

Stipulations on Shivratri

Bhubaneswar(KCN): As a large number of people are likely to congregate at different Shiva temples on the occasion of Mahashivratri falls on 1 March, the ACS Disaster Management & Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Pradeep Jena Jena on Saturday issued a set of guidelines to observe the festival.

There is a continuous decrease in the number of COVID cases in the State and the number of active cases has also decreased.

On the festival 'Mahashivratri', one of the largest and

most significant among the sacred festivals, people usually congregate to worship Shivalinga and observe it by fasting and meditation and keep awake all night.

As large congregations on the festival of Mahashivratri have large potential for spread of COVID-19 infections, the SRC, Mr.Jena has advised Districts Collectors and Municipal Commissioners to put some restrictions to avoid any further spread of the virus.

"While allowing for celebration of 'Mahashivratri' on 1st March, 2022 and its related rituals, the Collectors/ Municipal Commissioners may restrict congregations/ gatherings to such number as may be felt appropriate in view of the prevailing pandemic situation considering local situations/ space available within such temples and its premises to enter into/ gather in temples strictly adhering

to the COVID-19 safety protocols," he said. Further mela/ congregations outside/ within the temple premises may be restricted so as to



avoid mass gatherings/ crowding, Jena told the local administrations.

The devotees in these places must have to follow Covid-19 safety protocols such as wearing of face masks, physical distancing and hand washing /hand sanitizer.

Considering local conditions, District Magistrates, Municipal Commissioners, Police Commissioner (Bhubaneswar-Cuttack) can impose appropriate restrictions on entry of devotees into temples/ religious places/ places of worship and in the celebrations in temples/ religious places/ places of worship, the SRC said. Collectors, Municipal Commissioners have been authorized to decide the number of persons to attend any religious ritual/ festival/Puja in their respective jurisdictions with strict adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour and norms.

Air India flight carrying Indian evacuees from Ukraine to arrive in Mumbai in evening

MUMBAI(KCN): The campaign to repatriate Indian nationals from Ukraine has commenced as the first Air India flight, AIC-1944, from Bucharest in Romania carrying 219 Indian



evacuees from Ukraine, is expected to arrive in the city late evening, an official statement said on Saturday.

The Air India flight had departed from Mumbai at 3.38 am on Saturday and landed in Bucharest at around 10.45 am (Indian standard time). From Bucharest, CONTINUED ON: P-7

Ukraine president Zelenskyy speaks with Modi, seeks India's support at UNSC

K Y I V (K C N) : Ukraine's President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy also informed Prime Minister Modi of the

tweet. "More than 100,000 invaders are on our

resolution by the US that "deplores in the strongest terms"



Zelenskyy on Saturday spoke with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and sought India's political support at the UN Security Council to stop Russia's military offensive against his country.

course of Ukraine repulsing the Russian aggression. "Spoke with Indian Prime Minister @narendramodi. Informed of the course of Ukraine repulsing Russian aggression," Zelenskyy said in a

land. They insidiously fire on residential buildings. Urged India to give us political support in UN Security Council. Stop the aggressor together!" he said. India abstained on a UN Security Council

Russia's "aggression" against Ukraine, as New Delhi called for the immediate cessation of violence and hostilities and asserted that dialogue is the "only answer" to settling disputes.

New rule for urban contest

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The State Election Commission (SEC) has issued a new set of rules for filing of nominations to contest different posts in the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in the upcoming poll on 24 March.

Candidates will have to file nominations in Form—VIII for Councillor, Form VIIIA for Chairperson, Form X for Corporator and Form XA for Mayor.

Any elector who is above 21 years of age on the date of publi-

cation of preliminary Electoral Roll 10 February, 2022 is eli-

a person has signed more than one nomination paper as

ULB, but the proposer and secon-



gible to file the nomination.

An elector, cannot not sign for more than one candidate as proposer/ seconder. If

proposer/seconder, the nomination paper received first will remain valid.

Candidate has to be an elector of the

the voter of the concerned ward. They have to deposit a minimal amount from Rs 50 to Rs 250

CONTINUED ON: P-7

MahaMastkaAbhishek of Bade Baba after Kundalpur Maha Mahotsav in Madhya Pradesh

New Delhi(KCN): In the midst of devotion and splendour, MahaMastkaAbhishek of Bade Baba (Rishabh Dev, the First Tirthankar) occurred after the Kundalpur Maha Mahotsav, today. It is known

estimated 15 lakh people visited 133 brahmi sundaree (brahamcharya vrat) along with 18 deekshayen. 2007 new idols were also consecrated at the

The biggest Jain event of this century

to be the biggest Jain event of the century. This Panch Kalyanak Maha Mahotsav ran from 14th to 23rd February followed by the MahaMastkaAbhishek, a month long event, of Bade Baba (12 feet monolithic statue sitting in Padmasana). An



that of Akshardham. It CONTINUED ON: P-7

BJD heading for landslide victory in Zilla Parishad elections in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The ruling BJD is heading for a landslide victory in the Zilla Parishad elections with the party

15 seats respectively while independents and others have established leads in only six zones. While the trends have come

Balangir, Nuapada, Sambalpur, Sundargarh, and Mayurbhadj districts where the Opposition BJP had won a

has also not improved though the party is putting up a fight in the traditional stronghold of Southern Odisha.



leading in at least 270 ZP zones out of the 315 zones where counting is being done in the first phase on Saturday. Opposition BJP and Congress have fallen way behind by leading from only 24 and

as a big letdown for the BJP, particularly in the Western Odisha districts, the BJD has established leads in a majority of districts. The BJD performance of BJD has considerably improved in Kalahandi,

majority of seats in the 2017 Zilla Parishad elections. According to trends available till now, BJP has not been able to lead in a single seat in 16 districts. The performance of Congress

In the 2017 ZP elections, BJD had won 476 ZP zones while the BJP and Congress had won from 297 and 60 zones respectively. The BJD had won 651 ZP zones in the 2012 elections.

Control Room for Odias in Ukraine

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In an aim to facilitate smooth and safe evacuation of Odisha people stranded in war torn Ukraine, the Odisha Government has opened a round the clock Control Room at the office of the Special Relief Commissioner

0674-2534177 and Mobile No. 9437881245 and Special Relief Commissioner's e-mail ID: srcodisha@gmail.com between 10 AM to 7 PM. Beyond this hour, the Special Relief Commissioner's office can be con-

with appropriate authorities in Government of India. The Special Relief Commissioner's office will liaise with the Resident Commissioner to facilitate the return of the stranded. The Ministry of External Affairs/ Em-

for citizens from different countries staying/pursuing studies in Ukraine. Some of the students from Odisha pursuing education in Ukraine are now trapped in the conflict zone. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has



(SRC). Senior OAS officer and Joint Relief Commissioner Padmanav Behera has been appointed as coordinator in the Special Relief Commissioner's office for this purpose. The concerned persons can contact the Control Room with Phone No. 0674-2534177 and Mobile No. 7682982668. Behera can be contacted in office No.

tacted in the Control Room mentioned above. The SRC has requested family members of the stranded students to furnish the relevant particulars for sharing the same with Government of India for necessary support. Resident Commissioner, New Delhi, Ravi Kant is the Nodal officer coordinating the return of the stranded students

bassy of India in Kiev, Budapest and Warsaw are issuing regular advisories in matters of crossing border/ return of stranded Indian nationals. Families are requested to advise the stranded to follow these advisories issued from time to time and act accordingly. Russia-Ukraine conflict has led to certain serious consequences

already taken up the matter with the Union Home Minister and Union External Affairs Minister to find ways and means of bringing back the stranded persons of Odisha from the conflict zone at the earliest. The State Government will bear all the expenditure of their travel from Ukraine to New Delhi and to Bhubaneswar, CM has announced.

