes on Wednesday. Voting will be held from 7 am to 1 pm. Stating that the name of a person should be there in the ward-wise voters list/electoral roll, the SEC said a person can cast his/her vote by producing the electoral photo identity card (EPIC). Apart from EPIC, a voter can also produce any of the 13 different identity documents approved by the Election Commission.

In Sundargarh, four

Mo Sarkar Axe On Corruption

Cuttack (KCN): Taking strong action against corruption, the Vigilance has arrested 23 Government servants during one and half months of 2022. The Directorate of Vigilance is able

including 4 Class 1 officers, Vigilance Director Yeswant K Jethwa said on Wednesday.

"A considerable amount of vigilance work is based on feedback. Primarily we are tapping two types of feedback. One is pre bribery feedback and the other is post bribery or post corruption feedback," he said.

"Pre bribery feedback is helping us in laying traps and nabbing those who are demanding and accepting bribe amounts, while the transaction is taking place, or in intercepting them while travelling with bribe amounts. For this, we are relying on whistleblowers, aggrieved persons and our sources in various departments, institutions and offices across Odisha," said the Director Vigilance.

The other feedback is post bribery feedback. This feedback is helping the Vigilance in targeting the disproportionate assets generated through bribery and corruption, Mr. Jethwa said. CONTINUED ON: P-7



MO SARKAR
UNDER 5T FRAMEWORK
Dial 14545 to Register

to crack down on corruption by tapping the massive data generated by the Mo Sarkar system that is collecting random feedback on bribery, harassment etc. In 2022, the vigilance has registered 31 cases under the PC (Amendment) Act, 2018, so far. In these, as many as 23 Government employees have been arrested

18th Foundation Day of KIIT-DU

India's Food Security System is an Example before the World: Bishow Parajuli

Bhubaneswar (KCN): India's Food Security System is an Example before the World said Bishow Parajuli, United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) Representative and Coun-



try Director to India. Delivering the 18th Foundation Day Lecture at Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) Deemed to be University, Bhubaneswar on 16th February 2022 he said, "India has made tremendous progress in the field of food security during the last 50 years – it has become a food surplus country from a food-dependent country. Along with food production, conducive policy, science & technology, efficient supply chain, market and access are among the factors that contributed to the progress".

He said the production of food is not equal to

the availability of food. "Sadly, global hunger is rising. Up to 811 million people do not have enough to eat, while 270 million suffer from acute hunger despite plenty of food production", he remarked.

He congratulated Prof. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT & KISS for setting up this fantastic institution which is contributing signifi-



cantly in the field of spreading knowledge, creating opportunities and jobs, transforming lives, and nation-building. India's example is a showcase before the world, he stated, elaborating that initiatives like National Food Security Act, Public Distribution System (PDS), and Mid Day Meal have proved to be a lifeline in ensuring food security in the country. On climate change, he said, CONTINUED ON: P-7

Biden orders release of Trump White House logs to Congress

WASHINGTON(KCN): President Joe Biden is ordering the release of Trump White House visitor logs to the House committee investigating the riot of January 6, 2021, once more rejecting former President Donald Trump's claims of executive privilege. The committee has sought a trove of data from the National Archives, including presidential records that Trump had fought to keep private.

The records being released to Congress are visitor logs showing appointment information for individuals who allowed to enter the White

House on the the day of the insurrection. In a letter sent Mon-

should remain private, but decided that it was not in the best

interested in the organization and financing of a Washington



day to the National Archives, White House counsel Dana Remus said Biden had considered Trump's claim that because he was president at the time of the attack on the U.S Capitol, the records

interest of the United States to do so.

The committee is focused on Trump's actions from January 6, when he waited hours to tell his supporters to stop the violence and leave the Capitol. Investigators are also

rally the morning of the riot, when Trump told supporters to fight like hell.

Among the unanswered questions is how close organizers of the rally coordinated with White House officials.

ZP Prez Poll Schedule Out

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The State Election Commission (SEC) has published detailed schedules for in-direct election to Zilla Parishad (ZP) President, Vice President, Block Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Naib Sarpanch.



will CONTINUED ON: P-7

SEC Secretary RN Sahu has written a letter to the District Collectors specifying the detailed timelines for the in-direct elections.

As per schedule, the election to the post of Zilla Parishad presi-

Energy requirements of Indians expected to double in 20 years: PM

NEW DELHI(KCN): Energy requirements

(WSDS-22), Modi said environmental

climate action also needs adequate fi-

mitments made under the UNFCCC. We have also raised our ambitions during CoP-26 at Glasgow," Modi said.

Calling India a mega-diverse country which accounts for eight per cent of the world's species, the PM said, "It is our duty to protect this ecology. With 2.4 per cent of the world's land area, India accounts for nearly 8 per cent of the world's species. It is our duty to protect this ecology. We are strengthening our protected area network," he said.

The WSDS 2022 is a three-day summit being organised by TERI with participation from over 100 countries. It will conclude on February 18.



of the people of India are expected to double in the next 20 years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Wednesday as he urged developed countries to fulfil their commitments on finance and technology transfer.

Delivering the inaugural address at the 21st World Sustainable Development Summit 2022

sustainability can only be achieved through climate justice.

"Environmental sustainability can only be achieved through climate justice. Energy requirements of the people of India are expected to double in the next 20 years. Denying this energy would be denying life itself to millions. Successful

nancing. For this, developed countries need to fulfil their commitments on finance and technology transfer," the prime minister said.

He said India believes in fulfilling commitments under the United Nation Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). "We firmly believe in fulfilling all our com-

Heart of hundred torn

Madhu Subedi, (India)

Sometimes I am being released from pool of pain
Sometimes I am reconciled
After a long trial of brain,
Sometimes I cry and laugh
Over own definition of life
Sometimes it teaches the way of living with different vibes!



Sometimes I walk away leaving
Behind many failure and thorns
With hope of colourful flowers
Tearing eyes to be adjourned,
Sometimes I feel stumbling
Of emotions on beliefs and trusting
Even the mind that carried invaluable
Love makes me bursting!

Sometimes beautiful vision of dreams meet defeats and losing
Being a victim of my own
Selfish world while I processing,
Sometimes I move forward
To a journey of void and alone
Healing the wound of heart
That's hundreds torn!

Valentine's Day

Pinaki Chatterjee

Love never hidden behind any medium

It's itself a multiplicative axiom
Ever trickling and flows within body, mind and soul
And quenches thirsty hearts for love and to be loved as a whole
All cosmic vibes go on materializing
Only because of love and attractions ever remained flourishing
Love is strength and courage in disguise
Exhibiting how powerful an emotion love really is !!



I do believe love is multidimensional
But someone's falling in love ought to be unconditional
To day is unique day what's so called "Valentine's Day"
Where something to cheers
But much more love, affection and inclination to share

Nature , so Mysterious

Debjani Das

Oh yellow sunflower !
How dotting you are.....
Your petals get radiated
kissing the sun's rays
Where the sun reciprocates it with smiling gaze
Your cosmic love is so sensitive and unconditional
Enticed me becoming emotional
My heart gets blossoming with love from afar
As I seek becoming an ardent worshiper of nature.



The you in your poems

Shreeta Sikruti Kuanr

Drunk as poetry
Curve as symmetry
You return with wine bottles
Cardigan over your white tee
Tears on your cheek
Out of your little love spree
Pretence of a unforgettable time
Wiring your heart in pieces
As you sip another
You feel blood rush to the corner
Where it hurts the hardest
All segments fall
Into the grave you cover
Brown papers and love letters
Spreadsheets of reasons
If to love is infinite
Consider you on the passage
To galaxy bodies and time



Lonely fights
Uncertain nights
You are a little poem
Scribbled on a history sheet
Forging this silence under your eyes
Bargaining breaths over a lifetime
An exchange of lies and truths
To the woman who writes
Believes in parts and deceaseds
Uncovering another rare piece
This other verse
Dies like all mid left sheets.

