

## PM's security is most important, says Congress

NEW DELHI(KCN): After a major security breach on Prime Minister's convoy, the Congress reacting to the series of events, said the security of the Prime Minister is foremost and Punjab Government has set up an inquiry on the whole issue.

Congress spokesperson Gaurav Vallabh react-

Earlier, the Prime Minister landed at Bhasiana Air Force station in Bathinda town from where he was supposed to travel to Ferozpur by road. As per the Ministry of Home Affairs' statement on the PM Modi's Punjab visit, "Today morning PM landed at Bathinda from where he was to go to National Martyrs Memorial at



ing to reports said, "We have lost two leaders and we know that security is a most important issue of the Prime Minister."

The Congress sources said that the last-minute change in program or late information by the MHA to the state government may have led to the lapse and it will be ascertained by the report. The security breach of the Prime Minister is unpardonable and the Punjab government has sought a report from officials.

Vallabh said the Prime Minister was scheduled to fly on a chopper but the program was changed last minute so the report will ascertain if it was a lapse on the part of the MHA or state officials.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday cancelled his visit to Ferozpur town in Punjab, where he was scheduled to lay the foundation stones of Rs 42,750 crore projects, at the last minute due to a security breach.

## Odisha child commission voices concern over Centre's bid to raise marriage age of women to 21 years

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSPCPCR) has expressed concern over the Centre's bid to raise the minimum marriage age of girls to 21 years, pointing out that several schemes and the POCSO Act have the scope of extending support to children only up



to 18 years of age. It also noted that the move, if implemented, will override existing customs, practices and usage. In a letter to Vinay P Sahasrabudhe, the chairperson of Parliament Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth & Sports, the OSCPCR on Tuesday suggested that

## Swosti's first 5-star luxury beach resort has Puri address

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Picture yourself in a sky lounge bar overlooking the resplendent Bay of Bengal. Grand food court,

Premium Beach Resorts. The first five star premium luxury beach resort of Swosti Group - work for

project. There is a target to open the property by January 2024", said CMD of Swosti Group JK Mohanty. To be set



open air landscaped lawns on rooftops and much more is on the anvil as the glowing beachscape of Puri will soon have a new and luxurious highlight at Sipasurubuli where Swosti Group is coming up with its Swosti

which started last week - promises to provide an experience of opulence. The project would come up over two acres of land.

"We have obtained all clearances from government bodies required for the resort

up with an investment of Rs 160 crore, the luxury resort primarily aims at meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions (MICE) and wedding tourism. And to meet its aim, it will have mega conference and wed-

ding facilities with large open air landscaped lawns at different heights of the building. The property would be 13-floor high excluding the basement and ground floor.

The list of attractions on offer is a long one, the biggest highlight being a sky lounge bar 150 ft above ground level overlooking the sea. A whopping 125 luxury rooms, including five premium luxury large suites on the 12th floor, will make up the centrally air-conditioned property. A grand food court will serve various cuisines.

Swosti Group has also planned a special gaming zone for both

## Omicron variant fuels record number of infections in Croatia

ZAGREB(KCN): The omicron variant of the coronavirus has fuelled the highest number of daily new infections in Croatia since the start of the pandemic, officials said Wednesday, as other Balkan countries also reported a sharp rise in cases.

A total of 8,587 new cases were confirmed in the past 24 hours in Croatia, which presents a 50% rise since last week, Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic said during a government session.

"The numbers show that omicron is spreading, we know it is a highly contagious variant that is present here," he said.

"This is a warning how important it is to use everything at our disposal for protection from coronavirus,"

people have been fully vaccinated so far.

A steep surge in new infections also has been reported in other

the delta virus variant was dominant.

Croatia's neighbour Slovenia on Wednesday reported a seven-week high of 4,068



Plenkovic said authorities will monitor the situation and discuss possible tightening of rules in the coming days.

He said about 63% of adults in the population of 4.2 million

Balkan nations following the Christmas and New Year's holidays and as the omicron variant apparently takes over.

The low-vaccinated region was badly hit during the fall when

cases for the past 24 hours in what the official STA news agency described as a new wave fueled by Omicron.

In Montenegro, some doctors criticised the

## Covid: Odisha CM asks officials to get all hospitals ready with beds, ICUs in 10 days

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday, January 4, 2022, asked officials

the next 10 days. Reviewing the Covid situation through video conferencing, the Chief Minister

least equal to the peak period of the second wave of the pandemic, he said. Covid cases surge

achieve the vaccination target with focus on those in the 15 to 18 age group. He urged people to abide by all Covid protocols and cooperate with the State government so that harsh measures can be avoided. He said that the government will have to impose some restrictions to check the spread of the virus but these should not affect the livelihood of the people.



to expedite preparations to deal with the Omicron situation and ready all hospitals and necessary infrastructure within

said that adequate hospital beds and ICUs should be ready immediately. The number of beds and ICUs should be at

across districts in Odisha. The Chief Minister also asked the officials to work in a campaign mode to

Bhubaneswar DCP office sealed; 31 students test Covid positive in NISER. During the second

## Cabinet Clears Temple Act Amendment

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The State Cabinet headed by Chief Min-

ister Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday approved amendments to Shree Jagannath

Temple Act 1954 for the settlement of temple land-related

an ordinance to amend certain provisions in the Act, said temple administration, Management Committee, District



Collector and concerned officials for sale, lease of temple

issues. The Cabinet, which was held virtually, has decided to bring

Law Minister Pratap Jena. The Cabinet has delegated powers to

Collectors and concerned officials for sale, lease of temple

# Why art has the power to change the world

One of the great challenges today is that we often feel untouched by the problems of others and by global issues like climate change, even when we could easily do something to

As an artist I have travelled to many countries around the world over the past 20 years. On one day I

**Olafur Eliasson**



help. We do not feel strongly enough that we are part of a global community, part of a larger we. Giving people access to data most

may stand in front of an audience of global leaders or exchange thoughts with a foreign minister and discuss the construction of an

responsibilities may come as a surprise to some – is to help people not only get to know and understand something with their minds but also to feel it emotionally and physically. By doing this, art can mitigate the numbing effect created by the glut of information we are faced with today, and motivate people to turn thinking into doing.

Source: Studio Olafur Eliasson  
Engaging with art is not simply a solitary event. The arts and culture represent one of the few areas in our society where people can come together to share an experience even if they see the world in radically dif-

solar energy for all – Little Sun responds to the need to develop sustainable, renewable energy by producing and distributing affordable solar-powered lamps and mobile chargers, focusing especially on reaching regions of the world that do not have consistent access to an electrical grid. At the same time, Little Sun is also about making people feel connected to the lives of others in places that are far away geographically. For those who pick up a Little Sun solar lamp, hold it in their hands, and use it to light their evening, the lamp communicates a feeling of having resources and of being powerful. With Little Sun you tap into the energy of the sun to power up with solar energy. It takes some-



ferent ways. The important thing is not that we agree about the experience that we share, but that we consider it worthwhile sharing an experience at all. In art and other forms of cultural expression, disagreement is accepted and embraced as an essential ingre-

thing that belongs to all of us – the sun – and makes it available to each of us. This feeling of having personal power is something we can all identify with. Little Sun creates a community based around this feeling

Art helps us identify with one another and expands our notion of we – from the local to the global

