

## Hirakud releases first flood

Bhubaneswar(KCN): For the first time in this monsoon season, Hirakud dam au-

thorities on Monday morning released flood water through five sluice gates due to heavy rainfall upstream of the reservoir.



The authorities of the Hirakud dam project opened five sluice gates of the dam at 1 AM and released flood water to Mahanadi river.

Since number seven is believed to be a lucky one, the RDC Suresh Chandra

8. As per the prefixed lagna, the dam gates were opened in the right time after Puja and prayers and also breaking coconuts.

On today, the water level in the Hirakud dam reservoir stands at 613.27 feet against the maximum water level (MWL) of 630 feet.

Chief Engineer of Hirakud dam project Ananda Chandra Sahu said as per the rule

curve it was decided to release the first rain water to river Mahanadi on Mon-

day. Earlier, the Dam authorities have warned the people residing on the downstream and also the river side to remain alert of the flood water being released from Hirakud.

The dam authorities released water through sluice gates for power generation, irrigation in the Hirakud command area for agriculture, local industries and for drinking water purposes, he added.

The Chief Engineer said to maintain a perfect balance the inflow to the reservoir and the outflow is recorded at 1,01,156 cusecs. Around 75,000 cusecs water is being released into the Mahanadi river through the five gates.

There are 64 sluice gates including 24 on the right and 40 on the left side of the dam to release flood water. Each sluice gate has the capacity to discharge 16,440 cusec of water when reservoir level, also termed as danger level, is 630 ft. Besides, there are 34 crest gates, 13 on the right and 21 on the left side, which have the potential to discharge 16,238 cusec of water.

## Presidential polls: Cross voting in Odisha as Congress MLA votes for Droupadi Murmu

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Defying the party's decision, Congress MLA from

The Congress MLA said he expects people of Odisha will support his move and he will



feel proud if his vote will add to the victory margin of Murmu. Stating that the decision to vote for Murmu was a personal decision, he said that there was no other pressure on him. Asked whether his move has exposed the rift in Congress, Moqim said there is no such issues.

Cuttack-Barabati constituency Mohammed Moqim voted in favour of NDA Presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu throwing the state unit of the party in a turmoil.

"I voted as per the dictates of my conscience and chose the daughter of the soil for the country's topmost constitutional post," Moqim told mediapersons after casting his votes creating ripples in political circles here. Moqim said that as there is no whip in Presidential election, he listened to his conscience and voted for Murmu. "Besides, several eminent persons from both inside and outside the country had also requested me to vote for Murmu," he added.

However, Moqim's move has not gone down well with the party's other leaders. President of the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Sarat Pattanayak and leader of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) Narasingh Mishra said that Moqim's decision to vote for the NDA Presidential candidate has been reported to the High Command. Action will be taken as per the decision of the High Command, they added.

His party colleagues Santosh Singh Saluja and Tara Prasad Bahinipati also criticised Moqim for voting in favour of Murmu. Bahinipati, however, said that it showed that he was not happy in the party.

## Voting begins to elect India's 15th President

New Delhi(KCN): Voting for the presidential election in which NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu is pitted against joint opposition pick Yashwant Sinha began on Monday.

Polling began at 10 am and Prime Minister Narendra Modi was among the first to cast his vote. The voting process would conclude at 5 pm.

Nearly 4,800 elected MPs and MLAs are entitled to vote in the election, but nominated MPs and MLAs, and members of Legislative Councils are not.

Besides Room number 63 on the first floor of Parliament House, which has been converted into a polling station, voting is simultaneously taking place at various state assem-



blies.

In the national capital, voting is also underway at the Delhi legislative assembly. Counting of votes will be held on July 21. The system of secret ballot is followed in the presidential election, and parties cannot issue whips to their MPs

## Voting to elect new President concludes, Droupadi Murmu likely to win

NEW DELHI(KCN): Voting for the presidential poll ended on Monday with 98.90 per cent

### HIGHLIGHTS

Going by the stand taken by various parties, NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu is set to win the poll against joint Opposition nominee Yashwant Sinha.

Briefing reporters after the voting, Returning Officer Mody said out of 736 electors comprising 727 MPs and nine MLAs permitted by the Election Commission to vote at the



Parliament house, 728 (719 MPs and nine MLAs) cast their votes.

Earlier, the officer had said that six MPs did not cast their vote, but the figure was revised to eight after recompilation of the data. "Ballot boxes will reach Delhi via road and air by evening, assistant returning officers will accompany them," said Chief Returning Officer for presidential poll PC Mody. The counting will take place on July 21.

## Poor, middle class being maligned with talk of 'Revadi culture': Priyanka Gandhi



NEW DELHI: Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying that arrangements were being made for

some to earn indiscriminately, but the poor and middle class were being maligned with the talk of "Revadi culture." Priyanka Gandhi's attack comes two days after Modi, while ad-

ressing a gathering in Uttar Pradesh's Jalaun, had cautioned people against what he called the "revadi culture" of offering freebies for garnering votes and said it is "very dangerous"

for the development of the country. "Earlier, petrol-diesel, cooking gas were made expensive. From today, flour, cereals and curd has also become

## Zelenskiy sacks Ukraine's ambassadors to India, 4 other countries

KYIV(KCN): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy said on Saturday that he had dismissed several of Kyiv's senior envoys abroad, including the country's outspoken ambassador to Germany.

Zelenskiy announced the sacking of Ukraine's ambassadors to Germany, India, the Czech Republic, Norway and Hungary and said new candidates were being readied for the positions. "This rotation is a normal part of diplomatic practice," he said in a statement. It was not clear if the

and military aid for Ukraine as it tries to fend off Russia's Feb. 24 invasion.

economy, are particularly sensitive. Andriy Melnyk, who was appointed by Zelenskiy's predecessor as ambassador to Germany in late 2014, is well known among politicians and diplomats in Berlin.

The 46-year-old regularly engages in outspoken social media exchanges and has branded politicians and intellectuals who oppose arming Ukraine to fight the Russian invasion as appeasers.



envoys would be assigned new positions. Zelenskiy has urged his diplomats to drum up international support

Kyiv's relations with Germany, which is heavily reliant on Russian energy supplies and also Europe's biggest

CONTINUED ON: P-7



# The Second Edition of NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch is here! Empowering Young Influencers, the hunt is all set to get Bigger and Better!

Kolkata (KCN): NIVEA India, India's #1 Trusted skincare brand\* is back with the second edition of its most awaited NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch after a colossal success of its premier edition last year. Elevating the influencer game one trend at a time, the Gen-Zs of today are looking at transitioning from being traditional content consumers to new-age creators. In the ever-changing multiverse of filters, challenges and hashtags, NIVEA In-

aimed at curating conversations that are fresh, yet relevant. With the Gen-Z of today becoming the creators of tomorrow, we are enthralled to announce the second edition of our NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch after a remarkable first edition. We're all set to take things up a notch, while we aim to provide the right guidance, resources, and a platform to kick start their influencer journeys. As a brand that cares beyond skin, we aim to provide the right



dia aims at becoming the first-choice of every Gen-Z girl by helping kick-start her influencer journey in this one-of-a-kind digital hunt - #NiveaFreshBatchHunt! Promising all things bigger and better, with more colleges, mentors, influencers, challenges, and rewards, this second edition is all set to uplift the life of every budding Gen-Z creator in the country.

After a whopping success of their debut edition, NIVEA India has announced the second edition of NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch exclusively in partnership with Moj, India's number one short video app with 160 MAUs, that will help further ramp up the campaign in reaching Gen-Z creators and influencers across all the regions of India.

With an aim to make this season even bigger than the premier edition, NIVEA India is all set to bring back NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch in all things grand!

NIVEAFreshBatchHunt on Moj - The campaign, will be hosted on Moj that will help tap into a wider Indian influencer network with a huge audience base that takes on trends and challenges. The campaign will be rolled out in 7 different languages on Moj - English, Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada & Malayalam, reaching diverse Indian users. For the campaign, a customized 2D Interactive lens or filter will be created that will enable a participant to choose their personality and submit their entry using #NiveaFreshBatchHunt.

Wider College Ambassador Program - With the hunt getting bigger, the brand is keen on curating a wider ambassador program with 1000+ colleges across various regions in India.