Please be honest

Mr. Sadyant Satapathy

Once upon a time, there was a wood cutter named Rajendra Prasad who was a hard working person. He lives in small village named Rajgad. In this village all villagers were wood cutters but all the wood cutter were not honest people. In small things they got angry. But Rajendra is an honest person. So, he did not get angry in the little issues.



One day, a bus in a city road did not stop in the traffic when the traffic light was red. So the traffic police caught the bus driver. The bus driver was a person of the village Rajgad. The person got angry to the police man. But Police man said you were disobeyed the traffic rules. You are not honest.



After some days Rajendra gathered with all the village people and said you all please be honest so that we can enjoy our life happily. If you will always be in anger then you may not be honest and we can't enjoy our life. So, please be honest. Some days later the all people of the village became honest and all the people lived happily forever.

Class-III A, Mother's Public School, Puri

I love you because, it
heals me...
Gives eternal
satisfaction...to a lively
nub that beats only for
you, lost in your rhythm
and your astounding
tunes...

- Ayenankita Das

YourQuote.in

Traditional Indian art

The history of Indian painting dates back to the era of Ajanta, Ellora and other murals. Other famous examples are Buddhist palm leaf manuscripts, the Jain texts and the Deccan, Mughal and Kangra schools. Indian paintings is a portrayal of tradition and depiction of ancient texts and theories in color and anecdotal accounts. It was common during the ancient times have paintings in households in the doorways or indoor rooms where guests resided.

Tanjore Paintings

The shimmering water of River Cauvery with



a vast expanse of greenery on either side casts a spell on any ongoing traveller in Tanjore. Urchins in nearby hamlets enjoying themselves in the river, the deep sway of the overgrown coconut trees in the gentle breeze which sweeps the river banks, the bright looking ladies carrying a pot of river water, the brahmins having the holy dip - the "Cauvery Snamam" and performing the Gayatri and the Surya Namaskaram in the river bank is all a very familiar sight in a place where the River occupies the centre stage of civilisation. Thanjavur as it was called in the olden days, had been a city of great cultural importance and has witnessed the genesis and development of several forms of arts and crafts. Besides being a place for excellence in arts and

crafts, Tanjore also has been a place of commercial and political importance, historically. Paintings from Tanjore

It was during the Chola period Thanjavur rose in its status as a significant contributor to the socio-economic and cultural development of the country. The mastery over craft and the excellence in engineering knowledge acquired by the Tanjore craft persons are amply demonstrated by those imposing and towering temple structures. The majestic temple gopurams is not only an engineering marvel but also reflects the dexterity of the sculpt work. The intricate work on stone still remains an enigma. These gopurams have withstood the ravages of time and stands testimony to mastery of Tanjore craft and architecture prevalent in those days. The Bragadeswarar temple and the Raja Rajeswari temple are standing examples of this. Craft and art associated with architecture or other faculties of expression were essentially based on the culture prevailing then. Manifestations in the form of temples and art relating to God based themes were a result of the 'bhakthi' culture (which was best represented by the Hindus with their devotion to God) prevalent in those days.

The visual art pertaining to the traditional Tanjore School, now more popularly known as Tanjore Art had its genesis in the early 18th century or probably even before. Influence of art forms of Karnataka and Andhra are fairly evident in this style of art. The art is a unique mixture of the staunch belief in god and goddesses, which reflected the bhakti culture and the ability to create and build attractive works of art in the visual media. While the growth and development of the Tanjore art can be traced over a fairly long period between 1700 to 1900, the major thrust and impetus to the art was given during the period when the city was ruled by the Marathas. The art became popular during the Maratha period and received extensive royal patronage, especially during the time when Sarabhoji II reigned (1797-1833). Like any other arts and crafts in India during the ancient days, the patrons received the accolade for promoting art and craft forms while the actual artists and craft

persons remained anonymous.

Tanjore Arts & Crafts

Tanjore art is a natural extension of the skill and dexterity of the Tanjore craftsmen. The art is more skill oriented and it demands a lot of attention on fineness and perfection. It does not call for major ability for innovation and creativity. Tanjore Art is basically iconic. Figures of Hindu gods and goddesses are the normal themes. Siva, Parvati, Rama, Krishna, Lakshmi, Saraswathi and other gods and goddesses in different forms are depicted in this art form. If the depiction represents an event in the Hindu mythology, the main figure is supported with smaller figures as demanded by the theme. Rama Pattabishekam or Coronation of Lord Rama is a typical rendering in the Tanjore style where several figures are painted to bring out the reality of the thematic situation. The style and modality have undergone some minor variations due to contemporary demands. The traditional art was done on a single wooden board covered with a layer of cloth pasted on it. The cloth is coated with a compound of an adhesive and a smoothening agent.

Today this compound is normally a mixture of 'Fevicol' and French chalk powder or Plaster of Paris mixed with appropriate quantity of water. In earlier times lime white was used. After the application of the compound, the surface of the board along with the cloth is polished with a smooth stone or a glass stone to make the surface of the board smooth and even. This would facilitate the artist to work freely on the board and also ease the movement of the painting brush. Now the canvass is ready for taking the sketch.

A sketch is made with the finer details of the icons and the surroundings including the areas where the gems are to be placed and the relief work is to be made. In the case of a professional artist who creates several art works, in view of the repetitive nature of the painting, the artist maintains a master. The master is transferred to the board through a carbon. Care should be taken at this stage to provide a margin recess on all the four sides of the board to accommodate the frame, once the painting is completed. Once the detailed sketching has

been completed, the gems are placed. In the earlier days, especially the paintings that were patronised by the royalty, these gems were precious stones. Currently semi-precious stones are used. The adhesive medium in the conventional art is a paste made of tamarind seed. With the development of newer form of art materials, the adhesive media, which is more popular, is Fevicol

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The relief work is covered by sticking gold leaves or foils on them. The gold foils are thin so as to bring out the profile of the relief work after they are stuck. Pasting the gold foils over the relief work is again a delicate work - they need to be cut to size so as to ensure that they cover only the area where the relief work is done. Also care should be taken to apply the right amount of pressure with a piece of cloth or sponge on the foil while pasting. Any excessive pressure can tear or spoil the foil and on the contrary the foil would not be pasted properly if they are very gently pressed. The painting is normally done using white colour for the key figure and slightly shading it with blue or the normal body colour. The depiction is normally static and the painting does not reflect any action or movement. The usage of the background colours is mostly striking - it is a dark hue of red, blue or green.

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'Shakeela' trailer falls flat, lacks the punch expected in a star biopic



The trailer of Indrajit Lankesh's Hindi language film "Shakeela" doesn't hold much to impress. From using modern-day Hindi music to cliched film sets, it feels like a repackaging of Vidya Balan's 'Dirty Picture' except that this version fails to bring the charm Vidya brought to the

screen. The film, as described by the filmmakers of 'Shakeela', is "inspired by life events of a famous star Shakeela who predominantly starred in southern cinema." It features Richa Chadha as the titular adult actor who was one of the biggest stars of the 1990s ar-

iving from Kerala who went on to act in several adult films in languages spanning Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada, while Pankaj Tripathi is the male lead. The film is described to "portray the hardships of the actress as she had to face a lot of criticism, insults and betrayals from

her own family members and the film fraternity who were influential in getting her films banned." The main reason for the success of 'Kinnarathumbikal', one of the films that catapulted her into the limelight, was solely her screen presence and energy, and with no other male lead in the

movie. Trying to fill in the gaping hole left by Silk Smitha in the low-budget softcore industry, Shakeela made her own mark with around 250 movies in her kitty -- heralding the 'Shakeela Tharangam' (The wave of Shakeela). Meanwhile, the Shakeela that

Indrajith is trying to portray doesn't look like she has much story to tell. The screen-space also seems to be overpowered by star cast Pankaj Tripathi. Let's hope the full length movie holds more than what the trailer showed. The film is produced by Sammy Nanwani and Sahil Nanwani, with music by Meet Bros and Veer Samarth.

Priyanka Chopra reveals husband Nick Jonas likes her 'natural' looks, calls him 'appreciator'

WASHINGTON(K-CN): Nick Jonas has

Chopra. The actor re-

2019 and revealed how her husband is

natural or a more glamorous look.