Double medal for Odisha

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha has won gold in two categories-Reformist State Government and Tax Commissionerate

active facilitators, fiscal journalists, tax-friendly commissionerates and reform minded States, Tax India Online has insti-

Minister for Road Transport and Highway Nitin Gadkari and Chairman of the 15th Finance Commission N K Singh in an award ceremony held on Saturday at New Delhi. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has congratulated the Commissionerate of Commercial Tax & GST on this achievement. The performance of the State as a "Reformist State Government" was evaluated on several factors like infrastructure for industrial and skill development, Government to citizen services through technology, ease of doing business and State incentives, stamp duty rate rationalization and automation, electricity reforms and promotion of renew-

able energy, support to industry and trade, property and other municipal reforms. Similarly, the performance of the State Tax Commissionerate was evaluated on the basis of several taxpayer centric delivery of services like following the process of pre-showcase notice consultations as per the policy, escalating issues of taxpayers to be resolved by GST Council, response time in resolving queries raised by taxpayers and refund process followed by the State GST Authorities. The awardees were selected based on the feedback provided using online voting by taxpayers and citizens as well as by evaluation done by an eminent jury.



(Zones) in the 2nd National Taxation Awards for the year 2021. In order to motivate, encourage, acknowledge the compliant taxpayers, tax technology service providers,

tuted the National Taxation Award. Commissioner of CT & GST, Odisha, Sushil Kumar Lohani has received the award on behalf of the State in the presence of Union

Social worker Pradipta Mahali example for Youth mass

Cuttack Sadar (KCN): Cuttack Sadar block the Villagers of Keshpur Kandarpur Youth Social worker Pradipta Mahali son of Social worker and Sikhyabit D e b e n d r a Mahali,mother pious lady Parbati Mahali is doing variety of Seva of for betterment of society as example for Youth mass. In time of Corona,flood time and in many of needy times he has donate nose mask,

Sanitizer,food,help books for needy students etc. For emergency Sahitya seva he also worked,arranging to needy patient in time,clothers and



blood donation camp, Pujuyapuja tradition,Development of Library and much more real Seva he doing from his students carrier. For his best quality he is awarded by Muhana Sahitya Sansad Mumbai, Utkal Yuth Trust Bangalore, Dayanidhi Prativa Bikash Pratistatan 42 Mouza,Adarsha Yuva Sangha Bharat Cuttack Sadar Branch, Bishnupriya Charitable Trust Odissa etc.

Steel sector seeks better Environ

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Industry Captains in Steel Sector have for a better environment for the industry especially on finance, logistics, environment, support for the small-scale industries in the sector in Odisha. Ministry of Steel had an interactive session with steel companies based in Odisha here on 26 February. Union Minister of Steel, Ram Chandra Prasad Singh chaired the meeting which saw the participation of officials of steel companies based in Odisha.

taking lot of strides in development. Odisha government has rightly focused



Through institutions like the World Skill Centre, Bhubaneswar, on skill development which is the need of the hour. The Minister further

stated that steel consumption will continue to increase due to the various programmes and schemes of the government, such as Gatishakti Master Plan, in which the contribution of secondary steel sector will be very high. A mission to develop the secondary steel sector is in the making, he said. Ministry officials emphasized that the Government has been actively taking all efforts to address the concerns of the steel industry and welcomed inputs and comments on specific issues hindering the sector, especially the secondary steel companies.

CSML to build smart bus shelters

KOCHI(KCN): The Cochin Smart Mission Limited (CSML), as part of its efforts to make the city's roads smart, is all set to build smart bus shelters to aid commuters in the city. As part of the first phase, two bus shelters will be constructed at Abraham Madamakkal (AM) road by the end of March. The total cost of the shelters is Rs 20 lakh. The new bus shelters will be greener, cleaner, and smarter, says CSML officials. The solar-powered bus shelter will have facilities such as an SOS alert switch, charging points, wastebins and CCTV sur-

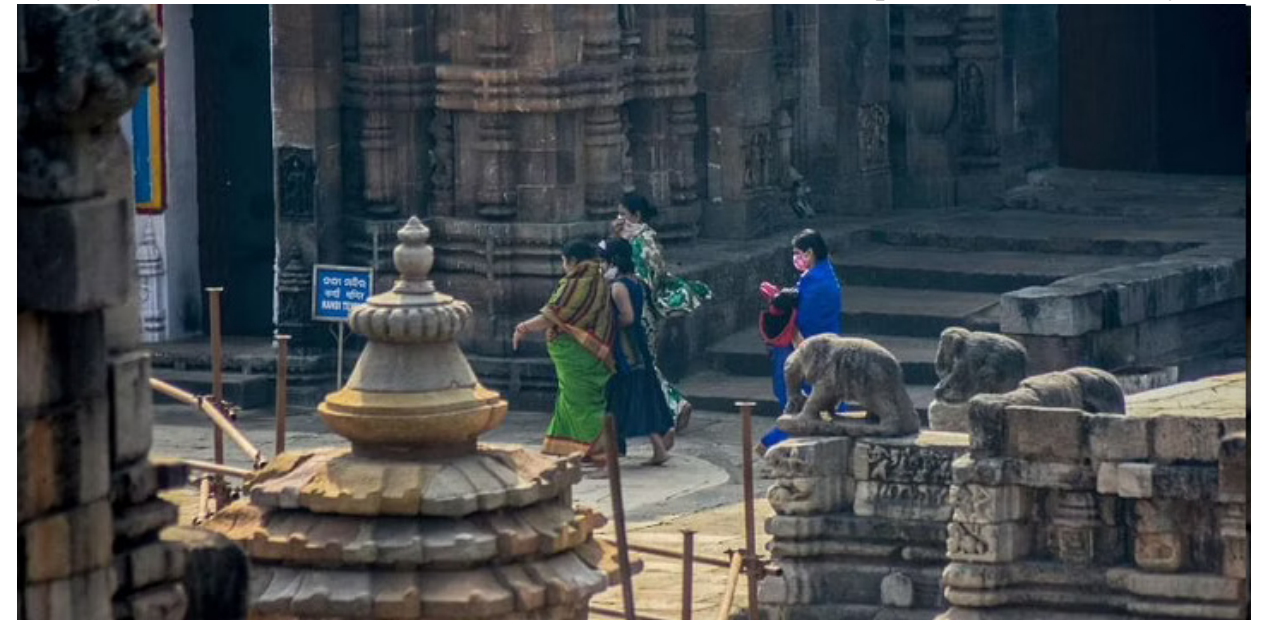
veillance for enhanced safety. "While we are nearing the concept of smart roads, CSML believes that the city also requires smart bus shelters," said S Shanavas IAS, CEO of CSML. Commuters said that it would be helpful if the smart shelters also had information regarding bus timings on those routes. "With the help of bus operators, the agency can also incorporate bus arrival and departure information at the shelters to make things easier for passengers," said Dayal Yadav, a daily wage worker who regularly travels on buses.

