

## JV-90 Grand Get together held at Jyoti Vihar

Burla (KCN): JV-90 Jyoti Vihar 1988-90 batch MBA, Padmasree. Dr. Jitendrya Haripal, the renowned Sambalpur Singer, Rama Bhai of Samosa shop owner fame were felicitated by the alumni. Ashok Patra, Chandra sekhar Pradhan, Laxmi Paikray Md. Aslam Manoj Sarangi Surya Mahapatra Narendra Jena, Babita Mahapatra, Kshyamandhi Nath, Pradeep Mishra Bhabani Panda-Suresh Kar, Pratap Panigrahi, pol sc Manoranjan Naik Anuj Bhukta, Ashok Dash, Sobhna Mahapatra, Jagdish Mishra, Sukomal Dash, Bhargav Sahu, Kalkiram Bagarti, Dillip Badpanda, Naresh Agrawala Sujit Samal, Sri Balabhadra Jena, Soumen Patel, Binay Patel, Sushant Patel, Bibhuti Bhushan Sahu, Ashok Ku



deserved alumni and their families can be taken care of. The present Vice Chencellor of Sambalpur University Prof. Sanjeev Kumar Mittal along with his wife Mrs Mittal, Prof. Biswajeet Satapathy, Head of Department of



Purohit, Narayan Dash, Brundaban Meher, Ravi Narayan Dash, Biswajeet Kumar Hota, Prajna Panda, Narendra Sahu, Trinath Behera, Trupti mayee Nayak, Jagannath Mishra, Madhusudan Pradhan, Sangeeta Gountia Suresh Meher, Upama Kalo, Purusottam Mishra, Lalita Sahu, Saroj Padhan, Ramesh Bhoi, Pratap Mohanty, Kalpana Sa Arun Panigrahi, Bachaspati Pradhan Tridib Tripathy, Jashobanti Guru, Hrudananda Dash, Suprita Dash, Krishna Mishra, Shailasuta

Purohit, Sweta Mohanty, Nirmal Parida, Durgesh Nandan Chhuria, Mohit Patel, Manoj Sahu, Minakshi Raj, Rosy Pradhan, Parameswar Singh, Hemanta Patel Gajendra Nayak, Debasish Gouda, Sunil Barik, Jayadev Adabar, Haladhar Sahu, Reeta Nanda, Biswambar Panda, Bibeka Nand Mishra, Minati Rath, Biswajit Mishra, Biswajeet Tripathy, Manoj Kumar Naik, Pradip Pradhan, Lalita Pradhan, Bijay Sahoo, Swaroop Panigrahi, Nrushing Mohanty, Ramesh Pati, Rabi Narayan Debta, Saroj Kumar Panda, Anita Hota, Kaberi Mishra, Sabitriprava Sahu, Babita Das, Ashok Ku. Sahu, Anita Lade, Jadumani Dash, Gitanjali Mishra, Jaydev Pradhan, Baibaswat Biswal, Rohit Saha, Biswajita Sahoo, Manas Dwivedi, Sarojini Patel, Ramakrushna Sahu, Debendra Bhoi, Pabitra Narayan Nepak Gobinda Meher, Manoj Chaudhary, Subrat Behera, Nimai Pradhan, were present on the occasion. Although all the alumni took pain in organizing the event, sincere gratitude must be given to Purusottam Mishra, Pabitra Nepak, Upama Kalo, Dillip Badpanda, Naresh Agarwal, Suresh Kar for their untiring support in organizing the event.



### Message

Warm Greetings to the People of Barachana – Dharmasala dist.- Jajpur, Odisha on the **Happy New Year 2022**. May the New Year bring peace, progress and prosperity for everyone.

**Dr. Pabitra Mohan Samantray**  
Barachana – Dharmasala,  
Jajpur, Odisha

## Odisha saw a united opposition but Naveen remained cool as cucumber

BHUBANESWAR: Recovering from the devastating Covid-19 pandemic, the 21st year of the twenty-first century saw its share of political storms in the State. For much of the year, the Opposition parties grabbed the media



CONTINUED ON: P-7

## New DGP takes charge

Cuttack(KCN): Veteran Top Cop Sunil Kumar Bansal on 31 December took over the charge of the Director General of Police (DGP) of Odisha Police.

1987-batch IPS officer, Mr.Bansal took charge from Abhay, who superannuated from service. Earlier Mr.Bansal was working with the Intelligence Bureau as its Special Director. He was on Cen-

tral Deputation since 1994 and has held

a ceremonial guard of

Mr.Bansal after assuming charge told



several key positions with the IB. New DGP was given

ing charge at the State Police Headquarters here.

Media that "Seva and service will be my

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## Land Rights for Slum Dwellers

Bhubaneswar(KCN): A day ahead of the New Year, the State Cabinet has decided

The State Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has approved the propo-

sitions. "In an historic decision, the Cabinet has decided to extend Jaga Mission scheme to five municipal corporation towns of Odisha. As many as 8,58,000 persons of 1.90 lakh families in 938 slums across the five municipal corporation areas will be benefitted with the decision," said Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) Minister Pratap Jena. The land distribution process will be completed within six months, he said.

Under the Odisha Land Rights to Slum Dwellers Act, 2017 and Jaga Mission, land rights have been provided to people residing in 109 urban local bodies (ULBs) including municipality and NACs across the State, Jena said, adding, around 1.75 lakh families have been benefitted from the program till date. The Odisha Land

Rights to Slum Dwellers Act, 2017 was enacted with a view to assign land rights to identified & eligible slum dwellers with a twin objective of providing security of tenure and to transform the slums into liveable habitats. The jurisdiction of this Act was extended to all the Municipalities and NACs. Similar provisions were now also incorporated in the municipal Corporation Act, 2003 through an amendment to confer property rights on the households living in the slums of the Municipal Corporations. The State Cabinet approved the proposal to provide grant-in-aid under 7th Pay Commission to eligible teaching & non-teaching staff of new aided non-government high schools, upper primary schools, Madrasas, said chief secretary

CONTINUED ON: P-7



to provide land rights to slum dwellers of five municipal corporation towns of Odisha.

posal for extension of Jaga Mission for slum dwellers in five municipal corporations—Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur, Rourkela and Sambalpur. Under the Jaga Mission, the State government will provide land to slum dwellers residing in the five municipal corpora-

### Message

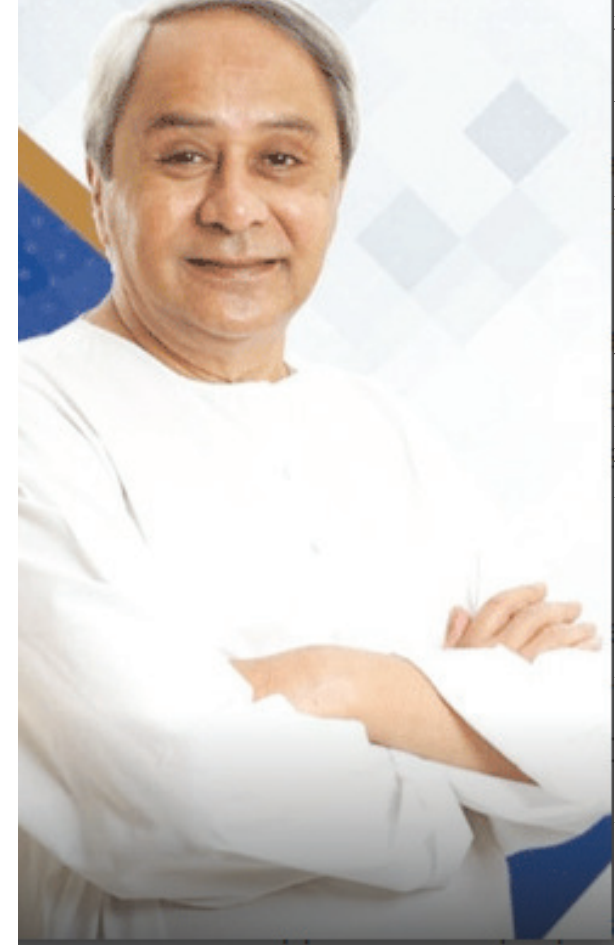
The **The Kalinga Chronicle** family wishes its readers, hawkers, advertisers, writers and well-wishers on the **New Year Day 2022**.

