

Challenges for Rural Poll

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Besides education and livelihood, the COVID-19 pandemic has also shaken the democratic fabrics of Odisha and



India as well. The elections are the building blocks of democratic infrastructure across the country, but the pandemic has come as a major challenge to renewing the democratic bodies – rural, urban, assembly or parliamentary. There is no alternative to elections for giving shape to the essential democratic process. The bottom line is that we have to live with the COVID-19 as nobody knows when or if, it will end or when the next variant will hit mankind. Thus, like other activities, the elections also need to be managed for the survival of the democracy.

Somalia's government spokesperson wounded in suicide bombing

MOGADISHU(KCN): Somalia's govern-

to be the sole target in the attack near his

expected that such attacks would increase



ment spokesperson was wounded Sunday in a suicide bombing that the al-Shabab extremist group has claimed responsibility for.

Mohamed Ibrahim Moalimuu appeared residence by a busy intersection in the capital, Mogadishu. A statement from the prime minister's office called Moalimuu's wounds non-life-threatening. It has been widely

as tensions rise in Somalia over a national election that has been delayed for almost a year. "Such attacks are purely politically motivated actions," said Mohamed Abdulaziz

Omar, a local civil society activist, adding that it also occurred in past elections in the Horn of Africa nation.

Moalimuu, a former BBC journalist, also survived an attack in August 2020 after being wounded in a siege that killed 15 people at a beachside hotel in the capital. He was secretary-general of the Federation of Somali Journalists at the time. The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group, which controls parts of Somalia, also claimed responsibility for that attack.

PM Modi to address World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda on Monday

NEW DELHI (KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will deliver a 'State of the World' special address at the World Economic Forum's Davos Agenda on Monday via video conference, his office said.

Scott Morrison, Indonesian President

address at the World Economic Forum's

of top industry leaders, international or-



The virtual event will be held from January 17 to 21 and will also be addressed by several Heads of State including Japanese Prime Minister Kishida Fumio, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, Australian Prime Minister

Joko Widodo, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, Chinese President Xi Jinping, among others. Prime Minister Modi will deliver the 'State of the World' special

Davos Agenda on January 17, 2022 at 8:30 PM IST via video conferencing, the Prime Minister's Office said in a statement. The event will also witness participation

organizations and civil society, who will deliberate on critical challenges being faced by the world today and discuss how to address them, it said.

BPSPA wins Union Home Minister's trophy in gazetted officers category

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Odisha's Biju Patnaik State Police Academy

continuously winning the Union Minister's zonal level trophy in

Centre," said a senior officer of BPSPA. The academy, which

subedars in 24 batches.

The academy also provides training to assistant sub-inspectors of Odisha Police, and officers of Excise, Prisons, Transport and Forest Departments.

The Ministry of Home Affairs had earlier instituted the award of 'Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Police Training', and award of 'Union Home Minister's Trophy to the best Training Institutions'. The objective is to recognise the importance of training and the trainers in police organisations and make training a respectable assignment. The inaugural year's medals and trophies under this scheme were awarded on January 26, 2016.



(BPSPA) has won the Union Home Minister's Trophy for the best police training institution at the national level in gazetted officers category for the year 2020-2021.

The State academy will receive a reward of Rs 20 lakh in the form of grant-in-aid from the Centre for being accorded with this recognition. BPSPA has been con-

different categories in the eastern zonal level since 2015. However, this is for the first time that the academy has won the award of best police training institution of the country.

"Over the last few years, a lot of qualitative improvement has been brought in the police training by the State Academy and this has been recognised by the

was established in 2005, provides long duration basic training courses to the directly recruited Odisha Police Service officers (DSPs), sub-inspectors, sergeants and deputy subedars after they join Odisha Police. Since its inception, BPSPA has trained 65 DSPs in six batches and more than 3,200 sub-inspectors, sergeants and deputy

KISS Inks MoU with Choice Welfare Foundation

Choice-KISS Residential School to be open in Maharashtra

Bhubaneswar(KCN): KISS residential School will be open in Mumbai after Delhi

land for Choice-KISS in the outskirts of Mumbai and he has also arranged funds

and his works towards society. He is a role model for us. So many poor, underprivileged

the coming years. On the occasion, Dr. Samanta said I am happy that all have recognized KISS as a successful model. He also said it is the pride for Odisha that KISS has been set up in three metropolitan cities of India. KISS-Delhi is working since 2013 while infrastructure work of HUHT-KISS Residential School in collaboration with HelpUs Help Them has been completed. Now KISS will be set up in Mumbai. Among others Kirti Ajmera, CEO, Ajmera Properties; Paras Jain, Chairman, Ruchira Exports; Prof. Deepak Kumar Behera, Vice-Chancellor, KISS



and Kolkata. An MoU was signed between KISS and Choice Welfare Foundation of Mumbai to set up Choice - KISS Residential school in Mumbai, Maharashtra on 17th December 2022. Sunil Patodia signed the MoU on behalf of the Choice Welfare Foundation while Dr. Achyuta Samanta, Founder, KIIT and KISS signed the MoU on behalf of KISS. This will greatly benefit the vulnerable, marginalized, and tribal students of Maharashtra. Mr. Patodia, a long-time well-wisher of Dr. Samanta had been expressing his interest to set up KISS in Maharashtra for a long time. In the meantime Mr. Patodia has arranged 25 acres of

from various sources for the building of infrastructure

for kids are not getting a proper education in Maharashtra. They



Choice-KISS. Choice Welfare Foundation will burn all the costs for Choice-KISS. This residential school will work from the coming year. On the occasion of the MoU signing ceremony, Mr. Patodia said, I am a great admirer of Dr. Samanta

have inner qualities, but they have needed proper education. So I have a dream to set up KISS in Maharashtra for the last five years. Today my dream has been fulfilled and this will be a big beginning. We will work together for society in

Deemed to be University; Prof. Sasmita Samanta, VC, KIIT Deemed to be University; Dr. P.K. Routaray, CEO, KISS and Kanhu Charan Mahali, Director General, KISS were also present.

The Bharatiya Kisan Sangh wrote a letter to the Honourable President

Cuttack (KCN)The government is very unjustified,unscientific



Sangh cuttack Odisha lots of block like Cuttack Sadar Block, Branga, Nischintakoili, Mahanga, Banki - 1,Banki-2, Athagarh, & incomplete. The Kisan Sangh Cuttack district president Rabindra nath Sahu,State prachar coordinator Asima Dash,Cuttack district Secretary Nischintak oili,Cuttack Sadar Block Secretary Niranjn Roul,Bijaya Swain vice president,Biraja Bhusan Pati,Suresh



Kantapara,Tigiria written letter to Honourable President through BDO to grow the minimum support price (MSP).Moreover the MSP fixed by the secretary farmer leader Devi Peasad Pati,Baranga Block coordinator Arun Sahoo,Tresaror Ranjan Senapati Athagaarh,Laxmidhar Routray vice presi-

Youth held for raping minor

BARIPADA(KCN): Baripada Town police on Saturday arrested a man for allegedly raping a differently-abled minor girl of Kalikapur locality here. The accused was identified as Madhu Singh. The incident took place on Friday night when the victim had gone to take part in Makar Sankranti festivities at a field near her house and the accused took her to a secluded place near Jarali river and raped

A week long blanket distribution programme commenced by Rotary Club, Barbil



Barbil (KCN): Continual rainfall in the city of Barbil of Keonjhar



district has increased the cold in the area . The outbreak is likely to escalate further. It can be fatal, especially for the elderly and the physically challenged. With this in mind, a week-long blanket distribution program has been launched by Rotary club Barbil. The first day of the week long

Ashok Thakaar, Antony Divedi, Mukesh Thakar, Dharmendra Agarwal, Ghanshyam Sharma, Arif Ansari, Amit Mahanta, Ashok Mahant and Ganeswar Mahanta were participated in the programme. They too have provided room heater to the inmate Vijay Niketan.

Make your birthdays memorable forever

MADHYA PRADESH (KCN): This IPS officer wants you to make your birthday memorable – forever. Janamdin ko yaadgar banayein, vriksha lagayein, smriti ko amar bayein vriksha lagayein (plant a tree to make your birthday memorable, plant a tree to make your memories last forever). This is the slogan of Mahesh Chand Jain (55), a senior police officer of Madhya Pradesh, who since 1996 has been on a mission to plant trees to keep the environment clean and make one's life's events memorable.