Collaborate with #NSFBSquad - NIVEA India will curate a wider influencer network with 10 high-reach influencers in each persona's squad including remarkable regional influencers to ensure deeper penetration across the country with 40 #NSFBSquad members.

Exciting Rewards and Opportunities - This edition promises bigger rewards. Winners will get a year-long contract with the brand to kick start their influencer journey along with a chance to feature in NIVEA's Ad along with a photo shoot by a celebrity photographer, smartphone, workshops, and a content creation kit!

Announced by celebrity and brand face Taapsee Pannu, the aspiring creators will be guided and mentored by 40 of the most loved, popular, and well-established influencers in their fields with 10 of them leading each category of persona. College girls from across the country need to choose their persona and showcase their talent on MOJ to win some of the most exciting prizes. Up to 100 winners will be chosen for the grand celebration of the NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch of 2022.

Talking about the recent announcement, Mr. Ajay Simha - Marketing Director, NIVEA India, said, "At NIVEA India, we have always

care, mentorship, and boost to the next generation of content creators. Along with being India's Most Trusted Skincare Brand, NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch is our way to build upon the trusted legacy of our brand while engaging even more meaningfully with college students across India." "I am delighted to be

a part, yet again, of this unique initiative by NIVEA India and I'm looking forward to the content created by the enthusiastic Gen Z girls across India. I urge every aspiring influencer to participate in the NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch 2022 and showcase their personality uniquely. The holistic platform provided to the top winners will bolster their content creation journey. I'm excited to be a part of the bigger & better second edition of NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch." Ms. Taapsee Pannu, Celebrity & Brand Ambassador, NIVEA India, said.

Talking about the NIVEA campaign on Moj Mr. Ajit Varghese, Chief Commercial Officer of Moj and ShareChat, said, "We are excited to collaborate with NIVEA on their second edition of NIVEA Soft Fresh Batch that will discover the next generation of young influencers across multiple categories and languages. In the recent past, Moj has successfully enabled several brands and content creators to deeply engage with audiences across the country through innovative and bespoke hashtag campaigns, filters, talent hunts, and challenges. We are certain that NIVEA's campaign will resonate with our GenZ creators and users located in different regions of India."

The premier season witnessed more than 20,000 digital entries with winners from more than 45 cities and states across the nation. Showcasing different talents such as Art,



Karate, Weightlifting, Dance, Comedy, Fashion, Makeup, etc. the campaign created a real impact in the lives of budding content creators by helping them kick-start their Fresh Journeys.

This initiative draws inspiration from the NIVEA Soft College Edition packs that come in 4 exciting designs that celebrate 4 unique personas of college girls - Fashionista, Sporty, Entertainer and Smarty. Leaving your skin soft and bringing an instant fresh feeling, these limited-edition NIVEA Soft packs will be available across all leading e-commerce portals & stores near you.

For more information and live updates, follow NIVEA India's Moj's page - @niveaindia or visitwww.niveasoffreshbatch.in.

# All is not Well in Congress

Bhubaneswar(KCN): It is very much loud and clear that all is not well in the Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) with senior Congress Lawmaker Moham-med Moquim casted his vote in favour of NDA Presidential candidate Droupadi Murmu.

Mr.Moquim made this announcement here on Monday at the State Legislative Assembly after casting his vote for the ongoing election to the highest position in the Indian Constitution.

The Cuttack (Barabati) MLA said that he chose Ms.Murmu, the daughter of Odisha soil, for the country's topmost constitutional post. "As whip cannot be applicable in the Presidential election, I voted as per the dictates of my conscience", he told Media persons. Notably, Mr.Moquim was in the race for OPCC President post following the

resignation of senior tion will be taken as



party leader Niranjan Patnaik. However, the AICC High Command has appointed Sarat Pattanayak as State Congress Chief.

Commenting on the cross voting made by Mr.Moquim, PCC President Mr. Pattanayak said, "We have informed our High Command. Ac-

per the instruction of the AICC." Congress Legisla-ture Party leader Narasingha Mishra said the Party will take final call on this matter.

Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahini-pati said this cross voting of Mr.Moquim proves that he is not satis-

per the instruction of the AICC." Congress Legisla-ture Party leader Narasingha Mishra said the Party will take final call on this matter.

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fied with the party's decision. This move has also raised ques-tions on the unity within the party, he added.

Another party MLA Santosh Singh Saluja said it is unfortunate and action will be taken by AICC.

Mr.Saluja said he should have voted for the opposition candi-date as a disciplined member of the party. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and many legislators have casted their votes in the ongoing Presi-dent Poll here at Room No-54 of the Odisha Legislative Assembly.

If the support of parties are taken into con-sideration, NDA's Presidential candidate Draupadi Murmu is way ahead of Yashwant Sinha.

Apart from BJP and it's NDA allies, BJD, YSR Congress, BSP, Shiv Sena, JMM, JDS, Akali Dal and TDP are extending their support to Ms.Murmu.

# Uproar over GST Hike

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Legislative Assembly on Monday witnessed uproar-ious scenes during 'Zero Hour' after the opposition Congress targeted the State Government over the Centre levy-ing GST on puffed rice (Mudhi) and flattened rice (Chuda).

The Congress mem-bers trooped into the Well of the House, shouted slogans and disrupted the pro-ceedings protesting against the imposi-tion of GST on cer-tain food items

As the protest grew, Speaker Bikram Keshari Aruk was forced to adjourn the house twice, first for ten minutes and again till 4 pm. The Congress members urged the Speaker to allow a resolution to pass in the House de-manding the with-drawal of the tax on food items. They also demanded a statement from the Finance Minister Niranjan Pujari in the House on the issue. During Question Hour, Congress MLA Suresh Kumar Routray raised this

issue during question hour and said the im-position of GST on food items of poor people and children is unfortunate.

He requested Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to write to the Centre to with-draw its decision. Otherwise, let the



state government bear the GST cost on the items like puffed rice and flattened rice.

In his response, Fi-nance Minister Niranjan Pujari said, "As per levying of GST on puffed rice and flattened rice is concerned, it is the subject of GST Council and Odisha, a single state, cannot take any decision on this."

However, Mr.Pujari clarified that only packaged and labeled puffed rice would at-tract GST, therefore it will have no impact

on customers and traders in rural areas these items which are sold in loose.

Congress lawmaker Tara Prasad Bahinipati and his party colleagues Santosh Singh Saluja also raised the same issue during Zero Hour.

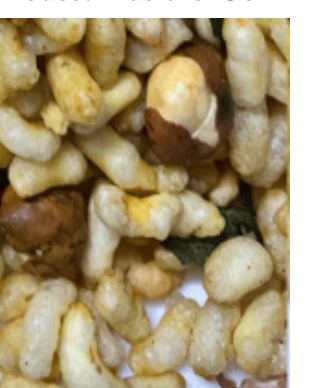


Mr.Bahinipati de-manded the Speaker to form a house panel to meet the GST Council chair-man and Prime Min-ister on this issue. The members said in Odisha, puffed rice, flattened rice, parched rice, curd, milk, jaggery is con-sumed by poor people and also offered as Prasad in temples. If tax is im-posed on these items, poor people will be affected and the baby food would become dearer.

The agitated Con-gress members

rushed to the well shouted slogans in support of their de-mand and demanded its withdrawal.

The Speaker appealed to the members to return to their seats and cooperate in smooth conduct of the business of the house. But the Con-



gress members did not pay any heed to the Speaker's appeal and continued their slogan shouting forc-ing the Speaker to adjourn the house twice.

Notably, several food items like puffed rice, flattened rice, parched rice, rice, wheat, curd, lassi, jaggery and milk attracted 5 percent GST from Monday after the GST Council meeting decided to lift the tax exemp-tion on some pack-aged and labeled items.