No Shivaratri congregation at Lingaraj shrine

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The BMC on Friday allowed cel-

devotees will not be allowed for 'sahanamela' darshan offer puja at the Aada Katha. Servitors will per-

feet and wear masks. The civic body has also banned any kind



celebration of Maha Shivaratri at 11th century Lingaraj temple in a restricted manner on March 1. According to the civic body order,

and entry into the sanctum sanctorum. Devotees will be allowed 'darshan' of Lord Lingaraj from Aada Katha only. However, they cannot

form all rituals on the day with strict adherence to Covid appropriate behaviour and devotees will be required to maintain a social distance of six

of mela or congregation of temporary vendors outside the temple to avoid crowding and keep the transmission of the virus in check. ?

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I'll keep venting my anger through my films: 'Thappad' director Anubhav Sinha

NEW DELHI(KCN): With three back to back films on the troika of troubling contemporary issues - religion, caste and gender -- director Anubhav Sinha, who seems to have hit a purple patch, says he is an angry man and will continue to vent his ire through his cinema.

Fresh from the success of his latest film "Thappad", a nuanced look at domestic violence and male entitlement, Sinha said this is his "most fertile" period. "I'm jumping between stories. As soon as I finish one, I start my next. I want to address everything. I'm still an angry man. I'll keep venting my anger through my films," the director told PTI in an interview.

Patriarchy, in his view, "is in our blood, in our bones". "It has been for centuries and we don't even realise that we have it," Sinha said. **ALSO READ |** Thappad movie review: This Anubhav Sinha-Taapsee film is mainstream social cinema at its finest Before "Thappad", which released on February 28, Sinha made "Article 15" on the caste divide in 2019 and "Mulk" on religious polarisation in 2018. "Perhaps this is the most fertile time for me. I keep finding good stories so I don't

see a reason not to work. I'm a workaholic and there

Thappad: The slap that Indian society needed?

make mistakes while telling the story of "just a slap".

wakes up when we are fast asleep to cook for us and then leave for

makes his own tea, loves his family and has a special corner in his heart for his daughter. "The film talks about 'anupayukt' (unsuitable) men but that doesn't mean there are no good men around. I wanted to have one good man in the middle but realised that he was too sweet. That is why, I wanted to say that even he made a mistake." A revealing conversation between Mishra's character and his wife, played by Ratna Pathak Shah, tells the audience how he overlooked her musical aspirations even while being the caring husband.



is no other engagement in my life. I'm meeting good writers, some are one or two films old, some are new. Things are falling into place organically," he said.

The 54-year-old, who began his career in 2001 with the romantic drama "Tum Bin" and went on to make commercial potboilers such as "Cash", "Dus" and "Ra. One" before changing gears to more meaningful cinema, said he works on two scripts simultaneously. That is why he is able to come up with at least one film a year. So, while he was making "Article 15" with co-writer Gaurav Solanki, he was also working on the script of "Thappad" with Mrunmayee Lagoo. **ALSO READ |**

"Similarly, while Mrunmayee and I were busy with 'Thappad', two other writers were writing my next two," he said. "I spend time with my writers, meet them at 8 in the morning to discuss what we have written. I am always working on two scripts. It takes more time between two films when you don't have a ready script," he added. Sinha credits the women in his team for "Thappad", hailed as a landmark film by many critics. The Taapsee Pannu-starrer is about a homemaker whose life falls apart when her corporate executive husband slaps her in a party. According to Sinha, the women in his crew ensured he didn't

"After the #MeToo movement, I told my team to hire as many women as possible. So there are always a lot of women in my team. I talk to them and they read the script and come up with their own suggestions. "While constructing a shot, if I have some confusion or a question, I discuss with them and try to find a solution. The only credit I take is that I'm receptive to their ideas." His late mother did not connect with his earlier films but would have loved "Thappad", he said. In 2010, he started cooking as a hobby. But it took his mother to make him realise that cooking can be a chore if you have to do it four times a day, every day. "I realised this woman

her school. She was a teacher. This affected me even as a child. Thankfully, I never saw any kind of violence, physical or otherwise, but yes, we are all misogynists. "My father would carry his own plate from the table and made the morning cup of tea. There were no words like 'feminists' and 'chivalry' in our lives then but it must have subliminally affected me that my father was like that. Still the cooking chores were done by my mother," he said. Though the director does not mention it, the protagonist Amrita's father, played by Kumud Mishra, may have something to do with Sinha's personal experience. He is gentle and large-hearted, quotes poetry,

Sinha said "Mulk", "Article 15" and "Thappad" are not a trilogy, but the success of the first two gave him the confidence to tackle the latest. "When I made 'Mulk', a courtroom drama, it was a little verbose because there were things I had to say. So it ended up speaking more. Its box office success gave me a certain degree of confidence. I truly believe my films should do well at the box office," he said. "Article 15" made Rs 65 crore at the box office and "Mulk" almost Rs 30 crore. "Thappad" is also on a healthy profit track with Rs 21 crore in its first week. Sinha is happy. It is not on a blockbuster point because this is not a Rs 100 crore film. It has its own loyal audience and the reaction has been really strong.

'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

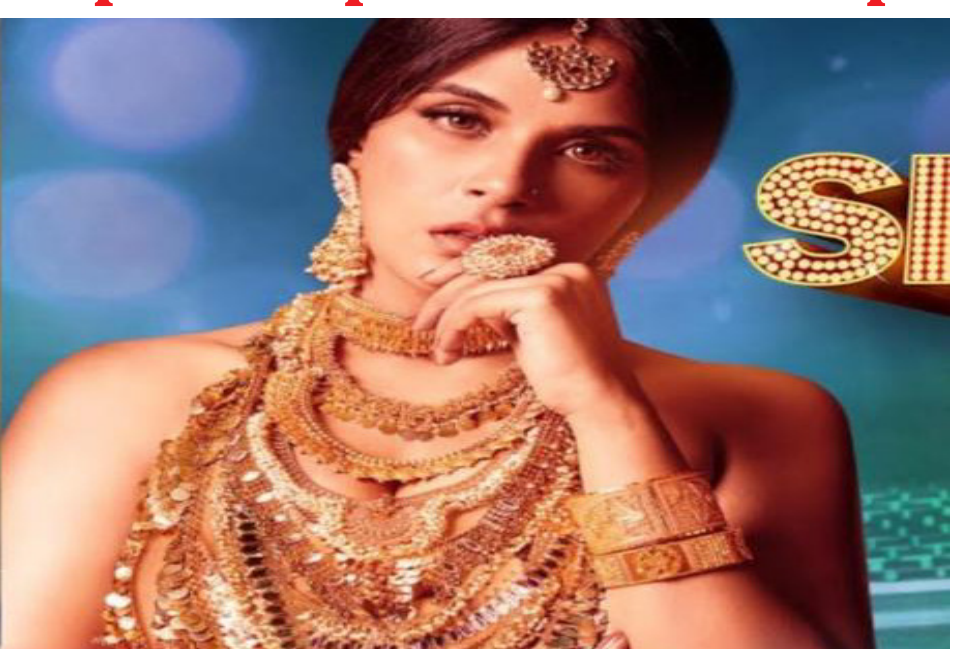
screen. The film, as described by the filmmakers of 'Shakeela', is "inspired by life events of a famous star Shakeela who predominantly starred in southern cinema." It features Richa Chadha as the titular adult actor who was one of the biggest stars of the 1990s ar-

riving 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.



When will Imran Khan talk to the people of Uttar Pradesh?

