

Churu Nagarik Parishad pays Homage to Late Shanti Lal Baid and demands early arrest of culprit

Kolkata (KCN): Churu Nagarik Parishad paid homage to Late Shanti Lal Baid, its Executive Committee member who was

anguish and sorrow on such kind of white collar crime in central area of the City. Narayan Jain, former President of Parishad and Social activist as

communication by mobile or in using whatsapp. Manju Manot an advocate of High Court as well as all other members demanded that Police

Chand Manot, Pawan Dhanuka, Bharat Baid, Jagat Baid, Pawan Agarwal, Tara Chand Brmecha, IP Goenka, Sanjay Birmecha, Kanti



murdered on 14 February, 2022 in a Guest House in Shambhu Nath Pandit Street, Kolkata. Dr. SK Sharma, former Sheriff of Calcutta presided over and expressed deep

well as a class fellow of deceased Shanti Baid, hoped that Kolkata Police will succeed in its efforts to catch hold of the culprit. Jain advised people to be cautious in meeting people and even in making

should expedite the investigation and book and arrest the culprit. The culprit had also extorted big amount of Rs. 25 Lakhs from the family of victim Shanti Lal Baid. Prakash Parakh, Tara

Surana and many others paid homage to the departed soul and prayed God for his Peace in heaven. They also prayed the God to give strength to his brother Kamal Baid and all family members to bear the immense loss.

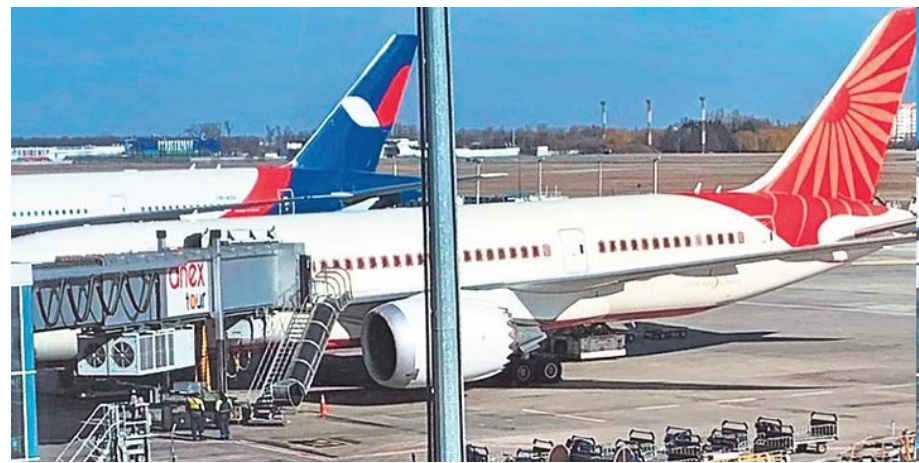
Nearly 8000 Indians have returned from Ukraine: Centre

NEW DELHI(KCN): Nearly 8000 Indian citizens have returned

the evacuation process began, a few days back, six evacu-

body has to pay anything, said MEA s p o k e s p e r s o n

Scindia who will oversee operations in Romania and Moldova, Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Puri who will be in Hungary, Minister of Law and Justice Kiren Rijju who will be in Slovakia and Minister of State in Ministry of Road Transport and Highways General V K Singh who will be in Poland.



from Ukraine since the first advisory was issued by the Indian Embassy in Kyiv last month.

ation flights have returned to India bringing back 1396 students.

Arindam Bagchi.

Four flights have come from Bucharest and two from Budapest. The government is bearing the entire cost of these flights so no-

In order to coordinate and oversee the evacuation process across five countries, four Senior Ministers have left for the bordering countries of Ukraine. These are Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya

"Situation on the ground is complex and fluid. However, we will accelerate evacuation process so that the remaining 12,000 Indians are brought back safely to India," Bagchi added.

UP polls: Choose between Modi's Mission Ganga and Akhilesh's Operation Danga, says Shivraj

BHOPAL(KCN): MP CM Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Shivraj Singh Chouhan who is on a tour of poll-bound UP, on Monday became nostalgic while addressing a rally in Jaunpur district on Monday. Addressing the rallies in



Jafrabad and Mungrabadshahpur assembly segments of Jaunpur district, the CM said he had a special connection with Jaunpur owing to his jail stay in the East UP district during

the 1990-91 Ram Temple Movement. He later also addressed a rally in the Jakhania-SC seat of Ghazipur district.

"I have a special connection with Jaunpur, as I spent eight days at the jail here during the 1990-91 Ram Temple movement. I was just an MLA from MP's Budhni seat at that time and just like other Ayodhya-bound Ram Bhakts, I entered UP through Hanumana in MP's Rewa district. But our passage to Ayodhya was cut short in East UP, as I was arrested and spent the next eight days in Jaunpur jail," Chouhan recounted at a rally in Jaunpur district.

UP polls: PM Modi cites 'international challenges', says need to make India strong Raising the issue of successful evacuation of Indians, particularly students from Ukraine by the Narendra Modi-led CONTINUED ON: P-7

Russia-Ukraine War LIVE Updates

Moscow closes its airspace to 36 nations; Lavrov cancels Geneva trip

Russia (KCN): Russian President Vladimir Putin dramatically escalated East-West tensions by ordering Russian nuclear forces put on high alert Sunday, while Ukraine's embattled leader agreed to talks with Moscow as Putin's troops and tanks drove deeper into the country, closing in around the capital.



Citing "aggressive statements" by NATO and tough financial sanctions, Putin issued a directive to increase the readiness of Russia's nuclear weapons, raising fears that the invasion of Ukraine could lead to nuclear war, whether by design or mistake.

Russian President Vladimir Putin puts nuclear forces on high alert, escalating tensions Russian President Vladimir Putin dramatically escalated East-West tensions by ordering Russian nuclear forces put on high alert Sunday, while Ukraine's embattled leader agreed to talks with Moscow as Putin's troops and tanks drove deeper into the country, closing in around the

capital. President Vladimir Putin dramatically escalated East-West tensions by ordering Russian nuclear forces put on high alert, but the explosions and gunfire that have disrupted life since the start of the invasion appeared to subside around Ukraine's capital overnight as the Kremlin's

military advances were slowed by an outgunned but determined resistance. President Vladimir Putin dramatically escalated East-West tensions by ordering Russian nuclear forces put on high alert, but the explosions and gunfire that have disrupted life since the start of the invasion appeared to subside around Ukraine's capital overnight as the Kremlin's military advances were slowed by an outgunned but determined resistance.

European Union defence ministers were also to meet, to discuss how to get weaponry they have pledged into Ukraine. Meanwhile, Western sanctions triggered by the invasion sent the ruble plummeting, leading Russians to line up at banks and ATMs. Russian mogul uses UK paper for anti-war plea

Russia-born media mogul Evgeny Lebedev has used the pages of a British newspaper he owns to implore Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the invasion of Ukraine. CONTINUED ON: P-5

Congress, BJP candidates cautious ahead of ULB polls

PARADIP(KCN): With BJD's unsailable victory in the panchayat polls, Congress and BJP candidates in Paradip and Jagatsinghpur are sceptical of contesting the upcoming urban local body (ULB) polls with party tickets.

Though the complete results of the rural elections are not declared so far, the Opposition candidates for ULBs are keen on contesting as independent candidates instead of being tagged to the BJP or Congress. Local BJD leader and former chairman of Paradip Municipality Basant Kumar Biswal said that the party has quite a

number of aspirants and election for the post of chairman will be held directly. "We will select the councillor and chairman candidates based on their expe-

leader Sampad Swain is worried with the current scenario, a youth leader Chinmaya Ranjan, son of Kishore Parida who was the chairman of Paradip

As many as 19 wards with 42,116 voters will exercise their franchise to elect members for Paradip Municipality. In the last urban poll, BJD had won 17 seats



rience and leadership qualities. There is no chance of accepting people from other parties as our hands are full with party candidates," added Biswal. While local BJP

Municipality, is also lobbying to get a BJP ticket for the ULB polls. Congress will field one candidate from Paradip Erasama Industrial Bikash Parishad.

followed by Congress at two and BJP one. Elections to 106 ULBs including 47 municipalities, 59 NACs and three Municipal Corporations will be held on March 24.