"there are days when he likes a really natu-

went all out for the event, wearing a sheer black top with a pussycat bow, a white blazer paired with a matching pair of pants. Adding a pop of colour to the whole look, she opted for striking pink eye makeup with a matching bold lip colour.

Earlier this month, Priyanka joined her fellow J sisters Sophie Turner and Danielle Jonas in celebrating the first night of their husbands' 'Happiness Begins' tour. All three women rocked Jonas Brothers T-shirts.

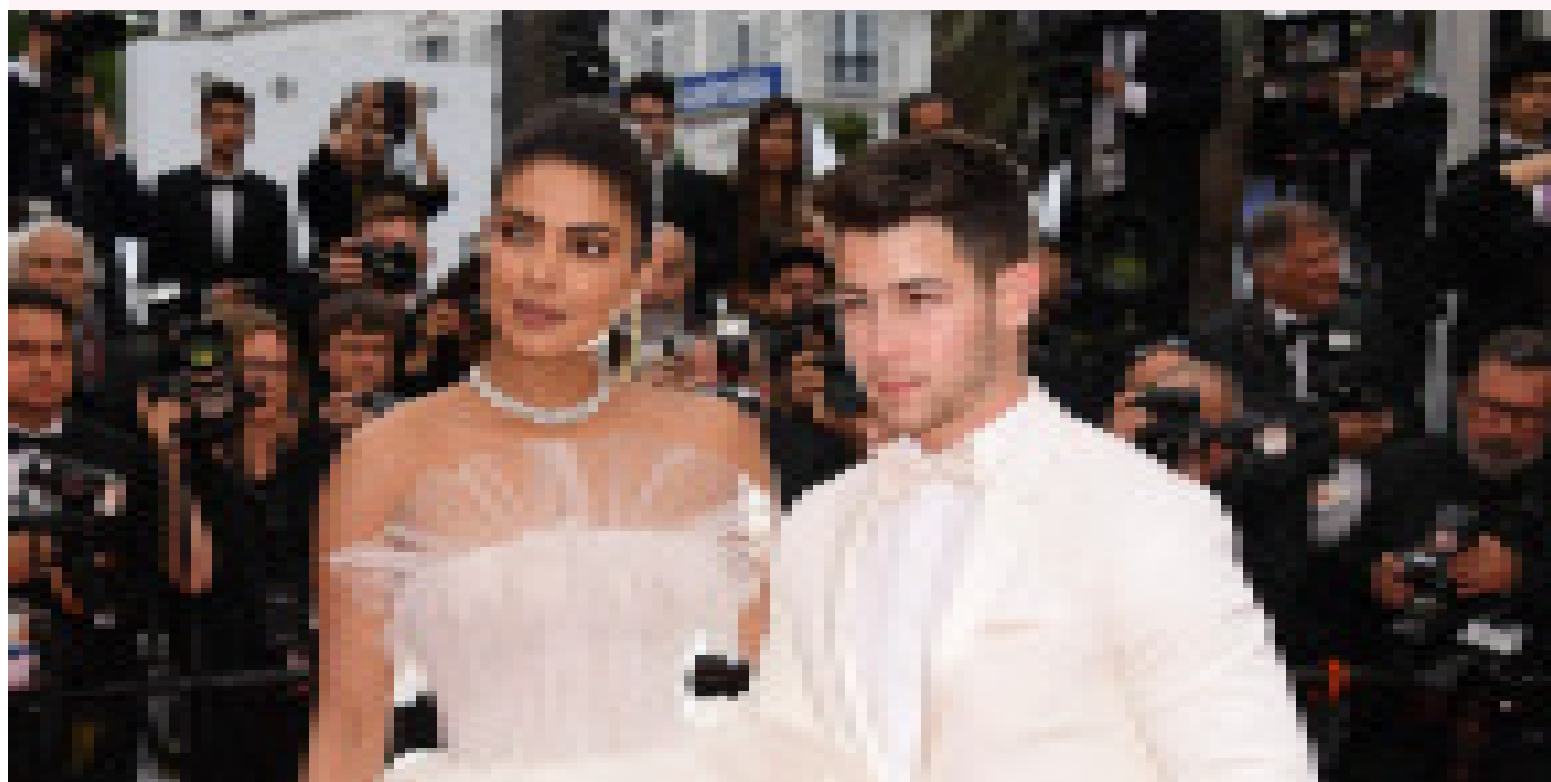
The actor shared that it was "really cool" that they all decided on coordinating their outfits since they "have such distinct personalities."

Just 'normal' to exclude women in decision making process: Adil Hussain

MUMBAI(KCN): Actor Adil Hussain has offered support to the growing group of female artistes who are asking the reason for women's absence from the Bollywood delegation of producers and actors that recently met Prime Minister Narendra Modi to discuss issues faced by the film industry.

Ritesh Sidhwani and CBFC chief Prasoon Joshi, met Modi to discuss how to take the entertainment industry to the next stage.

The meeting of the delegation came under fire on Wednesday for its exclusion of female representation with some activists and filmmakers pointing out that it was 2018 and asking, "Where are the women?" Adil took to Twitter to criticise the panel that met the prime minister.



nothing but love and admiration for his wife Priyanka

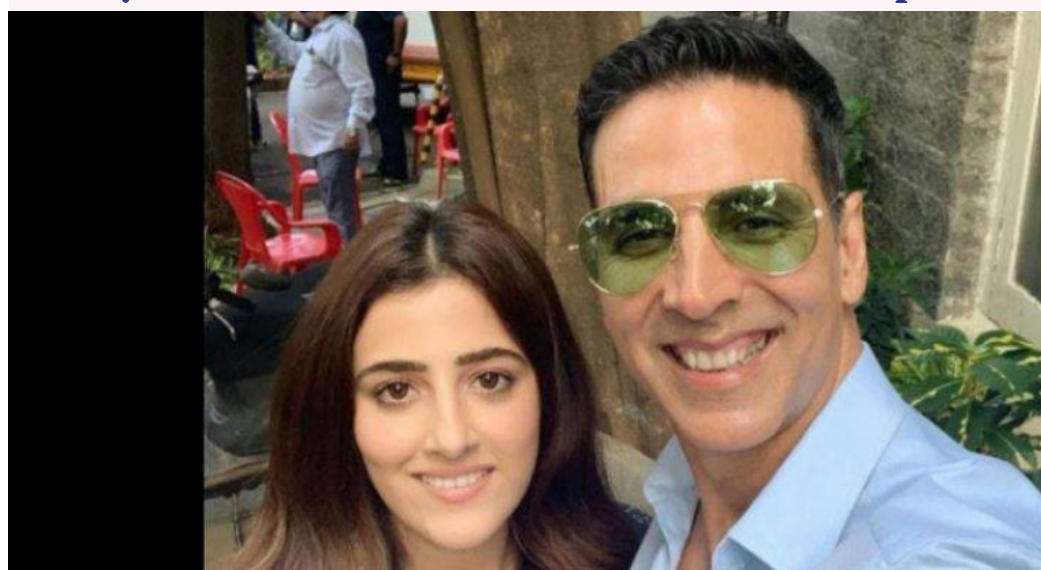
cently spoke to People at Beautycon Festival Los Angeles

full of admiration for her whether she decides to go for a more

"He likes a bit of both," the 'Quantico' star, said, adding that

real thing."

Akshay Kumar shoots with Kriti Sanon's sister Nupur for music video



MUMBAI(KCN): Actor Akshay Kumar on Sunday shot for singer B Praaks new single with actress Kriti Sanon's younger sister Nupur.

written by Jaani. B Praak has previously lent his voice to the song "Teri Mitti" in Akshay's film "Kesari".

London! The song will also feature renowned Punjabi singer Ammy Virk.

posing with Nupur and Ammy at the St. Xavier's college in Mumbai.

ALSO READ: Akshay Kumar has a namesake actor in

A lot of pictures are doing the rounds on the internet in which Akshay is seen

On the work front, Akshay will be seen in "Housefull 4" and "Good Newwz" this year.