Jain is DCP (Traffic) in MP's biggest and most populated city, Indore. Since 1996, when he was the Sub Divisional Officer Police (SDOP) of Lateri division of Vidisha district, Jain has not only planted trees himself, but also motivated others, including police and administration workforce, besides commoners. Jain travelled with saplings, shovels and pans in his official Mahindra SUV to plant saplings at temples, police stations and chaupals of every village of Vidisha district's Lateri subdivision. Inspired by his zeal, villagers joined him. The real journey of the green mission

started on January 6, 1999, when Jain was the Circle SP (CSP) of the newly created Neemuch district. "As the district was created in 1998, I lived in a private house in Revenue



Colony and routinely watched students of Carmel Convent School in front of my house waiting under scorching sun outside the school. This is when I planted five trees on the birthday of my elder son Nihit on January 6, 1999, and the journey of making birthdays memorably green began," Jain recalls. Since then there was no looking back for him. He not only himself planted trees on his and family members' birthdays and marriage anniversary, but also motivated other cops to replicate the unique initiative. From Neemuch to Vidisha, Jabalpur, C h h a t a r p u r ,

Hoshangabad to Indore and Khargone to Jhabua, Jain has not only guided in planting 50,000-plus trees in 25 years, but has regularly followed up and ensured that the planted saplings sur-

with the Jhabua district administration and forest department in March 2017. JCB machines from all police stations of Jhabua district were in action to dig pits. Then dumpers joined

While Jain has carried with dedication his love for trees wherever he has been posted, it was his tenure (December 2016-early 2019) as the police superintendent of Jhabua that earned him the nickname of "Tree Man". Sustained efforts powered by public participation that started in March 2017 transformed the 400 ft high and 2-km long barren Hathipawa hillock as Jhabua's prime ecotourism spot. "It was a hillock that remained barren despite all efforts in 15 years. The reason was the low quality of soil. Efforts to turn Hathipawa green began in association

in carrying black soil to the hillock for the ambitious tree plantation drive. The spadework for the massive plantation drive was carried out every Sunday for nearly four months, which paved the way for planting 10,000 trees on July 8-9, 2017" Jain recounts. Chandrabhan Singh Bhadauria, a senior journalist in the district, said seeing the transformation of Hathipawa hillock from barren to green was like a fairytale coming true. "He (Jain) made it a dream project and guided the plantation to mark various festivals and events." While Jain remained in Jhabua till early

Posted in Indore since 2020 as the DCP (Traffic) of Indore police commissionerate, Jain is now eagerly awaiting a decline in Covid intensity before resuming his mission. "I will be back once the pandemic impact starts to die down," he says. Re-living memories of earlier Indore stay The tall Kadam trees that Jain planted in 2015 at Indore's SP-GRP office are a proud testimony to his persistent efforts. "Being in Indore helps me relive the fond memories of my previous stints in the city as head of PTC and Government Railway Police SP," he says.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation closed for visitors

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): As Covid-19 cases continue to explode in the Capital city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Friday banned visitors' entry into its premises. Bhubaneswar which had reported 1,055 cases on Thursday, saw another 1,188 new cases in the last 24 hours pushing the active case tally to 6,500. More than 90 cases were reported from Covid hotspot K h a n d a g i r i , Chandrasekharpur, Patia, Nayapalli, while 88 cases were reported from the Old Town area of the city. More than 50 cases were also reported from Jharpada, while 47 persons were found infected in Rasulgarh. The infection which has taken almost all areas into its grip prompted the civic body to declare 10 more residential units and the first floor of the regional office of Union Bank of India in Nayapalli as micro-containment zones. With this, the total number of active micro-containment zones in the city rose to 103. Of this, 45 are in the southeast zone, while 29 each are in the southwest and north zones.

Para-athlete Kamalakanta Nayak clocks 213 km in 24 hours in wheelchair marathon, sets record

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Para - a t h l e t e Kamalakanta Nayak entered the Guinness

and completed it on the day. Earlier, the highest distance covered by

extend my gratitude to all those who supported and encouraged me during this

tance in 24 hours. "The to and fro distance from Rajmahal to Master Canteen - approximately 1.14 KM - is the lap for super ultra-marathon. Kamala Kanta covered 118 km in first 12 hours and rest in the second 12 hours," he said.



Book of World Records by covering 213 km in 24 hours on his manual wheelchair here on Sunday. A resident of Puri district, Kamalakanta started his marathon from the Master Canteen Square to Rajmahal Square Cycle Track point on Saturday afternoon

wheelchair in 24 hours was 182.4 km (113.34 miles) which was achieved by Mario Trindade of Portugal at the Vila Real Stadium in Vila Real, Portugal, on December 3-4, 2007. Kamalakanta went far ahead of that record. "I am extremely happy and

historic journey. My achievement will change the perception of people towards differently-abled persons. My next target is to qualify for the Paris Paralympics", said Kamalakanta. His mobility partner Siddharth Dage said, it was very difficult to cover such a long dis-

A total of eight cameras and GPRS systems were installed to monitor the event. He took total two hours break in four phases. "We will submit the details of the programme to the Guinness Book authorities for the official announcement," added Siddharth. The Department of Sports and Youth Affairs, Bhubaneswar Smart City Ltd and city-based NGO, Betterlife Foundation helped Kamalakanta in his journey.

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Veteran Film Director N Chandra to be Awarded 'Lifetime Achievement Award' in the Rajasthan International Film Festival-2022

Jaipur (KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj): The 8th Rajasthan International Film Festival



edition of the Rajasthan International Film Festival (RIFF) will be organized by RIFF Film

(RIFF) stated that this year the Life Time Achievement Award will be given to the renowned Writer,

given to such a personality in the film industry who has dedicated his whole life to the cinema.

Chandrashekhar Narvekar (N Chandra) is an Indian producer, writer and director who is known for crisp realism in his early Dark and Loud films. His most successful commercial films are 'Ankush' starring Nana Patekar, 'Pratighaat' starring Sujata Mehta and Nana Patekar, 'Tezaab' starring Anil Kapoor and Madhuri Dixit and 'Narasimha' starring Sunny Deol and Dimple Kapadia. The filmography of N

'Xcuse Me', 'Kagaar: Life on the Edge' and 'Ye Mera India' etc.

After his schooling, N Chandra began his career as a film edi-

career, leading to films by Raj Ghosla, BR Chopra and Ravi Tandon. Gradually, N Chandra continued to grow as a film editor

Film Awards 2019 (which were awarded in 2021).

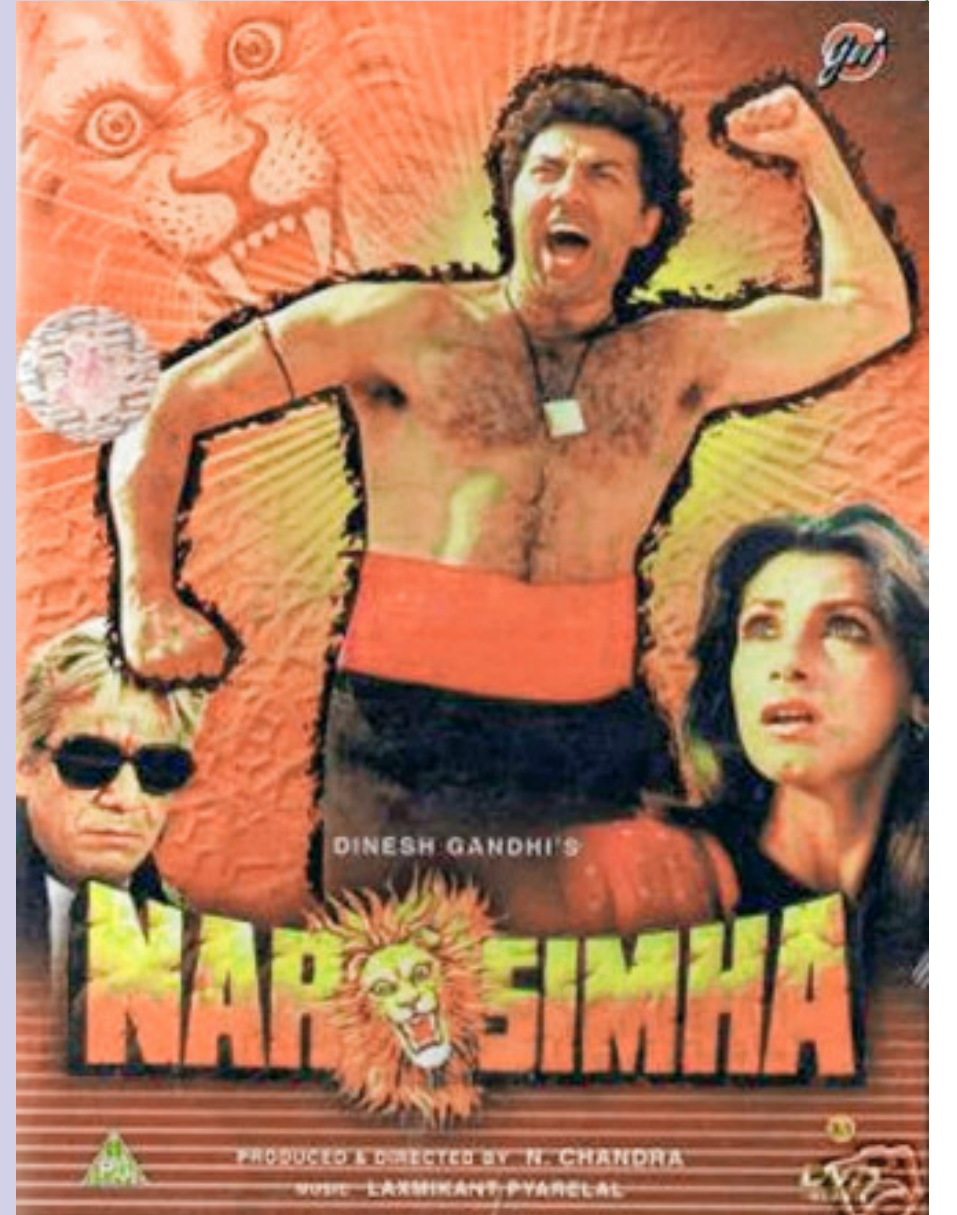
Anshu Harsh, the Managing Trustee of RIFF Film Club said