Maha Shivratri 2022: Know Mahadeepa time for Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar

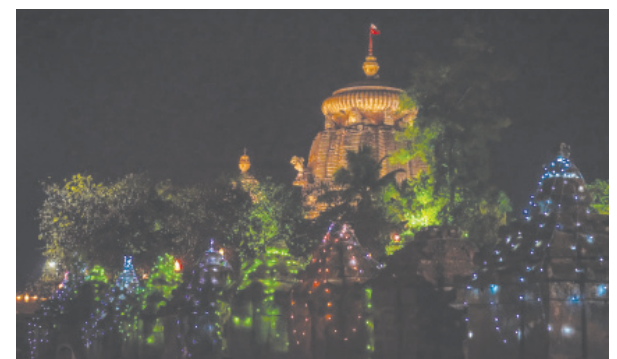
Bhubaneswar(KCN): Placing of Mahadeepa atop the Lingaraj Temple in Odisha capital is a significant ritual of Maha Shivratri as devotees break their fast after it. The temple committee has decided that the Mahadeepa will be placed atop the temple this year at 10 PM on the day of Maha Shivratri (March 1, Tuesday).

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has issued a set of guidelines for celebration of the festival at the Lingaraj Temple in the city.

As per the guidelines, the concerned servitors of the temple shall perform rituals of the deity by observing COVID appropriate behavior like wearing of mask and social distancing. Devotees will be allowed for the darshan of Lord Lingaraj from Singhadwara to Aada Katha on the occasion. There will be no puja during darshan of Lord Lingaraj near Aada Katha by the devotees. Sahanmela darshan/ Garvagruha darasan will not be allowed on the day of Maha Shivratri. The devotees shall have to maintain

social distance at all times during the event. The temple authorities shall ensure that only that many devotees are allowed inside the temple premises so that social distancing of 6 feet is maintained at all times.

All the devotees shall have to wear masks appropriately at all times during the occasion. Provision of hand washing/ hand sanitizer for the devotees will be ensured by the temple authorities. Spitting inside and outside the temple premises and chewing of pan/ gutkha has been strictly prohibited. Those with SARI/ ILI



like symptoms shall not be allowed to the temple. Other vulnerable group of people such as persons with co-morbidities, elderly persons, pregnant women and children below 12 years of age have been advised to avoid the event. Any kind of mela/ congregation of temporary vendors which will cause gathering has been prohibited outside the temple premises to avoid crowding.

Renubala Frontrunner for Kendrapara ULB Chief

Kendrapara(KCN): 10 in 1869 and 1st With State Election Commission notified and the oldest municipality of Odisha.



for election to Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) 2022, talks are round the corner for the post of Chairperson for Kendrapara Municipality, which was established on March

The Kendrapara Urban Zone is divided into 21 wards where 67.91% Hindu and 31.64% are Muslim populations. Renubala Kar, the first Women Councilor of Odisha, is

now eyeing for the said post. With locals having a good support to her, as she did commendable work in her first tenure in 1984, sources argued Shrimati Kar may emerge as a front runner for the post of Chairperson. During Shrimati Kar's tenure in 1984, tax collection was increased five times more than that of the target while more than 50 local people were given jobs in the Municipality.

It may be noted here that during COVID-19 time, Renubala Kar had extended all possible support to people of Kendrapara town while visiting door to door with essential commodities and medical equipment in hand.

She had initiated Construction of Market Complex, Gobari By-Pass Road, Santa Sahi Bridge,

Tinimuhani-Gobari Setu and Ranapada Setu. Locals alleged that the present councillors and chairperson are not meeting expectations and they are in need for a strong leadership under Renubala Kar to steer the development carried out by the State and Central Governments. Locals alleged that due to unauthorized encroachments, road accident are on rise, adding that if Renubala Kar like figure given a chance to lead the Municipality as Chairperson, something positive would happen.

The election will be held for the post of Mayors, Corporators, Chairpersons and Councilors in 107 Notified Area Council (NACs)/Municipalities and three Municipal Corporations- Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur.

Schools seems joyous after reopening of primary school



Barbil (KCN): Schools in the Joda-Barbil mining area in Kendujhar district are seen jubilant today. The uniformly dressed small kids

with schoolbag at their shoulder blooms the street once again. As per the government's plan, the eighth and twelfth schools were first

allowed to open on January 7. The next week, primary schools are scheduled to open, but are set to open on February 28 for a variety of reasons. Accordingly all Government and private schools in the Joda blocks have been reopened. Though Schools did not have full attendance, but good attendance was observed in schools. For a long time, children were coming to school after a long

gap roughly say 2 years. Amid Covid pandemic scenario, Twenty percent of children have access to virtual education only while 80 percent of children have been deprived of education due to lack of internet access and lack of Android mobile. "In most cases, the children have forgotten the lesson and we have to work hard to bring it back to the mainstream," said one teacher.

Husband brutally killed wife over domestic dispute

Barbil (KCN): Being Kendujhar district is a tribal-dominated district and due to ignorance of civic sense and lack of

night at Jagdasahi village in Kashia village of Serenda panchayat under Badbil police station in Kendujhar district

house due to a minor altercation between them. Bamai Munda forcibly entered the house as she had her own small children

help. But Mangal attacked further with an axe with an intension to kill her. Bamai died of e x c e s s



awareness many people get addicted to alcohol. This practice prevails nuisance in their personal and social life. This causes their children to the path of astray. A barbaric massacre was reported late last

witness of such illusion. Two spouse Mangal Munda and Bamal Munda of this village reportedly have been quarrelling even in small m a t t e r. M a n g a l refused to allow his wife to enter the

inside the house. But at around 3am, Mangal lost his mental balance and hit Bamai's neck by a screw driver, while she was asleep inside. Seeing this Bamai pleaded with pain and cried for

bleeding. Getting the information Barbil police arrived at this morning and sent the body for autopsy. Police too have detained Mangal Munda for further investigation as per source.

Ukrainian men return from abroad to fight Russian invasion



MEDYKA: While tens of thousands of refugees are leaving Ukraine amid Russia's attack on the country, some Ukrainian men and women are returning home from across Europe to help defend their homeland. At the checkpoint in Medyka, in south-eastern Poland, many were standing in a line early on Sunday to cross into Ukraine. "We have to defend our homeland. Who else if not us," said a moustachioed man in front of a group of

some 20 Ukrainian truck drivers walking to the checkpoint to enter Ukraine. They came from across Europe to return to Ukraine. They spoke to The Associated Press in Ukrainian and in Russian. Another man in the group said: "The Russians should be afraid. We are not afraid." Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy calls for Russia to lose UN Security Council seat. Members of the group declined to give their names, or only gave

their first names, citing their security and that of their families. A woman in her 30s who gave her first name, Lesa, spoke to the AP just before entering the checkpoint building. "I am afraid, but I am a mother and want to be with my children. What can you do? It's scary but I have to." Another young woman said she, too, was returning to take care of her children, so that Ukrainian men can defend the country. More than 2 lakh

people have fled Ukraine, says UN refugee agency. "We have to, we Ukrainians have to take our children away, to allow our boys to fight," she said. At least 150,000 people have fled Ukraine into Poland and other neighbouring countries in the wake of the Russian invasion, the UN refugee agency, the UNHCR, said Saturday. It did not give the figures for those going to Ukraine.

Russian troops enter Ukraine's 2nd largest city of Kharkiv

KYIV: Ukrainian authorities say that Russian troops have entered Ukraine's second-largest city of Kharkiv and fighting is underway in the streets. Oleh Sinehubov, the head of the Kharkiv regional administration, said Sunday that Ukrainian forces were fighting Russian troops in the

city while other forces rolled past, pressing their offensive deeper into Ukraine. Videos on Ukrainian media and social networks showed Russian vehicles moving across Kharkiv and a light vehicle burning on the street. Tel Aviv: An organisation that facilitates Jewish

ALSO READ | IAEA calls on all parties to refrain from actions that threaten safety of Ukraine's nuclear power plants. The organisation said in a statement it also plans to assist Ukrainian Jews with temporary housing in bordering countries until they can leave for Israel. The agency said it

internet service is now active in Ukraine. The tech billionaire made the announcement on Twitter in response to a tweet by Ukraine's minister of digital transformation saying that while Musk tries to colonise Mars, Russia is trying to occupy Ukraine. The minister called on Musk to provide his country with



city and asked civilians not to leave their homes. Russian troops approached Kharkiv, which is located about 20 kilometers (12.4 miles) south of the border with Russia, shortly after Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine on Thursday. But until Sunday, they remained on its outskirts without trying to enter

immigration to Israel says it is ramping up its efforts along Ukrainian border crossings to absorb what it expects to be a wave of new immigrants fleeing the Russian invasion. The Jewish Agency for Israel said late Saturday it plans to open six processing facilities along Ukraine's borders with Poland, Moldova, Romania and Hungary.

assisted a group of new immigrants to cross into Poland on Saturday where they are awaiting a flight to Israel. Israel's Foreign Ministry estimates there are at least 120,000 Jews in Ukraine. Israel also has a sizeable population of Ukrainian emigres. Los Angeles: Elon Musk says his SpaceX company's Starlink satellite

Starlink stations. In his response Saturday, Musk said: "Starlink service is now active in Ukraine. More terminals en route." Starlink is a satellite-based internet system that SpaceX has been building for years to bring internet access to underserved areas of the world. It markets itself as ideally suited for areas where internet service is unreliable or unavailable.