Olafur Eliasson  
Artist



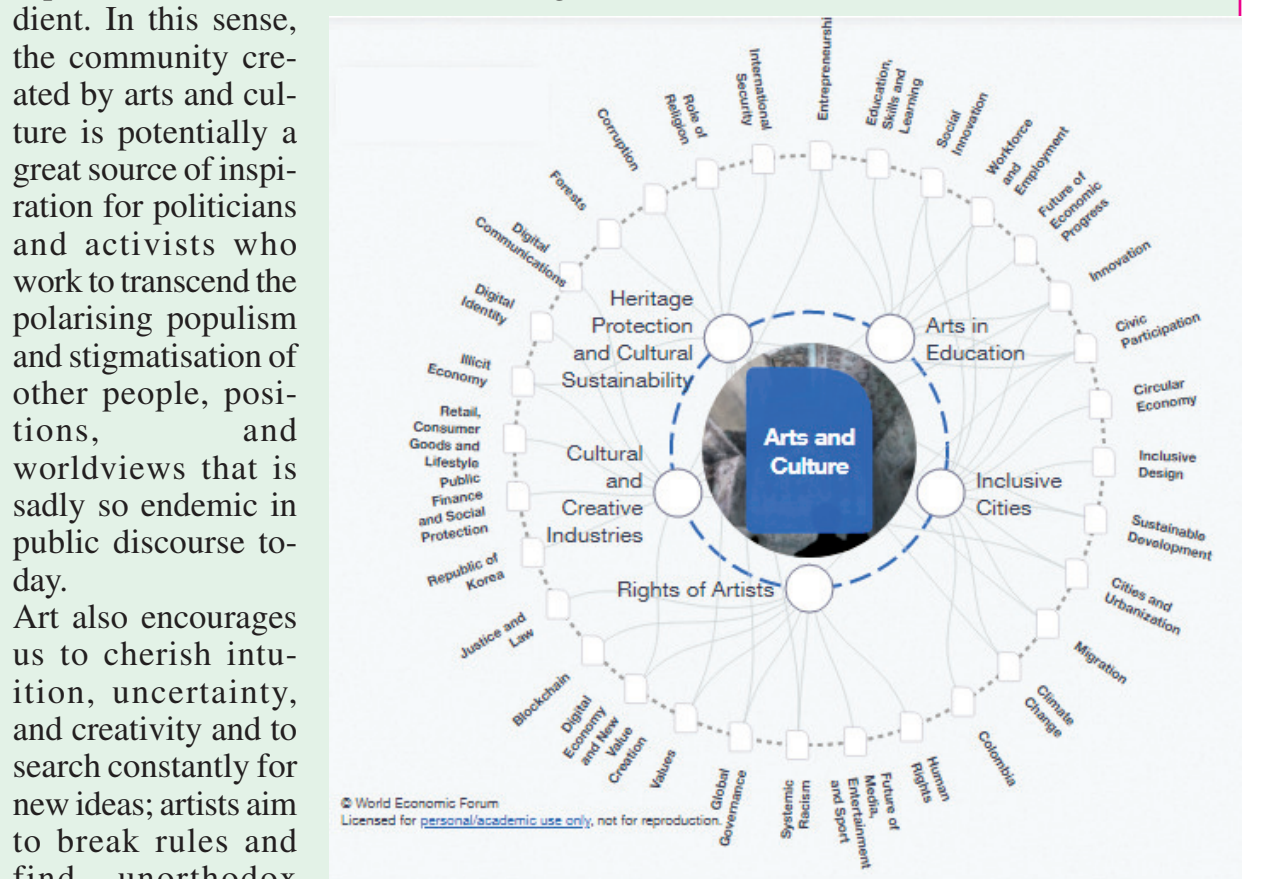
often leaves them feeling overwhelmed and disconnected, not empowered and poised for

artwork or exhibition with local craftsmen the next. Working as an artist has brought me into contact with a wealth of outlooks on the world and introduced me to a vast range of truly differing perceptions, felt ideas, and knowledge. Being able to take part in these local and global exchanges has profoundly affected the artworks that I make, driving me to create art that I hope touches people everywhere.



action. This is where art can make a difference. Art does not show people what to do, yet engaging with a good work of art can connect you to your senses, body, and mind. It can make the world felt. And this felt feeling may spur thinking, engagement, and even action.

Most of us know the feeling of being moved by a work of art, whether it is a song, a play, a poem, a novel, a painting, or a spatio-temporal experiment. When we are touched, we are moved; we are transported to a new place that is, nevertheless, strongly rooted in a physical experience, in our bodies. We become aware of a feeling that may not be unfamiliar to us but which we did not actively focus on before. This transformative experience is what art is constantly seeking. I believe that one of the major responsibilities of artists – and the idea that artists have



ways of approaching contemporary issues. My friend Ai Weiwei, for example, the great Chinese artist, is currently making a temporary studio on the island of Lesbos to draw attention to the plight of the millions of migrants trying to enter Europe right now and also to create a point of contact that takes us beyond an us-and-them mentality to a broader idea of what constitutes we. This is one way that art can engage with the world to change the world.

Source: Studio Olafur Eliasson  
Little Sun, a solar energy project and social business that I set up in 2012 with engineer Frederik Ottesen, is another example of what I believe art can do. Light is so incredibly important to me, and many of my works use light as their primary material. The immaterial qualities of light shape life. Light is life. This is why we started Little Sun. On a practical level, we work to promote

that spans the globe. I am convinced that by bringing us together to share and discuss, a work of art can make us more tolerant of difference and of one another. The encounter with art – and with others over art – can help us identify with one another, expand our notions of we, and show us that individual engagement in the world has actual consequences. That's why I hope that in the future, art will be invited to take part in discussions of social, political, and ecological issues even more than it is currently and that artists will be included when leaders at all levels, from the local to the global, consider solutions to the challenges that face us in the world today.

Olafur Eliasson is one of the recipients of this year's Crystal Awards, presented at the Annual Meeting in Davos. You can follow him on Twitter via @olafureliasson

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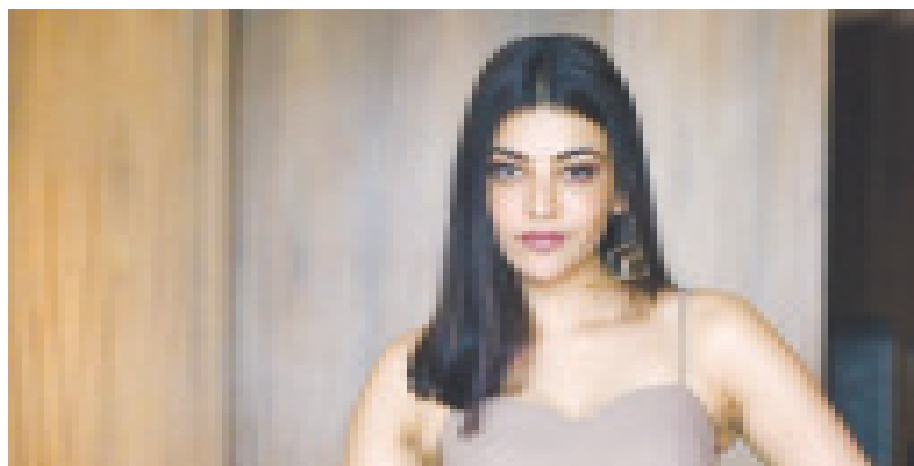
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# Signing 'Indian 2' has been a step up in my career, says Kajal Aggarwal



**CHENNAI (KCN):** Actress Kajal Aggarwal, who teams up with actor-filmmaker Kamal Haasan for the first time in the upcoming Tamil film "Indian 2", says signing the project has been a step up in

her over a decade-long career.

Last seen on screen in Telugu film "Kavacham", Kajal has already begun prepping for her role in "Indian 2".

"I'm really thrilled to be part of

the project. I'm quite excited about my role and the skills I will get to learn on the job. I see signing 'Indian 2' as a step up in my career," Kajal told IANS along the sidelines of the launch of beverage brand 7Up's

new campaign, 7Up Ponneram.

Ponneram translates to golden times in English. Kajal said her career's golden times started when she signed S.S. Rajamouli's "Magadheera".

"My golden times started when I signed 'Magadheera'. I have seen many ups and downs in my profession but it was only after I did 'Magadheera' did my career catapult to the next league. It earned me a lot of recognition which I enjoy even today," she said.

Talking about what excited her most about the association with 7Up, Kajal said: "It's a brand a lot of us can easily identify and relate with. I like the fact that it's a very clear beverage. It's also a drink that lets you take a step back and chill. I treat success or failure by taking a step back and I believe it gives you a lot of clarity."