Prime Minister of Pakistan Mr. Imran Khan has never been able to prove his mettle as a strong orator but is eager to debate on TV with the Indian Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi. He said, "I would love to debate with Narendra Modi on TV." It is yet to be seen if Imran Khan

debates with Modi Ji or not. While Imran Khan is desperate to talk to Modi Ji, he should primarily consider talking about the pain and sufferings of the Muslims who had migrated to Pakistan from UP, Bihar, and other parts of the country at the time of the partition. Even after years of the formation of Pakistan, they are considered second-class citizens there. These people who went to Pakistan are called Muhajirs, and over 70 percent of the population of Muhajirs is from UP. They are also termed UP Wala.

After 1947, Muhajirs settled in Karachi and Hyderabad of the Sindh province. For time immemorial, these Muhajirs have been cast aside by the three major parties, namely, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz), and the Pakistan Tehreek Insaf Party (PTI). The leaders of these parties do not even go to their localities to seek Muhajir votes during elections. Imran Khan does not hesitate to brand the Muttahida Qaumi Movement Party (MQM) as the party of killers. However, Imran Khan has never sympathetically approached their issues. The party leader, Altaf Hussain, who fights for the Muhajirs, is called a murderer. Altaf Hussain belongs to Agra. Pakistan now openly describes the partition of the country as a wrongful incident.

Imran Khan, who calls himself a scholar of history, does not even know that the Muslims of Uttar Pradesh participated enthusiastically in the movement for a separate Islamic nation. Now, Imran Khan is not even willing to talk to the people of UP. That is the reality of

R.K. Sinha

Orangi Town, Aligarh Colony, Bihar Colony, and Surjani areas of Karachi. The dreams with which they went to Pakistan are shattered and unfulfilled. It is comical that Imran Khan has not only dared to express his desire to talk

doomed to live predominantly in the Gujjar Nala, However, even before that, the Balochistan Liberation Army had taken responsibility for the Karachi attack. They have now begun spreading lies to the extent of deceit. Imran Khan has even gone so far as to say that India carried out the 2008 Mumbai attack. Although, he does not clarify that if the Mumbai attack was staged by India, then why is the case hearing going on

in Pakistan against the accused? Will they even tell who Ajmal Kasab was in any TV debate? If Imran Khan doesn't pay immediate attention to the insurgency of Balochistan, then



Imran Khan's personality. He is ungrateful. The India, from which he accepted several donations for funding the hospital named after his mother, now curses day and night. However, even in a closed society and a staunchly Islamic country like Pakistan, the MQM has retained its secular characteristics. It can be considered a secular political party of Pakistan. The most daunting complaint of the Muhajirs has been that their participation in Central Government and Sindh Government jobs is rapidly plummeting. When compared, they account for around two percent of the jobs in the central government and seven-eight percent in Sindh government jobs.

However, they constitute about 10 percent of the country's population and a little over 22 percent of Sindh's population. Muhajir is a poverty-stricken and helpless section of Pakistani society. They are also victims of illiteracy. Even after living in Pakistan for many generations, their conditions are deplorable. They are

to our respected Prime Minister but has also demanded it. He must remind himself that once the discussion starts, there will be no escape. Imran Khan will have to answer some hard-hitting questions like how their country evolved into a factory of terrorism and explain why they keep supporting Khalistanis directly and indirectly. Whenever they want, they can debate live on TV, in the presence of the leaders of Balochistan province of their country who are not ready to live with Pakistan. Imran Khan is unable to understand the spark of rebellion that is raging in Balochistan province. In Balochistan, the largest province of Pakistan in terms of area, the Balochistan Liberation Army wants to separate its province from Pakistan under any circumstances. This organization had attacked the Stock Exchange building in Karachi some time back.

At that time, Imran Khan was shamelessly claiming that India was behind the terrorist incident in Karachi.

it may be wiped off the map of Pakistan.

That is why India advises Imran Khan to prioritize his internal affairs within his country. He must know that government officials from other parts of Pakistan are not ready to go to Balochistan. Despite Balochistan being a part of Pakistan, it is entirely cut off. Keeping all this aside, Imran Khan sometimes goes to Beijing and Moscow. During his visit to Beijing, he completely avoids opening his mouth on the atrocities committed against Muslims in China. The public of Pakistan is suffering from inflation, unemployment, and dogma. But, they are not ready to do a TV debate with anyone to resolve these serious issues. Have you ever seen or heard Imran talking to the leaders of the minorities of Pakistan. That is never the case. Despite this blatant disregard towards the welfare of Pakistan, he dares to demand a debate with the Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi.

(The author is a senior editor, columnist, and former MP)

Has not Article 137 of the constitution providing for review become otiose, so too, the curative jurisprudence created through judicial legislation, unknown to jurisprudence elsewhere in the world

One of the senior most members of the NLC, out of anguish that SLPs, review petitions and curative petitions are dismissed in one-line/stereotypical orders, preferred an application under the RTI Act seeking the data concerning the total number of petitions filed under each category, the average time taken for hearing and final disposal and the percentage of such petitions being allowed or dismissed. The Registry of the Supreme Court replied to him saying that the Court does not maintain any data concerning the same, even as to the number of matters dismissed or allowed. However, he did not give up. He sought the help of member of Parliament. And the said MP raised a question in the Parliament. The then Hon'ble Minister for Law and Justice answered the said query on the floor of the House on 3.2.2021 thus:

In the 10yr period between 2011 to 2020

a)Review petitions (civil) dismissed-19710

Allowed- 92

b) Review Petitions (Crl), Dismissed-

6087 *Allowed-48*

c) Curative petitions (civil), Dismissed-2155

Allowed- 0

d) Curative petitions (Crl), Dismissed-620

Allowed- 3

So far as curative petitions go, I am not concerned.

The curative jurisprudence itself is against the constitution, a judicial legislation, which no court has the power to do. I consider this mechanism to be in ignorance of the elementary jurisprudence. The court failed to comprehend the distinction between res judicata and stare decisis and mistook one for the other, which would be evident anyone who reads Hurra v. Hurra, by which judgment this mechanism of reopening a case even after review has been dismissed came to be invented.

I, in all humility and with least doubt, assert that Review petitions are all mechanically dismissed, passing cyclostyle orders. In the NJAC case, for filing a review, photocopies of the judgement running into 1046 pages costing more Rs.20,000 had to taken on the Registry's insistence despite the judgment being reported, only to be told

Mathews J. Nedumpara

that it has been *dismissed in chambers, without any hearing.* Even our review of the Judges-2 case by which the Collegium was created, was *dismissed in chambers, without any hearing.*

It is an irony that it is Justice Krishna Iyer, the legend who fought for the right to be heard and open court hearing, who by authoring the judgement in P.N Eswara Iyer's case, 1980 AIR 808, held that the judges can "hear" cases in chambers by circulation. Hearing whom, when neither parties to the lis are allowed to enter the chambers? It is a greater irony that Justice Krishna Iyer buried the concept of open court hearing after extolling the virtue of open court hearing in his inimitable flowery language.

Article 137 is dead. We are writing an obituary thereof, as is evident from the minister's reply.

What we are facing is of an even greater danger namely the burial of Article 136, the right to leave to appeal, which has become the exclusive privilege of the coterie of lawyers who have mastered the art of sycophancy. Others face the risk of their cases being dismissed in a hearing which lasts for one or two min-

utes, with one-line orders stating that the SLP is dismissed.