- Editor-in-Chief

## New Year Gift for Teachers

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Odisha Government has announced slew of measures for the teachers and other staff on the eve of New Year 2022.

State Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has decided for extension of State Government Grant-in-Aid to eligible



view, the competitive examination for the post of Physical Education Teachers shall be conducted by the Selection Board for the State, he said.

The Chief Secretary informed that the Cabinet has approved the proposal enhancement of Grant-in-Aid to eligible employees of Aided

Non-Government colleges including erstwhile Junior Colleges consequent upon the implementation of Odisha Revised Scale of Pay Rules, 2017 (7th Pay).

Presently, the teaching and non-teaching employees of Aided Non-Government colleges governed under the Odisha (Non-Government Colleges, Junior Colleges and Higher Secondary Schools) Grant-in-Aid Order 2008; Odisha (Aided Colleges, Aided Junior Colleges and Aided Higher Secondary Schools) Grant-in-Aid Order 2009 and Odisha (Non-Government Upashastri and Shastri Colleges) Grant-in-Aid Order 2009 had been extended with financial benefits on the basis of Orissa Revised Pay Rules, 2008.

After implementation of Odisha Revised Scale of Pay Rules, 2017 for State Government employees, the above employees have been demanding enhancement of Grant-in-Aid on the basis of Odisha Revised Scale of Pay Rules, 2017, he pointed out.

So, the Government have been pleased to extend the Grant-in-Aid on the basis of ORSP Rules 2017 (7th pay) with effect from 01.01.2018 notionally up to 31.12.2021 and actual enhanced financial benefit shall be effective from January 15, 2022, he told reporters.

Approximately 15,664 teaching and non-teaching employees will get such enhanced financial benefit and the Government will have to bear an additional financial burden of Rs. 166 crores, he added.

Similarly, the State Government has approved the proposal for amendment of the Odisha Government College Librarians (Method of Recruitment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 2017.

In order to expedite CONTINUED ON: P-7

# The first case of Omicron in the Keonjhar district

Barbil, Dec 30th (KCN) The number of Corona case in the district of Keonjhar this month has been low, with an outbreak news of Omicron patient in the Birikala panchayat area of the Joda block a matter of concern now. A man, identified as Omicron, arrived in Kolkata on the 16th of this month from Dubai and arrived in Barbil on the 16th by train. He had come to

bus stand by an auto and latter gone his native Bileipada village by a transport bus. On reaching home some corona symptom was seen. Meanwhile, he was immediately admitted to the Corona Hospital in Ranki after he was diagnosed with corona disease on the 24th of this month and was sent for genomic testing on the same day, when

he was diagnosed with Omicron variant. Family members and other people he came in contact with him were identified and said to be in quarantine. As he had come to Barbil by train and used auto rickshaw to reach Barbil bus stand and later used a bus to reach his native. "As the identification is not possible, all the auto drivers who

have been doing auto business at the Barbil railway station have been identified. They were advised for RTPCR test," said Dr Sujatarani Mishra, CDMO. However, the district public health officer, Dr. Lalatendu Nayak, said that by Wednesday, the four foreigners who had come to the district and their corona test will be done

# UTPAL CHATTERJEE, former Sheriff of Kolkata, acclaimed journalist wishes all a peaceful 2022. Pleads for Climate Control

Kolkata (KCN): HERE'S WISHING YOU A PEACEFUL 2022 ! A person who says what he means and means what he says, does so usually from the very bottom of his heart. So, believe and trust in me when I wish you a peaceful New Year sans any worry or apprehension. If you were in the blues for the pandemic that has affected millions the world over, may the forthcoming year starting from January 1, 2022, take the blues away for you to cherish every moment without the weight of anything that that could bring in sorrow and tension. On the world front let all the leaders of nations, rich and powerful and those in perennial gloom and bloodshed, unite to concentrate on the major priorities that our planet faces. May the 193 member nations make the United Nations truly relevant,

strong and a real guarantor of world peace and

manifestations will work towards making our world truly clean,

relief.



understanding. Let the ultimate creator of the universe, Almighty God, listen to our prayers and forgive us our trespasses. Among them, surely, has been our constant conflict with Nature resulting in global warming and hence our priority number one : CLIMATE CONTROL. All this is not wishful thinking. A determined planet comprising peoples who want peace in all its

friendly and peaceful. Let us all help keep our planet green. After all, our world is not a dying patient. But it could do with plenty of love and care. So, my friend and fellow being, let us look forward to a new phase sans blues but with a pleasant disposition and smiling faces. And, it is all upto all of us. Let the bullies stop baring fangs but start reaching out. We have all suffered enough. Let there be

Utpal Chatterjee Shri UTPAL CHATTERJEE is an acclaimed Indian journalist and public speaker. He has also been the Sheriff of Calcutta. Sri Chatterjee has interviewed 21 Heads of State, nine Nobel Laureates and travelled with Indian Prime Ministers as part of their respective media delegations. Having done his fellowship in Journalism from Oxford, he has travelled abroad on other official assignments more than 50 times across all the continents except Africa and Australia. He is on the panel of experts of BBC, London. Earlier he worked for several leading Indian national newspapers and journals and has several international and national recognitions which reaffirm his intellectual and journalistic prowess.

# Rourkela Jharsuguda Passenger train untimely increased trouble

Rourkela (KCN): There is no timing of Rourkela to Jharsuguda Passenger train, due to which people have to

senger train should be run on time. Social Activist of Rourkela Nitesh Kumar requested the railway officials. Most of the

tant works. All of them travel between Rourkela to Jharsuguda for many urgent works as well. After talking to the

sponded that they find it late in reaching home. Through this news, everyone has demanded the railway officials to



face a lot of problems. People are not able to reach their homes on time. If it is done on time, then the common man will not have to face inconveniences. So say the travellers including Social Activist of Rourkela Nitesh Kumar. It was requested that this pas-

people from rural areas travel from Rourkela to Panposh, Kalunga, Kansbahal, Rajganpur, Sonakhan, Sagra, Gangposh, Tangarmunda, Bamra, Dhuruadihi, Bagdihi, Panpali, Dhutra and Jharsuguda for medical and other impor-

passengers of this passenger train including vendors, all of them expressed their reaction and requested that Rourkela Jharsuguda Passenger train should be run on time so that people do not have to worry. Many school and college students have re-

run Rourkela Jharsuguda Passenger train on time. Social Activist and president of Super 20 Nitesh Kumar also wrote to General Manager of South Eastern Railway including Station Manager of Rourkela on Thursday for the same.

# Social Worker Er. Dusmanta Patra felicitated as Kalasri Sanman - 2021

Cuttack (KCN): Eminent Social worker, Er. Dusmanta Patra felicitated as "Kalasri Sanman - 2021" at Kandarpur on the occasion 18th. Annual Function of cuttack sadar based leading cultural organization Saraswati Kala Parishad (SKP) for his best quality, dedication to society, humble and



sober nature with vast knowledge in civil field. In this felicitating & cultural program Presided by president Natyakar Guru Ashok Kumarr Pattnik & SKP team with grand success. In this cultural program some eminent personalities were felicitated for their extraordinary activities.