Somnath to Kashi - As India Revives its cultural Ancestry

Celebration of the 72nd Republic Day was an opportunity once again in the hands of Indians to accept, respect and appreciate Indian nationalism hugely in



line with its constitutional values. The idea of India that the country is built on, is its secular credentials cementing the sentiments of

liberty, fraternity and equality. We are a nation with an incomparable treasure of values passed on from generation to generation to strengthen the idea of humanness irrespective of what cloth we wear and what language we speak. From the ancient idea of Bharat to that of modern India, influenced by the spiritual values that Mahatma Gandhi stood for, this country has always been a mixture of variety put together to strengthen the Indianness essentially supported by its innate spiritual wisdom.

To bring a country, a polarised mix of language, culture and religious practices under one umbrella of collective responsibility and one citizenship was probably the toughest job that the leaders of an independent India might have faced. Before India attained freedom there were assertions and deliberations on what India stood for ages and what, as a country India should grow with. Coming out of the shackles of a colonial dominance, and with a baggage of centuries of invasions, a country victorious to breathe afresh the air of freedom was soon thrown into the flames of partition and chaos and destruction. Unfortunately, the dream for a prosperous nation with its cultural multitude flourishing together was shattered. The idea of Indianness stood vivisected and tormented sharply in accordance with what we can call a sedimented negation of cultural plurality. And the country where plurality flourished with liberty

and gave asylum to many cultures from across the globe had socially collapsed before it learned to stand firm.

It was in 1893 well before India got its freedom, Swami Vivekananda explained the essential idea of the term Indianness. Of course, to a foreign audience, he had the audacity to declare, "I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth. I am proud to tell you that we have gathered in our bosom the purest remnant of the Israelites, who came to Southern India and took refuge with us in the very year in which their holy temple was shattered to pieces by Roman tyranny. I am proud to belong to the religion which has sheltered and is still fostering the remnant of the grand Zoroastrian nation." A generation of people with no knowledge of their past, the real history, origin and culture are like a tree uprooted and thrown away from its origin. The discourse that Vivekananda set in his days was a beginning to search for the roots that India was thrown away from.

As a country, centuries of invasion and the suppression that it had on the identity of India, had crushed its essence of spiritualness to a great extent. India was not conquered with aggressive armaments alone but the intellectual resentment with which they destroyed its essential spiritual oneness was brutal. Numerous temples and centres of learning were destroyed or reshaped into monuments of atrocious incursion. The message that Vivekananda passed to the western world was clear. India, as a country, had always possessed the ability to assimilate. The essence of India's spirituality was always secular. But trampled by the imprints of invasion, the Indian mind was asleep and unaware of the loss that it had at the hands of multiple aggressions. The cultural renaissance ignited by Swami Vivekananda had a tremendous effect on

M. R. Lalu

the sleeping soul of the country. He could successfully define and defend India's spiritual and cultural ancestry and contribute to lift the country from the shackles of colonial dominance.

When the colonial days of outrage and cultural anarchy ended, it was time for an independent India to revive itself in tune with its own cultural design but that did not happen. After Independence, it was the reconstruction of the famous Somnath temple in Gujarat which invoked the revival of the essence of Indianness. The socio-political atmosphere in India since independence was largely enslaved to the welfare of a particular vote bank. This held the ruling parties from touching issues related to the revival of symbols of cultural ancestry to their glory of antiquity and stature. The warmth of a consolidated vote bank and the political prospects it could offer dissuaded them from reviving the cultural heritage of India. Despite the opposition of Nehru, revival of Somnath could happen as leaders like Sardar Patel took the reins of reformation. Many in Nehru's cabinet and the then President of India Rajendra Prasad stood for the temple resurrection. For Nehru, it was the revival of Hinduism and therefore objectionable. What followed next in the line was Ayodhya, the Mecca of Hindus. Of course, a long battle, both political and legal, continued for decades.

Accepting his faith in India's ancient cultural essence in public, it was Narendra Modi, who forced the political pundits to change narratives. After his riding into the power corridors of Delhi, vilification of the essential Indianness was offended with full force in India and even abroad. India's cultural nationalism, with its ever-inclusive principles and ancestry, needs to be regarded as a social force with tremendous power to change negative perceptions. Marching towards a new global leadership, this cultural

unity of India will accelerate its power on the international stage. Next, in the line of resurrection was Kashi. One of the oldest spiritual centres was bestowed with its ancient glory. Nobody, not even a leaf did sway in protest against it. The ancient temple complex was liberated from the octopus hold of encroachment and domination. Somnath and Ayodhya and Kashi are reminders of thousands of cuts and bleeds of invasion and dominance that went deeper into the collective consciousness of people.

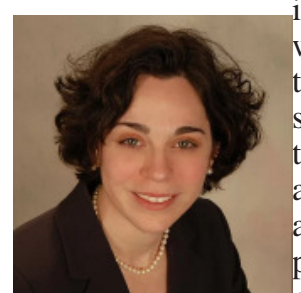
Most of the stories of invasion, which gained a space in the history books are of acrimony and subjugation that the ancient Indian people received at the hands of the invaders. They discredit the stories of valour and sacrifice made by the people of yore to keep the endless stretch of this land as one cultural unit. Their efforts to protect the essential Bharatiyata seem to be missing from the pages of history. Pest-ridden academia with deliberate intentions to malign the essence of India is active across the globe. Funds pouring into setting a global agenda to dismantle the essential Indianness is abundant.

Active roadmap is ready to cut a country of its roots, as a cohort professing anti national sentiments in and outside India discussing the dismantling of a religious idea which they grudgingly term the idea of Hindutva. Turning a blind eye on what India stood for generations accommodating all the variety of cultures with humility and compassion without any resentment and disapproval, conferences are called for only to defame the essence of Indianness on a world stage. Ramifications to which India stood up on the international forum recently was strong. Sending clear indications of strength and unity across the globe, India needs to further revive the essence of Indianness firmly holding on to its constitutional secular values.

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Since the Start of the Pandemic, Americans Are Drinking Too Much

Over the last two years, the United States witnessed a steep increase in alcohol use among adults. According to research from the Journal of the American Medical Association, those aged 30 and over experienced a 14% increase, with women seeing the steepest rise



in heavy drinking — a whopping 41% during the pandemic. The research also highlighted the fact that overdose and relapse rates rose among those who had pre-existing addictive conditions.

There is a multitude of factors that contributed to the increase in alcohol consumption during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, anxiety and depression rose dramatically among the general population, and alcohol consumption often increases for those who use it as a way to cope. "Stress and boredom likely were main drivers for a substantial increase in alcohol intake," explains Dr. Jagpreet Chhatwal, associate director of the Massachusetts General Hospital's Institute for Technology Assessment and assistant professor at Harvard Medical School. Amid the Pandemic, Eating Disorders Are on the Rise

Measures that were designed to help businesses stay afloat during the pandemic may have also affected drinking habits. According to Chhatwal, "cocktails-to-go laws that allowed customers to pick up mixed cocktails at local bars and direct-to-consumer laws that allowed liquor stores to deliver alcohol di-

rectly to homes" point to a potential link between access and consumption.

Regardless of the reason, these numbers are going to translate to significant morbidity and mortality rates for Americans in the future. According to new a study by researchers at Harvard's Massachusetts General Hospital published in Hepatology, due to the pandemic uptick in alcohol use, there will be close to 20,000 cases of liver failure, 1,000 cases of liver cancer and 8,000 deaths over the next two decades.

Addressing this pressing issue will be complicated in a country that has long glamorized the use of alcohol among its population. From Super Bowl advertisements to film and music references, alcohol has long been associated with celebration, letting loose and having a good time. Consuming alcohol, even excessively, is normalized to the point that it is integrated into daily life on a regular basis: after-work happy hours, relaxing at home, birthdays, weddings, sporting events, etc. Alcohol has become so fused into the fabric of American society that in 2019, the industry was already worth over \$250 billion.