What is the solution, could the judges be entirely blamed? To be fair, no. The powerful in Delhi, to promote their vested interests, took away the exclusive jurisdiction which the Civil Court enjoyed as a constitutional court of plenary jurisdiction, empowered, competent and duty bound to adjudicate upon even the constitutionality of statutes. Prior to the amendment of the Constitution in the year 1963, the High Courts of Bombay, Calcutta or Madras could not even have issued a writ to the union government situated in Delhi because it was beyond their territorial limits. In contrast, the City Civil Court in Bombay or a Munsiff in Cochin, could have entertained a plea challenging the constitutionality of an Act of Parliament, which it was duty bound, under the proviso to Section 113 of the CPC, to refer to the High Court, which obligation was not prevalent when the constitution came into force and came later by virtue of an amendment.

(The author is the President of the National Lawyers Campaign For Judicial Transparency And Reforms)

First AI flight carrying 219 Indian evacuees from Ukraine lands in Mumbai

MUMBAI: The first Air India flight carrying 219 Indian evacuees from Ukraine landed at the Mumbai airport from Bucharest, Romania, on Saturday evening, ATC sources said. Operated with a

Bucharest at 3.38 am Saturday and landed there at around 10.45 am (Indian Standard Time). It departed for Mumbai at 1.55 pm (IST). The Ukrainian airspace has been closed for civil aircraft op-

Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla had said on February 24. The distance between Kyiv and the Romanian border checkpoint is approximately 600 km and it takes anywhere between eight hours to

Our teams are working on the ground round the clock. I am personally monitoring," he added. Air India will operate more flights on Saturday to Bucharest and Hungarian capital Budapest to evacuate



Boeing 787 Dreamliner plane. Air India flight AI-1944 touched down the runway at Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) here at 7.50 pm, they said. Union Minister Piyush Goyal was at the airport to receive the Indian nationals returning from war-torn Ukraine on their arrival. The Air India flight had left from Mumbai for

erations since the morning of February 24 and therefore, the evacuation flights are operating out of Bucharest and Budapest. Indian nationals who reached the Ukraine-Romania border by road have been taken to Bucharest by Indian government officials so that they can be evacuated in the Air India flights. Around 16,000 Indians, mainly students, were stranded in Ukraine. Foreign

11 hours to cover it by road. The Indian embassy in Ukraine on Friday said it was working to establish evacuation routes from Romania and Hungary. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had earlier in the day said on Twitter that AI1944 with "219 Indian nationals has taken off from Romania". "Regarding evacuation of Indian nationals from Ukraine, we are making progress.

Indians stranded in Ukraine. Prior to the closure of the Ukrainian airspace, Air India had operated a flight to Ukraine's capital Kyiv on February 22 that brought 240 people back. It had planned to operate two more flights on February 24 and February 26 but could not as the Russian offensive began on February 24 and the Ukrainian airspace was consequently shut down.

Ukraine conflict: Running out of food, cash, Indian students take shelter in metro bunkers

NEW DELHI: "We are left with food for today only," 21-year-old Shana Shaji of

what is happening outside the station. Thinking the situation has improved,

Europe. The metro stations have turned into bunkers as people have

do now? No ATM is dispensing cash," Shaji added. Majority of the



Kerala said over the phone from Ukraine's Kharkiv city, hiding inside a metro bunker as the Russian military assault on the country rages on. Shaji, a medical student, and her friends had shifted to the metro station on Thursday when Russia launched its military offensive. Connected with the outside world with just their mobile phone, Shaji said they are unaware of

they had tried to exit the metro station but ran back in after spotting military vehicles on the roads. Panic gripped several cities of Ukraine after Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a military operation against the eastern European country. Following Putin's announcement, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said an "invasion" could be the beginning of a "big war" in

taken shelter to escape bombardment amid the raging military conflict. People in these "bunkers" are becoming increasingly despondent as they are running out of food supplies, Shaji said. "When I entered the metro station. I thought I will be evacuated soon but it has been three days," the fourth-year medical student said in a heavy voice. "We don't have food supplies. What will we

people in the metro station are Indian citizens, she said, adding they are sleeping on platforms and have used mattresses and blankets to prepare makeshift beds. They sleep in shifts to ensure the safety of the group. While several are stuck in bunkers, others chose to leave on foot to reach the land borders. With Ukraine closing its airspace after Russia launched the

Another corruption case against tainted CHC doctor

BHUBANESWAR: Vigilance officers on Friday registered an-

ing Rs 8,000 bribe from a patient's relative on February 16.

During the investigation, Jena was found in possession of dis-

stituted 304 per cent of his known sources of income, said a senior Vigilance officer. Apart from huge amounts of cash, Jena was found in possession of a three-story house in Capital City, a flat in Puri, one plot in Cuttack and four plots in Bari, Jajpur. He made at least 10 foreign trips to countries like Thailand and China between 2010 and 2019. Jena had demanded Rs 10,000 bribe from a woman's cousin for her cesarean delivery. He eventually agreed to take Rs 8,000 from them for the surgery.



other corruption case against Dr Sukant Jena of Charichhak Community Health Centre (CHC) in Puri district who was allegedly caught re-handled while accept-

After nabbing Jena, the anti-corruption agency's officers carried out searches at his house in the Capital city on February 16 and seized Rs 1.12 crore cash.

proportionate assets to the tune of Rs 2.57 crore. A separate case was registered against him after he was found in possession of disproportionate assets which con-

TDP chief, son politicising movie tickets issue: Perni

VIJAYAWADA: Cinematography Minister Perni Venkatramiah (Nani) flayed TDP Chief Chandrababu Naidu and his son Nara Lokesh for politicising every issue including the recently released movie ticket prices if they are sold against the fixed prices. Speaking to media at the party central office on Friday, Nani said the State government has issued GO 35 to fix prices of movie tickets in the-

atres and added that the prices were fixed

said the government has delayed issuing

He said Naidu was looking for a possible



based on area, AC, non-AC, multiplex and others. Questioning why exhibitors were not approaching Joint Collectors to fix movie ticket prices, Nani

the new GO due to the sudden demise of Mekapati Goutham. He added that it was unfortunate to see vested interests trying to politicise the matter.

alliance with Jana Sena and hence politicising the issue. He asserted that YSRC has never considered Pawan Kalyan as a serious politician.

BMC to shut down Covid hospitals as cases decline

BHUBANESWAR: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has decided to shut down all Covid care facilities, except two, from February 28 in view of the declining coronavirus cases in the State Capital. BMC Deputy Commissioner for Health and Sanitation Suvendu Kumar Sahoo said barring SUM and Aditya Ashwini Hospital, all other existing Dedicated Covid Hospitals (DCHs) and Covid Care Centres (CCCs) at Patia and Dumduma will be closed from February 28. Sahoo said the decision to this effect has been taken by the government in view of the improving Covid situation in the city. The civic body has already issued notices to Hi-Tech Covid hospital and Kalinga Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) Covid hospital asking them to close their facilities. Bed strength will be reduced to 70 in SUM DCH and 30 in Aditya Ashwini in view of the drastic fall in patient inflow to their Covid care establishments. "Currently, we have only 30 Covid patients undergoing treatment in three Covid hospitals," Sahoo

said. Following the outbreak of the third wave of the pandemic in January this year, the civic body had readied 1,800 beds in different DCHs and CCCs and kept resources in readiness to manage a patient load of around 4,000 in these hospitals. The Deputy Commissioner said apart from scaling down Covid infrastructure, the civic body has also reduced the number of Rapid Response Teams to two from 40 during peak of the third wave. The State Capital reported 24 new Covid cases against 51 recoveries in the last 24 hours. The city now has 545 active cases. 345 fresh Covid cases, 7 deaths in Odisha Odisha reported 345 new Covid cases and seven deaths in the last 24 hours. Health officials said with over 54,000 tests in the last 24 hours, the daily test positivity rate remained around 0.63 per cent in this period. Jajpur reported the highest number of 52 cases followed by 39 in Sundargarh.