# Workshop on Sexual Violence Against Women & Children

Khordha: The leading NGO of the state

Chairperson Ms. Manju Prava Dhal,

eration) leaders participated and clarified their doubts on the issues. The programme was quite participatory one. Secretary of DSS, Mr. Kedar Chaudhury Co-

Violence against Women, Violence in Workplace, Pursue local complain and take the benefits of compensation. All the resource persons assured to extend all



Darbar Sahitya Sansad (DSS) organized a one day Workshop on improving services at district level in reducing sexual violence on women and children. Eminent stakeholders like Dr. Bikash Das, President -CLAP, LCC,

CDPO, Sangeeta Padhi, Press club President Dillip Ojha etc. deliberated on how to strengthen the service of different service providers and stakeholders. 40 representatives like PRI, ASHA, CRP, MBK and Mahila Morcha Sangha (Fed-



ordinated the programme and invited the community leaders to be more active in reporting cases of POCSO,

possible help to DSS in the matter. The programme was supported by Maitri Network and Karuna Trust.

# Former Speaker and BJD leader Kishore Mohanty passes away at 63

BHUBANESWAR (KCN): Former Speaker of the Odisha Assembly and senior BJD leader Kishore Mohanty died following a heart attack on Thursday. He

Mohanty was elected to the Odisha Legislative Assembly thrice from the Jharsuguda Assembly constituency and won the Brajarajnagar Assem-

2004 to 2008. He was also elected to the Rajya Sabha (2009-2012). Mohanty was also the chairman of the Western Odisha Development Council

veyed his heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family members and constituents. "His contribution as a political leader and legislator will be ever



was 63. According to reports, the Brajarajnagar MLA fell ill during a meeting on Thursday evening. He was shifted to a private hospital in Jharsuguda where he breathed his last. He suffered a massive cardiac arrest, sources said. He is survived by his wife, daughter and son. A soft-spoken and popular leader from the industrial town,

bly seat in the 2019 elections. He was first elected as an MLA in 1990. Mohanty moved to Brajarajnagar to make way for senior Congress leader Naba Kishore Das who joined the BJD before the 2019 Assembly elections. He held the post of Speaker from 2008 to 2009 and also several other key posts including the government chief whip from

(WODC). He had a major contribution in the formation of Jharsuguda as a district when Biju Patnaik was the Chief Minister. Governor Ganeshi Lal, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, political leaders from BJD, Congress and BJP and people from all walks of life have condoled the sudden demise of Mohanty. The Governor con-

remembered," the Governor said. Expressing grief over Mohanty's sudden demise, the Chief Minister tweeted, "Deeply shocked to hear about the death of former Odisha Assembly Speaker and Brajarajnagar MLA Kishore Mohanty. He was an outstanding leader and will be remembered for his works as an elected representative."

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# Spider-Man No Way Home First Impressions: All the hype was worth it

Social media was a quiet place over the last two days. Spider-Man: No Way Home (NWH) had its world premiere a couple of days back, and all Spidey fans stayed as far away from social media as possible. All of them just wanted to keep away from ONE important question — Do Tobey Maguire and Andrew Garfield feature in NWH? We'll get to that soon enough... First, let us talk about how the film starts right from where it left off in Far From Home. Mysterio has revealed who the real Spiderman is to the world. Peter Parker (Tom Holland) is as vulnerable as he can



be. But he has MJ (Zendaya) and Ned (Jakob Betalan) for company in this tough time. The murmurs about Spider-Man not being the friendly neighbourhood superhero are now being amplified thanks to our not-so-friendly neighbourhood news anchor Jonah Jameson of TheDailyBugle.net. Peter and Co are hounded by the media and fellow students. There is scrutiny all around, and even their MIT dreams get crushed thanks to Mysterio's final video message. And just like the trailers suggested, when things are getting worse and stranger than usual, there is just one place to go to — Doctor Strange. Just like in any other superhero film, certain things happen, and Bam! the villains from the Spideverse take centre stage. Similar to the recent Venkat Prabhu film, Maanaadu, it is the supervillains who received maximum cheer from a sleep-starved audience that queued up

to enter the theatre at 5 am. Such was the sound that Spidey might have thought if he was the

spotlight on both Peter's friendship with Ned and love story with MJ, the writing, the performances and their camaraderie are so on point. The trio laughing at Dr Otto's name is as funny as it was in the trailer, and them figuring out the multiverse all by themselves is as goofy as it can get. Seeing Ned and MJ involved got the crowd backing them too as they continued in their path to be relevant and not relegated to just the usual "Superhero friend" and "Superhero GF" trope. The action set pieces prove to us why MCU has some of the most inventive stunt chore-

graphy, and the first half perfectly sets up what is one of the most-anticipated MCU films. As Spiderman: No Way Home unfolds, we get to know why it is also one of the best-written MCU films. There are strong emotional arcs. There is scope for redemption. There is revenge. There is salvation. There is blood. There is brotherhood. There is betrayal. And... as the film came to a close, and the credits started rolling... there were sore throats due to the loud cheering, moist eyes due to the beautiful emotional sequences, and reddened palms courtesy of the thunderous applause. Not one moved from their seats as first we saw a mid-credits scene, and then a post-credits one, and the loudest cheers were reserved for the sheer brilliance of the minds behind the MCU for neatly tying up multiple shows, films, and characters to rally the audience behind their franchises.

# 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 lan-

guage 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 English 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 SC: I am moody when it comes to social media, and I saw the pandemic as an out. I took a social media detox, and honestly, I am happy about this step back. M: It helps me see how people gauge my work. It is a great insight into misconceptions I had about myself. Of course, there will be bitter and harsh people. Even if we say things in good faith, negativity comes to us sometimes. I have decided not to give them that power. Also, in this pandemic, people have become negative and bitter; so, occasionally, I do give them that allowance at times and believe that things will look up. It is also important to realise that social media contains a small percentage of people in India. While your world might seem grey when compared to what you see in social media, there are a large percentage of people in the real world who are going through exactly what you are. The picture is not as bleak as we make it out to be. That's why I try to spread cheer on my timeline.

## New Year Beacons upon our responsibility

The Year 2021 has consigned into history. A New Year 2022 has dawned. The New Year is a time when we bid adieu to the present year and



welcome new beginnings with open arms. We welcome the Year 2022 and wish all an eventful and purposeful happy new year. It gives us another chance to start afresh and its advent is

celebrated with pomp, fervour, and grandeur. But it is not an occasion for celebration with pomp and grandeur as we deem, but beckons upon our responsibility to do something for humankind. It is an important time for introspection. It is time for analysing the past year and learning from that year and reorientating our activities.

. While we have entered the New Year with hope and aspiration, it is worth, re-capturing the events of the year gone by that have a mammoth imprint, impression on the life and living of people of the world.

The spread of Covid-19 has quickly spun out of the control and Like 2020, the year 2021 has been a turbulent and bizarre one in many ways- a year in which the Corona pandemic devastated entire society by killing crores of people, annihilating crores of livelihoods.

Though, after the mammoth contraction in both the Indian economy and world economy in 2020, in 2021 there was a recovery in some sectors due to pent-up demand, but still not adequate. The loss to the Indian economy was so massive that in terms of GDP that, India reached the pre-academic level in September 2021. But Global economy including India which was experiencing a synchronized slowdown in 2020 is now witnessing a K-shaped economic recovery with rich/corporates getting richer while the poor getting poorer.

The rise of poverty, inequality, and unemployment are so enormous that damage cannot be reversed so easily. In a statement marking the 30th anniversary of economic liberalisation, Manmohan Singh said he was deeply saddened at the devastation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the loss of millions of fellow Indians, and livelihoods.

. The pandemic Covid 19 has exposed the vulnerability of market economy; the fragility of the global economy; Achilles' heel of America, and other advanced countries; selfishness, greed, the rapacity of finance

capital; cruelty and limitation of capitalism; the devastating consequence of destroying our ecosystem.