On the career front, Kajal is keenly looking forward to the release of "Paris Paris", the Tamil remake of Kangana Ranaut's "Queen".

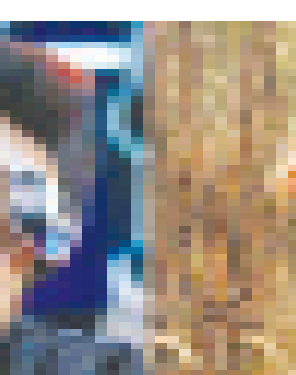
"Paris Paris" will be Kajal's first release of 2019.

"When I was offered the 'Queen' remake, I saw it as a story that can be explored in many languages. It's a simple story of a simple girl that I could connect with on many levels. I'm sure there are a lot of girls across different parts of Tamil Nadu who will relate to this story and I'd be glad if this film empowers them," she added.

# From 2.0 to Raazi, top 10 Indian movies based on worldwide gross

2018 has been an eventful year for Indian cinema. From Sanju to Sarkar, the industry faced a row

of controversies. Yet some movies shined amid the storm.



declared as 'double blockbuster' film. The movie showed the different phases of the controversial

ing Rs 293 crore. 4. Race 3: 'Our business is our business, none of your business' line

and the government freebie schemes.. A few scenes were deleted from the movie too. The matter was

ceived hilarious reactions on social media as well. Later, Aamir Khan apologised for failing to entertain

but it leaves you with a thought to ponder. 9. Rangasthalam:

With the right mix of content for a commercial flick, Rangasthalam made it big in the box office by collecting Rs 151 crore. The story is about how a young man with hearing impairment and his brother decide to dethrone their village's president who's been ruling the village for 30 years.

10. Raazi:

An adaptation of Harinder Sikka's 'Calling Sehmat' novel, Raazi is based on the true story of an Indian spy, who gets married into a Pakistani family of military officials to spy on Pakistan during the Indo-Pak war of 1971. It's easily Alia Bhatt's career best. The movie minted Rs 121 crore in the box office against the budget of Rs 30 crore.

It's been a great year for Indian cinema which took us on a journey of emotions, from laughter to tears, sometimes of joy. Though a lot of films didn't make it to this list, good films silently made it into the hearts of the audience.

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

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

On Tuesday, an 18-member panel, including Akshay Kumar, Karan Johar, Ajay Devgn, Siddharth Roy Kapur, Ritesh Sidhwani and CBFC chief Prasoon

Joshi, met Modi to discuss how to take the entertainment industry to the next stage.

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

of controversies. Yet some movies shined amid the storm.

According to IMDb, here's the list of ten movies that performed well in the box office last year.

1. 2.0:

It won't be an exaggeration to call 2.0 as India's 'Superhero' movie. True to that, Kollywood and Bollywood superheroes Rajinikanth and Akshay Kumar played the lead roles in the movie. The movie has so far earned over Rs 700 crore worldwide already and is still running successfully in theatres. Directed by Shankar, who's known to make magnificent movies, 2.0 comes with a social message for people on why one should reduce the use of mobile phones. Also, it is the first Tamil film to enter the 700 crore club. If you haven't watched the film yet, book your tickets right away!

2. Sanju:

Sanjay Dutt's biopic 'Sanju' minted Rs 340 crore at the box office and was

actor Sanjay Dutt, which really didn't go well with some organisations. RSS openly criticised the movie in their mouth-piece 'Panchjanya.' However, the movie became a huge hit in no time. It's definitely Ranbir Kapoor's best work ever. The movie was a comeback for both the reel and real Sanjus.

3. Padmaavat:

Initially scheduled to be released in 2017, the movie was caught in a row of controversies and finally got released early this year in January. Set in medieval Rajasthan, the story revolves around the life of Queen Padmavathi, which drew the flak from right-wing groups. Unlike the claims by the religious fanatics, the movie actually portrayed queen Padmavati in the best light. However, the film's team was asked to remove a few scenes from the movie before its release. Despite the fuss, the movie became a blockbuster at the box office, earn-

ing Rs 293 crore. 4. Race 3: 'Our business is our business, none of your business' line

later settled in Madras HC. It was much hyped that actor Vijay may begin his political career after this movie. Sarkar was well received by the Tamil audience and it made Rs 151 crore in the box office.

6. Baaghi 2:

This Tiger Shroff-Disha Patani starrer failed to impress audience due to its poor storyline line. Despite that, the movie minted Rs 161 crore in the box office and became a blockbuster. The story is about an army man trying to save his ex-lover's kidnapped daughter. The Baaghi series will have a third part 'Baaghi 3,' which will be out on March 6, 2020.

7. Thugs of Hindostan:

The film set in the 18th century earned Rs 130 crore in the box office against the 275 crore budget ending up a huge disaster at the box office despite having strong star cast including Aamir Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Katrina Kaif. The film re-

people. Even Katrina Kaif, Fatima Sana Shaikh expressed their disappointment. 8. Badhaai Ho: Badhaai Ho is nothing but fun! Made at a 30 crore budget, the movie became a mega-blockbuster, minting Rs 136 crore in the box office. This unconventional story is about a 25-year-old man facing embarrassment in society as his mother gets pregnant. Watching this movie will hurt your belly from laughing

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# Toy making in neo normal: No child's play is this

No child's play is this. While toys are certainly meant for the children and for child's play, being part of the market that encompasses toy makers is certainly not child's play. Toys have

global exports by 2025. There is high growth potential for India in exports of

**Ritwik Mukherjee**

plastic toys and board games in the US, EU and Middle East among other markets. According to IMARC Group, the Indian toys market reached a value of \$1.23 billion in 2020. The market is expected to grow at a CAGR of 12.2 per cent during 2021-2026.

RM: What is the share of organised and unorganised sectors on this industry? Which sector is growing faster?

Gupta: I would say that nearly 60 per cent of India's 3,500 toy manufacturers operate in the unorganised sector, from small units with sometimes as few as five employees. This means that the unorganised sector is larger in terms of number of players, but in terms of value, organised sector is much

toys' overall export potential is estimated to be in the range of \$0.9 mn – \$4.4 bn by focusing on high value toy exports to the US, EU and Middle East.

RM: How is Funtoys growing?

Gupta: Fortunately Funtoys managed to grow even during challenging times. We have been growing steadily. Our physical retail sales and online sales-both have been growing significantly, thanks to continuous ideation, innovation, designing and re-designing. Starting out of our family home at Jadavpur in South Kolkata and supported ably by my wife Bisistha Gupta and two sons, the company has now spread its wings in Orissa, Mumbai, Pune with retail presence all across the country.

RM: What would your thrust areas go forward?

Gupta: We will continue to focus on soft toys, which is our forte and will continue to lay thrust on innovative product designing, developing characters and reach out to our customers with new and innovative products, which are safe for the kids.

RM: What is your take on the growth prospects of AI-enabled, and other educative toys?

Gupta: Tech Infused future toys - Artificial

RM: How has the pandemic impacted the soft toys industry?

Gupta: Due to the lockdown and an increase

intelligence, 3D printing, and augmented reality especially in STEM toys are defining the future of toys.

in import duty on toys, supply of Chinese toys to India has reduced, said manufacturers. But at the same time, demand for toys has increased in the past three to four months because children are locked up at home and are demanding more toys. All these factors have led to about 25 per cent surge in domestic demand for toys, which we are trying to meet by scaling up production. But it will take us some time to do that.

RM: Would dependence on China eventually come down?

Gupta: Ironically, a large piece of the Indian toy market pie is taken by China as 70 per cent of India's imported toys, reportedly come from the dragon country. In February 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the country's first toy fair, with over 1000 virtual stalls, webinars by state governments, and knowledge sessions by experts, to boost the sector. He pushed the 'Vocal for Local Toys' agenda and said that most Indian toys are built out of natural and eco-friendly materials. India should make an effort to make minimal use of plastic in toys and use such material that can be recycled. The Prime Minister emphasised the need to increase local production of toys and increase India's share in the global toy market pegged at Rs 7 lakh crore. If things move the way it has been envisaged, dependence on China will certainly come down.