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WATCH 'Manikarnika' trailer: This Kangana Ranaut-starrer looks like bits from a Bhansali product



MUMBAI (KCN): Finally it comes. The trailer of the beleaguered historical "Manikarnika - The Queen Of Jhansi" brings to us a furious, ferocious and feral Kangana Ranaut, who tells the 'gora log', "We both want Jhansi. But you want to rule. I want to serve."

Well, precisely. The Rani Of Jhansi was passionately

dedicated to her kingdom. I don't see much of that dedication in the trailer. Much of it is devoted to displaying its leading lady's skills on horses and with swords. The trailer gives us an epic primer on 'Kangana Rides The Horse', 'Kangana Swats The Enemy', 'Kangana Bays For Blood', so on and so forth.

There is so much

of the talented actress' efforts to appear queenly, the trailer barely offers a glimpse of the impressive supporting cast, namely Danny Denzongpa, Atul Kulkarni, Suresh Oberoi and others who flit by in this steamroller view of a woman warrior's day-out binge. Threadbare thunder in a fancy teacup.

Alarming and

annoyingly, the film wears a thick and heavy Sanjay Leela Bhansali hangover. In the way the camera zooms in and pans the long stretches of the battle scenes, I was taken back to Bhansali's "Bajirao Mastani". In fact one of Kangana's derring-do in a battle sequence here, she gambols over her army to strike was a move identical to

Ranveer Singh's in "Bajirao Mastani".

ALSO READ: Ready to do a good movie down south, says actress Kangana Ranau So is Kangana's Jhansi Ki Rani, Bajirao or Mastani or both?

It's a highly derivative world created by people who seem to have the resources but not the vision. We could do with a lot more chutzpah when

recreating such an important chapter from Indian history.

It's not all a wash-out, though. Kangana seems to convey sufficient fire and elasticity. Her accent is a downer, though.

This is the way the trailer moves: uplifting one moment down to being a disappointment the next. Let's hope the film is not as uneven in tone.

When Julia Roberts realised she was famous

LOS ANGELES (KCN): Actress Julia Roberts, 51, revealed that the first time she realised she was famous was when she was in a bathroom stall at age 21 and a fan asked her for an autograph.

The actress had just starred in the 1988 film "Mystic Pizza" at the time of her bathroom encounter.

The Oscar-winner told the story during an appearance on an episode of a podcast, reports dailymail.co.uk.

ALSO READ: 'Ben Is Back' film review She had her fame awakening after returning home to Georgia to visit her mother and younger sister. The three caught a movie and

Roberts stopped by the bathroom afterward.

"It was after the movie was over and I was in the bathroom and there was a woman in the bathroom who said, 'Hey, girl in stall number one, were you in 'Mystic Pizza'?" she said.

The pushy fan proceeded to slip something under the stall and asked the "Mystic Pizza" star to sign it.

Hansika in Mohanlal's next Tamannaah Bhatia and Shruti Hassan are the new gal pals

It seems Mohanlal-B new release Bogan. Venkatesh, who has



Unnikrishnan team's untitled film is getting bigger and bigger. After Vishal and Srikanth, another popular south star Hansika Motwani will be making her Bollywood debut through the film. The update was announced by the director himself on his official Facebook page. "I wish great luck to @Hansika for her

She will have a very special appearance in my Mohanlal film produced by Mr Rockline Venkatesh," posted Unnikrishnan. According to the director, who had last teamed up with Mohanlal for Mr Fraud, VFX and special effects will have a lot of importance in the the big budget project. While Rockline

made films like Bajrangi Bhaijaan and Linga, is the producer, the project also boasts of an excellent crew. Manoj Paramahansa, who has cranked camera for films including Vinnaitaandi Varuvaaya and Nanpan, is the cinematographer. 4 Musics, the band behind the hit songs of Oppam, will be scoring the music.

Tamannaah Bhatia has been bonding with her contemporary Shruti Hassan.

eryday due to their busy schedules, but they always make sure to make time on

Shruti. Tamannaah says, "Shruti is a sweetheart and a dear



for a while now. Tamannaah chose to take some time out last week to meet her new BFF Shruti Hassan to celebrate her birthday. According to a source close to Tamannaah says. "Tamannaah and Shruti share a special bond, the two actresses may not be able to talk ev-

each other's birthdays. Shruti Hassan, who celebrated her birthday couple of days ago with close friends, had Tamannaah as one of her special guests. It is said that Tamannaah makes it a point to not miss her friend's special day at any cost. She had also brought a special gift for

friend. Since we both have tight schedules, we don't get much time to spend with each other the rest of the year, so I needed to be at her birthday party so that I could be with her. I have been attending her birthday since the last three years and making sure to be with her on her special day."

Meteoric rise: Betting big on probiotics and nutraceuticals

The vision is to become the finest and the most sought-after company in the



Biopharmaceutical landscape across the globe, by extending unprecedented service and quality parameters. The mission is to work continuously towards introducing novel ingredients and formulations in the biopharmaceuticals market by innovative research. With this mission and vision, Ahmedabad-headquartered Meteoric Biopharmaceuticals is moving ahead on a sharp growth trajectory, projecting a nearly 14-fold jump in its turnover over the next five years.

Speaking to Ritwik Mukherjee exclusively, Gaurav Kaushik, the young, effervescent Managing Director & CEO of Meteoric Biopharmaceuticals, outlines his ambitious plans of how his company would make it happen and would make it there.

Excerpts:
RM: What is the overall market size of enzymes, probiotics in India at this point? What is the overall market size of nutraceuticals in India? At what rates they are growing?

Kaushik: The overall Enzymes market in India was estimated to be \$308 million in 2019 and is growing at 7 per cent annually. The Probiotics market value stood at \$0.9 million in 2021. The market value is expected to reach \$1.1 million by 2027 with a CAGR of 20.50 per cent for 2022-2027. The Nutraceuticals market in the country is estimated to be \$4-5 billion. India is the global leader nutraceuticals. This market is expected to reach \$18 million by 2025. The Dietary supplement market in India is valued at

\$3294.44 million and will reach \$10,198.57 million by 2026.

RM: What kind of regulatory framework would help this segment grow further?

Kaushik: The government has been actively reforming and restructuring regulations in biopharmaceuticals for Indian companies to compete at a world-class level. However, there is a great necessity to make uniform and relaxed regulations as a single solution rather than struggling with state-level regulations,



long and complicated channels for approval of R&D, pre-clinical and clinical trials, and neutral development.

The accelerated development in the biopharmaceutical sector requires very clear guidelines and quick approvals. New drug development programs and innovations should be given priority and approval should be given in a few days.

Lastly, preview and regulatory banned for biopharmaceutical should be separated and needs to be structured separately than typical pharmaceutical drugs.

RM: Are you a B2B company or a B2C? What do you bring on the table and what is your customer base, currently?

Kaushik: Meteoric Biopharmaceuticals is a B2B company, which has become a one-stop solution for all biological requirements across

Ritwik Mukherjee

Enzymes, Probiotics, Nutraceuticals, Finished Formulations

and Animal Healthcare. We also offer unique services of product customisation, concept formulation and contract manufacturing under one roof. The company, at present, has as many as 10 patents and over 50 trade marks to its name.

At present, we service over 500 customers across 50 industries in over 90 countries.

With over 50,000 sq ft of production area, we have the largest portfolio of Enzymes for food and pharma industry. We are India's largest supplier of Bromelain, Sodium Hyaluronate, Co Enzyme Q 10, L-Gluthathione Reduced, Lactase, Bacillus Coagulans, S-Adenosyl-L-Methionine.