It has battered the arrogance, superciliousness of many powerful rulers and exposed the hypocrisy of rich, corporate behemoths, ruling class who always talk of wealth creation, GDP growth and calumniate, slander any sort of leisure for working-class, laborers and any entire world is paying a heavy price for nonchalance and procrastination

In 2020, that the middle class in India is estimated to have shrunk by 3.2 crores, the number of people who are poor in India (with incomes of \$2 or less a day) is estimated to have increased by 7.5 crores because of the COVID-19 recession, 23 crore people in India found earning less than Rs 375 per day, 97 percent of Indian households witnessed the decline of their income in 2020, nearly 12 crore lost jobs, though some got back.

But in 2021, things have gone from bad to worse. Hunger, poverty, and inequality are still rising. As per the data collected by UNDP, 130 crore people are poor multidimensional poor in the world while 22.7 crore Indians are multidimensionally poor. However, according to the NitiAyog's report, 25.1% of Indians are found multidimensional poor in 2016-17 and this must have increased now. The highest number of poor, hungry, and homes people in the world live in India. it is estimated that more than 81.1 crore people in the world faced hunger while more than 19.44 crore people are plagued by hunger in India.

According to the Global Hunger Index 2021, conflict, climate change, and the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have exacerbated the food security situation across the globe including India. But India's ranking is on the decline since Narendra Modi rode to power. India had ranked at 55 in 2014 before declining to 101 in 2021.

it is not only in the hunger index but in all other indexes like the human development index (131 out of 189 countries), global happiness index 144 out of 154 countries), global peace index (135 out of 163 countries), corruption perception Index (86 out of 180 countries)., This must-have increased further in 2020 in India. . India has slipped seven places to rank 101 In the 2021 report that was released October 14, 2021. India had ranked at 94 among 107 countries on the 2020 Index.

**Dr. Santosh Kumar Mohapatra**

What is more painful is that according to the World Inequality Report 2022 released by the World Inequality Lab on December 7, 2021 "India stands out as a poor and very unequal country, with an affluent elite, in the world."

The income inequality can be understood from the fact that, in 2021, while the top 10 percent and top 1 percent of the population hold 57.1 percent and 21.7 percent of total national income, respectively, the bottom half just 13.1 percent.

Inequality also enlarged when it comes to wealth. In 2021, the top 10 percent owns 64.6 percent of the total wealth, while the top 1 percent owns 33 percent. But the bottom 50 percent of the nation can be seen to own almost nothing( i.e., 5.9 percent of the total pie).

Impoverishment, inequality, enslavement, and discrimination are inextricably linked and plaguing our nation today. The rich are not made to pay legitimate taxes to generate more resources. There is a growing trust deficit between the ruling class and citizens. India's secular credential and socialistic nature seem to shatter today with society being contaminated and divided more than before under the present Modi regime.

In records, people enjoy freedom but are practically not free to express their own feelings, thoughts emotions if it exposes the failures of the ruling class. There has been growing intolerance to rational thoughts. An atmosphere has been created to kill independent thinking, suppress dissent. Hatred is created against dissenters. Intellectuals are made to fight each other with one section opposing other sections who fight for people and expose the failures of the ruling class. Social stability in jeopardy .

The ruling class is promoting superstitions, and decimating scientific temper What is reprehensible is that around the world, democracy is sliding, shrivelling with the rising of despotism. The decline of democracy is discernible in India in a bigger magnitude.

In the month of February 2021, India, described as a "flawed democracy", slipped two places to 53rd position in the latest Democracy Index published by The Economist Intelligence Unit. A week later on March 11, in its report titled "Autocratization Turns Viral." V-Dem demoted India from being a democracy to an "electoral autocracy."

India has been placed at 142nd position among 180 countries in the latest World Press Freedom

Index 2021, released on April 20, 2021. India was at 142nd position in 2020 as well, which means below 141 countries. In 2016. India's rank was 133 which has steadily climbed down to 142 in 2020. The RSF report says India is one of the world's most dangerous countries for journalists trying to do their job properly.

In the new year we should hope for a better, peaceful, happy society. The hope and aspiration of Indians from the Modi government for a just, balanced society and development has been pounded. The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members. The rich cannot accumulate wealth without the co-operation of the poor in society. But rich people seem to be a little worried about vulnerable sections of society. When people are ravaged by the corona pandemic, the wealth of billionaires and profits of corporate is increasing leaps and bounds. There is massive tax evasion by rich and corporates who are stashing their black money in tax havens

What is more disconcerting is that the government has slashed social expenditure such as on health, education, which has a far-reaching impact on poor people? Its ill effects have been further exacerbated due to the failure of the government to control the prices of essential commodities. The purchasing power of people is being hard-hit and many people are drowned to the quagmire of poverty and starvation.

The policy of the government to raise the indirect tax more affecting common people adversely and to reduce direct tax especially corporate tax is benefiting corporate. This is regressive in nature and enhancing inequality more.

It is high time, planners should think about whether India should be a country of 135 core people where hunger and poverty will vanish or a country of 35 crore people that will create big market opportunities for multinational companies and where the rest of people will perish, struggle to eke out a bare subsistence.

It is imperative that going into 2022, the government is able to set the agenda for human development, peace, and happiness. However, it is working class people who have got more responsibility as they have practical experience of associating with poor and downtrodden and waging struggle regularly against exploitation. Let us welcome the Year 2022 with hope and confidence that humanity will prevail over injustice and exploitation.

The writer is an Odisha based eminent columnist/economist/social thinker, E-mail: skmohapatra67@gmail.com

## Calcutta Karavan sets out on Dastangoi Mission

What has storytelling got to do in audit assignments or high profile administrative jobs?



The answer would certainly be an emphatic 'nothing'. But Suparna Deb, a top civil servant and Director General (GASAB-1), Comptroller and Auditor

General of India, has been proving this wrong, doing both (numbers crunching and storytelling) with equal elan.

Deb, a 1991 batch IA & AS officer, who had earlier done her Masters in History, has proved

RO (EMRO) of World Health Organisation at Cairo and Kabul, Financial (Attest) audit at NAO, UK, London and Embassy Audit of Indian Missions at New Zealand & Australia. As co-founder of Calcutta Karavan, Deb is now proving her equally strong grit as dastango, or storyteller, whose voice is his main artistic tool in orally recreating the dastan or the story.

Dastangoi is a 13th century Urdu oral storytelling art form. Subsequently, the Persian style of Dastan evolved in 16th century.



One of the earliest references in print to dastangoi is a 19th-century text containing 46 volumes of the adventures of Amir Hamza titled Dastan e Amir Hamza. The art form reached its zenith in the Indian sub-continent in the 19th century and is said to have died with the demise of Mir Baqar Ali in 1928. Dastangoi was revived by historian, author and director Mahmood Farooqui in 2005.

The early dastangos used to tell tales of magic, war and adventure, and borrowed freely from

**Ritwik Mukherjee**

other stories such as the Arabian Nights, storytellers such as Rumi, and storytelling traditions such as the Panchantantra. From the 14th century, Persian dastangois started focusing on the life and adventures of Amir Hamza, the paternal uncle of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. The Indian stream of dastangoi added storytelling



elements such as aiyari (trickery) to these tales.

And now Deb and her Calcutta Karavan are experimenting with bringing back the hidden love stories of wanderers, which often leave one intoxicated.

For instance, through its latest presentation: Shaam e Sufiana, Deb and her Calcutta Karavan narrated some very unique stories

from its treasures- Bagh o Bahar, which means garden and spring, two very short spans of beauty and love in human life. Once Hazrat Amir Khushroo narrated the stories of four dervishes (Dastan of Char Darwesh) to his ailing master Hazrat Nizamuddin Auliya. The adventure of four dervishes, scouting for love and beauty reveals the secret of life. It's a tough journey of pain and passion, at the end of which a mystical peace engulfs everyone. The top civil servant has lined up an ambi-



itious plans of celebrating different flavours of joy from the city of joy with Calcutta Karavan through Storytelling, Heritage Walks, History Talks, Food Walks, Music, Poetry and much more. Watch this space.