India has limited manufacturing capability in battery operated, electronic and technology-based toys. These can be scaled up.

Indian toy makers, at present, lack equipment to make electric toys. For this Indian toy makers need to import machines from S Korea and Japan and right now they are expensive to get with a 34 per cent import duty. If the government reduces the duty, we can start making electric toys as well. They have got a huge market.

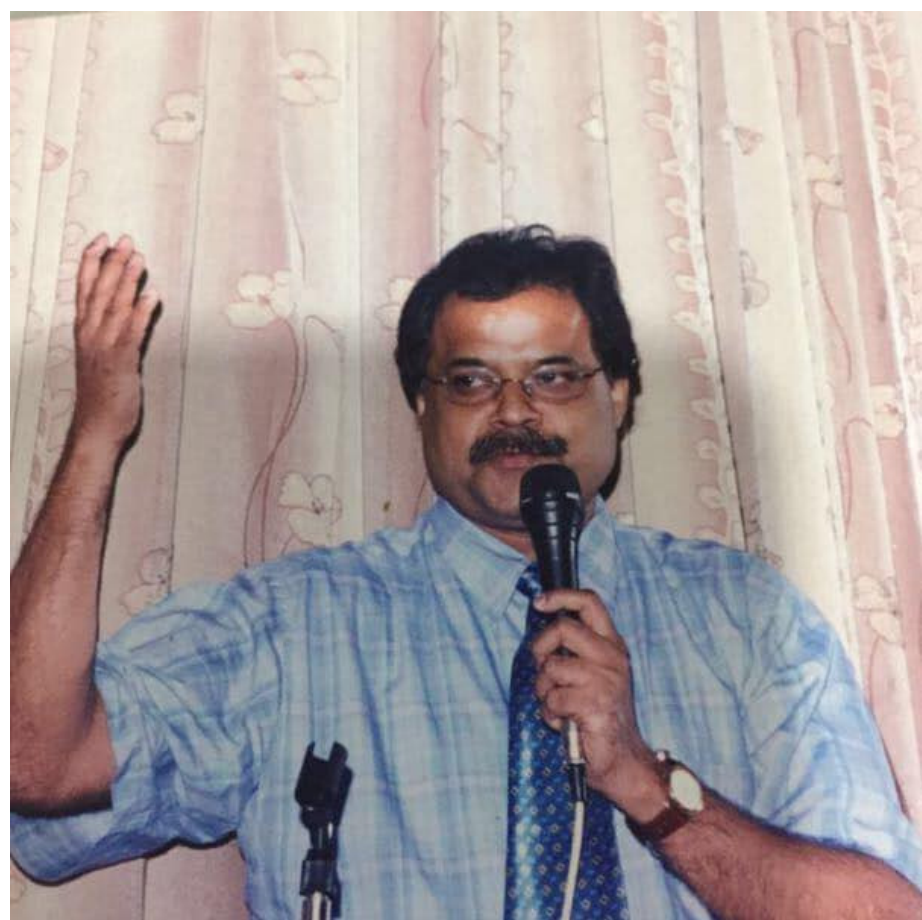


been an integral part of Indian culture and heritage for more than 5000 years. While the desire to play is as unabated today as ever before, the global toy industry has come a long way. Digital & technology advancement in toys is leading to rising application of Artificial Intelligence, especially in STEM Toys. India can also scale up its capacities and capabilities in technology-based toy in medium to long term period with a little bit of support from the government.

Speaking to Ritwik Mukherjee, Lob Gupta, founder-director and chief executive officer, Fantasy Creations, makers of popular FunToys brand of soft toys, and former president, West Bengal Toy Association, shares his thoughts on where



much higher. Besides, these unorganised sector often don't have the capital and where-withal to suddenly increase production. Therefore organised sector is growing much faster.



the Indian toys industry is heading.

Excerpts:

RM: How big is the overall toys industry in India? At what rate is it growing?

Gupta: If a recent FICCI-KPMG report is to be believed, the Indian toy market, which is currently estimated at \$1 billion, has the potential to double itself by 2025 (\$2 billion). India could also target a 2 per cent share of

much higher. Besides, these unorganised sector often don't have the capital and where-withal to suddenly increase production. Therefore organised sector is growing much faster.

RM: What is the share of India in global toys export? Is it growing? How can it grow faster?

Gupta: The overall global toy market is estimated to be \$95 billion. Significantly, as high as 70 per cent of this sourced from China. China has predominantly been the main source market. Average amount spent per child on toys worldwide is \$50-69. In India it is only \$3. Although India's toy export has come down from \$239 million in 2019 to \$224 million in 2020,

thanks mostly to pandemic and lockdown, there is huge scope for growth, thanks to huge cost competitiveness and advantages that India has.

There is no doubt that there is high export potential in toys such as dolls made of plastic and wood. India also has the potential to be a major hub for electronic toy exports such as STEM toys, video game consoles, etc. Indian



## Old Airport Road project ready by March

**BENGALURU:** After overcoming numerous hurdles, two out of three underpasses of the signal-free corridor on Old Airport Road, connecting Vellara Junction with Hope Farm

Tunnel Road and Suranjan Das Road. The project was delayed due to legal issues in connection with tree-cutting, land issues with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)

tion, and all the water utilities have been shifted. We ensured there was no disruption in water supply to any of the HAL establishments. Excavation work will be carried out next to

underpass will take much longer. "Work has come to a standstill after two retaining walls were constructed due to issues with ISRO. Two more retaining walls need to be built oppo-



Junction, is set to be completed by March-end this year. It will reduce travel time for the public commuting between Domlur and Marathahalli, and offer relief to motorists using Old Airport Road, which has frequent traffic snarls. The Rs 19.5-crore project running to a length of nearly 17.5km involves construction of underpasses at Kundalahalli, Wind

and later, the pandemic. A minor land issue with Indian Space Research Organisation is ongoing. RNS Infrastructure Pvt Limited is carrying out the work for BBMP. The latest deadline of September 2021 was also missed. A senior BBMP official said, "Our major issues have been sorted out now. We have restarted work at Suranjan Das Junc-

create ramps and install a central box in the middle." One ramp will run to 85 metres, while another would run to 135 metres, while the box will extend to 50 metres. "Traffic will be diverted through the newly-built service roads," he said. Kundalahalli and Suranjan Das underpasses will be ready by March-end. However, the Wind Tunnel

site the ISRO campus. They want the road width here to run to 6 metres, while the width we planned is 5 metres. We requested them to part with land but they are not ready to do so," another official explained. The real problem with the Wind Tunnel underpass is that traffic needs to be completely closed and cannot be diverted, he added.

## Kazakhstan sees 'nation-scale internet blackout' amid protests

**MOSCOW:** Kazakhstan on Wednesday was seeing a "nation-scale internet blackout" likely in response to unprecedented unrest in the Central Asian nation, a web monitoring group said. "Kazakhstan is now in the midst of a nation-scale internet blackout after a day of mobile internet disruptions and partial restrictions," the NetBlocks monitor tweeted. "The incident is likely to severely limit coverage of escalating anti-government protests." AFP correspondents in Kazakhstan had earlier said that internet connection was intermittent, and that messenger apps Telegram, Signal and

WhatsApp were all unavailable. The correspondents were unreachable on their mobile phones on Wednesday evening. Protests triggered by a New Year energy price increase have swept across the ex-Soviet country, in a rare challenge to the authoritarian government. Kazakhstan's leadership tolerates little real opposition and has been accused of silencing independent voices and media. Earlier Wednesday, protesters stormed the mayor's office in the country's largest city Almaty and appeared to have seized control of the building.