RM: So what next?

Kaushik: We are continuously and relentlessly on the path of R&D and innovation. We have two fully functional labs including a Microbiology Lab. With innovation and R&D, you can compete with the MNCs and stay competitive. We have now started vegetative form of Pancreatin. Our Pancreatin IP and Pepsin IP have been successfully registered in CDSCO. We have commercialised more than 100 brands under formulations.

RM: What was your last year's turnover?

Kaushik: It was Rs 60 crore

RM: ...And projected turnovers for the next 3-5 years?

Kaushik: We will certainly reach Rs 500 crore within next three years and Rs 800 crore over the next five years. We are pretty confident about that.

RM: India itself has a huge market, but you export your products also. Which are the countries, you export your products to? And how much of your revenue comes from exports?

Kaushik: At present, we export our products to 60/70 countries including the US, Europe, the UK, Brazil, Singapore, Malaysia, Israel, Turkey, South Africa, Oman, Sri Lanka, Iran, Columbia, Egypt, Vietnam, Japan, Korea, Algeria and many others. Nearly 60-70 per cent of our revenues comes from the export markets and the rest from the domestic markets.

RM: Going forward, what would be your thrust- export or domestic markets?

Kaushik: Going forward, our thrust between export and the domestic market could be 60:40. However, with demand and awareness is actively increasing in the domestic market for novel biologicals. If this trend and demand are consistent and continue to thrive we would be highly interested to cater the domestic need first.

RM: Since you have such a large export base and majority of your revenue comes from exports, do you have any plans to branch out and have your operations outside India?

Kaushik: The New Jersey Governor had invited us and responding positively to the invite, we are setting up an office with some operations there. Since the US is already a large export market for us, we are familiar with the rules and regulations, regulatory requirements in that country. In Sweden also we are working on three projects.

RM: Can you mention some of your products under different categories?

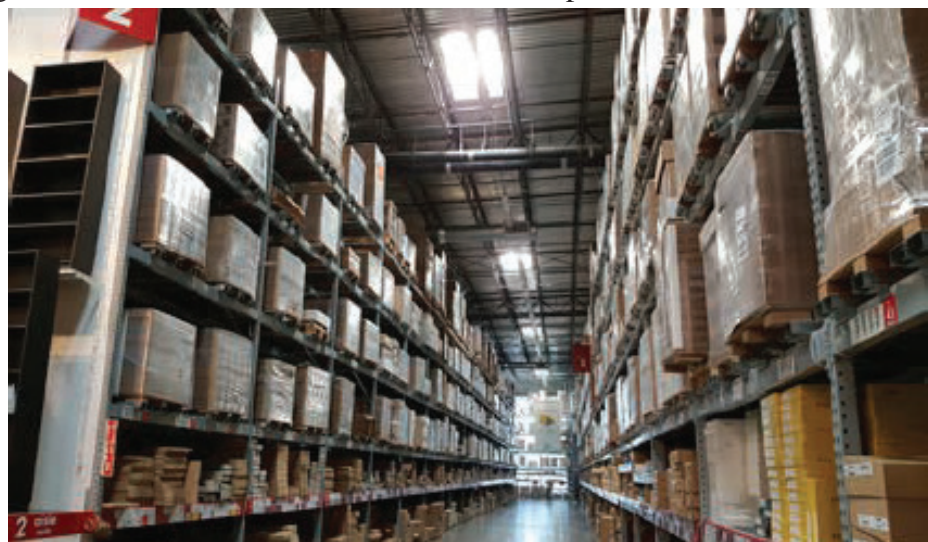
Kaushik: Under the Men category, we have Men's vitality, Stress & lifestyle management products. Under Geriatrics category, we have joint pain relief, symbiotic formulation, sleeping disorder, cognitive improvement. Under Kids/Adolescents, we have Probiotic spore gummies for IBS, Chewable Calcium tablets for bones, Lactose intolerance drops, Lactobacillus rhamnosus GG sachets, Dry syrups for diarrhoea, Cognitive functionality products. Under Women category, we have Probiotics for UTIs, For better hair, skin and nail, For acne, Iron Supplements, Pre-post and during pregnancy, Multi-vitamins & minerals for pregnancy, post-menopausal, Stress and lifestyle management, Calcium supplements for women, PMS, mood swings and period cramps, women's fertility. Then under General category, we have Probiotics for IBS, Probiotics for kidney functioning, Enzymes for digestion, Prebiotic formulation, Multi vitamin mineral supplements, weight management, antioxidant's formulation, Lactose intolerance, Synbiotics formulation, Probiotic treatment post antibiotics, Cuccumin sachets, Focus improvement, to mention a few.

Author is a Kolkata based Freelance journalist.

Evolution of India's Trade Negotiations

Dammu Ravi

Currently, India's share in global exports is 1.7%. Experts attribute India's low share to its decades of insular economic policies but with 1991 economic reforms, leading to integration into the world economy, India's share has picked up. In contrast, countries such as Japan, Korea, China and even ASEAN enjoy much greater share in global trade as a consequence of their open economic policies with significant thrust on exports. In 2000, India's total trade was about \$103 billion (exports \$43 billion+imports \$60 billion); in 2010, it was \$528 billion (exports \$201 billion + \$327 billion imports) and in 2019-20, it was about \$787 billion, India's major trading partners are USA, EU, China, UAE, Germany, Singapore, UK, etc. A worrisome factor for India is the ever widening trade deficit with China, which is feared to be dumping its goods in India indiscriminately through a deliberate state-sponsored unfair trade practices, while insulating its markets through highly cumbersome non-tariff measures. In South Asia, India is the most dominant economy with total trade at about \$25.7 billion in 2019-20, of which India's exports were \$22.8 billion. The World Bank Group study of 2018 observed that if only regulatory obstacles to trade are minimised in the region, trade in South Asia could increase by three times in few years. India's export product profile more or less remained constant for several years; petroleum products, Gems & Jewellery, machinery, organic chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electronics, leather, etc. have been consistently leading the chart. Diversifying export basket with value added products would help to expand its global market share. 18 YOJANA October 2020



in global trade. Technology and mobility of skilled manpower across borders have stimulated trade in services sector. Services constitute more than 55% of India's GDP, similar to the economic profiles of most developed countries. India's export of services trade has been gradually growing in the last two decades; in 2019, services exports were \$214 billion and

imports \$128 billion and India supplies 40% of global demand for IT skilled manpower. However, India's share in world services trade is only 2.6%, mostly concentrated in IT and IT-enabled services. With a view to diversifying services trade, India identified 12 champion services sectors with emphasis on realising their potential for employment generation. Currently, India's total trade including merchandise and services is \$1129 billion, which constitutes about 42% of the GDP. Deeper external engagements are a necessary condition for boosting trade and, in this regard, Global Value Chains (GVCs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) are important tools. Global Value Chains Global Value Chains or Supply Chains are a reflection of fragmentation of production processes that have assumed a high degree of sophistication and specialisation due to changes in technology, skills, capital and investment policies. It denotes an underlying principle that companies source raw materials and intermediate prod-

ucts at qualitative and competitive prices from wide ranging sources across the world. It marks a shift away from the traditional way of manufacturing where components and finished products are all produced in one country. As GVCs reduce input costs, it makes finished products competitive in the global markets, a propitious condition for trade to thrive. Open trade and investment policies of a country naturally attract GVCs. Some sectors of India, especially Pharma, Auto and Textiles are well-integrated into GVCs while those of China, Japan, YOJANA October 2020 19 Korea, Singapore etc. are not only extensive but also deeply entrenched in several countries around the world, lending their products competitive edge in the global markets. Free Trade Agreements Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) create conducive environment for GVCs to operate efficiently. Partner countries take advantage of liberalised investment climate under FTAs to set up production units as part of Supply Chain networks (GVC) to feed into finished products. A successful FTA creates a win-win situation for both partner countries, not only in terms of providing market access but also enabling deeper engagement through investments, technology and services. GATT Article 24 of WTO allows member countries to enter into bilateral/regional preferential trade arrangements in order to achieve higher level of trade liberalisation, notwithstanding that this provision amounts to derogation of GATT Article 1 'Most Favored Nation' (MFN) that stipulates nondiscriminatory treatment on trade preferences to all countries. In the last two decades there have been proliferation of free trade agreements globally with about 450 FTAs/

PTAs concluded and another 180 FTAs/ PTAs under either negotiation or review, involving about 2/3rd member countries of WTO. India concluded about 16 FTAs/PTAs and another 20 of them are under either negotiation or review. India's most notable bilateral FTAs are with Japan, Korea, Chile, Singapore and regional FTAs are SAFTA, ASEAN, Mescosur, APTA, etc.