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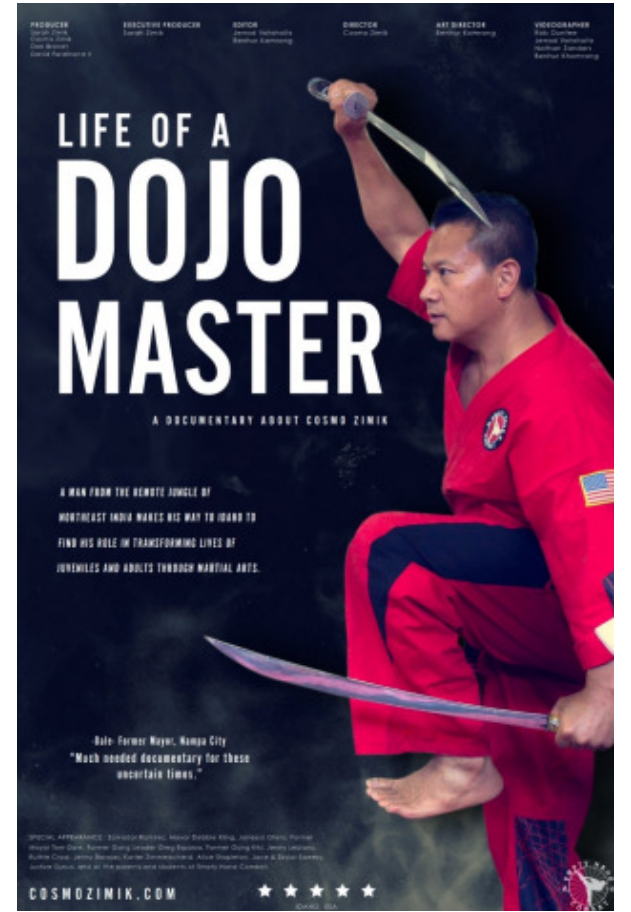
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# A Kung Fu Master Cosmo Zimik will arrive in India from the US on August 8 and release a documentary film in Mumbai

Mumbai (India) on all digital platforming and training others. He currently teaches Chitah Jeet Kune Do and some of these 2022' USA, and



(KCN, Sanjay Sharma Raj) forms. It's based on the life of Master Cosmo Zimik, a man born in the remote region of Northwest India, who made his way to the USA over twenty years ago. Master Cosmo Zimik started his martial arts career in Manipur, Northeast India, and has traveled the world teaching sides in Idaho, USA where his dojo, Empty Hand Combat, teaches Burmese Thaing Bando to at-risk youth, youth, and young adults to become martial artists. He trains them to become warriors and helps the community. Chitah Yajnes Shetty, founder of eration, also conferred an 8th-degree black belt to Master Cosmo Zimik. Master Cosmo Zimik has trained over 5000 kids and over 2000 have been under privileged kids and 'At Risk Youth' in Nampa, Idaho USA. The youth come from various backgrounds



Sharma Raj): A Kung Fu Master Cosmo Zimik will arrive in India from the USA on August 8, 2022 and release the documentary film 'Life of A Dojo Master' with Chitah Yajnes Shetty in Mumbai, which will be sent to several film festivals and will be released Shooting for third season of 'Four More Shots Please' to begin soon: Kirti Kulhari

the life of Master Cosmo Zimik, a man born in the remote region of Northwest India, who made his way to the USA over twenty years ago. Master Cosmo Zimik started his martial arts career in Manipur, Northeast India, and has traveled the world teaching sides in Idaho, USA where his dojo, Empty Hand Combat, teaches Burmese Thaing Bando to at-risk youth, youth, and young adults to become martial artists. He trains them to become warriors and helps the community. Chitah Yajnes Shetty, founder of eration, also conferred an 8th-degree black belt to Master Cosmo Zimik. Master Cosmo Zimik has trained over 5000 kids and over 2000 have been under privileged kids and 'At Risk Youth' in Nampa, Idaho USA. The youth come from various backgrounds

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It was recently revealed that Sriram Raghavan's upcoming film, Ekki, has been put on hold. A big-budget military drama starring Varun Dhawan, the film was delayed due to Covid-19. Now, rumour has it that Sriram has signed Katrina Kaif and Vijay Sethupathi

kids are homeless, staying in a homeless shelter with their moms. Their father is gone from their lives. Some kids have parents who are drug addicts and have left them to be raised by grandparents. Some are orphans who are looking for hope in life. He trains them in martial arts and gives them Free Uniforms, Boxing Gloves, and basic needs including shoes and clothing. He also helps them overcome life's hardship and their real-life struggles (including anxiety and depression), by counseling and pointing them in the right direction through Martial Arts. Master Cosmo Zimik also received an award from the Mayor of Nampa City for 'Making a Difference', from the Elk Lodge for 'Citizen of the Year

Idaho Channel 7 (NBC) Heroes for outstanding work in the community. He is the founder of Martial Arts Sports ministry, Athletes in Action (India) in 1995, Chief Instructor and Owner of Empty Hand Combat International LLC, Co-founder of Hong Kong Gospel Martial Arts 1999, 1st place in Power breaking at the 2003 Battle of LA (National Martial arts championship), Khru (Instructor) Muay Thai – Muay Thai Mission since 2009, 6th Degree Black Belt in Burmese Thaing Bando Martial Arts, 7th Degree Black Belt in Taekwondo, International Technical Advisor – Chitah Jeet Kun Do, International Advisor Board Member – World Martial Arts School Federations.

## Vijay Sethupathi, Katrina Kaif in Sriram Raghavan's next?

It was recently revealed that Sriram Raghavan's upcoming film, Ekki, has been put on hold. A big-budget military drama starring Varun

for his next. If true, this is the latest Hindi project Vijay Sethupathi is attached to — the others being Laal Singh Chadha and

ing web series directed by Raj and DK. The unrevealed series will also star Shahid Kapoor. Sriram Raghavan's last film was



Bani J, follows a quartet of friends who deal with their relationships, work-life conflicts, ambitions and anxieties in a male-dominated society.

a series of candid photos with Gupta, Gagroo and Bani. Created by Rangita Pritish Nandy and produced by Pritish Nandy Communications, the

Parineeti Chopra. The movie, which premiere on streamer Netflix on February 26, will feature Kulhari as a British cop.



Dhawan, the film was delayed due to Covid-19. Now, rumour has it that Sriram has signed Katrina Kaif and Vijay Sethupathi

Mumbaikar. The latter, directed by Santosh Sivan, is a Hindi remake of Maanagaram (2017). He is also rumoured to star in an upcoming

Andhadhun (2018) with Ayushmann Khurrana and Tabu. The film is getting a Tamil and Telugu remake with Prashanth and Nithiin, respectively, in the lead.



# Decline in FDI inflow for Indian Economy

The World Investment Report 2022 shows that the structure of global foreign direct investment (FDI) flows has been affected significantly by the pandemic. The report brought out by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) indicates

that global FDI inflows staged a smart recovery in 2021 rising by a substantial 64.3% to touch \$1.58 trillion, thus surpassing the pre-pandemic flows. This is in sharp contrast to the 35% fall in FDI inflows to \$963 billion in 2020. A major consequence of the pandemic was that the share of FDI inflows to developed economies slipped to just around one-third in 2020, the lowest recorded. Though the FDI inflows to developed economies more than doubled to \$746 billion in 2021, its share in global FDI inflows still remained lower than that of the developing economies. A major reason for the shrinking share of developed economies in global FDI inflows is the decline of inflows into the European Union (EU) for two consecutive years, which reduced its share in global FDI inflows from around a quarter to less than a tenth. Another major consequence of the pandemic was that FDI outflows from developed countries rose sharply from around two-thirds of the global outflows in the

pre-pandemic years to around three-fourths in

2021. This surge was mainly powered by the United States (US), which now emerged as the largest source of FDIs. The US now accounts for close to a quarter of global FDI outflows, marginally exceeding even that of the EU. Another major change noticed after the pandemic was that, for the first time, in many years, the global outflows of FDI from almost all major developed countries were higher than their FDI inflows. Similarly, another major fallout of the pandemic was that the developing countries have now become the dominant beneficiaries of global FDI inflows with its share exceeding that of developed countries both in 2020 and 2021. However, the pickup in FDI inflows to developing economies was sharply skewed. While FDI inflows to Africa more than doubled to \$82.9 billion in 2021 and that to South America surged by three-fourths to \$88 billion, both flows probably buoyed up by the global commodity boom. However, FDI inflows into Asia barely grew by around one-fifth. And this was also highly skewed. While inflows increased by around half in South East Asia and West Asia, it declined by a quarter in South Asia.