Author is a Kolkata based Freelance journalist.



her mettle in various high profile international audit assignments including United Nations World Health Organisation, Geneva, Audit of

## New Year celebration restricted in govt offices in Odisha

**BHUBANESWAR(KCN):** The Odisha government on Friday restricted gatherings to celebrate the New

Year celebrations with flower bouquets in offices on January 1. The government employees have been

instructed to avoid meetings by exempting several essential activities. In a revised notification, the Special Re-

striction Commission (SRC) clarified that night curfew restrictions from 10 pm to 5 am will not be applicable to officials on duty, healthcare and emergency workers of utilities, including electricity, fire services, telecom, water supply, railways, port and airport.

aggregators like Ola and Uber) to and from airports, railway stations and bus terminals/stops for facilitating the movement of passengers by air, rail and road will be allowed. The staff of IT and ITeS companies will be allowed to move during the restricted

hours on production of their ID cards apart from any person, in case of medical or another emergency, owner/staff of chemist shops, all industrial units, construction activities, early warning agencies and disaster management establishments. Operation of hotels and hospitality units, including their associated offices, movement of staff and associated personnel, dhabas along highways for takeaway only, petrol pumps and CNG stations, LPG distribution, home delivery of food and other essential items by restaurants and aggregators personnel and vehicular movement have been allowed. However, there will be no restrictions on the movement of persons/vehicles for testing and vaccination and home delivery of food items. All commercial establishments, including essential items, food and vegetable shops, but excluding medicine, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and optical shops will remain closed.



Year at offices on Saturday in view of the rise in new Covid cases in the State. The General Administration and Public Grievance department has directed all government employees to scrupulously avoid group movements, congregations and greet-

ings with flower bouquets in offices on January 1. The government employees have been advised to use virtual mediums for conveying their New Year greetings to colleagues and seniors, and maintain social distancing. A day after releasing the Covid-19 guidelines for January, the State government has modified the night curfew restrictions in all urban ar-

eggregators like Ola and Uber) to and from airports, railway stations and bus terminals/stops for facilitating the movement of passengers by air, rail and road will be allowed. The staff of IT and ITeS companies will be allowed to move during the restricted

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## Bhubaneswar's Nandankanan zoo unveils six tiger cubs on foundation day

**BHUBANESWAR:** Six tiger cubs made their debut appearance in Nandankanan zoo on the occasion of its 62th foundation day on Wednesday. While three cubs were born to white tigress Bijaya on March 28 this year, three others were born to tigress Megha on April 14. On the occasion, the cubs were named through a draw. The cubs born to Bijaya were named Bansi, Rakesh and Rocky, while those born to Megha were named Abhay, Bibek and Sohini. The zoo authorities also released a radio transmitter tagged pangolin into the wild to study its behaviour and survival fac-

tors. Deputy director Sanjit Kumar said tagging of radio-transmitter on the scaly anteater will act as a connecting link between the captive and the wild Indian pangolin to get information on their ecology, dispersal pattern, home range and survival post-rehabilitation. PCCF and HoFF Sisir Kumar Ratho, PCCF Wildlife Shashi Paul, Zoo director Manoj V Nair were present. On the other hand, Nandankanan authorities said that the zoo and the botanical garden will remain closed from December 30 to January 3 as a precautionary measure against new Covid-19 variant Omicron.

## Rain pain for vegetable growers in Odisha's Bargarh district

**BARGARH:** Untimely rain coupled

with hailstorm over the last 48 hours has damaged vegetable crops in vast tracts of agricultural land in the district leaving hundreds of farmers in the lurch.

Similarly, farmer leader Hara Bania

This year, vegetables were cultivated over



with hailstorm over the last 48 hours has damaged vegetable crops in vast tracts of agricultural land in the district leaving hundreds of farmers in the lurch. Crops damaged due to unseasonal rains in Bargarh district | Express In the last two days, Bargarh has received an average rainfall of 72.85 mm of rainfall. The worst-hit is Ambabhona block which received 105.6 mm and 51 mm rainfall on Wednesday and Thursday respectively. The unseasonal showers have flooded fields and damaged vegetable crops that were ready for harvest. Dolamani Saha, a farmer of Ambabhona, said apart from mustard, farmers mostly grow

flower, tomato and brinjal. "They were hopeful of getting

said Sohela block has also received heavy rainfall. Vegetable

18,000 hectares (ha) of land in the district including around 2,000 ha in Ambabhona. Block development officer (BDO) of Ambabhona Sitaram Bhoi said the crop loss assessment has already started but since rainwater is yet to recede from the fields, the exercise is moving at a slow pace.



good prices for their produce but unfortunately, the untimely rainfall and hailstorm destroyed everything. At least 15 villages in the block have been badly affected due to the hailstorm," he claimed.

good prices for their produce but unfortunately, the untimely rainfall and hailstorm destroyed everything. At least 15 villages in the block have been badly affected due to the hailstorm," he claimed.

farmers have suffered huge losses as the hailstorm damaged the crops. Farmers who had cultivated crops like potato and ginger have also suffered losses as the fields were inundated due to the rains.

"On Wednesday, crops over around 105 ha were damaged due to the rains. We will get a clear picture in the next two to three days," the BDO added. Sources said paddy farmers who harvested their crops have also suffered losses due to the rain. Over 1.3 lakh paddy bags kept in the open in absence of storage facilities have got wet.




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# Promotion Bonanza for Prison Police

Bhubaneswar(KCN): On the eve of New Year celebration, Odisha Government has given promotion to State Prison Administration Officers, thanks to overdrive of DG Prisons and Correctional Services, Santosh Kumar Upadhyay.

vices for timely promotion. Accordingly Department of Home has promoted several deserving officers of the State Prison Administration on 31 December. According to the notification, Anusaya Jena, Deputy Direc-

Prisons, Sambalpur Range, Sambalpur. This will be effective from January 1, 2022. Similarly, two Superintendents of District Jails are promoted to the rank of Senior Superintendent in the Pay Matrix level-12 of ORSP Rules, 2017. The officers are Anil

Moreover, another two Jailors are also promoted to the rank of Superintendent in the Pay Matrix level-11 of ORSP Rules, 2017. The officers are Nirakar Parhi and Soubhagya Kumar Bal. Mr.Parhi, presently serving in the Special Jail, Rourkela has been posted to District Jail, Sundergarh. Similarly, Bal has been posted to District Jail, Dhenkanal and deputed as Superintendent, Model Convict Prison, Radharamanpur, Athagarh.

Laxmi Mukhi, Superintendent, District Jail, Sundargarh is here transferred and posted as such in District Jail, Balasore. Sarmistha Prusty, Jailor, District Jail, Phulbani is hereby kept in charge of Superintendent, District Jail, Phulbani in addition to her own duties until further order.

Rasmiprava Ray, Jailor, District Jail, Dhenkanal is kept in charge of Superintendent, District Jail, Dhenkanal in addition to her own duties until further order.

Mr.Sahoo has been posted as Dy. Director (Administration), M G A P & C S, Bhubaneswar while Mr.Raula is posted at Circle Jail, Baripada.



Anusaya Jena, Deputy Director (Administration), Mahatma Gandhi Academy of Prison & Correctional Services, Bhubaneswar.

While State Government has adopted Policy under 5T Mo Sarkar Charter to provide promotional avenues to the serving officers and employees in time, Mr.Upadhyay pursued the cases of officers serving in the Directorate of Prisons and correctional Ser-

tor (Administration), Mahatma Gandhi Academy of Prison & Correctional Services, Bhubaneswar is promoted to the rank of DIG of Prisons in the Pay Matrix level-13 of ORSP Rules, 2017. On promotion Anusaya is now posted as DIG of

Kumar Sahoo, District Jail, Dhenkanal and Sujit Kumar Raula District Jail, Balasore. On promotions, Mr.Sahoo has been posted as Dy. Director (Administration), M G A P & C S, Bhubaneswar while Mr.Raula is posted at Circle Jail, Baripada.