Traditionally, India has been conservative to opening its economy through Free Trade Agreements for fear of exposing domestic industry to external competition. However, trade data of last 10 years suggests that India's volume of trade with its FTA partner countries has significantly grown and trade deficit remained either constant or widened marginally. Not being part of preferential trade architecture



could be detrimental for a growing economy like India as it would amount to inevitable erosion of its market share when FTA countries begin to trade amongst their partner countries at zero duty tariffs. Therefore, the way to go about an FTA negotiation is to seek longer staging phase out of its tariffs with a partner country while at the same time seek immediate phase outs in areas of core interest.

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Moscow closes its airspace to 36 nations; Lavrov cancels Geneva trip

Continued from page-1

London's Evening Standard on Monday features a front-page statement by Lebedev headlined "President Putin, please stop this war," alongside an Associated Press photo of medics battling to save a 6-year-old girl killed by shelling in the Ukrainian city of Mariupol. Lebedev wrote: "As a Russian citizen I plead with you to stop Russians killing their Ukrainian brothers and sisters.

As a British citizen I ask you to save Europe from war." Lebedev, whose oligarch father Alexander Lebedev once worked for the KGB, was made a member of the House of Lords in 2020.

Oligarchs Oleg Deripaska, an ally of Putin, and Mikhail Fridman, who is on a U.S. sanctions list, have also urged an end to the violence.

Meanwhile Roman Abramovich, the billionaire Russian owner of Chelsea Football Club, has offered to help broker peace.

A spokesman said Abramovich "was contacted by the Ukrainian side for support in achieving a peaceful resolution, and that he has been trying to help ever since." It was unclear what help he could provide.

The European Central Bank said on Monday that Vienna-based Sberbank Europe AG and its branches in Slovenia and Croatia are failing or likely to fail after they "experienced significant deposit outflows" because of the impact to their reputation from the conflict.

The mass exodus of refugees from Ukraine to the eastern edge of the European Union showed no signs of stopping Monday as they flee Russia's burgeoning war, with the U.N. estimating that more than 500,000 people have already escaped.

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire says France is getting ready to seize all assets of Russian officials and business leaders who are being targeted by EU sanctions.

Le Maire said France is in the process of listing property including financial assets, real estate, yachts and luxury cars.

French authorities are also seeking to identify other Russian individuals who could be added into the EU list of people targeted by sanctions due to "their proximity with the Russian leadership," he added.

"We will get legal means to seize all these assets," Le Maire said, speaking after a special defense meeting on Ukraine at the Elysee presidential palace.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian confirmed France will take part in the European effort to bring military equipment to Ukraine, to be sent via a hub in Poland.

France will also provide more humanitarian aid to Ukraine in the coming days, he said.

Russia has closed its airspace to carriers from 36 nations, including European countries and Canada, responding in kind to their move to close their respective airspaces to all Russian aircraft.

The move, announced Monday by the state aviation agency, follows a decision by the EU and Canada over the weekend to close their skies to the Russian planes in response to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

It added that planes from those countries could only enter Russia's airspace with special permission.

"We request Indians to go to West Ukraine but don't reach the border directly as there's rush there, it'll take time. Go to nearby cities, seek shelter there. We're making arrangements there, our teams will help you. Don't panic, we have enough flights," stated the MEA. The Indians

should go to the border for crossing into neighbouring Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Moldova only after coordinating with the authorities, the MEA added.

The Ukrainian delegation leaves a Belarusian military helicopter upon their landing in Gomel region, Belarus, Monday.

Russia and Ukraine met Monday for their first talks since the outbreak of war last week, with Kyiv demanding an "immediate ceasefire" as the number of refugees fleeing the country hit more than 500,000. As the delegations arrived for talks on the border between Belarus and Ukraine on day five of Moscow's invasion, the Ukrainian presidency demanded the

ceasefire "and the withdrawal of troops" -- which Moscow is almost certain to reject.

A defiant Russia said Monday it could ride out Western sanctions over its invasion of neighbouring Ukraine as President Vladimir Putin huddled with officials to discuss the economic turmoil of the five-day-old war. "The Western sanctions on Russia are hard, but our country has the necessary potential to compensate the damage," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has called for critical medical supplies to safely reach those who need them and is working with partners to establish safe transit for shipments through Poland.

A statement issued by Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, and Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe, Geneva/Copenhagen stated that during the crisis in Ukraine, health must remain a priority pillar of the humanitarian response, with health systems and facilities remaining protected, functional, safe and accessible to all who need essential medical services, and health workers protected so they can continue to save lives.

The UN human rights chief said Monday at least 102 civilians, including seven children, had been killed in Ukraine since Russia invaded five days ago, warning true numbers could be far higher.

Speaking before the UN Human Rights Council, Michelle Bachelet said her office had recorded 406 civilian casualties in Ukraine, including 102 deaths, since Russia began its full-scale attack last Thursday.

The ruble collapsed against the dollar and the euro on the Moscow Stock Exchange on Monday as the West punished Moscow with new sanctions over the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine. The ruble fell sharply at the start of trading, reaching 100.96 to the dollar, compared to 83.5 on Wednesday, the day before the invasion of Ukraine, and 113.52 to the euro, compared to 93.5 before the assault.

Russia wants to reach agreement with Ukraine to put an end to their conflict, a Kremlin negotiator said Monday, as Moscow's assault on the pro-Western country entered a fifth day.

"We definitely have an interest in reaching some agreements as soon as possible," Russian President Vladimir Putin's aide, Vladimir Medinsky who travelled to Belarus for the talks, said.

"We are waiting for the arrival of the Ukrainian delegation," he said, adding he expected the talks to start at noon local time.

Ukraine's defense industry conglomerate says the world's largest plane that was in regular operation was heavily damaged in fighting with Russian troops at the airport outside Kyiv where it was parked.

The UK government has seen no major change to Russia's nuclear posture despite President Vladimir Putin placing his strategic forces on higher alert, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said on Monday.

"We've looked at their posture. There isn't a significant change," he said on LBC radio,

as human shields.

Russia's central bank announced it was raising its key interest rate to 20 per cent from 9.5 per cent as the West pummelled the country with sanctions over Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

"The Bank of Russia's board of directors has



decided to raise the key rate to 20 per cent," the central bank said in a statement carried by Russian news agencies.

The Ukrainian military said on Monday that Russian troops had slowed down "the pace of the offensive", as Moscow's assault against Ukraine went into its fifth day. "The Russian occupiers have reduced the pace of the offensive, but are still trying to develop success in some areas," the general staff of the armed forces said.

A Russian armored personnel carrier burns amid damaged and abandoned light utility vehicles after fighting in Kharkiv.

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama on Monday expressed anguish over the Ukraine crisis, and said that problems and disagreements are best resolved through dialogue. War is outdated and non-violence is the only way, the Nobel peace prize winner said on the Russian offensive in Ukraine.

Ten students from Assam stranded in war-torn Ukraine have been evacuated along with other Indians so far and they have reached New Delhi and Mumbai on separate flights, the state administration said.

The Assam government said it has been in constant touch with the Ministry of External Affairs to ensure safe return of all people from the state, who are stuck in the restive country. Air India's fifth evacuation flight came from Romanian capital Bucharest to Delhi on Monday morning with 249 Indian nationals who were stranded in Ukraine amid the Russian military offensive, officials said.

India began evacuation of its citizens from Romania and Hungary neighbouring countries of Ukraine on Saturday onwards.

Tata Group-owned Air India has evacuated a total of 1,156 Indian nationals in five evacuation flights till now. Officials said one more evacuation flight is expected to land in Delhi on Monday.

Stepping up its efforts to evacuate Indian stu-

officials, a plane operated by Russian airline Aeroflot flew over the country. Aeroflot flight 111 had departed Miami, Florida, bound for Moscow.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi asked the government to urgently share its evacuation plan with those stranded in Ukraine and their fami-

lies as he shared a video of some students being harassed by the military there.

"My heart goes out to the Indian students suffering such violence and their family watching these videos. No parent should go through this," he said on Twitter while sharing the video of some students.