What is surprising is that the disruption of supply chains and the setback to globalisation during the pandemic seems to have had no significant impact on the geographical distribution of FDI inflows. Though many

**Pradeep Kumar Panda**

developed countries repeatedly

promised to reduce the global dependence on China's exports and ward off trade vulnerabilities by diverting investments to other areas, these initiatives seem to have floundered. In fact, the trends show that the result has been the opposite with FDI inflows to China accelerating even as FDI inflows to other developing countries like India falter badly. Consequently, between 2019 and 2021, the share of FDI inflows to China (including that to Hong Kong) went up from 14.5% to 20.3%, while that to India shrunk from 3.4% to 2.8%. Certainly, India seems to have failed to take advantage of the new opportunities offered by the pandemic. The efforts to persuade the world to bring in increasingly larger share of the FDI flows within its shores and diversify the global supply chains have apparently not borne fruit. Similarly, the slowdown in the economy has also affected FDI outflows from India with its share in global FDI outflows slumping down to 2.8%, the lowest level across the last four years.

The Government of India data on the FDI show that equity inflows have declined by around one-fifth to \$51.3 billion in 2021. However, the decline was not uniform. While FDI inflows from Mauritius, the largest contributor to the cumulative FDI inflows into India, more than doubled to \$8.7 billion in 2021, that from Germany and Japan increased by around a quarter. However, FDI inflows from almost all other major investor nations declined.

While FDI from Singapore, the US, the Netherlands, and United Arab Emirates fell by more than a quarter, that from the United Kingdom and Cayman Islands fell by around one-fifth. However, the bulk of decline in FDI flows in 2021 was due to the fall in investments in the computer software and hardware, the biggest segment, which fell by half to \$12 billion. Similarly, FDI inflows into infrastructure and construction sectors also declined by half. Surprisingly, FDI inflows to services (that include finance, banking, insurance, research and development, and others), which account for more than a tenth of the total FDI inflows, rose by a quarter to touch \$6.5 billion in 2021. In manufacturing, the improvement in FDI inflows was largely confined to automobiles, drugs and pharmaceuticals. Clearly, India still has a long way to go to emerge as a manufacturing hub in the global economy.

The steady decline of FDI outflows from the EU is a major setback for India, more so because India has failed to tap the potential for increasing inflows from the US, which has emerged as the largest source of FDI outflows. The consequent slump in the share of FDI inflows into India should set alarm bells ringing in the government. Certainly, it is still not too late to woo new investments to reduce global supply chain vulnerabilities and the excessive dependence on China.

The Author is an Economist

# Covid-19 Vaccination during Pregnancy — Two for the Price of One

The benefits of maternal vaccination to the infant through maternal antibody transfer across the placenta have long been recognized. In the 1870s, babies born to mothers who had received smallpox vaccination were unlikely to have smallpox early in life.<sup>1</sup> Tetanus toxoid vaccination during pregnancy, along with improved hygiene during delivery, has resulted in substantially reduced rates of neonatal tetanus in some developing countries.<sup>1</sup> Decreased risks of influenza and pertussis have been reported during the first few months of life among infants whose mothers had received the inactivated influenza vaccine and the combined tetanus–diphtheria–acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine, respectively. Both vaccines are routinely recommended during pregnancy in the United States; the influenza vaccine is recommended anytime during pregnancy, whereas the Tdap vaccine is recommended preferentially during the early part of gestational weeks 27 to 36 in order to maximize maternal antibody production, placental transfer, and antibody levels in the newborn.<sup>2</sup> Studies to evaluate whether maternal vaccination could prevent illness from other infections (e.g., respiratory syncytial virus infection or group B streptococcus infection) among infants are underway.<sup>1</sup>

At the time of authorization of the coronavirus disease 2019 (Covid-19) vaccines, information on their use during pregnancy was limited because pregnant women were excluded from the clinical trials. Since the time of authorization, safety data on vaccination during pregnancy have been accumulating

rapidly.<sup>3,4</sup> The results of a retrospective cohort study now reported

in the Journal<sup>5</sup> showed no association between maternal vaccination and serious acute adverse events in the 42 days after vaccination. On the basis of the increased risk of severe disease and pregnancy complications associated with Covid-19 during pregnancy,<sup>6</sup> the reassuring safety data on the use of other vaccines during pregnancy, and the accumulating data on the safety of Covid-19 vaccination for the mother and fetus, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and professional organizations (e.g., the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists) have strongly recommended vaccination in pregnant women. A booster dose is also recommended after the completion of the initial vaccine series.

Given the experience with previous vaccines, maternal Covid-19 vaccination was expected to provide some level of infant protection. Maternal antibodies have been shown to be present in umbilical-cord blood, neonatal blood, and breast milk after maternal Covid-19 vaccination, but the correlation with infant protection from infection was unclear.<sup>6</sup> Now in the Journal, Halasa and colleagues<sup>7</sup> report on the results of a large multicenter study in which a case-control, test-negative design was used to estimate the effectiveness of maternal vaccination against hospitalization for Covid-19 among infants younger than 6 months of age. In this study, 16% of the 537 infants hospitalized for Covid-19

**Sonja A. Rasmussen, M.D., and Denise J. Jamieson, M.D., M.P.H.**

(case infants) had been born to mothers who had been fully vaccinated

against Covid-19 during pregnancy. In contrast, 29% of the 512 hospitalized infants who had a negative test for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) (control infants) had been born to mothers who had been fully vaccinated during pregnancy. Maternal vaccine effectiveness against Covid-19-associated hospitalization among infants was 52%. Vaccine effectiveness against admission to an intensive care unit for Covid-19 was higher, at 70%. The current report extended earlier findings of this population<sup>8</sup> to include an additional 670 infants, many of whom were admitted to a hospital during circulation of the omicron variant. As expected, vaccine effectiveness was lower during circulation of the omicron variant than during the delta-predominant period (38% vs. 80%). In addition, vaccine effectiveness was higher when the second dose of Covid-19 vaccine was given after 20 weeks of pregnancy than when it was given earlier in pregnancy (during the first 20 weeks) (69% vs. 38%).

The results of the study by Halasa et al. provide compelling evidence that maternal vaccination is effective in reducing the risk of Covid-19-related hospitalization in infants younger than 6 months of age, a finding that further supports recommendations for Covid-19 vaccination during pregnancy. Such infants have a higher risk of severe illness and hospitalization than older children and can-

not be vaccinated now or in the near future. Because vaccines are less likely to be effective in infants younger than 6 months of age,<sup>1</sup> the recently completed clinical trials of Covid-19 vaccines in young children have excluded that age group.

This study also raises the question of the appropriate timing of Covid-19 vaccination during pregnancy. Determining the appropriate timing is difficult because the benefits of maximizing infant protection must be balanced against the maternal risks of delaying vaccination, given the increased risk of severe Covid-19 during pregnancy. Further study is needed to assess whether an additional booster dose given in later pregnancy would increase infant protection. Despite the increased risk of severe Covid-19 among pregnant women and the accumulating safety data regarding vaccines, only 71% of pregnant women in the United States were fully vaccinated as of May 14, 2022, with a markedly lower rate among non-Hispanic Black women (58%).<sup>9</sup> A recommendation from a health care provider has been found to be associated with a higher likelihood of maternal vaccination, and data on vaccine safety and on protection of the infant through maternal vaccination have been shown to be important to a pregnant person's decision-making process.<sup>10</sup> Thus, this evidence that Covid-19 vaccines help to protect infants as well as mothers is highly relevant for patient counseling: a "two-for-one" deal may encourage more mothers to receive Covid-19 vaccination.



# Bhubaneswar's Baramunda ISBT project nears completion

BHUBANESWAR: The grand Inter State Bus Terminal (ISBT) project at Bhubaneswar's Baramunda missed its deadline, again. Planned to be completed by June this year, it has been grappling with issues related to encroachment and moving bus owners as well as vendors. A crucial legal issue pertaining to a private lodge was sorted recently. All of these could, finally, push the progress of the high-profile project. The Bridge and Roof Company India Limited, a Central Government undertaking, was awarded the project with a bid of

by the High Court. As per the court order, the lodge owner now has to vacate the place within a month. We are hopeful it will be done by the end of this month after which acquiring land for the project will not be a problem," the BDA VC said. Covid Hiatus While the Covid-19 outbreak in 2020 was a major hindrance to the project, it faced hurdles in the finalisation of design, eviction of encroachment and acquisition of land. OSRTC MD Diptesh Kumar Pattnayak said the corporation had handed over



fer of ₹ 160.6 crores. After Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik reviewed the project in December 2020, the State government announced the ISBT will be ready within 18 months to become a landmark in the Capital. Out of the 46,474 sq m area, the terminal space will occupy 12,241 sq m while commercial space will be around 15,884 sq m. The entire project is planned on 15.5 acre.