Putting a positive spin on alcohol is dangerous because it creates the mirage that there are no negative consequences on a person's physical or mental health, which is both untrue and potentially harmful. "Not everyone is aware of the safe drinking limits or realizes when to stop," says Chhatwal. Excessive drinking can cause a myriad of health problems including high blood pressure, heart attacks, stroke, increase the risk for cancer, liver

Jennifer Wider

and GI problems, a weakened immune system, depression

and anxiety as well as socialization issues and job loss.

In a country where more than 14 million American adults 18 years and older had a clinical alcohol use disorder, according to statistics from National Institute for Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, the challenge will be raising awareness, confronting a booming business model and reevaluating new laws that made alcohol more accessible during the pandemic. In Chhatwal's opinion, "One of the foremost steps is to create awareness about the risk of an increase in alcohol consumption, especially high-risk drinking among women and minority populations who are more vulnerable." He also stressed the importance of enlisting primary care providers to do more extensive screening for alcohol consumption patterns. There is also an obligation to take a hard look at new laws: "We need to evaluate the effect of cocktail-to-go and direct-to-consumer laws — if such laws contribute to increased drinking then there is a need to make policy-level changes."

*[The Wider Lens provides commentary on trending stories in the world of health, covering a wide variety of topics in medicine and health care.]

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Jennifer Wider, MD, is a nationally renowned women's health expert, author and radio host. She has appeared on The Today Show, CBS News, ABC News Nightline, Fox News, Good Day NY and HuffPost Live. She sits on the advisory boards of Cosmopolitan and Health magazines. Wider is the resident doctor on Just Jenny SiriusXM Stars and LOVELINE. Wider is the author of four books, including "The Savvy Woman Patient," "The Doctor's Complete College Girls' Health Guide," "The New Mom's Survival Guide" and "Got Teens? The Doctor Moms' Guide to Sexuality, Social Media and Other Adolescent Realities." Wider has been an invited guest lecturer and workshop presenter at a variety of hospitals, women's centers, high schools and colleges across the US. She is a graduate of Princeton University and received her medical degree from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York.

Ravi in Pakistan 'most polluted river' in the world: Study

LAHORE: River Ravi in Pakistan is the most polluted river in the world, followed by water bodies in Bolivia and Ethiopia, a US-based research academy has

reported on Wednesday. The study concluded that contaminants in surface water posed a threat to environmental and/or human health in more than a

quarter of the studied locations globally - mainly in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and South America. The highest mean cumulative concentration was observed in Lahore, capital of Pakistan's Punjab province, at 70.8 µg/L, with one sampling site on the Ravi River reaching a maximum cumulative concentration of 189 µg/L. This was followed by La Paz river in Bo-

livia (68.9 µg/L mean, 297 µg/L maximum) and the river system in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (51.3 µg/L mean, 74.2 µg/L maximum), according to University of York's research came as a shock to the environmentalists and local administration of Lahore - which in 2021 earned the ignominious title of the



world's most polluted (air) city by leading air quality monitoring company, IQAir. Speaking to Dawn News, environmentalist Afia Salam said river Ravi, a transboundary river of India and Pakistan, had been turned into a drain. "We have laws about dumping wastewater and industrial waste but no law is being implemented in the country," she told the newspaper.

the study. The most common contaminants were paracetamol, nicotine, caffeine and epilepsy and diabetes drugs in the river, according to the study which was published in the journal of Washington-based National Academy of Sciences. Rivers in Iceland, Norway and the Amazon rainforest were recorded as the cleanest. The findings of the

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Several women Army officers yet to get pension after nearly one year of retirement

NEW DELHI: Around 15 short-service commission women officers of the Indian Army are yet to receive pension nearly a year after their retirement following over 20 years of service, people familiar with the development said on Wednesday.

Accounts (Pensions) (PCDA-P) headquartered in Allahabad to highlight that SSC women officers with over 20 years of ser-

vice commission women officers with over 20 years of service, people familiar with the development said on Wednesday.

ment commission shall retire on pension in terms of the



The women officers have not received the pension notwithstanding an order by the Supreme Court in February 2020 that had paved the way for extending the pension benefit to the women officers with a service tenure of 20 years.

handles the new system. After two women officers took up the matter with the department of ex-servicemen welfare (DESW) of the defence ministry, it sent a communication to the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) on Monday referring to the Supreme Court order on granting of Permanent Commission to service commission women officers.

vice are eligible for the pension benefits. "In view of the above, CGDA is requested to kindly look into the matter and comply with the orders of Supreme Court and pensionary benefits may be granted to all eligible women short service commission officers who come under the ambit of the Supreme Court order," the DESW said in the communication.

(government's) policy decision. Two women officers said it is the PCDA (P), Allahabad which is creating the problem as it raised "unnecessary objections" after giving pension to a number of other women officers. "It is almost a year's wait for the pension to be granted...The decision that we took for release (from Army) was because of pressing issues at the home front. We planned our lives accordingly. It is disappointing that we are yet to get our pension," said Lt Colonel (ret'd) Sarita Satija.

The people cited above said the problem arose due to a new online pension disbursement system called SPARSH that was rolled out last year. The Principal Controller of Defence

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UP polls: At Akhilesh's home turf of Karhal, BJP pins hope on non-Yadav OBC, upper caste voters

KARHAL (Mainpuri) (KCN): Victory of Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav in his debut battle from Karhal in Mainpuri looks certain. With his native village Salfai just 4 km away, this is his home turf in the true sense. But the BJP has moved strategically to make it more than a fight by fielding Union minister of state for law and order and party's Agra MP SP Singh Baghel. The assembly segment will go to the polls in the third phase on February 20.

'Netaji' (Mulayam) has studied at Jain Inter College of Karhal and later taught here briefly as an assistant teacher in 1963. After his first victory in assembly election from adjoining Jaswantnagar in Etawah district in 1967, Mulayam's hard work converted Etawah and Mainpuri into his family bastions. Currently, Mulayam is MP from Mainpuri.

ably elections had been the worst in the recent past and the saffron brigade succeeded in making major inroads into Yadav land by bagging 22 of 28 assembly segments across Etawah, Mainpuri, Firozabad, Auraiyya, Kasganj, Farrukhabad, Etah, and Kannauj. Voters of Karhal, especially, those coming from non-Yadav OBC and upper castes seem divided over their priorities and preferences. While Yadavs and Muslims stand strongly behind Akhilesh, the common refrain against SP on the ground is about its poor record on law and order and inefficient implementation of government schemes. Many of them want Akhilesh to win from Karhal but want Yogi to form the government in the state.

When it comes to the BJP's OBC vote-base, stray cattle, unemployment, and inflation have

ported by Sushil Kumar Gupta, the food grain trader having a shop at Ghiror roundabout. "This is the reason that in previous assembly elections, BJP candidate Rama Shakya got over 65,000 votes without much ado. She was silent and so was the voter. However, SP's Sobaran Singh Yadav won the seat by a margin of 38,000. People fear intimidation by the majority community here," says Gupta exhibiting his political prowess.

ALSO READ | UP polls: Alleged Samajwadi Party goons attack Union Minister's convoy in Karhal

While the SP is sitting confident about the support of Yadavs, Muslims, and chunks of other castes, BJP is pinning hopes on the support of non-Yadav OBCs and upper castes in Karhal which has 1.25 lakh of Yadavs and 18,000 Muslims. Non-Yadav castes include 35,000 shakyas, 30,000 Baghel, 30,000 Thakurs and 22,000 Dalits.

Going beyond the loyalty quotient towards the Yadav clan, law, order, benefits of Pradhan Mantri Gareeb Vikas Yojna, government housing schemes, toilets, seem to have traction on the ground. "The safety and security of our women can keep us tension-free and think of doing anything else in life. The current government has provided this confidence. Now the fear of losing family's honour is no more there," says Vinay Tiwari of Nagla Pat village.