## Neil Nongkynrih, founder of Shillong Chamber Choir, dies at 51

**GUWAHATI:** Neil Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma have lost a gem today," Sangma peace!" The Shillong Cham-



cert pianist who was the founder, mentor and conductor of the famous Shillong Chamber Choir, passed away in Mumbai on Wednesday. The 51-year-old was awarded Padma Shri in 2015. He was the son of former Meghalaya minister AH Scott Lyngdoh.

Sangma and his Assam counterpart Himanta Biswa Sarma mourned the death. "I am saddened beyond words by the sudden demise of Padma Shri Neil Nongkynrih...He was a mentor to the country's finest choir that serenaded crowds wherever they performed. We

tweeted. Himanta wrote on the micro-blogging site: "Deeply saddened by the news of the demise of Neil Nongkynrih. Under his leadership, the choir rose to great heights winning fame not only for Meghalaya but the entire Northeast. May his soul rest in

ber Choir had shot to fame by winning the reality show India's Got Talent in 2010. The musical career of Nongkynrih took off in 1988 when he left Shillong for Great Britain to study music. Following his return to India in 2001, he founded the Shillong Chamber Choir.

## Sweden creates agency to combat fake news ahead of election

**COPENHAGEN:** Sweden, which is holding a general election in September, has joined France in creating

The agency, which started up Jan. 1, has departments that respectively "identify, analyze and respond to the

campaigns, said it "will provide support to the population, agencies, municipalities, the media, voluntary

oreign power exerts influence on Sweden in the long term." That agency briefed lawmakers before the Sept. 9,



an agency to combat disinformation. The mission of the Swedish Psychological Defense Agency is to "defend our open and democratic society and free opinions by identifying, analyzing and responding to inappropriate influences and other misleading information directed at Sweden or Swedish interests."

impact of undue information influence and other misleading information" and "to develop and strengthen society's overall capacity for psychological defence." The government authority, which didn't name any countries it suspects of participating in disinformation

defence organizations and civil society in general, as well as working for increased coordination between these actors." In 2018, Sweden's domestic intelligence agency said foreign powers didn't carry out any comprehensive campaign to influence the Swedish parliamentary election. However, it added that a "for-

2018 election, about the risk, security and safety measures. The agency didn't identify any country involved by name. Sweden's next general election is scheduled for Sept. 11. France, which has a presidential election in April, set up an agency last year to combat foreign disinformation and fake news.



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Vice Adm SH Sharma Funeral Ceremony held with Military Honour



Khordha (KCN) The funeral ceremony of Vice Adm SH Sharma, PVSM (Retd.) was conducted with full military honour's at Bhubaneswar in his

residence. Vice Adm Sharma was commanding the Eastern fleet during the 1971 Indo-Pak war, which lead to the liberation of Bangladesh. Cmde NP Pradeep Naval

officer in-charge Odisha paid homage to the late Admiral and placed a wreath on behalf of the Chief of the Naval Staff, Officers and men from INS Chilika and INHS

Nivarini also paid homage to the Admiral. On completion of the ceremony the mortal remains were cremated at Swargadwar, Puri with full military honour.

GEDCOL Signs Pact with NHPC

Bhubaneswar (KCN): A promoter's

NHPC a Central Minitratna PSU and

Gold Rated State PSU OHPC, to form a Joint Venture Company for production of solar power from floating installations in different reservoirs of the state of Odisha with a total capacity 500 MW.

The agreement was signed by Bishnupada Sethi, Chairman, OHPC, NHPC CMD A K Singh & CMD GEDCOL here in the presence of Energy Minister Energy Dibya Shankar Mishra (Over Video Conferencing).

In the first stage, 300 MW capacity will be installed in the reservoir of Rengali HE Project. The project will be implemented under UMREPP mode and scheme of MNRE Department of the

Union Government which provides for one time central financial assistance to the developers and an annual facilitation fee to be paid to the state government throughout the life of the project. The first stage of the project will have an outlay exceeding Rs.2000cr and will generate 600 MU of energy per year. It is first of its kind in the state and largest in the country so far.

The project will help the state to meet its renewable energy generation target and purchase obligation besides creating investment and employment opportunities. More such projects are being planned in Hirakud and other reservoirs of the state.



agreement has been signed between GEDCOL, a fully owned subsidiary of

OSCPCR Objects Marriage Age Rise

Bhubaneswar: The Odisha State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (OSCPCR) has opposed Centre's move to increase the minimum marriage age of girls to 21.

OSCPCR Chairperson Sandhyabati Pradhan has written a letter to Chairperson of Parliament Committee on Education, Women, Children, Youth & Sports, Vinay P Sahasrabudhe on Tuesday.

A bill named "Prohibition of Child Marriage Bill, 2021" was introduced in Lok Sabha on December 21, 2021 was later on sent to the Parliamentary Standing Committee for review. If enacted, this proposed amendment will redefine the 'child' to bring the age of marriage for both men and women at par i.e. 21 for both boys and girls.

"This will be having an overriding effect over every other law, custom, usage or practice. The amendment in relation to marriageable age will be effective two years after the Bill receives assent of the President," Pradhan said.

Apart from this it is also proposing a change in the time period of filing petition to make the child marriage void. In the existing one it is prescribed that either of the contracting parties can file a petition to make the marriage void after completing two years of attaining majority, the proposal is to substitute it with five years, she said. The OSCPCR is spearheading the movement to End Child Marriage in the State of Odisha by the year 2030. A high power committee at the State has been formed to facilitate the process converging many Government and non-Government stakeholders.

Stating the Commission is a key member to this committee, Pradhan said apart from that steps like amendment of Odisha Prohibition of Child marriage Rules was amended in 2019. A State strategy action plan to end child marriage has also been framed and rolled out.

"As chairperson I have been interacting with different stakeholders especially with adolescents from different parts of the State. In the

above context I put forth the following few points on the issue of raising the legal age of marriage for girls for your consideration," she mentioned in the letter.

That change of legislation in isolation will never be able to stop child marriage, unless there is socio behavioral change among the parents and community.

Factors like distress and poverty, patriarchal norms and practices, lack of opportunity for schooling, employment and the like are still contributing in a large extent in prevalence of child marriage. There is also a need to strengthen families by providing appropriate livelihood opportunities, she said.

The Chairperson said that legislation alone has never been able to check child marriage. The National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) data says that only 785 cases has been registered under Prohibition of Child Marriage in 2020 which is 523 in 2019 and 501 in 2018. On the other hand 23.3% girls are marrying before the legal age as captured by NFHS - 5.

It is important to mention that this Write Petition was filed by the Delhi State Commission for Women and the National Commission for Women on asking for uniform definition of child in all legislation for the sake of uniformity.

While preparing the report, the Commission examined laws relating to child marriage from different countries and the international covenants that's mandate the eradication of child marriage. With reference to the age of marriage the Commission had recommended keeping 18 as the minimum legal age of marriage for both boys and girls. "With these above facts I humble request you to kindly consider not raising the legal age of marriage of girls to 21, rather keeping 18 as the minimum legal age for both boys and girls," she urged the Parliament panel.

In addition to this, the Committee may consider to recommend more accountability of the State towards building an enabling environment where the girls can dare to fulfill their desires which will build courage within them to say 'No' to Child Marriage, she added.

A girl child killed by a careless driving of a drunk driver

Barbil (KCN): It is reported that a small girl was killed in a vehicle accident at ward No 12 ,Laksmnagar under Barbil Municipality ofKeonjhardistricts.As per information Pankaj

doctor declared her death.The parent of the child got unconscious seeing the death of their only child.It is learnt that they were blessed with a child after long years of their



Das who lives in Laksmnagar had been to a near by shop along with her two and half years aged daughter and nephew to buy some sweet trophy for them.On their way back from the shop one Scorpio vide No OD 09C 8375 vehicle came from the opposite side and rolled over the girl child .The girl child get seriously injured .Seeing this people gathered on the spot and took the child to hospital where

marriage.Police arrested both the accused and sent them to jail .Drunk and drive incidents are becoming a common phenomenon in the area.Speedy vehicle in city area has too a matter of concern for the area. These two factors mainly responsible in the city and Police administration should be more vigilant and strict to overcome such situation comments one intellectual of the area.