As Russian troops draw closer to the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv's mayor is filled with pride over his citizens' spirit yet anxious about how long they can hold out. Mayor Vitali Klitschko was silent for several seconds when asked if there were plans to evacuate civilians if Russian troops managed to take Kyiv.

After leaving Afghanistan a year ago, Ajmal Rahmani believed he had found a haven of peace in Ukraine. This week, he and his family had to flee again -- this time to Poland to the sounds of Russian bombs. "I run from one war, come to another country and another war starts. Very bad luck," Rahmani said.

Canada announced that it would ship non-lethal protective military equipment such as helmets to Ukraine's army, but again ruled out sending troops in against Russian forces.

Ukrainian troops need bulletproof vests, helmets, gas masks and night vision equipment, Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Melanie Joly said at a press conference.

US President Joe Biden will hold a secure call with allies and partners on Monday to discuss "developments" in Russia's attack on Ukraine and "coordinate our united response," the White House said.

Russia's ruble plunged nearly 30 per cent against the dollar Monday after world powers imposed fresh, harsher sanctions on Moscow over its invasion of Ukraine.

The ruble was indicated to be down 27 per cent at 114.33 per dollar in offshore trading, according to Bloomberg News.

Australia will provide lethal military equipment to Ukraine to help the Ukrainians resist the Russian invasion.

The Australian government's announcement Monday gave no details on what material it may be sending. The move follows an offer on Friday of non-lethal military equipment, medical supplies and a \$3 million contribution to a NATO trust fund for support of the besieged country.

Australia has imposed sanctions on more than 350 Russian individuals, including Russian President Vladimir Putin since Thursday.

The U.N.'s two major bodies -- the 193-nation General Assembly and the more powerful 15-member Security Council -- will hold separate meetings on Russia's invasion of Ukraine, a reflection of widespread international demands for an immediate cease-fire and escalating concern for the plight of millions of Ukrainians caught up in the war.

Belarusians cast ballots in a constitutional referendum that the country's authoritarian leader called to cement his 27-year old grip on power, even as he offers the country's territory to his ally Russia to invade Ukraine.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, who has edged even closer to Russia amid crippling Western sanctions over his crackdown on domestic protests, said he was confident that Belarusians will support a set of constitutional amendments that would allow him to stay in power until 2035.

The Viasna human rights center released the names of 530 people detained Sunday across Belarus, where demonstrations against the war spanned at least 12 cities, AP reported.

In Minsk, demonstrators marched in different parts of the city carrying Ukrainian flags. A large pile of flowers kept growing at the building of Ukraine's Embassy.

A man holds a poster that reads "No War" as people lay flowers near the place where Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov was gunned down in Moscow, Russia, Feb 27, 2022.



accusing Putin of trying to "flex muscles" with his invasion of Ukraine bogged down. The Russian army said that Ukrainian civilians could "freely" leave the country's capital Kyiv and stressed it had air superiority over Ukraine as its invasion went into its fifth day.

"All civilians in the city can freely leave the Ukrainian capital along the Kyiv-Vasylykiv highway. This direction is open and safe," Russian defence ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said in televised remarks.

"Russian aviation has gained air superiority over the entire territory of Ukraine," he added, accusing Ukrainian troops of using civilians

dents stranded in war-hit Ukraine, the Centre on Monday decided that Union ministers Hardeep Puri, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Kiren Rijiju and R K Singh will travel to its neighbouring countries to coordinate the evacuation mission and help students, government sources said.

PM Modi to chair meeting on Ukraine crisis, some ministers may go to its neighbouring countries to coordinate evacuations Sources said.

Canada has closed its airspace to all Russian carriers in protest at the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ottawa announced. But the ban was quickly tested when, according to Canadian

BJD poll machine consumes state, one district at a time

Bhubaneswar: In Sundargarh, the Biju Janata Dal won 16 out of 17 ZP seats in the first phase while leading in as many in the second phase. Opposition Congress and BJP are yet to open their accounts.

That pretty much summed up the panchayat election story across the districts. The ruling party tasted defeat only in Koida-B where CPM's Sushila Munda won with a margin of 6,230 votes. Candidates in BJP strongholds of Sundargarh, Talsara and Birmitrapur and Congress citadel Rajgangpur failed to even put up a fight. Counting for Lathikata-C seat will take place on Monday and there is an indication of it going to BJD. Again.

Koraput witnessed similar scenes, with BJD winning in seven out of 13 ZP seats. "People of Koraput have shown their trust with the leadership of CM Naveen Patanaik who has worked for the development of tribal areas," says senior BJD leader of Koraput Bishnu Patra. However, Congress held its own as it finished a close second, winning in six zones. Koraput MP Saptagiri Ulka thanked the people of Koraput for supporting the party in different ZP zones. "We gave a good fight. That is important", he added. In Puri, BJD bagged all 11 seats that were put on the counting table on the day. A total of 33 ZP zones went into polls during the panchayat elections in the district.

Beach litter Pollution Book released



Bhubaneswar: Chairman, State Pollution Control Board Suresh Chandra Mahapatra released a book titled "A Pilot Study on Beach Litter Pollution: Paradeep 2019". The book is authored by Dr. K. Murugesan, Member Secretary Odisha State Pollution Control Board, N. Mallick, S.S. Pati, S.D. Sharma, B.S. Panda, S. Mishra, S. Nayak, and B. Saran and it is findings of a pilot study. Learned Author, Dr. Murugesan is known for his deep knowledge in environment protection

and did his Ph.D in the sector, officials say. This is first of its kind in the State as well as in the country on Beach Litter Pollution along the coast of an industrial town of Odisha (Paradeep), its impacts and their management. SPCB is working on Integrated Coastal Zone Management Program through its Coastal Management Cell (CMC), and has acquired expertise on wide range of activities on Coastal Pollution since 2013. This is a publication of State Pollution

Control Board and the publication would pave way to cover other future potential beaches in the an aim to protect our pristine coastline from contamination with metals, Micro Plastic etc. though Beach Litter Integrated Coastal Zone Management Program (ICZ publications, said Mr. Mahapatra. Mr. Mahapatra congratulated the authors for the methodological analysis and useful outcome of the volume. The book was released in the presence of Mona Sharma, Ad-

ditional Chief Secretary, Forest, Environment and Climate Change (FE&CC), Vishal Dev, Principal Secretary Finance, Susanta Nanda, Director, FE&CC and K Murugesan, Member Secretary, SPCB. The volume spells out practical picture on marine regional end, their potential transport, categorization, influential climatic factors and ultimate fate in ecosystem with observations in well navigate the complexities of the issue while maintaining green compliances.

Restrictions on Holi Celebrations

Bhubaneswar: The State Government on Monday issued Covid-19 guidelines for the month of March, 2022 putting restrictions on celebration of Holi at public places and roads.



"Holi" and their related rituals shall not be observed in public places throughout the State. People may celebrate 'Holi' with family members in their houses only and not in any public places including public roads," ACS Disaster management and Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Pradeep Jena said in an order. Collectors and Municipal Commissioners may impose any further restrictions as desirable in consideration of local situations, he said. While Mahashivaratri will be observed as per the recent order issued by the SRC, people shall ensure Covid Appropriate Behavior such as physical distancing, use of face mask/ covering and hand washing/ hand sanitizer during the celebration of "Dola Purnima". Religious rituals are allowed with strict adherence of Covid-19 protocols, Jena said. The Collectors and Municipal Commissioners may impose appropriate restrictions if required in Dola Melans. Also they shall determine the number of participants in these gatherings with strict adherence of Covid appropriate behaviour and norms. Further mela/ congregations outside/ within

the temple premises may also be reasonably restricted so as to avoid mass gatherings/ crowding, the SRC said.

There will be no night curfew across the State. During the month, all activities are allowed to fully function with strict adherence to COVID -19 protocols. All Social/ Religious/ Political/ Sports gatherings are allowed with strict adherence to COVID -19 protocols. Similarly, exhibitions, trade fairs, expo and Melas are allowed with full compliance to COVID protocols.

As Urban Poll will be held this month, the SRC has allowed political gatherings, meetings, rallies, door to door campaigns as per the instructions/ guidelines issued by appropriate Election Commission from time to time with full compliance to COVID protocols. Marriages, thread Ceremony/ Bratopaliayan, and related gatherings are allowed with approval from local authorities with a ceiling of 500 persons (for the entire event) including hosts, guests, priests and catering and other support staff with adherence to COVID-19 safety protocols.