Club from 25-30th March 2022 and will also celebrate Rajasthan Diwas. Somendra Harsh, Founder & Festival Director of the

Producer and Director Chandrashekhar Narvekar (N Chandra) at the 8th Rajasthan International Film Festival (RIFF). This award is

Chandra also includes films like 'Humlaa', 'Yugandhari', 'Tejaswini', 'Bekaabu', 'Wajood', 'Shikari', 'Style',



tor at the Film Center in Tardeo, Mumbai, where his father also worked. He started his film career as an assistant editor in Sunil Dutt's film 'Reshma Aur Shera' in 1969. He got a break in the film industry as a clapper boy in Gulzar's 'Parichay' (1972). N Chandra worked as an assistant editor with Pran Mehra, Vaman Bhosle and Guru Dutt early in his

and assistant director. N Chandra has been a member of the Governing Council of the Film and Television Institute of India, Pune. Along with this, he has also been the Chairman of the jury of Indian Panorama of 2010 and 2011 and was also included in the Indian Film Entry Jury for Oscars in 2006 and 2011. He was also the Chairman of the Jury at the 67th National

that "In this 8th edition of the Rajasthan International Film Festival (RIFF) Short, Documentary, Animation, Feature, Regional, Rajasthani films as well as music albums can be submitted by visiting the website www.riffjaipur.org and also by filmfreeway. The next deadline to submit the film is 31st January 2022."

Decoupled, dissonance, and deja vu: Madhavan, Surveen Chawla on marriages and more

At the outset, Netflix's latest release, Decoupled, might seem like the antithesis of love and romance because it tracks a broken marriage, and how worse romantic life can get. And yet, the glimmers of love and hope shared by Madhavan's Arya and Surveen's Shruti is the lifeline of this series. "I liked the take on splitting up. It is normal for people to grow apart. Not all splitting or divorces need to be about something dramatic. There is both a real image and a projected image in a marriage/relationship, and when there is a vast difference in what we are and we are projecting, all that remains is our intent to be together," says a sagely Madhavan tapping into his 22 years of marriage. In this conversation with Cinema Express, he is joined by an equally philosophical Surveen Chawla as they discuss marriages, literally and metaphorically.

Excerpts: Marriage of their real and onscreen selves Surveen Chawla (SC): Playing Shruti was so much fun. There were times when it felt like I was talking to my real-life husband, and not Madhavan's Arya. It was not about the manner of speech, but simply about the way both conduct themselves. The relatability factor is that the basic issues faced by this couple are things we might have experienced. Just because there is relatability, it doesn't mean all couples have to end up like Shruti and Arya. Relationships are always a work in progress. Madhavan (M): There were so many instances

that were well-written; I could see such fights erupting between my wife, Saritha, and me. When you are really fond of each other, the intensity of arguments flares up. But the difference between a marriage that works and one that doesn't is that once this argument is done, any residual anger will not seep into the next conversation. The power equation is reset after every disagreement, and this was written beautifully in the series too. This resetting of the power equation between Shruti and Arya

is what gives us the hope that this couple might actually work. I thought it was mature, and it was a great insight into the marriages of today. Marriage between thinking and acting languages SC: Having the same acting and thinking language can make all the difference to our performances. Although we are fluent in other languages, English has been the thinking language for both Madhavan and me. The pauses, the commas, the casualness... everything is effortlessly translated from our minds to our dialogues. When I am thinking in English and delivering lines in another, it runs the risk of becoming dialogue-y. Also, points to Hardik Mehta (director) and Manu Joseph (writer) for allowing me to put down on paper what Surveen was thinking as Shruti. They gave us the liberty and scope for improvisation. M: My son Vedanth gave me a huge nod of approval and not only felt that the show looked trendy but was also candid about how the En-

glish we spoke didn't feel forced. To be honest, I haven't done anything like this before. Our language of communication at home was English, and we wanted it to have the flow in which the language is spoken in our country.

ALSO READ: Decoupled Series Review: Madhavan, Surveen Chawla impress in this take on urban relationships Marriage between the content and audience SC: We are not regional actors anymore. In fact, we are global actors and not just pan-Indian. The pandemic propelled the OTT movement, and it has definitely taken centre stage. The world itself has shrunk, and it is important to have the right team and trust them to make the right decisions. But more than anything else, the end game is really the content we are doing. For now, I honestly don't have a preference about the kind of release as long as I am doing the content I love to do.

M: We have to decide if the content is worthy of the format it chooses to be presented in, and that choice has become paramount for the success of the content. Secondly, with experience, it does become an easy and informed choice. There is no way I could make Breathe into a film. Thirdly, having stepped away from the industry for a long time, I am more in touch with what people really want. Kids are now watching anime because they care more about relationships than the VFX. In this pandemic, people don't want to watch morbidity anymore. So, when I read a script and depending on the place where I am in my life, I see if I am able to relate to it. If yes, and then the team is a solid one, I am completely committed to the film/series.

Marriage between reality and social media personas



Taxing of deemed Income -Part 3

Narayan Jain

(Contd from article published on 3rd Jan 2022)
13. Section 56(2)(x): Section 56(2)(x), has come into effect from asst. year 2017-18. It provides that receipt of the sum of money or the property received by a person without any consideration or upon crossing a particular threshold would be liable to tax in the hands of the receiver under the head 'Income from other sources'. The taxation on gifts received by an Individual/ HUF is also governed by Section 56(2)(x) of the Income Tax Act. Sec. 56(2)(x) is applicable to all kinds of the assessee. The following receipts are to be taxed as deemed income:

- a) Any sum of money that is received without consideration, in aggregate exceeding Rs.50,000 during the financial year
- b) Any immovable property without any consideration, the stamp duty value of which exceeds Rs.50,000
- c) Any immovable property with the consideration which is less than stamp duty value by an amount exceeding Rs.50,000
- d) Any movable property (as defined and specified) without consideration where aggregate fair market value whereof exceeds Rs.50,000
- e) Any movable property (as defined and specified) for consideration which is less than fair market value by an amount exceeding Rs.50,000

14. Exceptions to Section 56(2)(x): Provision of section 56(2)(x) would not apply to any sum of money or any property received from any relative. Meaning of Relative as defined in section 56(2)(vii). **Provisions of 56(2)(x) would also not be applicable to any sum of money or any property that is received from a relative as defined above and also under the following circumstances:**

- a) On the occasion of an individual's marriage
 - b) By a will or by way of inheritance
- c) In the contemplation of death of the payer or donor, as the case may be;
- d) From any local authority that as defined in the Explanation to clause (20) of section 10
- e) From any fund/ foundation/ other educational institution/ university/ hospital/ other medical institution/ any trust or institution referred to in under section 10(23C)
- f) From or by any trust or institution that is registered under section 12A or section 12AA or section 12AB
- g) By any trust or fund or any institution or university or other educational institution or

When will the COVID-19 pandemic end?

On November 26, 2021, WHO reached deeper into the Greek alphabet to declare Omicron a new SARS-CoV-2 variant of concern.¹ The world's reaction has been an unpleasant mixture of dread, fatigue, and déjà vu. Almost two years into a pandemic that has claimed more than five million lives and affected billions more, people everywhere are finding it hard to summon the energy for another chapter in the story.²

Endemicity remains the endpoint. But at the time of writing, the Omicron variant is rewriting the timetable. Whether because Omicron is more infectious or has greater ability to evade the immune system, or both, it quickly became the dominant variant in South Africa.³ Data so far are mixed on the severity of the disease it causes: some early findings have pointed toward a mild clinical course, while other evidence has suggested that Omicron may lead to more frequent hospitalization in children than other variants do.⁴ We have written previously about the transition to managing COVID-19 as an endemic disease and noted that a new variant was one of the greatest risks to timelines.

This article presents a new analysis of a range of scenarios based on the infectiousness, immune evasion, and severity of disease caused by the Omicron variant. Based on the evidence to date, we have posited a base-case scenario in which Omicron is about 25 percent more infectious, evades prior immunity to a greater degree (25 percent), and causes less severe disease, again by about 25 percent, all relative to Delta.⁵ Our analysis suggests that in the United States, this combination of characteristics would lead to Omicron replacing Delta as the dominant variant in the next few months and to a higher peak burden of disease than the country saw in the second half of 2021 (but likely below the peak reached in the winter of 2020-21). This base-case scenario has the potential to place



hospital or any other medical institution referred to in sub-clause (iv)/ (v)/ (vi) or sub-clause (via) of section 10(23C)

- h) by way of transaction not regarded as transfer under clause (i)/(iv)/ (v)/ (vi)/ (via)/ (vib)/ (vic)/ (vica) (vicb)/ (vid)/ (vii)/ (viia)/ (viiaa)/ (viib)/ (viic)/ (viid)/ (viiaa)/ (viiaf) of section 47;
- i) From any individual by a trust created or established solely for the benefit of relative of the individual.
- j) from such class of persons and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed.