First batch of Indian students enter Hungary from Ukraine

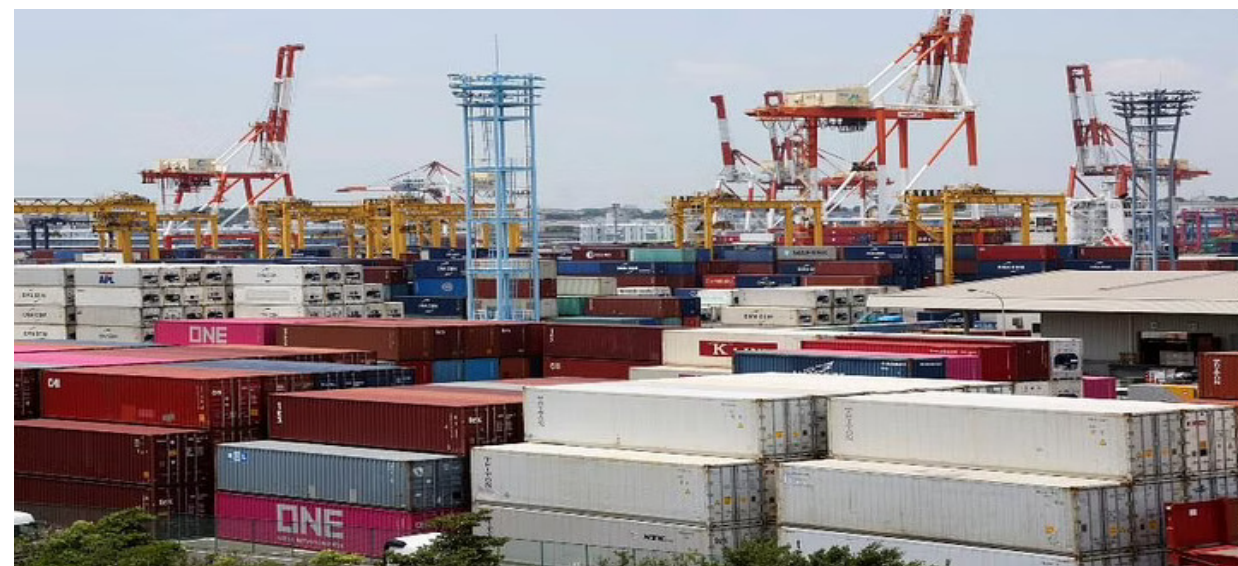


NEW DELHI: The first batch of Indian students entered Hungary from Ukraine through the Zahony crossing point on Saturday. The students are being taken to Budapest for return to India by an Air India flight, the Indian embassy in Hungary said. "First batch of Indian

students enter Hungary from Ukrainian side at Zahony crossing, travelling onward to Budapest for return to India by AI flight today," it tweeted. India on Friday managed to set up camp offices in Lviv and Chernivtsi towns in western Ukraine to facilitate the transit of

Indians to Hungary, Romania and Poland. India also positioned teams of officials at Zahony border post in Hungary, Krakowiec as well as Shehyni-Medyka land border points in Poland, Vysne Nemecke in the Slovak Republic and Suceava transit point in Romania to coordinate the exit of Indian nationals from Ukraine. India is trying to evacuate its nationals through Ukraine's land borders with Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Ukrainian government closed the country's airspace following the Russian military offensive.

'Good demand for AP's agro products in Canada'



VIJAYAWADA: Trade commissioner at the Canada Trade Office in Hyderabad, Vikram Jain, called on the office bearers and members of AP Chambers in Vijayawada on Friday to discuss the possibility of connecting members of the AP Chambers with Canadian businesses to explore trade relations. Stating that agriculture, dairy, pharma, life sciences, bio-

tech, medical devices, clean tech, electric vehicles, engineering, infrastructure and technology are some of the sectors that Canadian companies specialise in, the trade commissioner suggested that businesses from AP can look at partnering with them to distribute or manufacture these products in the State. "As Canada is famous for maple syrup, canola oil,

pulses, apples, blueberries, cranberries, seafood, etc., many Canadian companies look for partners in India. The companies from AP can consider distributing these products in India," Jain said and added that there is a huge opportunity for agro and other products, produced in AP, to export to Canadian markets. He said that the Canada Trade Office will share the details

of the companies, who are looking for Indian partners, with AP Chambers shortly. He also said Canada Trade Office will also organise exclusive online events to connect interested members of AP Chambers with Canadian companies. AP Chambers president-elect Potluri Bhaskara Rao and general secretary B Raja Sekhar hosted the meeting.

Distressed parents turn to God

JAGATSingHPUR: With Russia launching a full-blown invasion on Ukraine, anxious parents of students have resorted to divine intervention to get their wards back safely. Ashish Kumar Sahoo of Ohala, a student of Kyiv Medical

"We were in constant touch with him but now he has shifted to a bunker with his friends where the network is poor and they are surviving only on dry food," said Nelandri Sahoo, Ashish's mother. Uncertainty on

empty-handed," said his uncle Manoranjan Sahoo. The family performed a puja in Markandeshwar temple for the safe return of Ashish. Similar is the plight of Sheikh Sawan and his wife Tarannum Biwi from

worsens. We are praying to Allah for his safe return and war to end between the two countries," said Anish's father. Madhusmit and Durbesh Mohapatra's daughter Lipsa Mohapatra, an MBBS student, is



University, has been in Ukraine from the past six years. He was supposed to return home after his final exams in May but the current scenario has turned life upside down for him and his family which lives in fear each day.

Ashish's return looms large because of a missile attack just 15 km away from the bunker he has sought refuge in. "An Indian airplane had gone there to evacuate students a couple of days back but it failed to land and returned




Marichpada. The couple is eagerly awaiting the return of their son Md Anish who is studying in Vinister University in Ukraine. "College administration has advised them to stay at home and shift to a bunker if the situation

also stuck. Lipsa couldn't come back as the Indian flight could not make it in time five days ago to evacuate students. "We have sought government intervention to bring back our children safely," said Madhusmit.

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Reliance Industries takes control of Future Retail stores, offers jobs to employees

NEW DELHI: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd has taken over the operations of at least 200 stores of Future Retail and has offered jobs to its employees after the Kishore Biyani-led

that Future violated the terms of a 2019 deal the companies signed when the US e-commerce giant invested USD 200 million in a Future Group unit. Amazon's position has been backed by a Singapore arbitra-

has made a loss of Rs 4,445 crore in the last four quarters," the filing said. FRL said it is hopeful that the Reliance deal will be implemented as it will be beneficial for all the stakeholders. When contacted, Amazon

ing bank payments, citing its dispute with Amazon. The Delhi High Court on February 28, 2022 will hear arguments in the dispute between Amazon and Future Group. In August 2020, the loss-making retail

Easyday to Reliance for Rs 24,713 crore. FRL missed the due date of repayment of Rs 3,494.56 crore to its lenders on December 31, 2021. The retail enterprise blamed the delay on the ongoing dispute with Amazon. But it had sought to repay the debt in the next 30 days, that is by January 2022 -- which it also missed. It thereafter sought to sell its small-format stores to pay the first installment of the debt, but Amazon contested that move too.