Situated along the Lucknow-Agra Expressway, Karhal is a fortress of the Samajwadi Party which has won the seat five times during the last six assembly elections since 1993, except in 2002, when the BJP bagged it. The seat returned to SP in 2007 and is held by Sobaran Singh Yadav currently. The main roundabout at Karhal-Ghiror road is bustling with activity in the forenoon. Bharti Yadav has just opened her tailoring shop where she also offers the parlour services to local women-folk. Akhilesh Yadav is the natural choice for Bharti. "Bhaiyya will be elected from here," says Bharti without an iota of doubt. When asked the reason, she says: "It is better than the prince becomes the king and not someone else. Even if Bhaiyya (read Akhilesh Yadav) doesn't do anything, we will elect him." Bharti's conviction spells out the sentiment of many in constituency lying in the heart of Yadav land.

agrieved voters, but they are still willing to place their bets on the party. Talk to a cross-section of voters and a mixed bag of opinions opens up. "It will not be easy here to get a fair idea of the pulse of the ground as there is a huge community of silent voters not only in Karhal but also in adjoining seats in adjoining districts," says Vishal Pandey dealing in the trade of seeds and fertilizers. Pandey claims that people, except the Yadav community, will never spell out their choice. "Many keeps the cards close to their chest to escape intimidation later as they have to live here among the dominant Yadavs. They cast their vote silently," he adds while being sup-

state is set to witness the return of Akhilesh Yadav as next CM. Tillu, a farmer by profession, is joined by others of his ilk in Kanchanpura village of Yadavs. "We have around 2300 votes here and will ensure that SP Singh Baghel, the outsider, fails to save his deposit. Baghel ki jamanat jabh ho jayegi (Baghel will lose his deposit)," says Satyadev Yadav voicing the unflinching support to Akhilesh. "We don't have to have an issue to support Akhilesh, however, if you ask me, unemployment, price rise, lack of development, closed schools, COVID mismanagement are enough reasons to send 'Babaji' back to Gorakhpur," says Dharmendra Yadav.

ALSO READ | UP polls: Alleged Samajwadi Party goons attack Union Minister's convoy in Karhal

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Going further deep into the rural areas of Karhal, one finds a group of potato growers harvesting their crop. They hail the present law and order situation but suffer from stray cattle menace. "Now we are living in peace otherwise in the previous dispensation, it was not safe to leave the potato sacs in the fields. Now our family is safe and so is our money. Loot and extortion are a matter of the past. Stray cattle are the only issue. Yogi government needs to address it soon," says Awadhesh Mishra of Nagla Pool village. The potato growers of this and adjoining villages are selling their produce directly in the markets of Noida, Nagpur, and Hyderabad.

Similarly, the villages of non-Yadav OBCs including Shakyas, Prajapatis, Baghels, Pals, Sainis have apparently made their decision. Saugar Singh and Satyawati, a Shakya couple of Naglapur village claim that they would decide whom to vote on the day of voting. They are content with the law and order and security of their daughters in the present dispensation but miffed over the menace of stray cattle. "But we have never voted for SP and we will not do so this time as well," says Saugar Singh Shakya. The villages dominated by scheduled castes including Jatavs are still committed to Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP). In Nagla Dhani village, Sarvesh Kumar, 35, MA in English and engaged in poultry farming, come out openly in support of 'Behenji', Mayawati. Vocal about the issues of price rise and unemployment, Sarvesh says Jatavs won't let the BSP candidate down. "We will ensure that BSP candidate Kuldeep Narain is able to at least secure his deposit though nobody from BSP has contacted us so far," he says. But Mahipal, of the Jatav community, says he will vote for BJP as "he is getting free ration for so many days".



Ireland Doc On SUM Care

Bhubaneswar (KCN): Eminent Ireland-based gastroenterologist Prof. Dilip

'O' Anusandhan (SOA) here, to discuss the possibility of collaborating with

ods to regrow, repair or replace damaged or diseased cells, organs or tissues. It in-

"It would be nice to collaborate with a premier healthcare institute like IMS and



Mahapatra is exploring the possibility of establishment of a Centre for Regenerative Medicine in Odisha which can go a long way in making available advanced treatment to patients in a number of diseases including cancer.

Prof. Mahapatra, presently Director of the Lugh Medical Centre at Dundalk, Ireland and Vice-Chancellor of Ballsbridge University College at London, on Wednesday called on Prof. Manojranjan Nayak, President of Siksha

the university to set up the centre at the Institute of Medical Sciences and SUM Hospital, SOA's faculty of medicine, at Bhubaneswar.

"We had a preliminary discussion about the feasibility of such a project. They already have a small unit for regenerative medicine which has scope for expansion," Prof. Mahapatra, also an expert on pulmonary medicine and presently on a visit to Odisha, said. Regenerative medicine is the branch of medicine which explores meth-

cludes the generation and use of therapeutic stem cells, tissue engineering and the production of artificial organs.

Prof. Mahapatra, who is also an expert on pulmonary medicine and runs a Centre for Regenerative Medicine in Ireland, said stem cells were not only used to treat cancer, but they could be utilized to heal cases relating to burn injuries, address retinal problems and for orthopedic treatment like knee cartilage tear. "It has immense possibilities," he said.

SUM Hospital and the authorities are very positive about this possibility," Prof. Mahapatra said adding "since I am from Odisha, I want to contribute something to the people of the state."

SOA Vice-Chancellor Prof. Ashok Kumar Mahapatra, an eminent neurosurgeon, Pro-Vice Chancellor Prof. Pradipta Kumar Nanda and Pro-Vice Chancellor cum Registrar Prof. Bibhuti Bhushan Pradhan were present during the discussion

70 % Polling in First Phase

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Barring some minor incidents, the first phase of voting for election of Panchayati Raj Insti-

As per scheduled, the voting started at sharp 7 AM and continued till 1 PM. However, in places where voters were

during the next four phases of Panchayat Polls. The Commission has also directed the DGP to take strong action against

edly attacked by supporters of a political party at Nisibhanra village under R a h a d a m a l a Panchayat in Puri. All



tutions (PRIs) has completed smoothly in all 30 districts with 70 per cent polling, said State Election Commissioner Aditya Prasad Padhi here.

As per the latest report received from districts, there was a 70 per cent turnout in the first phase. The polling percentage may go up as the final report is yet to come, Mr. Padhi said. Notably, the voter turnout in the 2017 Panchayat poll was around 78 per cent while there was 76.65 per cent polling in the first phase.

seen standing in queue, they were allowed to cast their votes.

Violence has been reported in three booths of Dhenkanal district, seven booths of Jajpur district and five booths of Puri district, he said.

The SEC is likely to decide on the next course of action after receiving reports from district Collectors, Mr. Padhi informed.

The State Election Commissioner said instructions have been issued to the DGP to ensure law and order conditions

the law violators.

The election was held at 22,379 booths in 1,669 Panchayats in 70 Blocks of the State for 200 Zilla Parishad Members, 1,669 Sarpanches, 1,669 Panchayat Samiti Members and 22,379 Ward Members.

However, the poll for 13 Ward members, 6 Sarpanches, three PS Members and one ZP member was countermanded due to sudden death of contesting candidates. Fresh elections will be held for these posts.

Similarly, five persons sustained injuries after being alleg-

edly attacked by supporters of a political party at Nisibhanra village under R a h a d a m a l a Panchayat in Puri. All

injured have been admitted to the local hospital. As per reports, some miscreants allegedly looted a ballot box from booth-9 in Kasijharia village under Chapamanik Panchayat of Brahmagiri block in Puri. Four correspondents of media organizations were allegedly attacked by miscreants at a booth in Badala panchayat under Kanas block in Puri district. A clash between two groups disrupted the polling process over stealing ballot paper stamps at booth-1 in Sujanjpur Panchayat

Aadharshila. The foundation organised "Spelling Telling competition"

New Delhi (KCN): All over Haryana Students participated. Aadharshila the foundation organised Tell the The spell competition. The contest held in three parts and children showed their English vocabulary skills. Mrs Rupakshi Narang, chairperson of Aadharshila and principal of Vijaya Sr. sec. school is fond of writing poem and her poems are on her youtube channel Rupakshi Narang. Her poems are inspired by her real life. She told that at Aadharshila platform children can show their talent vir-

tually at ease at their home. The platform

fourth. Total 43 students participated.