15. Sec. 56(2)(c): Transfer of property other than Immovable Property: Where an assessee transfers Shares (other than shares quoted on recognised stock exchange), for a consideration which is less than Fair Market Value (FMV) of the share, such FMV shall be deemed to be full value of consideration received as a result of such transfer. The FMV of the shares shall be determined in accordance with Rule 11UA of the Income Tax Rules. The FMV in normal circumstances be calculated at "Net Worth" or "book value" of the company. Again, in such a case, a shareholder is required to pay tax on the amount which he has neither actually received nor is he going to receive in future but on the amount which he is deemed to have received based on certain valuation principals.

16. Section 59: The provisions of section 41(1) shall apply, so far as may be, in computing the income of an assessee under section 56, as they apply in computing the income of an assessee under the head "Profits and gains of business or profession". As per Sec 59 where Assessee had claimed any deduction or allowance in any previous years but later on he has received any amount of such allowances or Deduction in current financial year then such allowances shall be deemed to be Income of current financial year under Head Income from Other Sources. Where Assessee had incurred any liability in past but successor of Assessee gets remission of such liability then such remission shall be deemed to be Income of Successor under Head Income from Other Sources in current Financial Year.

17. Section 68 -As per section 68, any sum found credited in the books of a taxpayer, for which he offers no explanation about the nature and source thereof or the explanation offered by him is not, in the opinion of A.O., satisfactory, may be charged to income-tax as the income of the taxpayer of that

year. In case of a taxpayer being a closely held company (i.e., not being a company in which the public are substantially interested), if the sum so credited consists of share application money, share capital, share premium or any such amount by whatever name called, any explanation offered by such company shall be deemed to be not satisfactory if prescribed conditions are not fulfilled.

In case of a taxpayer being a closely held company (i.e., not being a company in which the public are substantially interested), if the sum so credited consists of share application money, share capital, share premium or any such amount by whatever name called, any explanation offered by such company shall be deemed to be not satisfactory, unless:

- (a) the person, being a resident in whose name such credit is recorded in the books of such company, also offers an explanation about the nature and source of such sum so credited; and
- (b) such explanation in the opinion of A.O. has been found to be satisfactory.

The above provisions of share application money, share capital etc., shall not apply if the person, in whose name such sum is recorded, is a venture capital fund or a venture capital company as referred to in section 10(23FB).

18. Sec. 69 Unexplained investments: Where in a year the taxpayer has made investments which are not recorded in the books of account, if any, maintained by him for any source of income, and he offers no explanation about the nature and source of the investments or the explanation offered by him is not, in the opinion of the A.O., satisfactory, then the value of the investments may be deemed to be the income of the taxpayer of such year.

19. Sec. 69A Unexplained money, etc.: Where in any year the taxpayer is found to be the owner of any money, bullion, jewellery or other valuable article and such money, bullion, jewellery or valuable article is not recorded in the books of account, if any, maintained by him for any source of income, and the taxpayer offers no explanation about the nature and source of acquisition of the money, bullion, jewellery or other valuable article, or the explanation offered by him is not, in the opinion of A.O., satisfactory, then the money and the value of the bullion, jewellery or other valuable article may be deemed to be the income of the taxpayer for such year.

20. Sec. 69B Amount of investments, etc., not fully

disclosed in books of account: Where in any year the taxpayer has made investments or is found to be the owner of any bullion, jewellery or other valuable article, and A.O. finds that the amount expended on making such investments or in acquiring such bullion, jewellery or other valuable article exceeds the amount recorded in this behalf in the books of account maintained by the taxpayer for any source of income, and the taxpayer offers no explanation about such excess amount or the explanation offered by him is not, in the opinion of A.O., satisfactory, then the excess amount may be deemed to be the income of the taxpayer for such year.

21. Sec. 69C Unexplained expenditure, etc.: Where in any year the taxpayer has incurred any expenditure and he offers no explanation about the source of such expenditure or part thereof, or the explanation, if any, offered by him is not, in the opinion of A.O., satisfactory, then the amount covered by such expenditure or part thereof, as the case may be, may be deemed to be the income of the taxpayer for such year. It may be noted that the aforesaid unexplained expenditure which is deemed to be the income of the taxpayer by virtue of section 69C shall not be allowed as a deduction under any head of income.

22. Sec. 69D Amount borrowed or repaid on hundi :Where any amount is borrowed on a hundi from, or any amount due thereon is repaid to, any person otherwise than through an account- payee cheque drawn on a bank, the amount so borrowed or repaid shall be deemed to be the income of the person borrowing or repaying the such amount. It will be treated as income for the year in which it was borrowed or repaid, as the case may be. However, it should be noted that if any amount borrowed on a hundi has been treated as income of any person by virtue of section 69D, then such person shall not be liable to be assessed again in respect of the same amount on repayment thereof. Amount repaid shall include the amount of interest paid on the amount borrowed.

(to be contd.)

(Narayan Jain is former Secretary General of AIFTP and author of the books "How to Handle Income Tax Problems" and "Income Tax Pleading & Practice" with CA DilipLoyalka)

a severe strain on healthcare systems.

Dr. Sarun Charumilind

The optimistic scenario would see a peak of disease burden close to that seen over the past six months, while the pessimistic would see a very significantly higher burden of disease than in the past six months. Note that in every scenario, our analysis indicates that hospitalizations will likely be higher in the next six months than they were in the past six months.

In any scenario for the future of the COVID-19 pandemic, much depends on the ways in which societies respond. Three levers are likely to be especially important, starting with the extent to which countries can effectively scale and make available new oral therapeutics with the potential to reduce the chance of progression to severe disease, and which are unlikely to be blunted by Omicron. Second, evidence is accumulating that booster doses are especially important for protecting against the Omicron variant; accelerating their rollout will help protect populations. And third, given public fatigue and the lessons of the past two years, finding the right combination of public-health measures will be critical.

The Omicron variant Three main factors determine the real-world impact of any new SARS-CoV-2 variant: the extent to which it can evade the immunity developed by those who have been vaccinated or previously infected by other variants, its inherent infectiousness (often expressed as a higher basic reproduction number, or R0), and the severity of disease caused.⁶ The first two factors combine to drive the number of cases, while the third determines the number of severe cases and deaths. For example, the Delta variant, which remains dominant in most of the world, was significantly more transmissible than previously circulating variants were, showed limited incremental evasion of immunity, and caused moderately more severe disease relative to other variants.⁷ Early data paint a mixed picture of Omicron's evasion of vaccine-induced immunity. The UK Health Security Agency recently

summed up its view: "Early estimates of vaccine effectiveness

(VE) against symptomatic infection find a significantly lower VE [against] Omicron infection compared to Delta infection. Nevertheless, a moderate to high [VE] of 70 to 75% is seen in the early period after a booster dose."⁸ There is still much more to learn—sample sizes in the new studies were small, antibody titers are an imperfect metric of immune protection, and major manufacturers are yet to release similar information. The response to Omicron may include both accelerating the rollout of booster doses of existing vaccines and developing new formulations better targeted to this variant. Companies have indicated that modified or new vaccines could be available in a few months, though the scale and global availability are unclear.⁹ Regarding evasion of natural immunity, a pre-print article from South Africa suggests a significantly higher chance of reinfection by Omicron relative to Delta or Beta.¹⁰ Both the pace of case growth and the rapidly increasing share of Omicron among samples sequenced suggest that, through a combination of greater infectiousness and immune evasion, Omicron is spreading very quickly.¹¹ If the experience of South Africa were to be repeated elsewhere, we could see a continued rapid increase in the number of COVID-19 cases as Omicron is established.

The question of disease severity is more complicated. Several clinicians in South Africa have noted the apparently mild presentation of Omicron cases.¹² Further, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) noted on December 12, 2021, that 776 cases were within its remit and "all cases for which there is available information on severity were either asymptomatic or mild. There have been no Omicron-related deaths reported thus far."¹³ On the other hand, ECDC also notes that it is too early to draw definitive conclusions on disease severity. The United Kingdom reported its first Omicron-related death on December 13, 2021, and some reports from South Africa suggest a

potentially higher rate of hospitalization among young children than seen in previous waves of COVID-19.¹⁴

In the base-case scenario, US COVID-19-related hospitalizations could peak significantly higher in the next six months than in the past six months.

Each of these observed trends may change as sample sizes increase, confounding factors are considered, and the clinical course of disease plays out over time. The answers, when they arrive, will have important consequences for the months ahead. Given the uncertainty, we have built a set of scenarios describing potential outcomes measured by hospitalization rate. They are indexed on the recent Delta wave and show whether various potential combinations of infectiousness, immune evasion, and clinical severity are likely to lead to a higher or lower rate of COVID-19-related hospitalization.