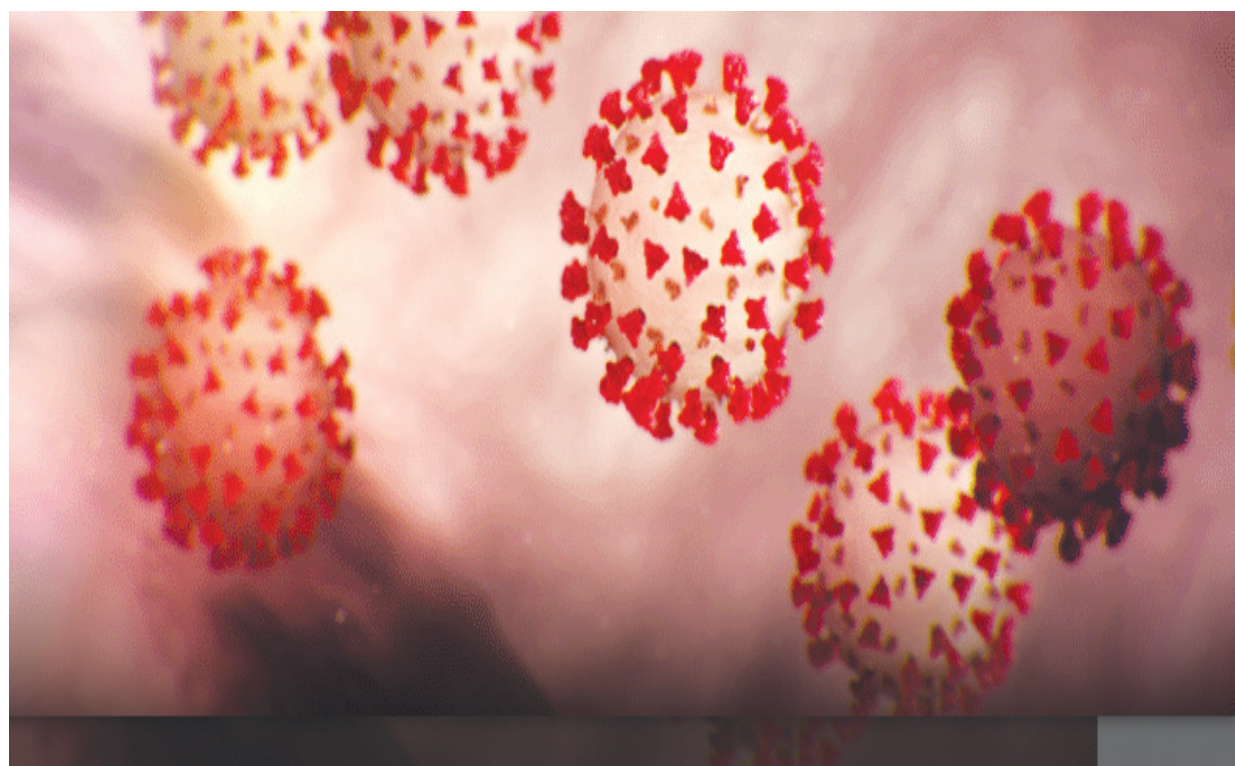
COVID Rise By 78%

Bhubaneswar(KCN): State on Wednesday reported 1,216 fresh Covid-19 cases, which is 78.82 per cent more than the cases reported yesterday. The State has reported 1261 cases, of

(I&PR) Department. Highest 456 cases were reported from Khurda district, followed by 166 in Sundargarh, 99 in Sambalpur and 80 in Cuttack. The State has also reported two deaths due to virus

should rest assured that the cases in Odisha will climb proportionately. In two days, State's positivity rate has gone past 1 per cent," said Director of Health Services, Bijay Mohapatra.

State, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik yesterday asked concerned officials to keep all Covid hospitals ready within 10 days to face the emerging situation. The Chief Minister



which 187 are of 0-18 age group. On Tuesday, 680 cases were reported in the State while 424 cases were reported on Monday. For the first time since August 2021 second week, the State has reported more than 1200 daily cases.

taking the toll to 8,466. The total active Covid cases in Odisha now stood at 3,981.

Meanwhile, the Omicron cases remained 37 in the State, of which four have been recovered from the disease.

"The transmission is very fast and other states too report a high number of cases. If a positivity rate jumps from 0.1 per cent to 3.8 per cent in New Delhi, we

Stating no one can limit the Covid cases, Mohapatra said, "We are, however, trying to break the transmission chain in the community. Although the severity of Omicron variant is low and the infected people don't require hospitalisation as was felt in the second wave, we are trying to ready hospital beds and intensive care units as soon as possible."

Amid resurge in the Covid-19 graph in the instructed to make arrangements of beds, critical care units as needed during the peak time of the second wave of the pandemic last year.

Stressing on the vaccination programme, he directed officials to complete the vaccination target on a campaign mode and give priority to the teenagers in the age group of 15 to 18.

### Investor wealth jumps over Rs 9.30 lakh crore in four days of market rally

NEW DELHI: Investors have become richer by over Rs 9.30 lakh crore in four days of market rally, with equity benchmark Sensex recapturing Mount 60K on Wednesday.

The 30-share BSE benchmark jumped 367.22 points or 0.61 per cent to settle at 60,223.15. In four days, the Sensex has gained 2,428.83 points. As the winning momentum continued, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies zoomed by Rs 9,30,419.3 crore in four sessions to reach Rs 2,72,44,894.96 crore. Bajaj Finserv was the biggest gainer in the 30

frontline companies pack on Wednesday, jumping 5.09 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, Kotak Bank, Axis Bank, Tata Steel, HDFC Bank and Asian Paints.

The broader market depicted mixed trends, with the BSE midcap index gaining 0.36 per cent, while the smallcap gauge dipped 0.08 per cent. "Markets traded upbeat for yet another session and gained over half a per cent, in continuation to prevailing up move. The beginning was on a flat note, tracking muted global cues however noticeable buying in banking, metal and auto majors helped the benchmark inch gradually higher as the session progressed. Markets have witnessed an excellent start of the calendar year however we may see a breather now..." said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

### Airtel withdraws scheme for corporate restructuring announced in April 2021

NEW DELHI: Bharti Airtel on Tuesday, January 4, 2022, dropped its plan to change its corporate structure that was announced in April 2021, and said it will continue with the existing corporate structure. It said the existing setup will be optimal to leverage reforms announced by the government for the telecom sector.

bility business, improving its operating income.

"The seminal telecom sector reforms package announced by the government of India has significantly boosted the outlook and investor confidence for the industry while simplifying the license framework. With a strong balance sheet and 5G ready network, Bharti Airtel



"The Board of Directors of Airtel is of the view that the existing corporate structure of the company is, therefore, optimal for leveraging these emerging opportunities and unlocking value while continuing to scale up Airtel's digital businesses. Therefore, the scheme of arrangement for the new corporate structure announced on April 14, 2021 stands withdrawn," Airtel said.

In April, Bharti Airtel announced a new corporate structure in which it decided to separate its telecom business from other businesses. As per the company, the new structure was expected to remove the telecom regulatory overhang on Airtel's digital business and reduce statutory liabilities related to its mo-

("Airtel"; "Company") is well positioned to invest aggressively in the emerging growth opportunities offered by India's digital economy," said the company.

Airtel said it will merge its wholly-owned subsidiary Telesonic Networks with itself, resulting in a consolidation of fibre assets into the company, while Nettle Infrastructure Investments too will be merged with Airtel. In addition, Nettle Infrastructure Investments Limited will also be merged with Airtel. "As announced earlier, the Company will pursue its plan to eventually fold the DTH business (Bharti Telemedia) into Airtel to move towards the NDCP vision of converged services to customers," the company said.