Tanya third & Tarushi got consol-



was started on Mar 29, 2021, where events are organized on every last Sunday of every month. This moth "Tell the Spell" competition was organised for classes third and

In class third first position was acquired by Ishita, second by Garvit, third Divya and Aarav got consolation prize.

In class fourth Simar got first position, Bhavishya second,

tion prize. All students were awarded with trophy and certificate. Madam Amrita was the judge. With best wishes for all the students. Mam Rupakshi concluded the program.

Odisha BJP leader Jayanarayan booked for 'misbehaviour'

SAMBALPUR: Sambalpur MLA and senior BJP



leader Jayanarayan Mishra was booked for allegedly misbehaving with the Sadar tehsildar during an eviction drive near Durgapali within Khetrajpur police limits

here on Tuesday. The eviction drive was carried out for implementation of the State government's Samaleswari Temple Area Management and Local Economy Initiatives (SAMALEI) scheme. When the drive was underway, Jayanarayan along with his

supporters reached the spot and reportedly tried to stop the work. An argument ensued between the BJP workers and officials present there over the eviction and Jayanarayan alleged misbehaved with Sadar tehsildar Laxman Amat. Later, Amat lodged a complaint against Jayanarayan with Khetrajpur police. Basing on the complaint, police registered a case under sections 94 and 506 of the IPC against the Sambalpur MLA. Khetrajpur IIC Mamata Nayak said investigation into the incident is underway. The SAMALEI scheme envisages beautification and development of the 16th century Samaleswari temple.




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Didn't live up to customers' expectations; addressing some gaps on war footing: Vistara CEO

MUMBAI: Admitting that Vistara fell short of customers' expectations in the last few months, its Chief Executive Of-

website and the mobile app couldn't offer targeted solutions to some of the problems you faced. And I also understand

Vistara resumed recruitment and ramp-up of resources on various fronts buoyed by optimism in late 2021, the require-



ficer Vinod Kannan has said the airline is addressing some of the gaps on a war footing while many changes and enhancements are in the offing.

Kannan, in a letter to customers, acknowledged that the recent disruptions in services would have led to the alterations in their travel plans and the frustration over a long wait to reach out to the airline's call centre.

"We have always wanted to make flying an experience that is not transactional, but a joyous and memorable 'new feeling' However, I admit that we fell short on this commitment in the last few months and did not live up to your expectations," Kannan said.

"I am aware that our

that your on-ground experience may not have been up to your expectations in some instances," he further said.

Assuring the customers that their grievances have not gone "unnoticed" he said, the safety of customers and the airline staff takes precedence over any other consideration.

"However, the varying restrictions that we have had to navigate and the constant safety concerns due to these unusual times, brought us some unique challenges in these past months, forcing us to curtail many aspects of our services, temporarily."

The new year brought along a sharp decline in demand right after a brief but very optimistic period while

ments around training and occupancy meant that it was not able to scale up as desired.

"This, coupled with a scale back in capacity necessitated by a precipitous decline in demand, implied that the volume of inquiries and requests increased manifold," he said.

Stating that many changes and enhancements were in the works, he said, "I have taken stock of things as they stood, and I want to assure you that we are addressing some of the gaps on a war footing."

"Additionally, the airline has also fast-tracked initiatives across its entire IT infrastructure to make the digital experience more convenient," he added.

India economy to grow at quickest pace among large nations: Finance Ministry report

NEW DELHI: The Indian economy is poised to grow at the quickest pace among the league of large nations on the back of various initiatives taken by the government in Budget 2022-23, said the Finance Ministry's Monthly Economic Review.

"The current year may as well end with an economic reset manifest of a post-COVID-19 world. Manufacturing and Construction will be the 'growth drivers', triggered by the PLI schemes and public capex in infrastructure," the review report said.

Agriculture, which continues to see a constant increase in net sown area and crop diversification, will strengthen food buffers while benefiting farmers through generous volumes of procurement at remunerative minimum support prices and income transfers through PM KISAN scheme, it added.

Observing that the IMF in its January 2022 update has lowered its global growth estimate for 2022, it said India is yet the only large and major country listed by the IMF whose growth projection has been revised upwards in 2022-23.

"In a testimony to the resilience of its people and the farsightedness of its policymaking, the Indian economy that contracted by (-)6.6 per cent in 2020-21 is now projected in 2022-23 to grow the quickest among the league of large nations," it said.

The report said the Budget 2022-23 has strengthened the direction set for India's economy by the previous year's budget.

The capex budget, higher by 35.4 per cent over current year's budget estimates and rising to 4.1 per cent of GDP after inclusion of grants-in-aid to states for capital works, will power the seven engines of GatiShakti to reduce the infrastructure gap and facilitate private investment in the country, it said.

On the impact of the third wave of COVID-19, it said, overall economic activity re-

mained resilient and this is reflected in the robust performance of several high-frequency indicators like power consumption, PMI manufacturing, exports and e-way bill gen-



eration.

"Once the uncertainty and anxiety caused by the Covid-19 virus recede from people's minds, consumption will pick up and the demand revival will then facilitate the private sector stepping in with investments to augment production to meet the rising demand. Barring external shocks – geopolitical and economic – this scenario should play out for the Indian economy in 2022-23," it said.

The Budget has targeted nominal GDP growth of 11.1 per cent in 2022-23 with a GDP deflator of 3.0-3.5 per cent. The implied real growth component of just about 8 per cent is close to the forecast in Economic Survey, 2021-22 as well as 7.8 per cent projected by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the RBI in its meeting of February 2022.

The unchanged repo and reverse repo rate along with the MPCs accommodative stance prioritise growth during these uncertain times and reinforce the investment orientation of the budget.

ZP Prez Poll Schedule Out

Continued from page-1

be held on March 13 and 25, respectively. The in-direct poll for the post of Block Chairman and Vice-Chairman will be conducted on March 12 and March 22, respectively.

An interested elected Zilla Parishad Member can submit his/her nomination paper for the President or Vice-President poll in between 10.30 AM to 11.30 AM on the election day.

The nominations will be scrutinized in the next one hour while the candidates can withdraw their nominations by 1 pm. If required, voting will be held from 1.30 PM to 4 PM and then the result will be declared.

Similarly, the Naib Sarpanch election will be held on March 11. The interested Ward Members can submit their nominations between 10 AM to 11 AM on the same day while scrutiny of nominations will be done from 11 AM to 11.30 AM. candidates can withdraw their nominations by 12 noon and voting, if required, will be held between 12 noon to 1 PM. Counting and declaration of results will be done soon after that.

"The above timing including the date and venue shall be published on the Notice Board of the Election Officers for information of the general public. The Superintendent of Police of the District may be requested to make adequate police arrangements during the conduct of indirect election," Mr.Sahu told District Collectors in the letter.

This time, the Commission is going to implement the new anti-defection rule for in-direct election to the post of Zilla Parishad President and Vice-President.

The State Government has recently amended the Odisha Zilla Parishad (ZP) Election Rules, 1994 by adding another clause. The new clause provides for appointment of agents by every political party and the election officer will allow the authorised agents to verify the vote cast by the elected Zilla Parishad member of their respective parties as is being done during Rajya Sabha elections, SEC officials said. As per the new norms, during the in-direct election to Zilla Parishad President and Vice-President posts, all the Members will have to show their votes to the political agent appointed by their own party before dropping it in the vote box.

The political parties will have to submit details on appointment of authorized agents in a prescribed form to the concerned electoral officer by 5.30 pm of the previous day of election, the officials said.

India's Food Security System is an Example before the World: Bishow Parajuli

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today sustainable system of farming has become as important as increasing food production. Climate change is bringing natural disasters like droughts, floods, rising sea levels, and cyclones, resulting in crop loss. Higher education institutions of excellence like KIIT and KISS have a great role to play in ensuring that Green Revolution 2.0 is founded on sustainable practices and is able to meet the challenges of climate change, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Achyuta Samanta said, KIIT & KISS are community-based institutions and are contributing to most of the objectives of Sustainable Development Goals. Apart from quality academics and research, KIIT has been significantly contributing to the field of art, culture, sports, social development, and spiritualism, he added.