The results of these scenarios for the United States are shown in Exhibit 1. Each of the three variables is an important driver of the outcomes. Evidence so far suggests that the Omicron variant, relative to Delta, is likely to be more infectious, show more immune evasion, and be less severe, on average. In the base case (25 percent more infectious; 25 percent greater immune evasion; 25 percent less severe disease), the COVID-19-related hospitalization rate in the United States could peak significantly higher in the next six months than in the past six. In the pessimistic scenarios, the peak number of hospitalizations for COVID-19 could be much higher in the next six months than in the past six months, whereas in the optimistic scenario, the number would be higher but similar to that seen in the second half of 2021, as waning immunity causes ongoing disease from a combination of the Delta and Omicron variants.

Partner, Philadelphia, Supports the design and delivery of high-quality, efficient, accessible healthcare that generates the best possible individual and population outcomes through clinically driven, healthcare-value strategy and analytics

Soumya Patnaik objects to tariff applications of govt utilities, Tata Power

BHUBANESWAR: Putting the State government in a spot, se-



nior BJD leader and Khandapada MLA, Soumya Ranjan Patnaik on Saturday filed objections to the Aggregate Revenue Requirement (ARR) for the year 2022-23 and tariff applications of four State-run power utilities and four Tata Power managed distribution companies.

Patnaik, a strong critic of the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) for some of its controversial regulatory mechanism and tariff orders

passed for the current fiscal, is the first sitting MLA of a ruling party to intervene in the tariff proceedings in the last 25 years of the Commission's existence.

In his petitions, Patnaik submitted that the OERC has failed to realise the basic objectives of the power sector reforms in the State. The prime aim of the State government to initiate reforms was to supply 24X7 hours quality electricity to consumers living in every corner at affordable price. Despite capital grant investment of about Rs 20,000 crore in the last decade for augmentation of distribution supply infrastructure of the four distribution companies (discoms), there has been no significant improvement.

Expressing concern over the non-

capitalisation of the assets created out of government assistance in the balance sheets of discoms sold to Tata Power, Patnaik said that many important issues like unaccountable inadvertent power, mismatch of OERC data with CEA data, obsolete methods to forecast sales, power purchase and determination of transmission tariff, non-separation of SLDC from OPTCL, cost based tariff, normative loss and multiyear tariff are yet to be duly addressed by the Commission,

Taking strong exception to the ARR petition filed by GRIDCO, the bulk power supplier to the State, the former MP alleged that the latter has no locus standi under the Electricity Act, 2003, which does not provide any

space for any power trader to file ARR and tariff application before OERC.

He urged the Commission to dismiss the petition of GRIDCO and pass the Central Electricity Authority's General Review-2021 and tariff report in the proceedings specifying the crucial roles, functions and authority of CEA under the provisions of the Act. Contacted, the BJD legislator said the objection should not be viewed politically. "I did it to create awareness among people which should not be seen politically," he added.

Patnaik has filed objections to the ARR and tariff application of State owned OHPC, OPGC, GRIDCO, OPTCL and the four discoms namely TPCODL, TPWODL, TPSODL and TPNODL.

Wild tusker damages boundary wall of EVM warehouse in Odisha's Khurda

BHUBANESWAR: A wild elephant went on a rampage in Khurda town damaging the boundary wall of a warehouse where electronic voting machines (EVMs) are stored. The warehouse is located adjacent to the Khurda Collectorate. Officials said there has been no damage to the warehouse or the Collectorate.

Forest department officials said, the adult tusker, who roam alone without being attached to any herd, was moving from Jariput forest to Barunei forest. En route, the tusker

went near the Collectorate and broke down the boundary wall of the warehouse late on Friday.

Later, it headed towards a park nearby creating panic among the local people. However, forest officials managed to chase it away from the place. "The elephant has now moved to Barunei forest and members of the protection squad are tracking its movement," said an official from Khurda forest division. Growing human-elephant conflict has become a matter of concern for Khurda district in recent years.

Prince Harry takes legal action over family protection in UK

LONDON (KCN): Britain's Prince Harry, now based in the US with wife Meghan Markle and children Archie and Lilibet, is taking legal action over a Home Office decision to prevent him from paying for police protection for himself and his family during visits to the UK.

statement. "With the lack of police protection comes too great a personal risk. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex personally fund a private security team for their family, yet that security cannot replicate the necessary police protection needed whilst in the UK. In the absence of

seven-month-old daughter and two-year-old son. He has only travelled solo last year, to attend his grandfather Prince Philip's funeral in April and then to unveil a statue in memory of his late mother Diana, Princess of Wales, in July. The application for a judicial review, a le-

has been subjected to well-documented neo-Nazi and extremist threats.

"While his role within the institution has changed, his profile as a member of the royal family has not. Nor has the threat to him and his family." Prince Harry has spoken in the past about his security



The 37-year-old Duke of Sussex, who stepped back from frontline royal duties in 2020, wants to fund the security for his family himself during a future visit to his home country. He reportedly does not want to ask British taxpayers to foot the bill, having stepped back as a senior member of the royal family.

"The UK will always be Prince Harry's home and a country he wants his wife and children to be safe in," Harry's legal representative said in a

such protection, Prince Harry and his family are unable to return to his home," it noted.

Queen Elizabeth II's grandson and sixth in line to the British throne is believed to be arguing that his private protection team in the US does not have access to UK intelligence information, which is needed to keep his wife and children safe when they visit Britain.

Now based in California, Harry hopes to visit the UK with his wife Meghan and

gal challenge in the High Court in England against the decision of a public body or government department, follows a security incident in London in July 2021 when Harry's car was chased by photographers as he left a charity event.

His legal representative's statement added: "Prince Harry inherited a security risk at birth, for life. He remains sixth in line to the throne, served two tours of combat duty in Afghanistan, and in recent years his family

concerns ever since his mother, Princess Diana, died in a Paris car crash as her vehicle was chased by paparazzi photographers in August 1997. A UK government spokesperson told the BBC that the country's "protective security system is rigorous and proportionate". The spokesperson said: "It is our long-standing policy not to provide detailed information on those arrangements. To do so could compromise their integrity and affect individuals' security."

Amidst a stalemate, US, Russia harden their stances in talks

WASHINGTON: The failure of last week's high-stakes diplomatic meetings to resolve escalating tensions over Ukraine has put Russia, the United States, and its European allies in uncharted post-Cold War territory, posing significant challenges for the main players to avoid an outright and potentially disastrous confrontation.

Unlike previous disagreements that have arisen since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the current Ukraine crisis and seemingly insurmountable differences between Washington and Moscow carry real risks of debilitating economic warfare and military conflict that are exacerbated by the dangers of miscalculation and over-reaction.

For the U.S. and its NATO and other European allies, nothing less than a vast pullback of the roughly 100,000 Russian troops now deployed near the Ukrainian border will prove that Russian President Vladimir Putin has no intention of negotiating in good faith.

For the Russians, the West's absolute refusal to consider a ban on NATO expansion and the withdrawal of troops from Eastern Europe is proof of its perfidy.

Potential concessions are complicated by the fact neither Putin nor President Joe Biden wants to be seen as backing down before either domestic or foreign audiences.

ALSO READ: Amid tensions at Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia demands US, NATO response next week

The refusal thus far by each side to climb down from what the other regards as unrealistic and maximalist demands have left the prospects for diplomacy in limbo, with the US and its allies accusing Russia of stoking tensions for no legitimate reason and the Russians complaining again that the Americans are the aggressors.

Some believe the situation will have to become even more dire before the impasse can be broken.

"The gap in perceptions is so broad that a new

and dangerous escalation could be necessary to make the parties open up their imagination and search for agreements," Fyodor Lukyanov, the head of the Moscow-based Council for Foreign and Defense Policies, observed in a commentary.

For Western analysts, it seems a situation in which Putin will have to compromise if the conflict is to be avoided.

Some think Putin's focus on NATO, which has struggled for years with questions about its relevance, may have given the alliance a new lease on life.

"This is an extremely uncertain and tense period without an obvious way out unless Putin backs down," said Jeff Rathke, a Europe expert and former US diplomat who is currently president of the American Institute for Contempo-



rary German Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

"He's talked himself into a frenzy that is hard to walk away from if he doesn't get the fundamental redrawing of the European security architecture that he claims to want".

"He's shown he's ready to play chicken with the threat of massive military force to bring that about and he's certainly gotten everyone's attention, but he hasn't changed anyone's views", Rathke said

US officials from Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and national security adviser Jake Sullivan to chief negotiator Wendy Sherman have said it is Russia that faces a "stark choice". De-escalate or face punishing sanctions

and the opposite of what it wants: an increased NATO presence in Eastern Europe and a more well-armed Ukraine.

Yet in Russia, officials say the shoe is on the other foot. They have cast their demands as an "absolute imperative" and have argued that the Western failure to meet them makes talks on other issues irrelevant.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the US and Russia reached "some understandings" during last week's talks.