### 79 per cent Indian users shop via social commerce

NEW DELHI: Nearly eight out of ten social media users in India use social commerce to make

purchases, according to an Accenture report released on Tuesday.

Globally, the social commerce industry is expected to grow

three times as fast as traditional e-commerce to \$1.2 trillion by 2025, the study by Accenture suggests. The industry is currently estimated to be worth \$492 billion.

"Just under two thirds (64%) of social media users surveyed said they made a so-

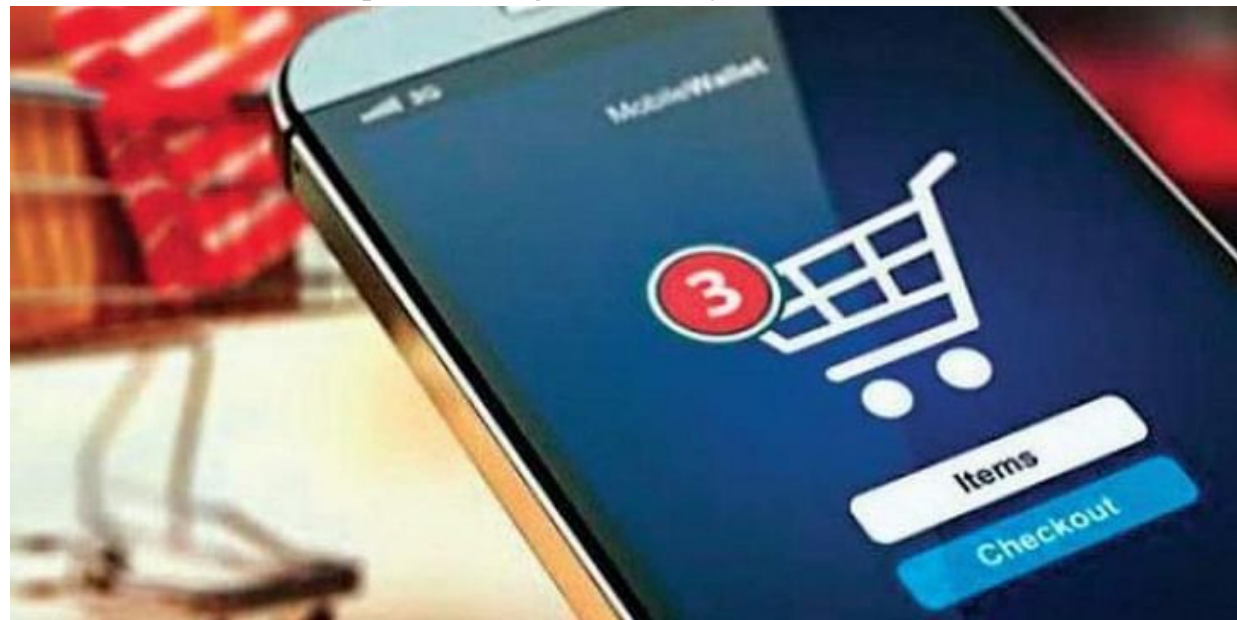
cial commerce purchase in the last year, which Accenture estimates to reflect nearly 2 billion social

commerce purchase in the last year, which Accenture estimates to reflect nearly 2 billion social

buyers globally," says the report. It says China will remain the most advanced market both in size and maturity, however, the highest growth will be seen in developing markets. The growth will be driven by Gen Z and Millennial social me-

dia users, accounting for 62% of global social commerce spend by 2025. "Driven by mobile-first con-

sumer preferences and the launch of new hyperlocal social commerce platforms, the emerging success of social commerce in India is a testimony to the power of people and communities," said Anurag Gupta, MD and Lead - Strategy & Consulting, Accenture in India.



purchases, according to an Accenture report released on Tuesday. According to the report, 'Why shopping's set for a social revolution', despite being a mature market, almost half of consumers in India are making more impulse pur-

### SBI, ICICI & HDFC Bank 'too big to fail'

NEW DELHI: No new banks have been

additional measures to deal with systemic

names of banks designated as D-SIBs starting from 2015 and place these banks in appropriate buckets depending upon their Systemic Importance Scores (SISs). The importance of these banks are measured based on their size, interconnectedness, substitutability and complexity. Based on their scores, banks are categorised into four buckets and are required to have additional Common Equity Tier 1 capital requirement.



added to the Reserve Bank of India's list of Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) as State Bank of India (SBI), ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank continue to be identified as systematically important banks, or banks that are too big to fail, in 2021. Accordingly, these banks will be required to have additional Common Equity

released by RBI on Tuesday, SBI would require 0.6% of its risk weighted average asset as additional CET1, while ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank would require 0.2% as additional CET1.

The 2021 list is based on the data collected from banks as on 31 March 2021. Systemically important banks are subjected to

risks. The Domestic Systemically Important Banks framework requires the RBI to disclose the

### Omicron variant fuels record number of infections in Croatia

Continued from page-1

lack of respect for measures such as mandatory face masks and recommendations to avoid gatherings during the holiday period. Last week, Montenegro tightened virus rules after cases started to rise, including limited working hours of bars and a ban on any gatherings.

In Serbia, long lines have formed outside COVID-19 medical centres as infections started to soar following New Year's celebrations with open-air concerts and packed bars, restaurants and clubs.

Experts have warned that new cases could reach "dramatic" figures in the coming days because of the omicron variant and disrespect for COVID-19 rules.

The state RTS television quoted unnamed health ministry officials as saying that "this is just the beginning of a new wave that apparently is going to be very hard."

Serbia and most countries of Central and Eastern Europe have about 50% of the population fully vaccinated, which is far lower than the European Union average.

### Odisha child commission voices concern over Centre's bid to raise marriage age of women to 21 years

Continued from page-1

the minimum age of marriage for boys, instead, should be made 18 years.

"I humbly request you to kindly consider not raising the legal age of marriage of girls to 21, rather keeping 18 as the minimum legal age for both boys and girls," OSCPCR chief Sandhyabati Pradhan urged the Sahasrabuddh-led panel.

Marriage age of women to be raised from 18 to 21, bill in Parliament soon

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Bill, 2021, which has proposed a uniform rule for all communities, was introduced in Lok Sabha on December 21, 2021.

It was later on sent to the Parliamentary Standing Committee for review.

If enacted, this proposed amendment will redefine 'child' to include male and female who have not completed 21 years of age.

Pradhan, in the letter, said, "That change of legislation in isolation will never be able to stop child marriage, unless there is socio-behavioural change among parents and community.

Factors like distress and poverty, patriarchal norms and practices, lack of opportunity for schooling, employment and the like are still contributing to a large extent in the prevalence of child marriage.

Address poverty, education to curb child marriage

Stating that there is also a need to strengthen families by providing appropriate livelihood opportunities, she drew attention to the fact that the Juvenile Justice Care and Protection Act and programmes like the Integrated Child Protection Scheme have the scope of extending support to vulnerable children only till the age of 18 years.

In such circumstances, there will be no space to provide support to a bride or groom between the age of 19 to 21 years if rescued from child marriage, she claimed.

"Act like POCSO has restricted consensual sex up to the age of 18. This implies that someone may have sexual act after 18 but won't be able to marry till 21. This will create new sets of issues like increasing unwed mothers and foeticide thereafter," the commission chief said.

### Swosti's first 5-star luxury beach resort has Puri address

Continued from page-1

children and adults in the food court, while people will also have the option to experience a state-of-the-art wellness spa and gym facilities besides, an infinity swimming pool.

Mohanty added that the beach resort will provide direct jobs to 375 people, while it would give indirect employment to 700 people. "Emphasis will be given to local youths who have experience in the hotel industry or have done courses in hotel management from Swosti Institute of Management & Social Studies", he added.