## No public gathering; political events with 100 persons ceiling: Odisha government

BHUBANESWAR: Amid the spread of Omicron in other parts of the country, Odisha government on Thursday banned social and religious gatherings, community feast and functions, exhibitions and trade fairs in January across the State. Keeping in view the three-tier Panchayat elections early next year, political gatherings were, however, allowed subject to a ceiling of not more than 100 persons in full compliance with Covid guidelines. As per the guidelines issued by the Office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), no picnic in parks, nature clubs, beaches and other spots will be allowed throughout the month. Exhibitions, trade fairs, expos and melas will also remain prohibited. However, official events will be allowed with prior approval of the government. Annual day and anni-

versary celebrations, excursions or picnics by educational institutions have been prohibited while cultural and dance programmes will also not be allowed in hotels, parks, malls, convention centres and kalyan mandaps. However, cultural gatherings, programmes including orchestra, jatra, dances-classical, folk and other permitted forms, competitions, open air theatres, drama, nukkad natak, street plays and other such performances have been allowed subject to a ceiling of 1,000 persons depending on the size of the ground. The organisers of such events have been directed to make arrangements for online booking of tickets as far as possible, and open sufficient number of counters to prevent crowding during physical ticket buying. Only those having double dose/final vaccination certifi-

cate or rapid antigen test (RAT)/RT-PCR negative report obtained within 72 hours prior to such functions will be allowed to go into auditoriums, assembly halls, cinema halls, theatres in halls and closed places for the shows, and also marriages and cultural functions being held indoor. Marriages, thread ceremony, funerals, last rites, etc., have been allowed with a ceiling of 250 persons (for the entire event) including hosts, guests, priests and catering and other support staff.

**Curbs** Political gatherings 100 persons max Open air cultural functions 1,000 persons max Marriages, last rites 250 persons max Cinema, theatre halls 50 pc capacity

**Banned** Religious gatherings, expos, fairs Picnic, excursion, annual functions

## Covid clouds world New Year party; India records highest single-day rise of 309 Omicron cases

The world began ushering in 2022 on Friday after another tumultuous and pandemic-ridden year capped by new restrictions, soaring case numbers, and a slight glimmer of hope for better times ahead. The past 12 months saw a new US president and a fresh Adele album, the first spectator-free Olympics, and dreams of democracy from Afghanistan to Myanmar and Hong Kong crushed by authoritarian regimes. But it was the pandemic -- now entering its third year -- that again dominated life for most of humankind. More than 5.4 million people have died since the coronavirus was first reported in central China in December 2019. Countless more have been sickened -- subjected to outbreaks, lockdowns, lock-ins and an alphabet spaghetti of PCR, LFT and RAT tests. The year 2021 started with hope, as life-saving vaccines were rolled out to around 60 percent of the world's population, although many of its poor still have limited access and some of its rich falsely believe the jabs are part of some ill-defined plot. As the year drew to a close, the

# Tender for Mining Blocks

Bhubaneswar: State Government has issued Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for e-auction of three mineral blocks for the second time as sufficient numbers of bidders have not come forward in the first attempt.

The Directorate of Mines in the Steel and Mines Department has issued the notice for grant of mining lease for Teherai iron ore & manganese block, Behera-Banjipali limestone

expired. Interested and eligible bidders will have to register themselves on the website of MSTC Limited ( <https://www.mstc.com/auctionhome/mlcl/index.jsp>). The model documents and summary of the blocks is also available on the website. On successful registration, they will obtain login ID and password, which is a necessity for participation in the e-

while 7 February, 2022 is the last date for submission of the bid. The tender fee for Teherai iron ore and manganese block is Rs 5 lakh and Rs 2 lakh for other two blocks.

The bidders who had purchased the tender document for Teherai block in response to the Notice Inviting Tender dated 7 July, 2021 and the tender documents for Behera-Banjipali & Naringapanga blocks

to the NITs issued earlier, the three mineral blocks have been put for auction under second attempt, sources said. These blocks are being auctioned under second attempt of auction as per clause (b) of sub-rule (11) of rule 9 of Mineral (Auction) Rules 2015 and amendments thereunder. Further, the State Government has debarred Tarama Apartment Private Limited from participating in



block and Naringapanga graphite block.

Out of the three mineral blocks, Behera-Banjipali and Naringapanga are virgin blocks while the lease of Teherai has

and Naringapanga graphite block. As per the NIT, the interested bidder can purchase the tender documents after payment of a tender fee on the e-auction platform's website till 2 February, 2022

in response to the NIT dated 22 October, 2021, will not require to pay tender fee again, it said. As the State Government has not received the required number of bidders in response

Teherai iron ore and manganese block auction process. This company has become defaulter as it has failed to take the mine even after successfully bidding, the sources said.

## e-office launched in Bhubaneswar's Utkal University



BHUBANESWAR: To bring in transparency in administration, the Utkal University launched e-office system on Wednesday. Launching the initiative, Vice-Chancellor of the university Sabita Acharya said that e-office is an effective tool for transparency, efficiency

and accountability. Under the 5T initiative, e-office which has been developed by National Informatics Centre (NIC) will be implemented by Centre for Modernising Government Initiative (CMGI) - a society under GA department. In February this year,

the Higher Education department had asked all its 12 public universities to implement the e-office system. Under it, digital workplaces will be created and files would be stored in the cloud as a result of which, they cannot be tampered with. Utkal University is the third varsity in the

State to implement the e-office system after Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, and Maharaja Sriram Chandra Bhanja Deo University in Baripada. CMGI project coordinator Pinaki Mohanty said that the e-Office is a very convenient system for the employees and it will reduce their work load.

emergence of the Omicron variant pushed the number of daily new Covid-19 cases past one



million for the first time, according to an AFP tally. France on Friday became the latest country to announce Omicron was now its dominant coronavirus strain. In Britain, the United States, and even Australia -- long a refuge from the pandemic -- the variant's prominence is driving

record new cases. To party, or not? Parts of the Pacific nation of Kiribati became the first to welcome in the new year from 1000 GMT. But from Seoul to San Francisco, celebrations have again been cancelled or curtailed as infections rise. In Sydney, which in normal times bills itself as the "New Year's Eve capital of the world", the vast harbour where people gathered to watch the city's fireworks was notably uncrowded. With tourists still unable to enter the country and many residents fearful of the rapid spread of Omicron, tens of thousands were estimated to have attended, rather than the one million-plus who normally flock to the foreshore. Still, the city saw New Year's Eve in with a bang -- igniting six tonnes of technicoloured fireworks, turning the Harbour Bridge rainbow-like. "I'm just trying to focus on the positive things that happened this year, rather than dwelling on all the bad things that have happened," 22-year-old medical student Melinda Howard told AFP as she waited for the show.

## GST tax hike on textiles put on hold: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman

NEW DELHI: Heeding to demands made by several states, the GST Council on Friday put on hold a decision to hike the tax rate on textiles to 12 per cent and referred to a panel of state ministers to recommend rate by February, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said. The panel, the highest decision-making body for indirect taxes, met under emergency provisions after states made a request for deferring the tax rate hike on textiles, from the current 5 per cent, to be effective from January 1, 2022. ALSO READ: GST Council defers rate hike on textiles, says Andhra Finance Minister

Currently, the tax rate on manmade fibre (MMF) is 18 per cent, MMF yarn 12 per cent, while fabrics are taxed at 5 per cent. In the Council meet in September, it was also decided that a 12 per cent uniform GST rate would apply on textile products, except cotton, including readymade garments.

Briefing reporters after the Council meeting called under 'emergency provisions', Sitharaman said the Council had in September decided to correct the duty inversion in textiles with effect from January 2022.