## Progress So Far

Sources point out that out of 28,125 sq m of work, structural work has been completed on around 20,000 sq m. The project expenditure, though, is barely about 40 per cent by now. The entire terminal and commercial structure has been divided into six blocks. Work on the first four blocks on a G+2 structure is complete and the remaining two blocks with B+G+2 design are in progress.

However, a number of works are yet to start. The government has planned 35 bus bays and 190 idle parking spaces as well as a public parking lot for more than 250 four-wheelers and 175 two-wheelers at the ISBT. Construction work of the facade, bus bays, and a sewage treatment plant is yet to begin while BDA struggled with the acquisition of 4-acre land but managed eventually.

The existing OSRTC building on around 1-acre land, adjacent to the terminal structure, remained partially demolished due to a legal dispute between the corporation and a lodge in which the latter had got a stay order from the Orissa High Court.

## Overcoming Hurdles

Vice Chairman of Bhubaneswar Development Corporation Sanjay Kumar Singh said the brown-field project required a number of bottlenecks to be removed for implementation. "The major hurdle was to negotiate with bus owners to shift from the existing bus stand to a transit stop. This required a lot of time as a temporary parking area was needed to be created with required facilities," he said.

Rehabilitation of vendors was another major issue. As it was an OSRTC bus stand, a number of vendors needed to be shifted and convincing them took time. "The stay order on removal of a lodge at the old OSRTC structure was vacated only recently

the land, required for ISBT, to BDA by 2021 but the lodge remained a problem. The project was conceptualised in 2017. The BDA floated a tender for architectural and urban design the same year in July and Delhi-based Integrated Multimodal Transit System Limited won the bid the next month. In 2018, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced that the bus stand will get a grand makeover as the best-in-class ISBT by April 2019.

It, however, remained a mere announcement till it received a nod from the State Cabinet on September 26, 2019. Construction work for the terminal started the same year after an agreement between the BDA and Bridge and Roof. However, the work was hampered for over six months in 2020 following the Covid-19 pandemic.

While the pandemic had its own impact, there were also lapses on part of Bridge and Roof which delayed the project implementation. "The company was issued a show-cause, while I spoke to the CMD and now we are given a schedule to complete the work by December 2022," Singh said. "The positive achievement is that we have been able to shift the bus stand to the temporary parking area amicably. Relocation of vendors and removal of encroachments were also done smoothly and expect the project work will now continue smoothly," he said.

## ISBT TIMELINE

- ! 2017 - Project was conceptualised
- ! 2018 - CM announced the project
- ! April 2019 - Initial completion deadline
- ! Sept 26, 2019 - Project gets State Cabinet approval

## PROJECT PLAN

35 bus bays, 190 idle parking spaces as well as a public parking lot for more than 250 four-wheelers and 175 two-wheelers

## BOTTLENECKS

- Negotiating with bus owners to shift to a transit stop
- Rehabilitation of vendors
- Covid-19 delay of two years
- Delay in design, eviction of encroachment, land acquisition

# Slave Island starves as Sri Lanka's food prices soar

His hair is neatly combed but his cheeks are sunken and veins visible on his gaunt frame: like many Sri Lankans, Milton Pereira and his family cannot afford to buy enough food. During the country's worst-ever economic crisis, which has driven rampant inflation and spurred protests that last week brought down the president, Sri Lankans are buying less, eating less and working less.

"It's very difficult to live, even a loaf of bread is expensive," Pereira told AFP outside his modest home in Slave Island, a poor enclave of the capital Colombo.

"If we take one meal, we skip another."

With six children in the family, the 74-year-old said the best they had been able to afford in recent weeks was the occasional fish, cut into small pieces for everyone.

"Because we don't have much money, sometimes we give the fish to the children," he said. The adults, he added, "only eat the gravy".

Triggered by the coronavirus pandemic, the country's financial woes were exacerbated by government mismanagement, critics say.

Peirera's son, B. G. Rajitkumar, is an electrical labourer who has had no work for months. "Food prices go up every day," he said. "This exponential price rise is the most terrible thing I have ever faced."

Food inflation in Sri Lanka reached 80.1 per cent in the year to June, according to official figures.

At a nearby vegetable store, residents pay 1,000 rupees (\$2.80) for a kilo of gourd, twice as much as three months ago, and owner Mohamad Faizal said some of his customers were now buying as little as 100 grams a time.

"The prices have gone up," he said. "The main reason is there is no way to transport those items because there is no fuel."

## - 'No option' -

With no foreign exchange reserves for imports and having defaulted on its \$51 billion foreign debt, Sri Lanka is experiencing dire shortages of fuel, medicines and other essentials.

According to the World Food Programme, nearly five million people -- 22 per cent of the population -- need food aid.

In its latest assessment, it said more than five out of every six families were either skipping meals, eating less or buying worse food. While food is not in short supply, the issue is affordability.

The city's New Manning main wholesale vegetable market was bustling on Sunday as buyers, sellers and porters jostled with sacks of produce.

But traders say business has gone down by more than half since March.

"Prices for everything have more than doubled," said trader M. M. Mufeed. "Some unsold vegetables go to waste and many poor people come to take away some of it every day after the market closes."

His sales are down 70 per cent, he added. "Sometimes I sell to poor people for much

less to avoid wasting food and make up somewhat."

But potatoes, onions and garlic continue to be imported from India, Pakistan and China, said import-export businessman Ashley Jennycloss.

"Supply of food is not a problem, but because there is no fuel that makes it difficult and everything becomes expensive," said Jeeva, another trader, who gave only one name.

Some people travel long distances on foot to the New Manning market in the early morning to buy small amounts of vegetables for their kitchens at bulk rates.

"I have no option but to walk 10 kilometres to this market because food is cheaper here compared to retail stores near my home," said 50-year-old Howzy, who gave one name.



## - Pumpkin patch -

The protest movement that brought down Rajapaksa has its headquarters outside his former office, where dozens of volunteers work in a patchwork of tents lining the seafront promenade.

Among them, former government employee Theodore Rajapakse -- no relation -- is teaching people how to produce fast-growing vegetables in small patches of land near their homes.

"My country is in trouble," he said, adding that he has taught around 3,000 protesters since he joined the demonstrations.

"You can grow 100 kilos of pumpkin in a three-foot-by-three-foot patch of land," he added.

But the prospects of immediate improvement in Sri Lankans' plight are limited, and the most likely successor as president, former prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, is reviled by the protesters as a Rajapaksa ally.

At Slave Island -- an area named after a staging post the Portuguese used for slaves from Africa during the colonial period -- Pereira had little hope.

"Gota is gone, but there is no one candidate to lead us out of this terrible condition," he said. "Politicians are divided. So it will get worse, what else can happen?"

## Clean chit for Aryan Khan in cruise drugs case

Mumbai: All the hype and hoopla over the drugs case against Aryan Khan has come to nothing. Almost eight months after the registration of the case, in which the 24-year-old star kid spent 26 days in custody, the narcotics control bureau has given him and five other accused persons a clean chit.

The special investigation team of the NCB on Friday filed a 6,000-page charge sheet naming 14 accused. The agency said that the names of six persons, who were made accused by the earlier investigating team, including Aryan, Avin Sahu, Gopal Anand, Samir Sehgal, Bhaskar Arora and Manav Singhal have been dropped from the charge sheet for the "lack of sufficient evidence".

# North Korea test-fires most powerful missile since 2017

SEOUL: North Korea on Sunday tested its most powerful missile since 2017, ramping up the firepower for its record-breaking seventh launch this month as Seoul warned nuclear and long-range tests could be next. Pyongyang has never test-fired this many missiles in a calendar month before and last week threatened to abandon a nearly five-year-long self-imposed moratorium on testing long-range and nuclear weapons.

With peace talks with the US stalled, North Korea has doubled-down on leader Kim Jong Un's vow to modernise the regime's armed forces, flexing Pyongyang's military muscles despite biting international sanctions.

South Korea said Sunday that North Korea appeared to be following a "similar pattern" to 2017 -- when tensions were last at breaking-point on the peninsula -- warning Pyongyang could soon restart nuclear and intercontinental missile tests.