Marriage processions are also allowed with due prior written approval from competent authorities subject to the ceiling 100 participants including bridegroom, priest, friends, relatives, guests, members of band party, light & sound systems etc. The number of persons in the marriage procession will count towards the above said ceiling of 500 persons. Funerals, last rites and related gatherings with approval from local authorities shall be allowed with a ceiling of 250 persons.

Working Hard for Odias in Ukraine; CM

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Monday said his Government is working hard for the safe return of the students and other people stuck in war-hit Ukraine.

The Chief Minister said this while virtually interacting with a few Odia students, who have been successfully evacuated from the Ukraine. At least seven students have landed in New Delhi from the Ukraine so far while about another 500 students are still stranded there, sources said.

Welcoming the students on their return to India, the CM said, "We are so relieved. We are also working for the safe return of other students from Odisha as soon as possible."

The students briefed the Chief Minister about how they evacuated from the war torn country and requested him for safe evacuation of the Odia students stuck in very difficult situation in Kharkiv area. "Most of the Odia students have struck in the Kharkiv area, which is now turned into a war zone," a returning student told the Chief Minister. "We are working hard to see that they return to India as fast as possible. I have already spoken to the home minister and the external affairs minister to help us as much as possible. I will speak to them again," assured Patnaik.

The Chief Minister has directed concerned officials to open a help desk in Mumbai. He

also asked to make arrangements for transportation of the returned Odisha students from Bhubaneswar to their native place through government-run OSRTC buses. Speaking to media persons in New Delhi, Resident Commissioner and Nodal Officer appointed for evacuation of the Odias from the war-hit country, Ravi Kant said seven stu-



dents from the State, who were stranded in different parts of Ukraine, have reached Delhi. He further said all arrangements are being made as per the instructions of the Chief Minister. Stating that about 500 students were still stuck there, Kant said, "Our 24/7 control room is in operation. We are contacting all who are in distress, collecting their feedback. We are arranging food, transportation and addressing the issues faced by them," Kant said.

"We are in touch with the students. Our teams are working in close coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Civil Aviation for evacuation of the students," he said. The nodal officer said he is hopeful that at least 25 per cent of the Odia people stranded in the Ukraine will return to India in a couple of days.

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Congress goes downhill but retains strongholds in Odisha panchayat polls

BHUBANESWAR: Written off as an also-ran before the panchayat elections, the performance of

election till reports last came in.

The party will gain satisfaction from the fact that it has not sur-

the party has won or is leading in 11 zones compared to BJD's 15 while in Rayagada district the party is

panchayat elections are surprised by the one-sided results in favour of the BJD. A senior leader said that there was disenchantment among the people against the BJD and the BJP. "We expected that the tally of both BJD and BJP will go down. But the results are beyond expectations," he said.

There is a ray of hope for the party. Some leaders claimed Congress voters have started coming back to the party unlike the 2017 elections when they had shifted to the BJP. Some leaders maintain that minus the Congress votes, the BJP is likely to be relegated to the third position this time. However, the party's miserable performance in Keonjhar and coastal districts remains a cause of concern.



the Congress has been noteworthy as the party retained its traditional strongholds in southern Odisha and other areas. If statistics are considered, the tally of the Congress will be less than the 60 zilla parishad (ZP) zones that it had won in the 2017 panchayat elections. The party has so far won 21 ZP zones and is leading in another 9 in this

rendered its strongholds like Rayagada and Koraput districts in favour of the ruling BJD this time. In several other southern districts like Malkangiri, Nabarangpur and Gajapati, the party has put up a good fight despite the organisational superiority and better election machinery of the BJD.

In Koraput district,

ahead in five seats. In Malkangiri, the party has won one seat and is leading in another while in Gajapati district, the party has won from two zones. Several senior leaders maintained that if the party had more resources and effective election management machinery, the results would have been much better. Many leaders who campaigned in the

Ukraine crisis: British Petroleum to exit Russia's Rosneft stake despite financial hit of USD 25 billion

Ukraine: Marking an abrupt end to the three decades of operating in the energy-rich country, British Petroleum (BP) has abandoned its 19.75 per cent stake in the

consequences' from this move, a hit that may amount to as much as USD 25 billion.

"Like so many, I have been deeply shocked and saddened by the

in a press release. U.K. Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng welcomed the move of British Petroleum. "Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine must be a wake-up

1.4 billion. Looney and his predecessor as CEO Bob Dudley will both step down from the board of Rosneft.

It will take an USD 11 billion foreign ex-



Russian oil giant Rosneft, surprising the investors. This costly end is the most significant move made by a Western company in reaction to Moscow's invasion of Ukraine, intended to isolate the Russian economy for Putin's blatant move.

BP is one of the first Western Oil majors to establish a presence in Russia after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Rosneft accounts for almost half of BP's oil and gas reserves and a third of its production. In a memo to its employees, BP's chief warned of 'financial

situation unfolding in Ukraine and my heart goes out to everyone affected. It has caused us to fundamentally rethink bp's position with Rosneft. I am convinced that the decisions we have taken as a board are not only the right thing to do, but are also in the long-term interests of bp. Our immediate priority is caring for our great people in the region and we will do our utmost to support them. We are also looking at how bp can support the wider humanitarian effort," BP Chief Executive Bernard Looney said

call for British Businesses with commercial interests in (President Vladimir) Putin's Russia", Kwarteng said on Twitter.

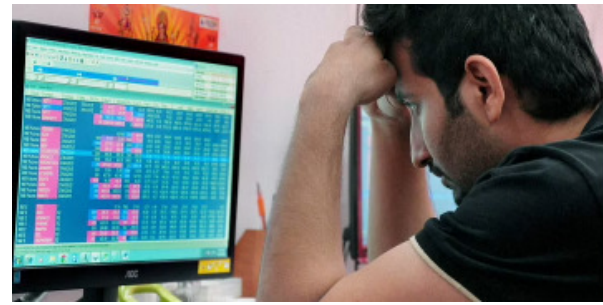
On the other hand, Rosneft blames BP's decision on 'unprecedented political pressure', reported Russian news agencies. Looney also said he will resign with immediate effect from the Russian company's board. BP also plans to exit its other business in Russia, which includes three joint ventures with a joint value of about USD

change non-cash charge after the exit from Rosneft, which BP will no longer include in its accounts. BP said it also expects a second non-cash charge of up to USD 14 billion, for the "carrying value" of Rosneft.

BP received revenue from Rosneft in the form of dividends which totalled around USD 640 million in 2021, roughly 3% of its overall cash flow from operations. The company currently has around 200 employees in Russia, most of whom are local staff, the BP spokesperson said.

Sensex tanks 870 points as Ukraine crisis continues to roil global markets

MUMBAI: Equity benchmark Sensex crashed about 870 points to slip below the 55,000-level in opening deals on Monday in line with weak-



ening global sentiments amid the worsening Russia-Ukraine crisis.

The 30-share BSE Sensex was trading 869.33 points or 1.56 per cent lower at 54,989.19 in early trade and the NSE Nifty plunged 233.80 points or 1.40 per cent to 16,424.60.

Barring PowerGrid, Tata Steel and Sun Pharma, all Sensex shares were trading in the red. Snapping its seven-day losing streak on Friday, the 30-share BSE Sensex had climbed 1,328.61 points or 2.44 per cent to settle at 55,858.52.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty had soared **Rupee crashes 40 paise to 75.73 against US dollar in early trade**

MUMBAI: The rupee tumbled 40 paise to 75.33 in early trade on Monday, tracking the surge in crude prices amid escalating tensions between Russia and Ukraine. At the interbank forex market, the local currency opened

points as Ukraine crisis continues to roil global markets

On the domestic equity market front, the 30-share Sensex was trading 709.15 points or 1.27 per cent lower at 55,149.37, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 198.15



sharply lower against the dollar.

It was moving in a tight range of 75.78 and 75.70. In early deals, it was trading at 75.73, registering a fall of 40 paise over its previous close. In the previous session, the rupee had gained 27 paise to settle at 75.33 against the US dollar.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.78 per cent higher at 97.37. Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures surged 4.24 per cent to USD 102.08 per barrel.

Meanwhile, in a dramatic escalation of tensions in eastern Europe, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his nuclear forces to be on high alert in response to what he called "aggressive statements" by leading NATO powers over the Ukraine conflict.