"But in general, in principle, we can now say that we are staying on different tracks, on totally different tracks, and this is not good, and this is disturbing," he said in an interview on CNN's "Fareed Zakaria GPS" to be broadcast on Sunday.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Friday that Russia had vainly tried for years to persuade the US and its allies to engage in talks on the non-deployment of intermediate-range missiles to Europe, limits on war games and rules to avoid dangerously close encounters between Russian and allied warships and aircraft until the US and NATO expressed willingness to discuss those issues this week.

He attributed the change in approach to a US desire to shift attention away from Russia's main demands, adding that Moscow will focus on NATO non-expansion. He insisted that it's the US that's formulating the position in talks while other allies just march on its orders.

"To be frank, everyone understands that the prospect for reaching a deal depends on the US," Lavrov said.

He said whatever the US says about the need to consult allies in negotiations "are just excuses and attempts to drag the process out".

Thus, the stalemate.

The West's approach has been to have "as much diplomatic effort as possible to de-escalate," said Andrew Weiss, vice president for studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, where he oversees research in Washington and

Moscow on Russia and Eurasia.

"The problem we've got is that the Russians mean business, and they've shown us in a bunch of cases, in 2014, in 2008, that they're prepared to go to war to get these things, and we're not," he said. "And that's the challenge."

The tough and uncompromising Russian positions have led some to believe that Moscow will only up the ante after receiving what all sides expect will be formal, written refusals from the US and NATO to accede to its demands.

Indeed, the chief Russian negotiator in the talks, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, suggested Thursday that Moscow might respond to rejections by escalating matters outside of Europe through the potential deployment of troops to Cuba and Venezuela.

The US has called such a suggestion "bluster" and said it would respond decisively if it happened.

"The lack of a diplomatic solution logically leads to the further exacerbation of the crisis," wrote Dmitri Trenin, the head of the Carnegie Moscow Center, in an online analysis.

Trenin predicted that a set of "military-technical measures" that Putin said Russia would take if the West rejects its demands could include a broad array of moves from the deployment of new weapons systems in various regions to much stronger military ties with Belarus and closer coordination with the Chinese partners.

Still, there's a risk that by focusing his ire on NATO, Putin may have inadvertently strengthened its hand, especially with its newer members like the Baltic states, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic.

"For countries that have joined NATO since the Cold War, you can definitely say that NATO is more relevant to them now than it was a year ago or in 2014," Rathke said.

Anyone who thought that NATO was no longer relevant to European security has been taught a lesson in the last few months and it's only going to get worse.

Dr. Prakash Srichandan to be conferred with prestigious Paika Samrat Award

Khordha (KCN): The leading social and cultural organization of Odisha Prerana in collaboration with New Thinking Forum Khordha organised State Utkal Prativa and Cine Prativa Award Function at Geeta Govinda Sadan. Speaker Odisha Legislative Assembly Surya

those who are established in different sectors voluntarily work for the development of society and people and also work as front line corona warriors these people were felicitated is our main motto and he requested the felicitated person's to create an awareness about the covid-19 pandemic

Tripathy, Social Activists Ganesh Samant, New Thinking Forum President Narendra Prusty attend as guest. The Chief guest Surya Narayan Patro felicitated Dr. Prakash Srichandan to the prestigious Paika Samrat Award for the remarkable contribution to the field of Art,

trict Red Cross Society Secretary Prabir Kumar Das, Additional Director Health Department Sweta Das, Actress Namrata Singh Deo, Lipsa Mishra, Actor Sritam Das, Bobby Mishra, Actress Puspamishra, Minu Sharma, Anchor Sibani Mohanandi, Sportsmen Archita



Narayan Patro inaugurated the function and said that "He is very much delighted to felicitated the talented personality of Odisha to work in different fields art, culture and social service for the development of Odisha." President Prerana Dr. Dillip Srichandan Presided over the function and stated that "In the pandemic situation the cine artists and the people

situation among people's and the society." In this programme 7th battalion Commandant Bijay Kumar Sahu, Founder High Tech Medical College Tirupati Panigrahi, Senior Chartered Accountant Chitta Ranjan Behera, Odisha Bira Mohasangh President Dr. Prakash Srichandan, State Red Cross Youth Officer Dr. Ajaya Kumar

Culture and Social Service. Otv, Editor Radha Madhav Mishra, Argus Tv, Executive Editor Shivananda Das, Dr. Ajaya Swain, Editor Pakhi Ghar Banoj Tripathy, Odisha Youth Red Cross Officer Dr. Ajaya Kumar Tripathy, Co-ordinate Dr. Gopal Mishra, Convenor Cuttack District Red Cross Society Dr. Sasmita Pattnaik, Boudh Dis-

Mal Bisoi, Journalist Subhranshu Ranjan Samantaray, Gayatri Mohanty, Sumanta Sundaray, Mousumi Mohanty, Rashmita Das, Satarupa Samantaray, Subhamita Das, Scholars Students Lucy Das, Social Activists Sunil Pradhan, Ajaya Kumar Guman Singh among others were felicitated in this function.

Diesel smuggling from Jharkhand, tanker seized

Barbil, Jan 16th (KCN) A diesel-laden BileipadaNuamundi road on the suspicion of



state supply diesel to various contractors in the mining region at low prices. The price difference between two states have given a pathway of smuggling of HSD. Similarly other contractors regularly bring diesel from there and use it directly in their business. Some path already exist in two borders in Joda and Barbil area to extend business in an illegal way. It is need not say that these paths are used to import sand, chips, paver blocks, etc. without revenue. Odisha government is losing huge revenue this in appropriate import of HSD from Jharkhand. Knowing from any source, locals stopped the tanker and handed it over to the police. Now GST enforcement squad has approached to the spot to verify the issue.

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SEC Gears up for Urban Poll

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The State Election Commission (SEC) has geared up to conduct the much-awaited Urban Poll soon after completion of the Panchayat Elections. The preparedness for the election to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) was also discussed during the meeting of State Election Commissioner AP Padhi with District Collectors and SPs, official sources said.



The preparations for elections to Urban Local Bodies are likely to proceed simultaneously with the conduct of General Elections to PRIs, 2022. The Commission has already started its preparation in right earnest, the source said.

In the meanwhile EVMs and other required Forms have already been dispatched to 15 Districts. EVMs for other Districts will be dispatched soon, they said.

Some Districts have to transport the EVMs loaned by ECI from Bihar. All District Magistrates are impressed upon to give equal importance to the instructions of the Commission as and when issued in connection with the conduct of General Elections to the ULBs in the State.

These elections are long overdue and will follow the PRI elections. The Commission vide Letter No. 158/SEC dated 07.01.2022 has appointed Election Officer for 107 Urban Local Bodies in the State and vide Letter No. 4525/SEC dated 07.12.2021 has issued instructions for preparation of Ward-wise Electoral Rolls out of the Assembly Electoral Roll published in January, 2022 and avail-

able in Excel format.

The Electoral Rolls for the District have already been sent. The SEC has asked the Collectors and SPs to take all advance steps for preparation of ward-wise Electoral Roll so that the preparation of Electoral Rolls can be completed within minimum time.

Yesterday, the Housing & Urban Development Department issued a notification issuing a draft reservation list of chairpersons of 107 Municipalities and Notified Area Councils (NACs) of the State.

As per the notification, the office of Chairperson in 54 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) has been reserved for women candidates. The chief post in 9 ULBs has been reserved for Scheduled Caste (woman), five for Scheduled Tribe (woman) and 40 for women.

Similarly, the chairperson post in eight other ULBs reserved for Scheduled Caste and three for Scheduled Tribe, while 42 others are under un-reserve category.

Few days ago, the H&UD Department had issued a draft notification on reservation of the Mayor seat for the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) and Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC).

The Government has reserved the Mayor post for BMC and Berhampur Municipal Corporation for women candidates while CMC has been kept unreserved. The Department had invited objections and suggestions from the general public on the reservation for the post of Mayor. Notably, the State Government has amended the Odisha Municipal Rules, 1994, to hold direct election for the posts of Mayors of municipal corporations and Chairpersons of Municipalities and NACs during the upcoming poll.



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New kiln investment adds efficiency to supply chain, says Tata Steel UK

LONDON: A new GBP 4 million investment at a major facility in north-west England will allow for more efficient and sustainable supply of critical steelmaking material to the Port Talbot steelworks in Wales, Tata Steel UK has said. The investment towards the refurbishment of a major lime-making kiln at Tata Steel's Shapfell site in Cumbria took 10 months to complete and allowed it to start producing again after being mothballed since 2016, the Indian steel major said on Friday.

The company's Cumbrian facility uses UK-quarried limestone to manufacture

lime, which goes towards improving the quality of steel as well as removing impurities during steelmaking.

"This investment has led to a crucial upgrade for the site. This particular kiln had been mothballed for several years, but we had an opportunity to bring it back on stream to cover production as another kiln comes to the end of its normal lifespan, while also using new technology which means we're being more sustainable and cost-effective," said John Baird, Shapfell's Operations Manager. "It's great to see capital invested in the site to help us keep operations moving

and continue supporting jobs and innovation here in Cumbria. It's been a perfect opportunity to bring some of our talented team through to see a rare kiln refurbishment and share this knowledge for future relines," he said.