"KIIT has developed an ecosystem to absorb different cultures of the world. It attracts students from about 65 countries, while its graduates are working in 70 countries. KIIT culture equips students to become global citizens", said Prof. Sasmita Samanta, the Vice-Chancellor, KIIT-DU in her presidential address. Prof. Saranjit Singh, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, proposed the vote of thanks.

On this occasion, Dr. A. Samanta and Mr. Parajuli also signed a Letter of Intent between the Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) Deemed to be University and WFP India in the presence of Professor Deepak Kumar Behera, VC, KISS-DU, and other dignitaries from WFP India, KISS and KISS.

Mo Sarkar Axe On Corruption

Continued from page-1

"For this, we have been increasingly tapping the massive data generated by the Mo Sarkar system that is collecting random feedback on bribery, harassment etc. from community members who visit Government offices for various services," he further informed.

This data is helping us in identifying hotspots of corruption, in terms of individuals and institutions, and enabling more focused targeting, the Director Vigilance said.

"In coming days we are committed to intensify our actions further, equipped with the Mo Sarkar Feedback and utilising data mining tools over the Mo Sarkar data, and taking advantage of digital data and footprints generated in financial transactions and activities of individuals," he added.

In a few days, the Vigilance has arrested senior officers including one ADM, an Additional Collector and an Additional SP.

1st phase rural polls in Odisha today

Continued from page-1

blocks will go to polls in the first phase. Polling parties carrying ballot papers, boxes and other election related materials reached their assigned booths on Tuesday evening. In the first phase, Bargaon, Kuanrunda, Lathikata and Bonai blocks comprising 66 panchayats and 2,81,069 voters, will go to polls.

In Koraput, polling will be held in Borigumma, Semiliguda and Bandhugaon blocks comprising eight ZP zones. Security has been tightened in Maoist-affected pockets in Bandhugaon. Police force has been deployed in villages bordering Andhra Pradesh near Thidibals.

Similarly, polling will be held for three ZP zones in Malkangiri block. Of the 264 booths where polling will take place, 88 are sensitive. At least 15 booths have been set up in Tandiki, Chalanguda, Matapakka and Udupa panchayats which share border with Chhattisgarh. Border Security Force and personnel of DVF and SOG have been deployed in the sensitive booths to avert any untoward incidents during polling.

In Nabarangpur, Chandahandi and Jharigaon blocks will go to polls in the first phase. Official sources said a total of 51,707 voters will exercise their franchise in 158 polling booths in Chandahandi. Of these booths, 16 have been identified as highly sensitive and 19 are in Maoist-affected areas. Similarly, 99,079 voters will cast their ballots in 257 booths in Jharigam. While 12 booths here are highly sensitive, 10 are in Maoist-hit areas.

IT Dept raids Chinese telecom firm Huawei's multiple premises in India



NEW DELHI: The Income Tax (IT) Department has conducted raids on various premises of Chinese telecom company Huawei in India as part of a tax evasion investigation, official sources said on Wednesday. The raids are going on at multiple loca-

tions in the national capital New Delhi, Gurugram, Haryana, and Bengaluru in Karnataka.

The official sources said the searches started on Tuesday and the investigations have been ongoing. IT sleuths are looking at Huawei's financial documents, account

books, and its Indian businesses and overseas transactions.

"We have been informed of the visit of the Income Tax team to our office and also of their meeting with some personnel," Huawei said in a statement.

"Huawei is confident our operations in In-

dia are firmly compliant to all laws and regulations. We will approach related Government departments for more information and fully cooperate as per the rules and regulations and follow the right procedure," the company said.

ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier A to begin in Oman from Feb 18

DUBAI: The ICC Men's T20 World Cup Qualifier A is all set to begin at the Oman Academy grounds in Al Amerat on Friday. A lot is at stake for the

shortest format of the game later this year as an intense and exciting battle of cricket awaits fans across the world. The eight-nation tournament features

excitement in the camp of debutants - Germany and the Philippines, who start the tournament as minnows, as this would be their first major event at the

package in Group A and matchups against the hosts and Nepal could potentially be decisive for the two teams that would make it to the semi-finals. In Group A, Ireland is the dominant unit, and the UAE, who have been in a good form ahead of the event, are likely to push for the top two spots.

Debutant Germany and regional team, Bahrain, are the other teams in Group B with Germany hoping to ring in a surprise or two. For Germany, it will be a new chapter in the history of the game, as they make their first-ever appearance at a global qualifier, an achievement for an emerging cricket nation they share with the Philippines.

Nepal and the UAE sealed their places in the Qualifiers based on their rankings in the ICC Men's T20I Team Rankings. The other four teams - Germany, Canada, Bahrain, and the Philippines - advanced through their regional qualifying tournaments held through the course of last year.



eight participating nations - Ireland, Nepal, UAE, Canada, Germany, Philippines, Bahrain, and hosts Oman - as they vie for the two spots available at Qualifier A from February 18 to 24. Qualifier A is one of the two global qualifiers that is part of the final stages of the qualification process of the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2022 in Australia. A total of 20 matches will decide the two teams that will travel to Australia for the pinnacle event in the

an experienced Ireland side, who are set to face a fight from an in-form UAE, hosts Oman, and Nepal as the quartet boast of experience at playing at the global stage. However, with teams like Canada, Germany, Bahrain, and the Philippines eager to showcase their mettle, there is a good possibility of a few surprises in the coming week. If Test-playing nation Ireland, the only Full Member nation, in the fray, begins the tournament as a favorite, there is a lot of

Champions League: Special to score here in my hometown, says Manchester City midfielder Bernardo Silva

LISBON: Manchester City midfielder

and Raheem Sterling helped the Premier

score those goals with not so many

overturned by VAR, before Bernardo



Bernardo Silva was pleased by his team performance against Sporting in their last-16 tie of the UEFA Champions League on Tuesday. Manchester City scored five for the third time in this season's UEFA Champions League to beat Sporting. Goals from Riyad Mahrez, Bernardo Silva (2), Phil Foden,

League side to a convincing first-leg win away in Lisbon. After the match, Bernardo Silva, who was honoured with the man of the match award, said: "It's a very good performance. I honestly think in the first half we weren't good enough to be 4-0 up. Sometimes we were a bit sloppy, but we were very clinical to

chances." "To win 5-0 away is a good result. I'm Portuguese, I'm from the other side of the city. My mum is Sporting, my dad is Benfica. It was special to score here in my hometown," he added. Riyad Mahrez grabbed the opener, an effort which was initially ruled out for offside before being

Silva crashed a shot in off the crossbar. Phil Foden prodded in a third and Silva struck again before the break as City took a stranglehold on the tie with less than a quarter of it played. Raheem Sterling curled in the fifth - the pick of the goals - just before the hour to give his side a big advantage ahead of next month's second leg.

Delray Beach Open: Sebastian Korda ousts Thanasi Kokkinakis in opener

FLORIDA: Sebastian Korda, the 2021 Delray Beach Open finalist, coasted to the second round with a 6-4, 6-1 win over the

tralian swing, during which he won his maiden ATP Tour singles title (Adelaide 2) and his first Grand Slam title alongside

frustrated his opponent with some pesky retrieving as the breeze made winners hard to come by. The 21-year-old

2-6, 6-3, 6-4. Sock has now at least one match in each of his last four appearances in Delray Beach. Adrian Mannarino was the only other



2022 Australian Open Doubles champion Thanasi Kokkinakis on Tuesday. Korda's final run last year was his first tour-level final.

It was also Kokkinakis' first match since the Aus-

Nick Kyrgios in the Australian Open doubles event.

On a windy night, the fifth-seeded American was crisp in his return as he showcased his versatile game. In addition to a largely attacking game plan, he

American will next face Italy's Andreas Seppi, a 7-5, 6-4 winner against Peter Gojowczyk.

Jack Sock, the 2017 singles champion, bounced back from losing the first set to defeat Daniel Altmaier

seeded player in action Tuesday, and he lived up to that billing with a 6-2, 6-3 win over Liam Broady. The seventh seed will next face American Brandon Nakashima, who got past Denis Kudla, 6-1, 6-1, on Monday.

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