The latter volunteered to help FRL with a loan of Rs 7,000 crore via Samara Capital which was refused by FRL's independent directors. In a relief to Kishore Biyani's FRL, the Supreme Court recently directed bankers and Amazon on the applica-

tion related to issuing direction for "convening of the meetings of the shareholders and creditors of the Company and other applicant companies involved in the Scheme to consider and approve the Scheme". "In view of this, the long-stop date for the Scheme has already been extended by six months to 30th September 2022 by Reliance," it said.

This is the third extension of timeline by Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL), the retail arm of Reliance Industries, for completing its Rs 24,713 crore deal with the Future group. Earlier, RRVL had extended the timeline from September 30, 2021 to March 31, 2022. The first long

stop date was March 31, 2021, which was extended to September 30, 2021. Long stop, an established practice in merger and acquisition transactions, is a timeframe in which parties agree on which all conditions precedent for a transaction need to be fulfilled and the transaction completed.

As part of the scheme, Future Enterprises Limited is the transferee company to Reliance Retail. Future Group's 19 companies operating in retail, wholesale, logistics and warehousing would be consolidated into one entity -- FEL -- and then transferred to Reliance.

Air India flight carrying Indian evacuees from Ukraine to arrive in Mumbai in evening

Continued from page-1

it departed for the city's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport at around 1.55 pm (IST).

According to a statement from CSMIA earlier in the day, the first flight with Indian evacuees from Ukraine is expected to arrive from Bucharest at 8 pm.

"Campaign to repatriate Indian nationals begins. The first AIC-1944 carrying 219 Indian departed from Henri Coanda International Airport in Bucharest. The plane is expected to arrive in Mumbai late evening," PIB Mumbai said in a tweet on Saturday.

"In the light of the current crisis in Ukraine, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) is extending full support to the evacuation of the stranded Indian students, who are arriving in Mumbai today (Saturday) by AI-1944 at 8 pm (expected time of arrival)," CSMIA said in the statement earlier in the day. The private airport operator also said it has blocked a special corridor for the arriving passengers. The Ukrainian airspace has been closed for civil aircraft operations since the morning of February 24 and therefore, the evacuation flights are operating out of Bucharest and Budapest. Around 20,000 Indians, mainly students, are currently stranded in Ukraine, according to officials.

The private airport operator said it has fenced in a special area at the facility for the arriving passengers to sit and will also provide them with free Wi-Fi codes, distribute food and water bottles. They will also be provided with any guidance or medical assistance if required at the time of arrival, it said.

The airport has blocked a special corridor for the arriving passengers, CSMIA said, adding as per the guidelines laid down by the government, the Airport Health Organization (APHO) team at the facility will be conducting mandatory temperature checks.

Passengers would be required to produce either a COVID-19 vaccination certificate or a negative RT-PCR test report at the time of arrival. In case any passenger is not able to show any of the documents at the time of arrival, they will have to undergo RT-PCR testing at the airport, where the cost would be borne by the airport, it said. These passengers would be able to leave the airport post-testing negative.

Before the closure of the Ukrainian airspace, Air India had operated one flight to Ukrainian capital Kyiv on February 22 that brought 240 people back to India. It had planned to operate two more flights on February 24 and February 26 but it could not do so as the Russian offensive began on February 24 and the Ukrainian airspace was consequently shut down



group failed to make lease payments to landlords, sources said on Saturday. Reliance Retail, the retail arm of the oil-to-telecom conglomerate, had in August 2020 agreed to take over the retail and logistics business of the Future Group for Rs 24,713 crore but the deal couldnt be closed as Future's warring partner Amazon went to courts citing violation of some contracts.

Future denies any wrongdoing. Sources said several landlords had approached Reliance as Future Retail Ltd (FRL), which is neck deep in losses, was unable to pay rent. Future has more than 1,700 outlets, including the popular Big Bazaar stores, and has not made lease payments for some of its outlets.

Facing closure, Reliance transferred the leases of some stores to its step-down subsidiary, RRVL and sublet them to Future to operate the stores, the sources said. It has since started rebranding the stores and offered to take all employees employed there on its payroll, they added.

In addition, a majority of inventory at these stores was being supplied by Reliance Jiomart as a cash-strapped FRL could not clear dues to existing suppliers. Reliance will likely replace Big Bazaar signages and branding from these stores with its own brand. Amazon has argued

tor. Without confirming or denying the takeover of its stores, Future Retail Ltd in a stock exchange filing said, "The shareholders are aware that FRL is going through an acute financial crisis. The company has defaulted on its loan servicing and as already informed, the account of the company has been classified as NPA by the banks.

FRL said it is finding it difficult to finance the working capital needs and "termination notices have been received for a significant number of stores due to huge outstanding, and we would no longer have access to such store premises".

"The ongoing litigation initiated by Amazon in October 2020, and which is continuing for the last one and a half years, has created serious impediments in the implementation of the Scheme (Reliance takeover), resulting in severe adverse impact on the working of the company," it said, adding the firm is scaling down its operations to reduce losses.

FRL is proposing to expand its online and home delivery business to increase its reach to the customers. "The company has been finding it difficult to finance the working capital needs. Increasing losses at store level is a grave concern and is a vicious cycle where larger operations are leading to higher losses. The company

declined to comment on the development. FRL had in January challenged its lenders in the Supreme Court to avoid facing insolvency proceedings over mis-

New rule for urban contest

Continued from page-1

while submitting the nomination.

The money will be refunded, if candidate withdraws/ nomination rejected/ candidate dies before poll/ candidate is elected.

Forfeiture of deposit if number of votes polled does not exceed 1/8th of the total no. of votes polled (or 10 Percent of votes polled in case of Corporation)

It is mandatory for the contesting candidates to submit two affidavits while filing the nomination papers. The candidate will have to submit one affidavit that he has not more than one spouse living and has not more than two children.

The other one is on containing information pertaining to criminal antecedents/ assets/ liabilities/ educational qualification. They will have to submit a caste certificate too. The affidavits will be uploaded on the district web site and/ or ULB web site.

If an affidavit is not submitted, the Executive Officer (EO) will have to give direction on the nomination paper to produce before scrutiny. If any rival candidate furnishes information contrary to the affidavit by a sworn affidavit, such affidavit shall be disseminated along with the candidate's affidavit. However, the Commission has made it clear that there will be no rejection of nomination for wrong information or suppressing information in the affidavit.

The scrutiny of nominations for Chairperson/ Mayor will be done first while scrutiny of nominations for Councilor/ Corporator will be done ward-wise starting from ward No. 1 till completion. In case of objection during scrutiny, EO will hold a summary inquiry.

Nomination of a candidate will be rejected if he/she is less than 21 years of age, not registered as a voter in the ULB, not signed the nomination paper, proposer/ seconder have not signed, proposer and seconder are not electors of the ward.

Similarly, if a candidate has not submitted two prescribed affidavits, his/her nomination will be rejected.

Moreover, if he/she has not submitted the original caste certificate (for SC/ST) or not made a deposit, the nomination will be rejected. In case of rejection, the concerned EO will give brief reasons to the candidate.