ALSO READ | Sensex tanks 870

410.45 points or 2.53 per cent to 16,658.40. On a weekly basis, the Sensex had lost 1,974 points or 3.41 per cent and the Nifty gave up 618 points or 3.57 per cent.

Meanwhile, in a dramatic escalation of tensions in eastern Europe, Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his nuclear forces to be on high alert in response to what he called "aggressive statements" by leading NATO powers over the Ukraine conflict.

Spooked by the Ukraine crisis, foreign institutional investors further offloaded shares worth Rs 4,470.70 crore in the Indian capital markets on Friday, exchange data showed.

Asian shares were trading mostly lower in afternoon trade on Monday, tracking the worsening geopolitical crisis in eastern Europe. Oil prices, which have been rising since the Russian invasion of Ukraine, shot up again on Monday on worries about supply disruptions. Brent crude futures were up over 5 per cent at USD 99.61 a barrel.

UP polls: Choose between Modi's Mission Ganga and Akhilesh's Operation Danga, says Shivraj

Continued from page-1

central government under the Mission Ganga umbrella, the MP CM said "When the Russian forces entered Ukraine and the Indians were subsequently in trouble there, the PM decided to evacuate every Indian safely and speedily. The PM Modi stood with the nation's people in Ukraine and evacuated them through Mission Ganga, while the SP chief during his stint in power in UP, ran the Operation Danga in UP," Chouhan said. Claiming that an awesome BJP wave was sweeping the politically crucial state, Chouhan said, on the day of UP polls results, while the BJP will retain power with bumper seats, the SP's cycle will get punctured.

The MP CM is on an extensive tour of UP, right since successfully defeating the COVID-19 infection recently. After Avadh and Central UP regions, Chouhan addressed a series of poll rallies in parts of East UP, including Mau, Ballia, and Kushinagar districts on Sunday. After the festival of Mahashivaratri on Tuesday, the MP CM (who had also campaigned for BJP candidates in Goa and Uttarakhand also) is likely to be in PM Modi's parliamentary constituency Varanasi on Wednesday.

Nearly 8000 Indians have returned from Ukraine: Centre

Continued from page-1

The Indian embassy in Warsaw has arranged 10 buses to transport Indians from the border regions into Poland. Arrangement has been made for food and accommodation in Poland. India is also planning to send humanitarian aid to Ukraine - which would include basic essentials like medicines and food.

"We have opened a new route through Moldova today morning. They will arrange evacuation through Romania. This will help Indians from Odessa and Southern Ukraine," Bagchi said.

Meanwhile, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar has spoken with his counterparts in Moldova, Poland and Hungary to ensure that Indian evacuation process is as seamless as possible.

Today, the weekend curfew was lifted in Kyiv and Kharkov so students have been encouraged to take trains to reach the western border of Ukraine.

The Indian Embassy in Ukraine has been requesting all its citizens to coordinate their journey details with them and not head to the borders directly.

A special Twitter handle (OpGangaHelpline) has been set up by the MEA to assist and update the evacuation process.

More flights will be added as and when there is a possibility of getting back more people. The strength of the embassies in the four bordering countries of Ukraine (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania) have been increased to facilitate the Indians who are heading back home.

Strandja Memorial Boxing Tournament: Nikhat Zareen, Nitu strike gold for India

NEW DELHI: Indian boxers Nikhat Zareen (52kg) and Nitu (48kg) struck gold at the 73rd Strandja Memorial

Zareen, on the other hand, outpunched Ukraine's Tetiana Kob, a three-time European Champion

the ring. The Hyderabad-based Zareen, who is a multiple-time national medallist, had won a

Dhanana village.

The youngster was introduced to boxing by her father, who took a three-year leave without pay from his state government job to help her get coaching in her formative days. He eventually rejoined work in Chandigarh when she started doing well at the international level.

India won two medals in the last edition with Deepak Kumar and Naveen Boora securing silver and bronze respectively.

The performance of the men's squad was underwhelming this time with none of the seven in fray managing to enter the medal rounds. In all, the tournament featured over 450 boxers from 36 countries, including traditional powerhouses such as Kazakhstan, Italy, Russia, France and Ukraine, where Russia launched a military operation on Thursday despite global appeal for restraint.



memorial Tournament in Sofia, Bulgaria by notching up thoroughly comprehensive victories in their respective finals on Sunday. Nitu prevailed 5-0 over Italy's Erika Prisciandaro, a former youth world championship bronze-medallist.

ships medallist 4-1. While Nitu produced a wonderful counter-attacking performance by taking full advantage of her longer reach and taller frame, Zareen was engaged in a draining and messy bout which had its fair share of clinching, holding and even some tumbling over in

gold medal at the Strandja Memorial's 2019 edition as well. Nitu is a two-time former youth world champion and is also a former gold medallist at the Asian youth championships. The 21-year-old hails from Haryana's famed cradle of Indian boxing, Bhiwani's

Mandhana cleared to continue her World Cup campaign, relief for India

NEW ZEALAND: In a relief for India, opener Smriti Mandhana has been cleared to continue playing at the ICC Women's World Cup after taking a blow to the head during the

runs. According to an ICC report, the 25-year-old Mandhana was assessed by the team doctor following the incident and was originally declared fit to continue, only to

the incident. The stylish batter looked in fine fettle while scoring her 20th half-century in her previous ODI against New Zealand before the upcoming 50-over showpiece.

against West Indies, before beginning their World Cup campaign against Pakistan on March 6. In the warm-up against South Africa, India posted 244 for 9 after a century from



team's first warm-up fixture against South Africa. Mandhana was forced to retire hurt after being hit on the head by a Shabnim Ismail bouncer during her team's first warm-up game which India won by two

retire hurt an over and a half later after another consultation. The report further states that the left-hander felt no concussion symptoms according to the medical staff at the time, nor experienced delayed effects from

ALSO READ | Indian star Smriti Mandhana hit on head in World Cup warm-up game Mandhana has so far scored 2461 runs in 64 ODIs, including four centuries. India is scheduled to play another warm-up,

Harmanpreet Kaur and Yastika Bhatia's 58. Luus and Laura Wolvaardt made half-centuries for South Africa but they couldn't get the team across the line, as left-arm spinner R a j e s h w a r i Gayakwad picked up 4 for 46 in 10 overs.

Schools reopen for Classes I-VII

Bhubaneswar: After a gap of nearly two years, schools for class I to VII students have been reopened in Odisha on Monday amid strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols.

Bishnupada Sethi, Principal Secretary School & Mass Education was monitoring all the pre-school opening arrangements, so that kids will not face any problem. Mr.Sethi along with other senior officials of the Department of School & Mass Education were in constant touch with DEOs across the State, said a senior official. Though the State Government had announced to resume classroom teaching for the class I to VII students from February 14, it was delayed for Panchayat election in the State. The schools were reopened on that day, but students were allowed from today after proper cleaning and sanitization.

The schools and colleges for other higher class students have already reopened from February 7 in the State. The schools reopened at sharp 10 AM. In some schools, the students were welcomed through offering flowers and tika to give a festive feeling to children. In a school of Mohana block in Gajapati district, the students were welcomed by beating drums.

"We have made special arrangements to welcome the students. Besides greeting the students at the main gate, arrangements were made to welcome the students at each classroom, said a teacher of government high school, Unit-IX, Bhubaneswar.

Students were seen wearing masks while entering the schools. "I am excited and feeling

very happy as our school reopened today and will meet my teachers and friends," said Swapnashree Satpathy, a class III student of a primary school in Cuttack city.

Prior to reopening of the schools, the classrooms and premises were properly sanitized and seating arrangements have been made in accordance with the social distance norm. A parent-teacher meeting was also conducted yesterday.

The School and Mass Education, Principal Secretary, Bishnupada Sethi had asked the schools conduct a rapport building exercise for one week to ensure

the students do not face any stress in their school.

The students will be engaged in exercise like clay modeling or any craft work with locally available raw materials.

Sessions on word puzzle games, asking the students about fruit name, animal name etc. (both Odia & English), storytelling, painting, etc. will be conducted in the schools.

Baseline assessment of the children (from class I-V) will be done at the schools in Odia language, Math & English on March 9, 10 & 11 respectively to know their learning level. The assessment questions developed by TE&SCERT for three levels i.e Grade I, Grade II & III, Grade IV & V will be provided to the school.

The Baseline assessment will be followed by identification of learning status as well as learning loss of each child. The Principal Secretary has asked the schools to share the progress of students with their parents every week.





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