North Korea "has come close to destroying the moratorium declaration", South Korea's President Moon

Jae-in said in a statement following an emergency meeting of Seoul's National Security Council. South



Korea's military said Sunday it had "detected an intermediate-range ballistic missile fired at a lofted angle eastward towards the East Sea." A lofted trajectory involves missiles being fired at a high angle instead of out to their full range. Sunday's ballistic missile was estimated to have hit

a maximum altitude of 2,000 kilometers and flown around 800 kilometers for half an hour, Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said. That indicated that Pyongyang may have tested its "first Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM) since 2017", Joseph Dempsey, an analyst with the International Institute for Strategic Studies, wrote on Twitter.

The last time Pyongyang tested a similar missile was in 2017, when the Hwasong-12 flew 787 kilometers at an apogee of just over 2,111 kilometers.

Analysts said at the time that the trajectory indicated that the missile could have flown around 4,500 km if fired on a range-maximizing ballistic trajectory -- putting the US territory of Guam in range.

Japan's top government spokesman Hirokazu Matsuno said Sunday that the ballistic missile "was one with intermediate-range or longer range."

Time is ripe  
Pyongyang has tested hypersonic missiles twice this month, as well as carrying out four launches of short-range ballistic and cruise missiles.

Last week, leader Kim was photographed by state media inspecting an "important" munitions factory that produces "a major weapon system".

"Kim has been withholding his appetite for testing and provocations," Soo Kim, an analyst at the RAND Corporation, told AFP.

Now however, "the time is ripe, and North Korea's continued missile firing will only throw another wrench into Washington's already high plate of foreign policy challenges," she added.

The frenzy of missiles was also aimed at reminding the world that "the Kim regime hears external discussions of its domestic weaknesses," said Leif Easley, a professor at Ewha University.

"It wants to remind Washington and Seoul that trying to topple it would be too costly," he added.

The string of launches in 2022 comes at a delicate time in the region, with Kim's sole major ally China set to host the Winter Olympics next month and South Korea gearing up for a presidential election in March.



# Mo School approves 131 Cr Projects 41K Cr for Nutrition

Bhubaneswar: The State Government on Monday approved proposals worth Rs 131.73 crores from 26 districts under the Mo School Abhiyan. Chairing the Executive Council meeting of the Mo School Abhiyan through virtual mode, School & Mass Education Department Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi has approved the proposals.



Mr.Sethi laid emphasis on the infrastructural development of the Government schools under Mo School Abhiyan. The Council was pleased with the record number of Utilisation Certificates (UCs) submitted to the office of the Mo School within a month's time.

Within a month, 10,672 alumni have joined hands with Mo School Abhiyan and have contributed Rs 5.06 crores for the development of their alma mater. The Mo School Abhiyan has received grants worth Rs 38.85 crore from various CSR funds.

Coupled with the donors' contribution, CSR funds and a 2X matching grant from the State Government, the Executive Council has approved projects worth Rs 131.73 crores which will be availed in the development of the 1557 primary, upper primary and high schools across the State, officials said.

The alumni have contributed Rs 1.12 crores in Balasore, Rs 42 lakh in Cuttack, Rs 25.22 lakhs in Bhadrak, Rs 24.27 lakhs in Sambalpur and Rs 18.94 lakhs in Mayurbhanj districts respectively.

Till date, 6.85 lakh alumni have been connected with Mo School Abhiyan. Mo School has received Rs 644 crores in the 2022-23 financial year for the third phase of High School Transformation and to accelerate the pace of Mo School projects.

Proposal for the transformation of 2159 high schools out of the remaining 4310 high schools from the first and second phase of High School Transformation was also sought. Complying with the ever-increasing interest of the students of the govt schools for scientific learning, Mo School in collaboration with Odisha Bigyan Academy and Regional Science Centre is facilitating programmes aligned with scientific programmes. Recently, scientific workshops and training

sessions were conducted to develop scientific temperament among students and teachers. Further, decisions have been taken to organise Mobile science exhibitions in the near future.

Along the same line, Mo School has joined hands with the Institute of Mathematics and Applications, Bhubaneswar to help students develop interest in mathematics.

'Mathematics Mela' will soon be organised for students of high school and upper primary schools with the support of both the organisations and the collaboration will also aid in the skill development of the mathematics teachers. In these regards, decisions have been taken in the 35th Executive Council of Mo School Abhiyan.

To encourage coding lessons among the students of the transformed high schools, Code Club activities have been kickstarted in 1076 high schools.

In the meantime, training on coding and programming were conducted for 413 teachers from 30 districts. For the safety of the assets procured in the transformed high schools, it was instructed to engage security personnel to safeguard the same and funds under 'Mo School' in the transformed schools may be utilised in this regard.

Similarly, every transformed school will be profited with the installation of CCTVs, lightning arresters and fire extinguishers. Internet facilities will be provided in all the transformed schools under the High School Transformation Programme.

Mr.Sethi has instructed that special attention be given on internet connectivity in the schools of the remote areas and ensure students of these areas avail the benefits of internet facilities.

Mo School in collaboration with TATA Trusts and Livolink Foundation has set up an Academic Resource Centre in Kandhamal district under the primary school transformation programme. The centre will play a pivotal role in the skill development of the primary teachers.

With the support of Mo School different co-curricular activities will be organised in 300 transformed schools to boost the holistic development of the students and skill development of the teachers.

A suggestive list of activities will be provided to the schools and awareness drives will be conducted every month for the students. Special programmes will be organised to promote dance, music, art and crafts, sports, spoken English, foreign language, coding and leadership skills among students. It has been collectively instructed to organise various competitions and programmes to aware students on health and nutrition. The meeting also witnessed the presence of Anupam Saha, State Project Director- OSEPA and Member Secretary- Mo School, Pratap Kumar Mishra, Additional Secretary, S&ME Dept., Ratikanta Mohapatra, Financial Advisor, S&ME Dept., Director, Secondary Education, Director, Elementary Education, Director, TE & SCERT, Amarjit Jena, COO, Mo School and Prabir Kumar Khillar, OSD, Mo School.

## Unique megalithic burial site discovered in Dakshina Kannada

Mangaluru: A team led by MSRS College History and Archaeology department Head Prof T Murugeshi



has discovered a unique Megalithic burial site, dating back to 800 BC at a cashew plantation in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka.

Based on the information provided by the villagers, the team visited 'Pandavara Guhe,' (Cave of Pandavas) at Aturu-Kundaje government cashew plantation near Ramakunja of Kadaba taluk. To their

surprise they found a unique type of rock cut cave- a Megalithic burial- at the place.

"Normally the rock cut caves of the Megalithic era are 2.5 or 3 feet long with openings in the centre and about a meter deep it is hemispherical in shape. But here, there is no central opening but a huge circle engraving. The circle is about 7 feet in diameter on the laterite surface. What is more interesting is that exactly below, there is a cave with the same measurement. On the side, there is an opening of about 2 feet in height," Prof Murugeshi told Deccan Chronicle.

"Usually, Megalithic burial sites are marked by stone circles, menhirs and stone carnes. But for the first time a sepulchral is marked by a circle," he said. Prof Murugeshi remarked that this could perhaps be the first rock engraving of the megalithic period found from Dakshina Kannada.

According to Prof Murugeshi, the burial site dates back to 800 BC- 500 BC.

Members of the excavation team entered the cave to get a clear picture of the structure inside.

"About 4-5 people can easily sit inside. Interestingly at the centre we noticed an altar- like pit. We did not find any grave goods inside the cave as they might have been taken away long ago," he added.

Bhubaneswar(KCN): In order to improve nutrition attainment in the State, Odisha Government has formulated a massive Nutrition Budget with a kitty of more than Rs.41,000 Crore. For the first time such a huge allocation has been made during 2022-23.

While investment in nutritional interventions for children, adolescent girls and women is the utmost priority of the state government huge hike in allocation in this sensitive sector will go a long way for improving nutritional outcomes in the State, officials say.

According to Budget Estimate, Nutrition Budget holds more than 20 Percent of the Total Annual Budget, focusing keenly on bettering the nutritional status of most vulnerable section such as children, women. And accordingly, state has made strategic budgetary intervention for which Rs.41,239.62 Crore has been allocated in the Nutrition Budget for 2022-23. Officials say that Nutri-

tion Budget helps prioritize the allocation of financial resources for all schemes and programs addressing the nutrition in the state.

Odisha Government is implementing 24 Nutrition Specific and 132 Nutrition Sensitive Schemes.