"From December onwards representations started coming and on December 29, letter also

### Odisha saw a united opposition but Naveen remained cool as cucumber

Continued from page-1

space with their high-octane campaign both in and outside Odisha Legislative Assembly against the BJD government over two murder cases.

The monsoon and the winter sessions of the Assembly were a complete washout as a determined opposition BJP and Congress paralysed the House over their demand for resignation of two ministers for their alleged involvement in two separate murder cases - one in January and the other, in October.

The Opposition put the Government on the defensive alleging involvement of Law Minister Pratap Jena in the murder of BJP leader Kulamani Baral and his associate Dibyasingha Baral, a charge denied by ruling BJD.

However, the kidnap and murder of Mamita Meher, a school teacher of Kalahandi later in the year, grabbed headlines across the nation, after the victim's charred remains were found buried on the premises of the institute where she worked.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik came under fire for giving protection to Minister of State for Home Dibya Shankar Mishra who was targeted for shielding Gobinda Sahu, prime accused in the case. Such was the intensity of Opposition campaign it forced him to order appointment of a retired judge to monitor the investigation. Known to drop ministers for being under 'cloud of suspicion', the CM though put his foot down on the two issues and refused to cast away the two from his Cabinet despite months long protest by the Opposition.

Interestingly, the Mamita Meher murder case brought the two opposition parties, BJP and Congress, on the same page and a rare unity was on display while fighting for the lady teacher in their own separate way.

Perhaps for the first time, the Opposition legislators worked in tandem with their respective parties while taking up the fight against the Government on a single issue.

The Chief Minister, whose image largely remained unblemished despite serious allegations leveled against two of his key ministers and adverse reports by two Central teams alleging large-scale irregularities in the rural housing scheme and paddy procurement, faced the Opposition's wrath but with his usual composure, he maintained his popularity by retaining the Pipili Assembly seat in the by-poll. An astute politician, Naveen, however, took the wind out of Opposition sails by announcing a slew of doles for different sections of the society ahead of the panchayat polls. The Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana smart health cards, direct cash benefits for house repair, livelihood assistance for a large section of the society and a spate of new projects kept him busy. The rattled Opposition parties are yet to figure out how to counter the juggernaut in the next bout of the rural polls.

Protests over murders

CM came under fire for protecting Minister Dibya Mishra

Monsoon, sessions of the Assembly were a complete washout as Oppn demanded ouster of 2 ministers

came from the Gujarat FM and therefore the emergency meeting (was called).

The decision of the emergency Council meeting today is that we retain the status quo and not go to 12 per cent, from 5 per cent, meaning don't do the correction now in case of textiles," she said.

Sitharaman said states also raised the issue of long-term ways by which the Council could look at correcting duty inversion and also have a plan for revenue generation.



"The decision of the Council was that the rate rationalisation committee would also look at textiles in their review, and submit the report by February which I agree to have it circulated to all ministers and post that to hold either at end February or sometime in March a Council meeting in which the committee's recommendation or report will be discussed," she said.

The Group of Ministers on rate rationalisation is headed by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, and also include Finance Ministers of West Bengal, Kerala and Bihar. Stating that every state agreed that there is a duty inversion in textiles and there is a need to correct it, Sitharaman said "the overriding push" was probably because a certain segment of the textile industry said it would immediately cause an increase in the price.

"That is why it has gone back to the committee to actually do a more in-depth study and come and present it to the Council," she said, adding there are many complexities in taxation of textiles. States like Gujarat, West Bengal, Delhi, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh and Andhra Pradesh have said they are not in favour of a hike in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rate on textiles to 12 per cent, from 5 per cent, with effect from January 1, 2022.

"The industry while representing, inter alia, felt that there could be a temptation of not coming into the formalised system and the immediate pressure to be in the realm of informal segment of the business. Also the second was that it would burden the lower end of the buyers," Sitharaman added.

The Council in its previous meeting on September 17 had also decided to correct the inverted duty structure in footwear and textile sectors. With effect from January 1, 2022, all footwear, irrespective of prices, will attract GST at 12 per cent. To a query on the impact of Omicron variant of coronavirus on the economy, Sitharaman said the spread at which it is spreading has made everybody sit and pause to look where it is going. She said the Prime Minister has reassured the nation that there is no need to panic, but "we have to follow all the protocols and has also announced vaccination programme for frontline workers again and made sure 15-18 years age group also get covered."

"With our levels of caution kept on board, youths getting covered with vaccines, with each of our efforts, we should be able to face it," she said.

### New DGP takes charge

Continued from page-1

priority apart from taking ahead the good work started by my predecessors on all fronts".

He said the Odisha Police has achieved milestones in containing the Maoist menace, adding cybercrime has emerged as a major challenge for law enforcers across the globe, as in the state.

Before leaving Odisha on a Central Deputation, Mr.Bansal had worked as the superintendent of police of Mayurbhanj and Sambalpur districts.

In his farewell message, former DGP Abhay thanked the people of Odisha for their cooperation in maintaining law and order.

"COVID-19 pandemic had been a testing time for all of us and we stood strong together to fight it. Bringing down Left-wing Extremism and organised crime has been possible because of the support of people," Abhay said, wishing everyone a happy and peaceful New Year 2022.

He was scheduled to retire in June this year, but his tenure was extended by the state government till December 31.

Meanwhile, the Chief Minister appointed Abhay as Chairman of the State Task Force for Narcotic drugs related issues in the State, in the rank and status of Chief Secretary.

## Miscreants loot Rs 3 lakhs cash from BJP leader's house in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR: around 2 am to asleep in another room. The miscreants

Cocking a snook at throw garbage when



Commissionerate Police, five armed miscreants stole Rs 3 lakh in cash and gold ornaments weighing 200 grams from the house of a BJP leader and business man Dinabandhu Das here in the wee hours of Thursday. Das, a civil contractor and into transport business, had gone outside his house at Bhotapada under Mancheswar

police limits at

### Land Rights for Slum Dwellers

Continued from page-1

Suresh Chandra Mahapatra.

About 26,164 employees of the non-government aided schools and Madrasas will receive the benefits of grant-in-aid with effect from 1 January, 2022, he said.

The Cabinet has also decided to provide land to OSHB and BDA for affordable housing on a free hold basis. The GA Department and Revenue Department has provided land to the Housing Board and BDA for development of residential and commercial projects.

The primary objective of such allotment of land is to achieve parity in distribution of this precious resource and to ensure that the housing and commercial requirement of space in respect of less privileged sections of population is not monopolized and exploited by the private sectors.

OSHB has implemented 10 projects while BDA has executed 6 projects over Government land allotted by GA Department & R & DM Department on lease basis.

The delay in payment of premium by OSHB and BDA attracted imposition of interest by GA & PG Department and R & DM Department which could not be paid because the housing/commercial units were constructed, sold & handed over to the allottees decades back.

The allottees, having paid the cost of housing/commercial units, are pressing hard for execution of lease deeds.

Now, the State Government has proposed to waive out the interest payable on delayed payment of premium to the tune of Rs14.71 crore (BDA-Rs.651.55 lakhs, OSHB-Rs.820.20 lakhs).

This initiative will benefit 5,235 allottees (3984 in respect of OSHB & 1251 relating to BDA) of 16 projects executed by OSHB & BDA and therefore resolve this long standing issue of execution of lease deeds in favour of the allottees, said Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra.

The amendment proposal in the Odisha Grama Panchayat Act, 1964, the Odisha Panchayat Samiti Act, 1959 and the Odisha Zilla Parishad Act, 1991 also got Cabinet approval.

The amendment aims at inserting provision of filing affidavits by the contesting candidates and provision of disaster management in the above three Acts.

Similarly, the Government can initiate penal action against those filing false affidavits.