In case of death of a candidate before the poll is taken, the EO will countermand the polls and report the fact to the Election Commission. Election proceedings shall be started afresh in all respects as if for a new election, the Commission said.

giant proposed to sell its retail, wholesale and logistics arms that included businesses including Fashion at Big Bazaar, Koryo, Foodhall and

MahaMastkaAbhishek of Bade Baba after Kundalpur Maha Mahotsav in Madhya Pradesh

Continued from page-1

was made in Nagar Shaili with no use of steel. The magnificent temple is purely built with Bansi pahar stone and Kutch yellow stone.

Speaking on the success of this mega event, Shri Santosh ji Singhai said, "God has given us the way to have the opportunity to celebrate this mega event wherein devotion and love is being poured from all across the country. People from all walks of life and all religions came to witness the event and become an integral part of this Jain Kumbh."

On the fourth day, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Union Industries Minister Piyush Goyal and Union Minister of State Prahlad Patel reached Kundalpur and took blessings of Acharya Shri Vidyasagar ji Maharaj in the ongoing festival in the famous pilgrimage center of MP.

Also, in the last few day's renowned names like Shiv Raj Singh Chauhan, Piyush Goel, Prahalad Patel, Om Birla and Jyoti Rao Scindia visited this mega celebration along with 15 lakh devotees, which has now been recorded in world history.

Acharya Shri while expressing his devotion and dedication towards Bade Baba said that "Bade Baba's MahaMastkaAbhishek will now happen in every 9 years." People were overwhelmed and immensely overjoyed to hear this.

The Panch Kalyanak Maha Mahotsav closed with the grand Gajrath feri mahatosav wherein 30 chariots of silver and gold from across India moved in grandeur. Over 3 lakh people witness the magnificence of this traditional closing ceremony.

Shri Santosh ji Singhai, Adyaksh of the organizing committee also shared his gratitude and happiness on the success of the event and said, "Bade baba aur chhote baba ki kripa se jangal mein mangal ho raha hai. On a short notice of 10 days, this mega event has been organized successfully, which seems nothing less than a dream. We are thankful to all the organizers and volunteers (Swayam Sevaks) for their hard work."

In the Mahotsav, more than ten lakh devotees from about 15 states and five countries reached Kundalpur. More than 40000-50000 disciples came to the MahaMahotsav from the Delhi NCR region itself.

History was also created in Kundalpur when 133 girls together took a vow from Acharyashree Vidyasagar ji Maharaj to observe a non-life celibacy fast and walk on the path of salvation.

Unflustered by bilateral results, India focused on peaking at World Cup

CHENNAI: Sixteen matches, 4 wins, 12 losses with a win-loss ratio of 0.33 is not the record any team would want to have in the 12 months leading up to the ODI World Cup. But, that is the kind of year the women's team, led by Mithali Raj, have had since they returned for the first time after the pandemic struck. However, despite losing all the four series they have played since 2021, Mithali is not too wor-

ried about team combinations going into the global event. And that's telling because, even after every defeat in the recent New Zealand series, the coach and players seemed unflustered, almost as if they knew what was going behind the scenes, with results being inconsequential.

While taking the positives from the bilateral

series, India is not affected by the losses.

"In bilaterals, we can get our takeaways, but in the World Cup, we play each and every team. Results are important for self-confidence, but momentum is key and it is important to peak at the right time in the World Cup," Mithali said

with some young players, who've brought in a fresh approach in the 50-over format.

"Most of them, even the young players who recently got into the side, had the opportunity of playing in (T20) leagues. When you go into big events, you depend on experience, not just

India vs Sri Lanka: Virat Kohli's 100th Test match will be behind closed doors, say officials

MOHALI: The BCCI around Mohali while directive of BCCI," ting up billboards won't be allowing any also taking into ac- senior PCA treasurer across the stadium to



spectators for the upcoming first Test between India and Sri Lanka starting here March 4, which is incidentally legendary Virat Kohli's landmark 100th Test, a Punjab Cricket Association official stated. The decision has been taken in the wake of the COVID-19 cases in and

count that most of the Indian players will be linking up with their respective IPL squads just after the end of the second Test in a bubble-to bubble transfer. "Yes, apart from the people, who are on duty for the Test match, we are not allowing any general spectators as per the

RP Singla told PTI on Saturday. "Still there are fresh COVID cases emerging in and around Mohali, so it's better we take all safety protocols. Obviously, the fans miss out because an international match at Mohali is happening after almost three years," Singla said. However, PCA is put-

celebrate the momentous occasion in Kohli's glittering cricket career. "We will be putting up big billboards and our PCA Apex Council has also decided to felicitate Virat. We will either do it at the start of the game or at the end depending on BCCI directive," Singla added.

No contest: Nadal defeats Medvedev in 2 sets in Mexican Open

ACAPULCO: This time around, there was no drama. In a rematch of an epic five-set Australian

fourth title in Acapulco. The Spaniard started off strong in the match with a break in

Tsitsipas 6-4, 6-4. After losing all four of his matches in January, Norrie is 10-1 in February and ar-

Norrie had service breaks in the ninth game of the first and second set to defeat Tsitsipas.



Open final, Rafael Nadal defeated Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 6-3 early on Saturday and qualified for the Mexican Open final, where he will play Cameron Norrie. A month ago in Australia, the 35-year-old Nadal came from two sets down to beat Medvedev and win his record 21st Grand Slam singles title. Nadal is now 14-0 in the season and will try to capture his

the fourth game of the first set that lasted 47 minutes. But Medvedev, who will be the world's No. 1-ranked player on Monday, played better in the second set, but missed converting 11 breakpoints, seven of them in a fifth game that lasted 19 minutes. Earlier, Norrie extended his hot streak in February by upsetting Stefanos

rived in Mexico after winning the third ATP Tour title of his career at Delray Beach. Norrie, the sixth-seeded player in Acapulco, matched the biggest win of his career by beating No. 4-ranked Tsitsipas. "I served very well today, I really enjoyed the match, it's one of my best wins, I hope we can keep the run alive tomorrow", said Norrie.

Norrie's previous biggest career win was he defeated Dominic Thiem, who was fourth in the ATP rankings, in the 2021 Lyon semifinal. The British player now has a 4-20 record against top 10 opponents. "It's going to be a great match regardless of whom I'm going to play against, it's going to be hard," Norrie said.



in the pre-tournament press conference on Saturday.

Among the eight teams that are taking part in the World Cup, India has handed debuts to the most number of players in the last year: ten. Although there could be various reasons for it, a few of the debutants have played consistently since and even booked a place in the flight for New Zealand ahead of some of the senior pros. "The talent that we've got in the last year... most of them have shown that they have the ability to play at this level like Richa (Ghosh), Shafali (Verma), we have Meghna Singh in the seamers and Pooja Vastrakar. They all have been given good game time and those series have really helped them and me as a captain to find out where they fit in into the composition of the team," she added. The runners-up from the previous edition have retained a core group of players from 2017, as many as seven of them, along

young players. Having both together is a good mix," said the 39-year-old, who will be playing in her sixth ODI World Cup.

Going into the marquee event with some inexperience in the pace attack, India seems to be putting together one piece at a time with respect to team combinations during the New Zealand series. With batting coming good in that series, Mithali is confident of the eleven they are looking to field in the early stages.

"The bowling unit took a bit of time. I definitely know my playing composition for the first couple of games and I look forward to giving game time to all the core players during the warm-ups and also to those players who will get an opportunity at some point in the World Cup." India will play South Africa on Sunday and West Indies on Tuesday in warm-up matches before taking on Pakistan in their first match of the event on March 6.




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