Similarly, nutrition sensitive schemes are implemented by Departments of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Fisheries and Animal Resources Development and Women & Child Development. While nutrition sensitive components comprise

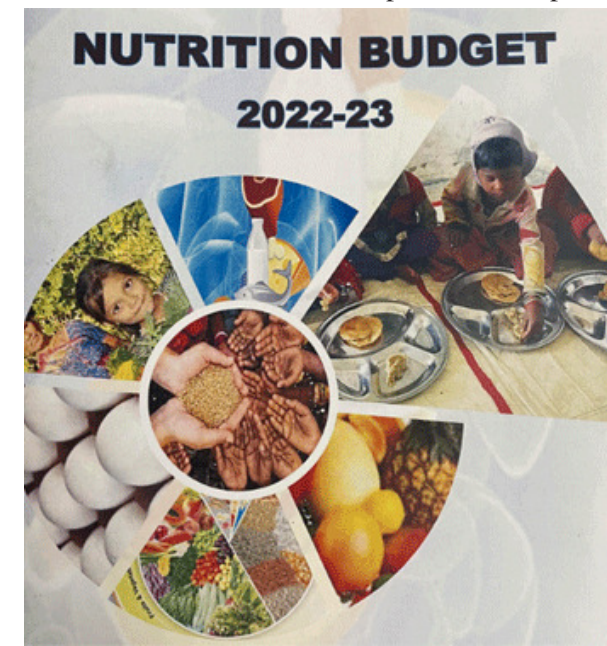
tor has got Rs.35,830.90 Crore.

In fact, such an initiative has helped the State as it is a frontrunner of many health & nutritional indicators. There has been significant increase in early child health indicators such as early initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding, complementary feeding and adequate diet diversity in children, which are above the national averages.

Odisha has ranked Number One in the country in terms of indexing IYCF Indicators.

The big leap in children receiving adequate diet has been one of the most remarkable and noteworthy achievements. This is one of the most important determinants in reducing stunting in children.

While Odisha is on a mission mode to improve nutritional status of its citizens, specifically children, women, more schemes and programs are included in 2022-23, officials admit.



Largest numbers of nutrition specific schemes are implemented by Departments of women & Child Development, Food Supply & Consumer Welfare, School & Mass Education.

84.62 Percent, nutrition specific component include 14.38 Percent of the Nutrition Budget. Nutrition Specific Sector has been allocated Rs.5408.72 Crore and Nutrition Sensitive sec-



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# Heavy rains cause landslide in Odisha's Gajapati; watch on Hirakud dam

BHUBANESWAR/BERHAMPUR: Over 200 mm of rain that pounded Gajapati in the last 24 hours triggered landslides besides ter he slipped into Gangua nullah in the State Capital. In the last 24 hours, the rains led to flooding



caused flash floods in neighbouring districts of the State. The incessant rains led to landslides in Bangdising village under Badakalakote panchayat in Gajapati. At least one house was damaged in the village. Roads are being cleared by JCB machine to reach the village. Gumma Tehsildar is supervising the restoration work, said Special Relief Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena on Sunday. Similarly, landslides took place in the Parimala panchayat under the Nuagada block in Gajapati. It left road communication affected between Nuagada and Gunupur as boulders fell on the roads from the hills. In the neighbouring Rayagada district, two youths were left stranded on a rock in the Nagavali river due to a sudden rise in the water level. Odisha Fire Service personnel rushed to the spot and rescued the two who are natives of Kashipur block.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik appreciated the efforts of the firefighters of Rayagada and Kolnara in rescuing the two persons from the swollen river. The Odisha Fire Service personnel also rescued a four-year-old boy af-

in parts of the Nayagarh and Malkangiri districts. Nuagada and R Udayagiri in Gajapati district and Tangi in Khurda received extremely heavy showers and recorded 240 mm, 230 mm and 210 mm rainfall respectively. Fifteen other places in Kandhamal, Jajpur, Puri, Nayagarh, Gajapati, Cuttack, Kalahandi and Balangir districts also witnessed very heavy rainfall in the last 24 hours.

The low pressure that caused the pounding showers is now over north Odisha and there is a strong possibility that the system will start weakening within 24 hours. There is no warning for very heavy rainfall in Odisha from Monday onwards, said Director of Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre HR Biswas.

With the rains leading to flash floods, Odisha Government kept a close watch over the situation. The upper catchment in Chhattisgarh also received a good amount of rain on Saturday night. With Hirakud Dam's water level reaching 611.58 ft on Sunday, a close watch is being kept on the Mahanadi river, he added

# Reliance Jio submits earnest money deposit of Rs 14,000 crore ahead of 5G auction

NEW DELHI: According to the India's largest list of pre-quali-

players' appetite, Rs 2,200 crore. strategy and plan With its EMD at Rs

# Beer market gaining prominence in India; would enhance product line, says UBL

NEW DELHI: The beer market is gaining prominence in India owing to a rise in disposable incomes, popularity of low-alcohol beverages and growing social acceptance,

ket growth," said UBL while sharing the industry overview.

Moreover, the introduction of online ordering and ease of doorstep delivery in certain states could further enable wider distribution towards end consumers.



"Overall, the industry fundamentals remain very strong and your company is convinced that with the current strategies in place, it can drive, lead and shape the

said United Breweries Ltd.

The company, which is controlled by Dutch brewing firm Heineken NV, intends to enhance its product line through innovation thus catering to a larger audience, both in India and abroad, according to the latest annual report of UBL (United Breweries Ltd). "We intend to leverage and contribute to the in-house expertise of Heineken thus augmenting our mutual growth," said UBL, adding, "Its initiatives are driven to encash the young demographics and increasing disposable income in India."

Besides, UBL also intends to fine-tune its supply chain, which is crucial in adequately catering to consumer demand, the company said in its outlook.

While discussing the industry overview, UBL said: "In India, we believe our best days are ahead of us as young people continue to choose beer as a social lubricant."

However, it also added the industry's potential is yet to be fully unlocked owing to factors such as a relatively limited outlet universe, various government regulations and high taxation policies in most states across India. Rapid urbanisation, rising middle class and change in societal perspective, along with the launch of new low- and no-alcohol variants of beer and technological advancements, are poised to propel mar-

beer market in India," said UBL.

UBL, with its flagship brand 'Kingfisher', is the leading player in the beer market in India. Heineken is now a majority promoter shareholder and owns a 61.5 per cent stake in UBL.

Last year in June, it acquired 16.15 per cent equity shares of UBL from the Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) under whose custody the transfer shares owned by the Vijay Mallya Group were being held.

For the financial year that ended on March 31, 2022, UBL's gross turnover was at Rs **Voting begins to elect India's 15th President**

Continued from page-1

and MLAs with regard to voting.

The value of the vote of a Member of Parliament has gone down to 700 from 708 in this presidential poll due to the absence of a legislative assembly in Jammu and Kashmir.

The value of vote of an MLA varies in different states. In Uttar Pradesh, the value of vote of each MLA stands at 208, followed by 176 in Jharkhand and Tamil Nadu. In Maharashtra, it is 175. In Sikkim, the value of vote per MLA is seven, while it is nine in Nagaland and eight in Mizoram.

In accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of single transferable vote, every elector can mark as many preferences, as there are candidates contesting the election.

These preferences for the candidates are to be marked by the elector, by placing the figures 1,2,3, 4, 5 and so on, against the names of the candidates, in the order of preference, in the space provided in column 2 of the ballot paper.

According to Election Commission's directions, while MPs will get a green-coloured ballot paper, the MLAs will get a pink ballot paper to cast their vote.

Separate colours help the returning officer ascertain the value of vote of each MLA and MP.

Seeking to maintain secrecy of voting, the EC has issued a specially designed pen with violet ink to enable voters mark their ballot papers in the presidential poll.

**Poor, middle class being maligned with talk of 'Revadi culture': Priyanka Gandhi**

Continued from page-1

expensive. To benefit his trillionaire friends of Modi ji, electricity will be made expensive in the coming time," the Congress general secretary said in a tweet in Hindi.

"For some people, arrangements are being made to earn indiscriminately, but the poor and middle class are being maligned by talk of 'Revadi culture'," Priyanka Gandhi said.