### Covid: Odisha CM asks officials to get all hospitals ready with beds, ICUs in 10 days

Continued from page-1

wave, monitoring groups were set up and observers to different districts appointed for proper management of the situation. Besides, officials were entrusted with responsibilities for oxygen management, launching information campaigns and preparing training modules. The Chief Minister said that the monitoring groups and observer system should be reactivated. Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said that officers will be asked to visit districts to assess the situation.

### Cabinet Clears Temple Act Amendment

Continued from page-1

land under occupy of thousands of people since decades, said Jena.

The approval of the State Government is no more required, he said.

Till now, the persons who had occupied or were in possession of temple land for long had to approach the State Government for the sale or transfer of the land.

The State Government had also formed Uniform Policy for this purpose in 2003.

As the process was time taking with many applications pending for years, the amendment has decentralised the process empowering the Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) and the Temple Management Committee to settle the lands, sources said.

It will not only solve the problems of thousands of people who are residing on the temple land for over 50 years but also enhance the revenue of temple.

The amended has been made to remove certain restrictions therein and to delegate powers to officials at different levels to facilitate speedy disposal of cases relating to alienation of immovable properties, lands belonging to the temple, Shree Jagannath Temple Management Committee.

## ICC Test rankings: KL Rahul gains 18 places to 31st rank; Jasprit Bumrah among top 10 bowlers

DUBAI: India opener KL Rahul has made a huge gain of 18 slots to reach the 31st position among batters in the latest ICC Test rankings after his Player-of-the-Match

2017, struck 123 in the first innings and was associated in an important 117-run opening partnership with Mayank Agrawal (60) as India became the first

is carried out on Wednesdays and includes all matches that are completed by Tuesday each week. Fast bowlers Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammad Shami

gained two spots to 14th after a fighting 77 in the second innings, while Temba Bavuma was up 16 places to 39th for his scores of 52 and 35 not out.



effort that helped India defeat South Africa by 113 runs in the first Test. With the win in Centurion, India took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series which is a part of the World Test Championship (WTC). Rahul, whose best in the format is eighth position that he attained in November

Asian team to win a Test match at the venue while gaining important points in the WTC points table. ALSO READ! Stand-in captain KL Rahul makes 50 for struggling India. Agarwal has gained one place for his contribution, while Ajinkya Rahane is up two places to 25th in the latest update that

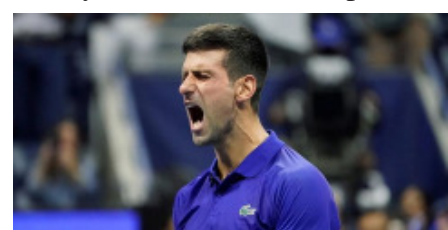
are other Indians to move up the rankings. Bumrah was up three spots to ninth after finishing with five wickets in the match while Shami's eight wickets, including a five-for in the first innings, saw him move up two places to 17th. For South Africa, captain and opener Dean Elgar has pro-

gressed seven scalps, has advanced one place to sixth position while his fellow fast bowler Lungi Ngidi has gained 16 slots and is 30th on the list after finishing with eight wickets in the match. Debutant left-arm fast bowler Marco Jensen entered the rankings in 97th position.

## Novak Djokovic's medical exemption for Australian Open sparks debate

BRISBANE: With his medical exemption approved, Novak Djokovic may have some explaining to do when he gets to Melbourne to defend his Australian Open title. The exemption allows the top-ranked Djokovic entry to the tournament regardless of his vaccination status for COVID-19, a subject he has declined to clarify amid months of speculation he could

miss the season-opening major unless he can prove he's had two doses of a coronavirus vaccine. That's a Victoria state government-mandated condition of entry for all players, staff, fans and officials entering Melbourne Park when the tournament starts on January 17.



His revelation on social media that he was heading to Australia seeking a record 21st major title sparked some debate and plenty of headlines on Wednesday, with critics questioning what grounds Djokovic could have for the exemption and backers defending his right to privacy. Australian Open tournament director Craig Tiley defended the "completely legitimate application and process" and insisted there was no special treatment for Djokovic. Only 26 people connected with the tennis Grand Slam event applied for an exemption and, Tiley said, only a "handful" - estimated at about five - were granted. The names, ages and nationalities of applicants were redacted for privacy reasons before each application for a vaccine exemption was assessed by two independent panels of experts, and Tiley noted Djokovic is under no obligation to reveal his reason for seeking one. But, he suggested, it would be "helpful" if Djokovic chose to explain it to a Melbourne public still getting over months of lockdowns and severe travel restrictions imposed at the height of the pandemic. "I would encourage him to talk to the community about it. We have been through a very tough period over the last two years," Tiley said in a news conference while Djokovic was in transit. Australia only started to reopen its borders late last year when more than 80 per cent of adults nationally had received two doses of an ap-

proved coronavirus vaccine. Restrictions were further eased when that number topped 90 per cent. Reasons allowed for anyone applying for a vaccination exemption can include an acute major medical condition, serious adverse reaction to a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, or evidence of a COVID-19 infection within the previous six months. Victoria state's acting minister for sports Jaala Pulford said, "No one is or will be receiving special treatment because of who they are or what they have achieved professionally. Lots of people in the Victorian community will find this to be a disappointing outcome, but the process is the process. Nobody has had special treatment. The process is incredibly robust." Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison initially said the decision was a matter for the government of Victoria, where Melbourne is the state capital. "They have provided (Djokovic) with an exemption to come to Australia, and so we then act in accordance with that. States provide exemptions for people to enter on those basis, and that's been happening for the last two years," Morrison said. Morrison later added that if Djokovic is unvaccinated, he still needed to produce satisfactory evidence upon his arrival to support the medical exemption. "If that evidence is insufficient, then he won't be treated any different to anyone else and he'll be on the next plane home," Morrison said. "And so if medical exemptions had been provided by medical professionals and that's been furnished to him as a proviso for him to get on that plane, well, that will have to stack up when he arrives in Australia," he added. Morrison said there's been numerous cases in recent years where people have had to provide suitable proof to support their claims for a medical exemption, "so the circumstance is not unique". Djokovic tested positive for the coronavirus in 2020 after he played in a series of exhibition matches that he organized in Serbia and Croatia without social distancing amid the pandemic. It's not inconceivable that the 34-year-old Djokovic, who finished one win short of a calendar-year Grand Slam in 2021 when he lost the US Open final to Daniil Medvedev, could have been infected again. The decision on whether to elaborate now is fully in Djokovic's court.

## India vs South Africa 2nd Test: Umpire Allahudien Paleker traces his roots to Maharashtra

MUMBAI (KCN): South African umpire Allahudien Paleker is having a fine Test debut in the ongoing second match against India at the Wanderers in Johannesburg but very few would know that his family traces its

Wednesday, "I am also a Palekar. He traces his roots to our Shiv village. His father then migrated to South Africa for a job and later settled there. Allahudien was born in South Africa, but his original village is

extremely happy." Not only this but Palekar (44) had also officiated in a Ranji Trophy game at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai during the 2014/15 Indian domestic season. Palekar had officiated in the

other Ranji game in India as part of the umpire exchange programme," a senior Mumbai Cricket Association umpire, who was also the MCA's office-bearer in the past, told PTI. In that drawn game against Madhya



origins to Ratnagiri in Maharashtra. Palekar traces his roots to Shiv village in Khed tehsil of Ratnagiri district. Shiv village 'sarpanch' (village head) Durvesh Palekar told PTI on

Shiv, which is in Khed tehsil. The entire village, the gram panchayat (local governing body) is proud of him, that our name and that of the village has gone on the international level. We are

Mumbai versus Madhya Pradesh league game along with Indian umpire Krishnamachari Srinivasan. "He did umpire in that Ranji Trophy game and also stood in an-

Pradesh. Palekar had witnessed centuries by Suryakumar Yadav (135) and Shreyas Iyer (142 not out). Palekar is a former first-class player and comes from a family of umpires. His father Jamalodien is an umpire.




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