"We also took the opportunity to complete some virtual reality work inside the kiln before it was heated up again which will be used to train operators in complete safety in the future," he added. Over a 12-year period, Shapfell's Kiln 4 will produce nearly 1.5 million tonnes of calcium-rich lime products. The kiln is lit using new technology in conjunction with a

company called Secatherm.

A hot gas blower system - instead of traditional wood - which is used to give increased control while at the same time providing both reduced and cleaner emissions has been installed.

New technology, including airflow monitoring, will allow Tata Steel UK to understand and control the combustion and energy efficiency of the kiln to save on overall energy use and costs, the company said.

Tata Steel said in the UK it has the ambition to produce net-zero steel by 2050 at the latest and to have reduced 30 percent of CO2 emissions by

2030.

The vast majority of that work will need to happen in South Wales, where the company's largest operational site Port Talbot is.

The company said it is developing detailed plans for this transition to future steelmaking based on low CO2 technologies and is close to knowing which will best help achieve its ambitions. In the meantime, Tata Steel is exploring how and where new green steelmaking assets could be located on the Port Talbot site as well as testing to see if CO2 emissions could be used to make products for other industries.

Tata Steel is a partner in the South Wales Industrial Cluster, which is examining a range of options from carbon capture to hydrogen and has been recognised as Sustainability Champions by the World Steel Association four years in a row, the company said. Tata Steel is one of Europe's leading steel producers, with steelmaking in the Netherlands and the UK, and manufacturing plants across Europe.

The company supplies high-quality steel products to the most demanding markets, including construction and infrastructure, automotive, packaging and engineering.

Challenges for Rural Poll

Continued from page-1

that the planners and policymakers should evolve the special system for conducting free and fair elections in e-mode as the virtual examinations and even major interviews are being held today.

There are three options for this; one is in-person voting or remote voting through e-voting or postal ballots. In theory e-voting or postal ballots may sound safer but they are very difficult to implement in practice on a large scale in India.

Major technology issues, connectivity issues and identity issues come in the way of e-voting in a state like Odisha. It may be possible in an urban setting. But even then identity issues will be very difficult to resolve. Aadhar-linked voting may be a solution, but maybe will take a decade from now when mobile internet services are universally available and dependable in the remotest places like cut off areas of Malkangiri or the hills of Koraput or the Similipal sanctuary.

Postal ballot can safely be ruled out as the postal system simply doesn't have the capacity to deal with so many burdens within such a short span of time and there too identity is an issue as is confidentiality.

In absence of two other options, we are now left with only one mode which is in-person voting. Therefore, vaccination, masking, social distancing and hand sanitising are the most effective tools against Covid and basically these will be our tools to conduct the elections. In Covid pandemic situation the real friend is N-95 Mask, which protects us from virus in a big way, said a Public Health expert.

Guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India (ECI) and followed by the State Election Commission (SEC) as well, appear to be sufficient to hold elections in the face of what appears to be a less dangerous virus - Omicron. However, the weak and vulnerable must of course take more precautions.

The people as sensible citizens should cooperate with the SEC and come forward with in-person voting by following the protocol, urged the Election Commission. Here, the State Government too has a major role and regulating the people with stringent and exemplary action under the Disaster Management Act is necessary in case of violations, to set the trend for an election which is safe.

During pandemic it is also a major concern about the health safety of over one lakh personnel, those who will be engaged in election process. While the State Government has assured vaccination of both the doses and even booster doses for these personnel, however, concern continues to haunt the SEC on the issue of health of these electoral personnel. It is a major challenge.

Similarly the vote counting process appears to be one of the most difficult areas to manage because of the number of persons who are involved in the process in order to make it more transparent. It will also be a prolonged process of three days of close contact.

Anyway, beginning with the government machineries to political parties, candidates and individual voters, all must come to one platform and understand the situation. It is not unusual for the peace loving and law-abiding people of Odisha to make the ensuing panchayat elections, a success. The people in general have major responsibilities this time. One is to elect a good candidate for the post of ward member, sarpanch, samiti member and Zilla Parishad member, but also cooperate with the SEC to establish democracy in the grass-root level. It's a very fragile situation for the state as well as for the people in general.

Elections in India are also narrated as the festival of democracy and the polling for the rural polls is more colourful as it happens in villages. This time round, this festival of democracy may be low key as major celebration like Lord Jagannath's Rath Jatra was held sans devotees. There may not be massive campaign in the nook and corner of the state, but democracy must be renewed strengthened with people's support who will certainly defeat the evil design of pandemic to stall the elections, pointed

Despite government aid, Vodafone Idea woes not over

NEW DELHI: Last week telecom operator Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL) decided to convert the interest on spectrum and adjusted gross revenue (AGR) dues into government equity. This means the government will become the highest stakeholder in the country's third largest telecom company with 35.8% shares.

board, we don't expect it either," informed Takkar. Overall, the decision of Vodafone Idea received a mixed response from the telecom and market experts.

Many are of the view Vodafone Idea got a lifeline that would save it from bankruptcy or shutting down. A few believe it would help the

upgrade its technology. For instance, this year, the 5G spectrum auction is round the corner and the telecom operators need a hefty sum of money to bid for it.

Then comes Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR), which is the usage and licensing fee that telecom operators are charged by the

Department of Telecommunications (DoT). At the same time, the telecom operators in India are claiming that it has the lowest Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) in the world. All these things are making these telecom operators difficult to thrive and debts are piling year on year. To give a lifeline to the ailing industry, the government in October 2021 came up with a telecom relief package.

The package includes a four-year moratorium to repay dues it owed to the government, one-time opportunity to exercise the option of paying interest for the four years of de-

ferment of spectrum and AGR dues by converting the net present. Subsequently, Vodafone Idea and Tata Teleservices decided to convert the interest from AGR dues to government equity. Vodafone Idea had past AGR dues worth Rs 58,254 crore, of which it has already paid Rs 7,854 crore.

2021. Now the moot question is what the latest move will cost to the company? Prashanth Tapse, vice-president (Research) at Mehta Equities Ltd, said it is just a structural rescue plan to keep Vodafone under survival mode helping the company to breathe in the competitive space and stave off the risk of

meet the liabilities of Rs 1,94,500 crore. It would also need to invest in the network to arrest the ongoing market share churn. The numbers are startling; therefore, VIL would need to take a tariff hike - leading to an ARPU increase of ~1.9x - to reach a self-sustainable level over the next four years," said the financial firm. It also mentioned that it may need to grow its revenue approximately three times from current levels and containing the rate of churn should be a priority. "Until VIL has sufficient funds to invest in the network and compete in the market, the subscriber churn may continue to dilute earnings," said the firm.

bankruptcy, which was a concern for equity investors.

"I believe, in the current bleeding environment, it would be very hard to get new investors into IDEA as going forward they will need huge money for capex to expand and upgrade technology and if money doesn't come in, peers would take undue advantage and lead to loss of opportunity to Vodafone Idea," said Prashant Tapse. The Motilal Oswal Financial Services said Vodafone Idea will have to increase their tariff to have higher ARPU to be in the game and avoid any major market loss.

"Large-scale capital support is needed to



As the news circulated in the market, the shares of Vodafone Idea went down drastically as many believed the government will take over the company. On the bourses, the shares of Vodafone Idea plunged 21%, but it bounced back 8.5% the next day when the chief executive officer of Vodafone Idea Ravinder Takkar rebuffed all these speculations.

"The government, through a letter from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), has clarified that it does not want its nominee on the board. They have said there is no intention to nominate a person on to the

cash-strap telco to ease its cash flow so that it could use that money to improve its network and spend on 5G spectrum. The presence of the government as a stakeholder will help the company to invite a few investors. However, others differ. They say it is a short-term relief for the telecom operator, and what if it is not able to pay the amount on time.

AGR dues and relief package. The telecommunication industry is said to be very capital intensive as it requires an extensive network infrastructure to provide fixed line and wireless services. The industry needs regular investment to

Department of Telecommunications (DoT). At the same time, the telecom operators in India are claiming that it has the lowest Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) in the world. All these things are making these telecom operators difficult to thrive and debts are piling year on year. To give a lifeline to the ailing industry, the government in October 2021 came up with a telecom relief package.

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As per the company estimates, the net present value (NPV) of this interest is Rs 16,000 crore and the issue price would be ₹10 per share. Tata Teleservices owes ₹850 crore to the government as in AGR dues, thus enabling the government to own 9.5% stake in the company. However, Bharti Airtel, which owes around Rs 43,980 crore in AGR dues, of which Rs 18,004 crore had been paid, decided not to opt for converting its interest dues into government equity.