She also shared an image of GST rates for items such as curd, rice, flour and LED light on one hand and media reports claiming benefits for big corporates with the heading "meva culture", using a Hindi metaphor for practise doling out largesse. In his remarks in Jalaun, the prime minister had used 'revadi', a popular north Indian sweet often distributed during festivals, as a metaphor for freebies being promised by various parties to grab power and said the people, specially the youth, should guard against it.



telecom operator Reliance Jio Infocomm has submitted an earnest money deposit (EMD) of Rs 14,000 crore ahead of its participation in the 5G auction, while Bharti Airtel has put in Rs 5,500 crore.

fied bidders posted on the telecom department's website, the EMD (Earnest money deposit) amount of Adani Data Networks stands at Rs 100 crore. Typically, EMD amounts give a broad indication of

for picking up spectrum in an auction. It also determines the eligibility points, through which telcos target a specific amount of spectrum in a given circle. Vodafone Idea has put in an EMD of

14,000 crore, the eligibility points assigned to Jio for the auction stand at 1,59,830, the highest in the list of four bidders. The eligibility points allocated to Airtel are 66,330, while that of Vodafone Idea are

eligibility points of 1,650, based on its deposit.

The 5G spectrum auction is scheduled to start on July 26. Total of 72 GHz (gigahertz) of spectrum worth at least Rs 4.3 lakh crore will be put on

The auction will be held for radiowaves in various low-frequency bands (600 MHz, 700 MHz, 800 MHz, 900 MHz, 1800 MHz, 2100 MHz, 2300 MHz), mid (3300 megahertz) and high-frequency bands (26GHz).



## Maharashtra crisis: Uddhav faction files fresh plea in SC against move to disqualify its MLAs

A bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana agreed for its hearing alongside the other five pending pleas.

The bench, also comprising justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli is already scheduled to hear on Wednesday as many as five pending pleas about the recent political crisis in Maharashtra that led to the fall of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government in the state. The turmoil began with a rebellion in the Shiv Sena following which Uddhav Thackeray resigned as chief minister on June 29.

A day later, rebel Sena leader Eknath Shinde took an oath as chief minister with the BJP supporting his faction. The fresh sixth plea was mentioned before the bench by senior advocate Devdatt Kamat.

"Maharashtra matters are listed on Wednesday. I request for tagging the same along with them," Kamat said. The CJI said, "Okay, tag it with them."

The CJI-led bench, on July 11, had granted interim relief to the Uddhav Thackeray faction MLAs by asking Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narvekar not to proceed with the plea seeking their disqualification as sought by the Shinde group on the ground of defying the party whip during the trust vote and the election of the speaker.

The top court seized of five petitions and the first one was filed by the Shinde faction during the summer vacation when some rebel Sena MLAs moved before it challenging the disqualification proceedings initiated by the



deputy speaker.

Rest four pleas, now the fifth one, have been filed by the Thackeray faction. On June 27, the vacation bench extended the time for the rebel MLAs to file written responses to the deputy speaker's disqualification notice till July 12.

On July 3, Rahul Narvekar of the BJP was elected Speaker of the Maharashtra Assembly. He had polled 164 votes and defeated Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena candidate

Rajan Salvi, who got 107 votes.

A day before the floor test, Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Narvekar had recognised Gogawale as the Shiv Sena's chief whip, removing Sunil Prabhu, who belongs to the Thackeray faction.

After winning the trust vote in the state Assembly on July 4, the Shinde faction of the Shiv Sena issued a notice to 14 legislators from the Uddhav Thackeray camp for violating a whip issued by the Sena whip and Shinde loyalist Bharat

Gogawale.

Both sides have accused each other of defying the party whip during the Speaker's election and the trust vote on July 3 and 4, respectively, seeking disqualification of the legislators from both sides.

Maharashtra legislature secretary also came into the picture and issued show-cause notices to 53 of the total 55 Shiv Sena MLAs in the state, including 39 of the faction led by Shinde and 14 of the Uddhav Thackeray group.

The notices have been issued under the Members of Maharashtra Legislative Assembly (disqualification on grounds of defection) rules.

In the trust vote, 164 MLAs voted for the motion of confidence, while 99 voted against

it.

The Thackeray faction has also challenged the validity of assembly proceedings held on July 3 and July 4 in which a new speaker of the House was elected and subsequent proceedings of floor test in which the Shinde-led coalition had proved its majority.

It has also filed a plea challenging the decision of the newly-elected Speaker to recognise the new party whip of Shiv Sena rebels led by Shinde.

Prior to this, Prabhu had moved the top court seeking suspension from the assembly of the chief minister and 15 rebel MLAs against whom the disqualification pleas are pending. The vacation bench of the court had on June 27 granted interim relief to the Shinde faction by extending the time for replying to the disqualification notices sent to 16 rebel Sena MLAs till July 12.

On June 29, the Maharashtra governor had ordered a floor test, prompting the MVA government to rush to the top court seeking its deferment.

The bench refused to stay under the direction of the Governor to the 31-month-old MVA government to take a floor test in the Assembly to prove its majority after which the then beleaguered chief minister Uddhav Thackeray quit office.

After Shinde was sworn in as the chief minister on June 30, Prabhu moved to the top court seeking his suspension and of 15 Sena rebels on various grounds, alleging that they are acting as pawns of the BJP, thereby committing the constitutional sin of defection.

## Bengaluru FC signs Fiji striker Roy Krishna for two years

BENGALURU: Bengaluru FC on Monday announced the signing of a two-year contract with Fiji international striker Roy Krishna, which will add more firepower to their front-line.

The 34-year-old Krishna, who captained Fiji and has the most goals and appearances for his country, has previously turned out for ATK FC and ATK Mohun Bagan in the Indian Super League.

"I had conversations with the coach (Simon Grayson) when I was in the early stages of negotiations and he really convinced me that

move as I had to factor in my family. I'm really pleased with how well things have worked so far, and I'm glad that I don't have to worry about taking on Bengaluru FC as an opponent, and that I get to be part of the BFC legacy."

ALSO READ | 'Huge opportunity for me': Paul Pogba's brother Florentin joins ATK Mohun Bagan on two-year deal

At Phoenix, Krishna was named the Players' Player of the Year in 2017-18, Player of the Year in 2018-19 and with 18 goals, won the A-League Golden Boot in 2018-19.

Krishna is the Phoenix's all-time leading



I would have an impact at the club," said Krishna following the completion of formalities on his deal. I've always admired the way Bengaluru played and organized itself over the years that I've played in India."

Krishna is the Blues' sixth signing of the season, following the arrivals of Javi Hernandez, Prabir Das, Faisal Ali, Amrit Gope and Hira Mondal.

After beginning his career with local side Labasa as a teenager, Krishna made his first move abroad in 2008, joining New Zealand Football Championship side Waitakere United.

In his six seasons with Waitakere, Krishna scored 55 goals in 75 appearances and picked up the NZFC Golden Boot in 2012-13.

Following a short stint at Auckland City, where he became the first Fijian to score at the finals of a FIFA tournament by netting against Raja Casablanca in a playoff of the FIFA Club World Cup, Krishna moved again, this time to Australia where he joined Wellington Phoenix.

"When we played against Bengaluru FC, they have always been a tough opponent and we knew it wouldn't be a walk in the park. We had a different strategy when taking on BFC," said Krishna.

"From the start I've had a good impression of the club, but it took some time to finalize the

goalscorer with 51 goals, and his record of 18 goals in a single A-League season has not been matched by any other Phoenix player.

"We wanted to bring Roy to Bengaluru FC the moment we knew he was available. There were a host of clubs within the League and outside who were in the running to sign him," said BFC Director Parth Jindal.

"We want to bring BFC back to where it belongs, and this signing is as big a statement of intent. Roy's work ethic, eye for goal and records are phenomenal, and we're all excited to see how he teams up with Sunil and the rest of the squad."

In his three seasons in the ISL, Krishna has 36 goals and 18 assists and was joint top-scorer in the League twice -- in 2019-20 with 15 goals as ATK lifted the ISL trophy and in 2020-21 with 14 goals, as ATK Mohun Bagan reached the final.

Krishna, who is an ambassador for the Oceania Football Confederation, represented Fiji at the U-20 and U-23 levels, before making his debut for the senior national team at the 2007 South Pacific games.

His opening goal against Mexico at the 2016 Rio Olympics is Fiji's first and only goal at an Olympic Games.

With 31 goals in 45 appearances, Krishna leads the charts for goals and appearances for his country.




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