Incorporation of the provisions of filing affidavit will help in fixing of accountability on the contesting candidates and bringing them under justice in case they are found to have mentioned false information in their affidavits, said the Chief Secretary.

threatened the family of dire consequences if they informed the police.

"We suspect at least three other anti-socials were standing outside the house. I saw one miscreant was wearing a balaclava, one had covered his face using a towel and another had put a helmet on his head. Two others were coming inside and going out frequently," Monalisha said.

On receiving complaint, a case was registered and investigation launched, said Manchewar police. As per police data, 547 robbery cases were reported till November end this year and 393 cases of them were closed during the period.

### New Year Gift for Teachers

Continued from page-1

recruitment of Junior Librarians in Government Colleges of the State, it is necessary to bring the following amendments in aforesaid rules, Mr.Mahapatra said.

Proposal for amendment of the Odisha Government Colleges Laboratory Assistant-cum-Store Keeper (Method of Recruitment and Condition of Service) Rules, 2017 also got cabinet nod today.

The recruitment and conditions of services of Laboratory Assistant-cum-Store Keeper are being governed as per provisions made in Odisha Government College Laboratory Assistant-cum-Store Keeper (Method of Recruitment and Condition of Service) Rules, 2017. In order to expedite recruitment of Laboratory Assistant-cum-Store Keeper in Government Colleges of the State, it is necessary to bring amendments in aforesaid rules.

The State Cabinet has also decided to bring restructuring in the Rural Works Organization. Keeping in view the increasing workload, expanding budget and the challenges owing to implementation of the flagship programmes like, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Mukhya Mantri Sadak Yojana (MMSY), Biju Setu Yojana (BSY), implementation of construction of bridges to bridge up all the missing-links on roads of RD Department, construction of Government Buildings of own Department as well as Higher Education, Revenue, Home Departments in rural areas such as OAVs, ITIs, etc. and projects taken up under DMF, OMBADC, Government in Rural Development Department have been contemplating structuring of the Rural Works Organization with creation of new Circles I divisions as well as creation/abolition of posts under Engineering cadres.

Accordingly, the State Government has decided to create a new RW Circle in Rayagada and 3 new RW Divisions in Udala, Bansapal and Bonai. Similarly 8 more Quality Control Divisions are being created to strengthen the monitoring and supervision. It is proposed to create 314 R.W. Sub-Divisions coterminous with 314 Blocks and to create 10 project Sub Divisions in DMF/OMBADC Blocks. Commensurate with the above restructuring, proportionate increase / decrease in different officiating posts have been worked out to place appropriate numbers of personnel at field level.

A total number of 142 extra posts have been created at different levels of Engineering Cadre starting from AEE to EIC of RW organization, Mr.Mahapatra added.

## Delighted to see players wanting to embrace new style of play: ATK Mohun Bagan coach Juan Ferrando

PANAJI: ATK Mohun Bagan head coach Juan Ferrando was pleased with the way his team executed their game plan during the 2-1 victory over his former team FC Goa in the Indian Super League (ISL) match at the P.J.N Stadium in Fatroda, Goa on Wednesday. Two right-footed goals, one each from Liston Colaco and Roy Krishna, were enough to secure three points for ATK Mohun Bagan as FC Goa, slumped to their first defeat in four games. Ferrando was earlier FC Goa's head coach who has recently joined ATK Mohun Bagan. "I'm feeling happy because our team ATK Mohun Bagan got three points, but it's normal. And a part of me is upset because I know the opponent. But I'm a professional coach. I'm thinking about football," said Ferrando in a post-match press conference as per the ISL website.

"I think every goal is important for the club. Our target is to score in the last part of the game with our attack and we need to improve a lot. But every goal is important because every goal is a great opportunity to get three points," he added. The head coach further said the team players and the coaching staff helped him a lot when he came into the team mid-season. "When you have the fresh season, it's perfect. You have time. Maybe you need double sessions, you stop the training and continue working one hour more. When you are in this moment, you know that some players are at risk of injuries," said Ferrando. "There are a lot of problems, but I'm happy because the coaching staff and the rest of the club try to help me a lot. Also, most important, players want to work in this style and methodology, for me, it's a pleasure," he added.

## India steamroll Sri Lanka by nine wickets to win eighth Under-19 Asia Cup title

DUBAI: India reaffirmed their supremacy in the Under-19 Asia Cup with a record eighth title as they hammered Sri Lanka by nine wickets

in a rain-hit summit showdown on Friday. The Indian bowlers were all over Sri Lanka, who were gasping at 74 for seven in 33 overs, when heavy rain lashed the Dubai International Cricket Stadium and stopped play for more than two hours. It became a 38-over-a-side contest when play resumed with Sri Lanka limping to 106 for nine.



India were set a revised 102-run target in 38 overs via DLS method which they reached rather comfortably in 21.3 overs with opener Angkrish Raghuvanshi scoring an unbeaten 56 off 67 balls. India's only loss in the competition came against arch-rivals Pakistan who lost to Sri Lanka in the semi-finals. The tournament pro-

vided valuable game time for the Yash Dhull-led side ahead of the U-19 World Cup, beginning in the West Indies from January 14. Ravi Kumar made the ball talk though the former was a tad unlucky to not get a wicket. Left-arm pacer Ravi got the first wicket of

the match by removing Chamindu Wickramasinghe in the fourth over. The left-hander opener went for a big hoick over mid wicket but ended up mistiming it straight into the hands of Raj Bawa at third man. Wickramasinghe's opening partner Shevon Daniel tried to pull Bawa but the ball got big on him, taking a faint edge to wicket keeper Aaradhya Yadav to leave Sri Lanka at 15 for two in the 11th over. India looked a far superior team. Hangargekar was the most impressive pacer in the first 10 overs, generating good pace that hurried the batters besides extracting movement off the pitch. The Sri Lanka batters looked completely at sea against the Indian

spinners, be it fast bowlers or the spin pairing of Kaushal Tambe (2/23) and Vicky Ostwal (3/11). Both off-spinner Tambe and left-arm spinner Ostwal got the odd ball to turn sharply. Ostwal got two in one to leave Sri Lanka in dire straits at 57 for seven. Southpaw Dunit Wellagle attempted a slog sweep to break the shackles but ended up getting caught in the deep. Two balls later, Ranuda Somarathne missed Ostwal's arm ball on the back foot, trapping him in front of the stumps. With India set to bowl out Sri Lanka for a sub-100 total, heavy rain stopped play. In the five overs Sri Lanka had, they managed 32 runs for the loss of two wickets. Hangargekar got a much deserved wicket on the last ball of the innings with Raghuvanshi taking a diving catch at the square leg boundary to dismiss Matheesha Pathirana.

## Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova tests positive for COVID-19

MELBOURNE: French Open finalist Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova has tested positive for COVID-19, casting doubt on her place in the Australian Open beginning January 17.

it's safe for everyone." Pavlyuchenkova is coming off one of her best seasons. After making her first Grand Slam final in June, a loss to Barbora Krejickova at



The 30-year-old Russian confirmed she has the coronavirus and is isolating after arriving in Australia on Tuesday. "I was fully vaccinated and was preparing for the start of the season in Dubai," Pavlyuchenkova said on social media Thursday. "But we live in a very difficult and unpredictable time. Right now I am in complete isolation, in a special hotel and following all the protocols under the supervision of doctors. "Now it's important to take care of yourself and the health of others. I'll be back on court when

Roland Garros. Pavlyuchenkova is now ranked a career-high 11th. She led Russia to the Billie Jean Cup, formerly the Fed Cup, in November, and in August teamed with Andrey Rublev to win mixed doubles gold for Russia at the Tokyo Olympics. Pavlyuchenkova, whose best result at Melbourne Park is reaching the quarterfinals in 2017, 2019 and 2020, is still searching for her first major singles title. The opening event of the women's season is the WTA 500 in Adelaide, starting on Sunday.



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