Its impact? Vodafone is the third largest telco in India with a subscriber base of 27 crore till August

No title defence for No. 1: Djokovic deported from Australia

MELBOURNE: Instead of starting the defence of his Australian Open title on Monday, Novak Djokovic was slated to be deported from the country, a stunning and unprecedented end to his run of success at Melbourne Park. Djokovic has won nine of his 20 Grand Slam trophies at the Australian Open — including three in a row

— and was scheduled to play in the main stadium to conclude Day 1 of the tournament. But the No. 1-ranked player in men's tennis now must leave Australia after three Federal Court judges decided unanimously Sunday to affirm the immigration minister's right to cancel

Djokovic's visa. The ruling was made less than 18 hours before the first Grand Slam matches of 2022 were scheduled to begin. Djokovic said he was "extremely disappointed" by the legal outcome but respected the decision and would cooperate in his "departure from the country." He also said he planned "to rest and to recuperate." The 34-year-old from Serbia was trying to use a medical exemption approved by two independent medical panels and Tennis Australia to get around the requirements that everyone at the Australian Open — players, their support teams, spectators and others — be inoculated against COVID-19. Djokovic is not vaccinated, and the government said his presence could stir up anti-vaccine sentiments.

The saga started on Jan. 5, when Djokovic's flight landed at a Melbourne airport.

"I am uncomfortable that the focus of the past weeks has been on me," he said Sunday, "and I hope that we can all now focus on the game and tournament I love." Tennis Australia issued a statement saying it "respects the decision of the Federal Court" and added: "We look forward to a competitive and exciting Australian Open 2022 and wish all players the best of luck."

Djokovic's absence means just one past champion is in the men's bracket: 2009 winner Rafael Nadal. And that also means now it is only Nadal who will have a chance to claim a 21st Grand Slam title and break a tie with Djokovic and Roger Federer (who is sidelined after a series of knee operations). Djokovic's dominance in Grand Slam play of late has been particularly impressive, winning four of the last seven major tournaments and finishing as the runner-up at two others. The only time he did not get at least to the final in that span was at the 2020 U.S. Open, where he was disqualified in the fourth round for hitting a ball that inadvertently hit a line judge in the throat after a game. Last season, Djokovic went 27-1 at majors, com-

ing within a victory in the U.S. Open final of becoming the first man since 1969 to win a calendar-year Grand Slam.

On Monday night, Djokovic was supposed to play Miomir Kecmanovic, a Serbian ranked 78th, at Rod Laver Arena, the main stadium. Instead, Kecmanovic will head to a smaller arena to face 150th-ranked Salvatore Caruso of Italy, a so-called "lucky loser" — someone who loses in qualifying rounds but gets access to the main draw because someone else withdraws after the first day's schedule was released.

Third-seeded Alexander Zverev's opener against Daniel Altmaier was moved to Rod Laver Arena. The Federal Court's decision was as polarizing as Djokovic's vaccination status in a city where residents spent more than 250 days in lockdown and faced harsh travel restrictions at the height of the coronavirus pandemic. Nadal was among those who said before Sunday's ruling that players knew the rules coming to Australia and no individual was bigger than the tournament.

After the ruling, Vasek Pospisil, a Canadian who won the 2014 Wimbledon men's doubles title and has worked with Djokovic to form an association to represent players, tweeted: "There was a political agenda at play here with the (Australian) elections coming up which couldn't be more obvious." Pospisil also wrote: "This is not his fault. He did not force his way into the country and did not 'make his own rules.'"

Pospisil said Djokovic wouldn't have travelled to Australia and would have "been home with his family" had he not received the medical exemption that turned out to be so contentious.

The ATP Tour described Djokovic's absence from the Australian Open as "a loss for the game" and said the court ruling "marks the end of a deeply regrettable series of events."

The tour said it "continues to strongly recommend vaccination to all players."

Swadhin Shines at Inter-Varsity Meet

Bhubaneswar(KCN): High jumper Swadhin Majhi of Angul produced an impressive performance at the recently held All India Inter-University Athletics Championship for Men in Mangalore to return with a bronze medal. Twenty-year-old Majhi, who trains at the Reliance Foundation Odisha Athletics High Performance Centre (HPC) at the Kalinga Stadium here, came with a personal best of 2.08 metres for the third place in the event. He would have performed better, had he not sustained an ankle injury during his first attempt.

Based on his observations at the meet in Mangalore, Reliance Foundation Odisha HPC Head Coach James Hillier identified some technical

aspects to improve Majhi's performance. "With Swadhin, I have been focusing



on his body positions in the run up and particularly in the last three strides," said Hillier. "I feel that he is not setting up the jump optimally yet. He is improving but these technical changes take time," he added.

The other eye-catching performance at the Mangalore meet

came from sprinter Amlan Borgohain, who has been training at the HPC since

ing their best timings. "Amlan made a couple of errors in the final that ultimately cost him the gold, but I'm sure he has learnt from his mistakes, and he will be a better athlete in future." With high profile events such as the Commonwealth and Asian Games scheduled for later this year, Borgohain is focused on being in the peak of shape to put his best foot forward at those competitions. The coaching staff and support teams have identified critical interventions needed to ensure that he arrives at those competitions with the best preparation possible.

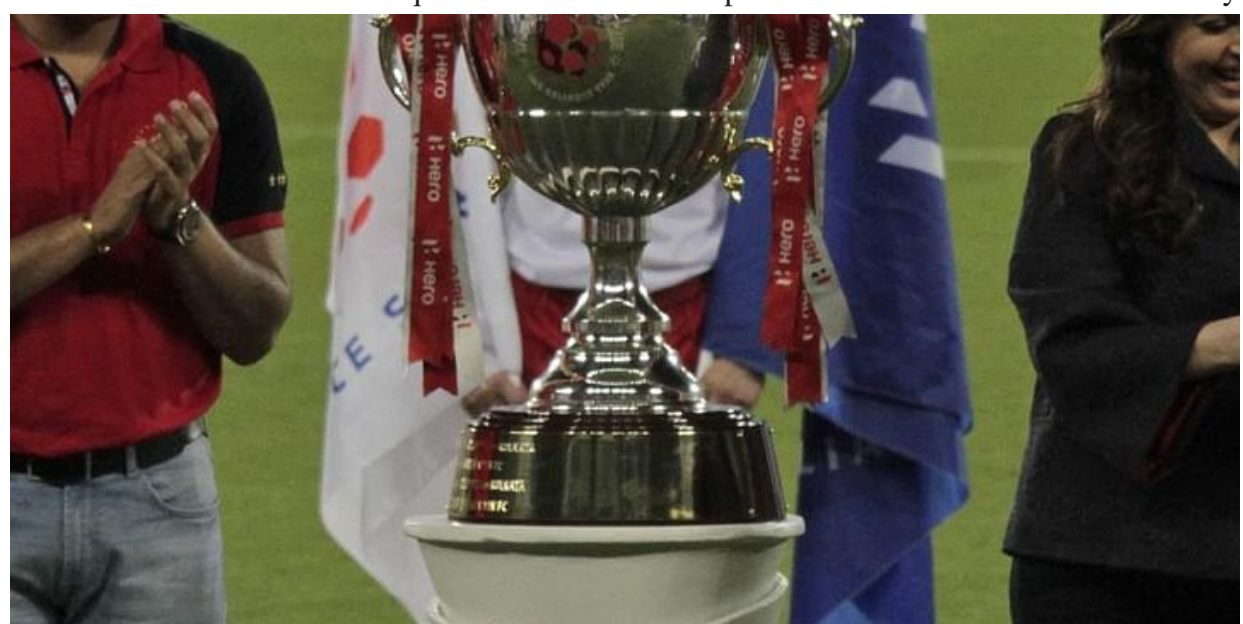
The World University Games, scheduled to be held in China in June this year is of immediate interest to Borgohain.

Sunday's ISL fixture between Kerala Blasters and Mumbai City FC postponed

PANAJI: The Indian Super League (ISL) match between Kerala Blasters FC and Mumbai City FC in Vasco was postponed on Sunday, hours before their kickoff as the southern outfit did not have the requisite number

of players to field. The match was scheduled to be played at the Tilak Maidan in Vasco.

The tournament organisers did not specify the reason for the postponement but sources close to the league attributed it to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Prior to this, two more matches had been postponed this season after the coronavirus breached the ISL's bio-bubble.

"Hero Indian Super League (ISL) has decided to postpone Match No.62 between Kerala Blasters FC and Mumbai City FC scheduled to be played today, Sunday, January 16, 2022, at Tilak Maidan Stadium, Vasco. The League will look to reschedule the fixture to a later date," the ISL said in a statement.

"The decision has been taken in consultation with the League's medical team after it was

of all the players and support staff in the squad and others involved," it added in the statement. On Saturday, the ISL fixture between ATK Mohun Bagan and Bengaluru FC was also postponed due to the surge in COVID-19 cases.

Earlier, ATK Mohun Bagan's match against Odisha FC had to be postponed after an unnamed player reported positive for the virus. As many as four ATKMB players in the bio-secure bubble had been reported to be positive and the Juan Ferrando-coached side had been locked in their rooms for one week without a single training session.

Players of other teams including FC Goa, Bengaluru FC and Odisha FC also contracted the coronavirus, while SC East Bengal too isolated themselves after their hotel staff inside the bio bubble found positive.




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