

Post Zilla Parishad landslide in Odisha, BJD eyes majority in panchayat samitis

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): After the massive mandate in the Zilla Parishad elections, the ruling BJD is now focusing on capturing a majority of panchayat samitis by installing party-supported candidates as chairpersons. Election to the post of chairpersons of panchayat samitis will be held on March 12. Intense politicking has started among representatives of the three main political parties - BJD, BJP and Congress - as

the post of chairperson of panchayat samitis along with the sarpanchs hold the key to dominance in rural areas.

Though the post is apolitical, the election is keenly fought by the political parties because of the funds at the disposal of the panchayat samitis and the influence it has on the local-level politics. While the BJD claimed that it has set a target to win the post in at least 275 to 280 blocks out of the 314, BJP and Congress maintained that the situation is not so rosy for the ruling party. They claimed that the performance of the BJD has not percolated down to the grassroots level.

General secretary of the BJP Golak Mohapatra claimed that the party is targeting to win the post in at least 150 blocks. The BJP supporters have won many posts of panchayat samiti members. Similarly, Congress is hoping to win at least 20 to 25 panchayat samiti chairperson posts in this election. Party spokesperson Manoranjan Das said that Congress is hopeful that party-supported candidates will win the post in Koraput, Puri, Jagatsinghpur and Balangir districts. **CONTINUED ON: P-7**



Respectful Homage to Former chief minister Legendary Biju Pattnaik on his 106th Birth anniversary

US Navy says crashed F-35C plane raised from South China Sea

BEIJING: The U.S. Navy says it has recovered an F-35C Lightning II aircraft that crashed while attempting to land on an aircraft carrier in the South China Sea in January.

The 7th Fleet said a robot submarine attached rigging lines to the long-range joint strike stealth fighter, which was then raised from a



depth of 3,780 meters (12,400 feet) on Wednesday using a ship's crane.

The recovery alleviates concerns that China or Russia might reach it first and gain access to its advanced technology, whether to replicate it or learn how to defeat it.

The multimillion-dollar aircraft was conducting "routine flight operations" from the USS Carl Vinson when it crashed on Jan. 24, the 7th Fleet said.

Leaked footage showed it coming in too low

for a landing, hitting the rear of the deck wing-first and then skidding and rotating across the flight deck before falling overboard. The pilot ejected and was injured, along with six sailors aboard the aircraft carrier.

The wreckage will be delivered to a nearby base to be studied for clues to what caused the accident and may be sent onward to the continental United States, the fleet said. The exact location where the accident occurred has been kept secret.

The aircraft carrier had superficial damage and was able to resume operations. The Carl Vinson and its strike group returned to San Diego on Feb. 14 after an eight-month deployment.

China claims virtually the entire South China Sea, where it has placed military facilities on seven human-made islands built atop reefs and atolls. It has also increased pressure on self-governing Taiwan to the north that it claims as its own territory.

The increased Chinese Naval and Coast Guard presence has prompted the U.S. and its allies to step up exercises in the region in what they call freedom of navigation operations in line with international law.

Refugee crisis: Tearful goodbyes at Kyiv train station during war in Ukraine

KYIV(KCN): A woman crouches down in the doorway

neck up for a kiss that both hope will not be their last.

wave goodbye to his father, who is staying behind to fight the

border with Poland.

She backs toward a wall of the train station and is soon overcome with emotion. She places her hands over her mouth, squeezes her eyes shut tight and lets the tears fall.

These are the goodbyes that have been repeated across Ukraine in the week since Russia invaded and began pounding the country's cities with bombs.

The UN says the fighting has sent more than 1 million people fleeing the **CONTINUED ON: P-7**



of a blue and yellow train at a station in Kyiv, Ukraine's embattled capital city. Her husband stands on the platform below and cranes his

As the train door closes, the woman holds up their 2-year-old son and he smiles and presses his tiny hand against the smudged window to

Russian invaders. Nearby, a grandmother reaches out to bid farewell to her daughter and grandson, who are on the train headed toward

Russia-Ukraine War LIVE Updates

India abstains from UN Human Rights Council vote

Ukraine/Russia (KCN): Russian troops are shelling Europe's largest nuclear power station in Ukraine.

"We demand that they stop the heavy weapons fire. There is a real threat of nuclear danger in

into the facility's parking lot and shining spotlights on the building where the camera was mounted.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg says the military organization will not police a no-



the biggest atomic energy station in Europe," Andriy Tuz, spokesperson for the plant in Enerhodar, said in a video posted on Telegram. The plant accounts for about one quarter of Ukraine's power generation.

Tuz told Ukrainian television that shells were falling directly on the Zaporizhzhia plant and had set fire to one of the facility's six reactors. That reactor is under renovation and not operating, but there is nuclear fuel inside, he said. Firefighters cannot get near the fire because they are being shot at, Tuz said.

A live-streamed security camera linked from the homepage of the nuclear power plant showed what appeared to be armoured vehicles rolling

fly zone over Ukraine and is warning that such a move could end in a wide-spread war in Europe.

Speaking Friday after chairing a meeting of NATO foreign ministers, Stoltenberg said "we are not going to move into Ukraine, neither on the ground, nor in the Ukrainian airspace."

Russian President Vladimir Putin's forces have ramped up their attacks in Ukraine, launching hundreds of missiles and artillery strikes on cities and making significant gains in the south.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has appealed to the West to enforce a no-fly zone over his country, most recently after a fire overnight at one of Ukraine's **CONTINUED ON: P-5**

Rahul visits Varanasi's Kashi Vishwanath temple, says PM seeks vote on basis of 'lies'

VARANASI(KCN): Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Friday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of seeking votes on the basis of "lies", and said he now does not talk about his poll promises of doubling farmers' income and generating jobs.

"Hindu religious books nowhere say to speak lies," Gandhi told an election rally here after offering

prayers at the Kashi Vishwanath temple here, during which he



was also joined by his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Rahul Gandhi alleged that Modi now

doesn't speak on his earlier poll promises of doubling farmers'

income and generating jobs for youths, whereas there is "no mismatch" in the Congress' words and **CONTINUED ON: P-7**

deeds.

He cited the example of fulfilling poll promises of writing off farmers' loans by the Congress government in Chhattisgarh and also procurement of paddy at the Minimum Support Price of Rs 2,500 a quintal. "Not in the name of dharma, rather he is winning votes on the basis of lies," the former Congress chief said, attacking **CONTINUED ON: P-7**

UP election: Modi holds roadshow in Varanasi as last phase of polling nears

VARANASI(KCN): Prime Minister Narendra Modi

Modi arrived in his Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency after ad-

crossing. The crowd chanted "Jai Shri Ram" and

Modi wore a saffron cap and a "gamcha" (towel) around the neck.



started his roadshow here on Friday afternoon, drumming up support for BJP candidates ahead of the last phase of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections on March 7.

dressing a rally in neighbouring Mirzapur. He began the roadshow after garlanding a statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel at Maldahiya

"Har Har Mahadev", and showered rose petals as the prime minister's convoy moved through the city to cover a distance of a little over three kilometres.

According to the planned route, the roadshow would end close to the recently renovated Kashi Vishwanath complex, where the PM would offer prayers.

Modi had begun his first roadshow in Varanasi from the same spot after filing his nomination papers for the 2014 Lok Sabha election. BJP city president Vidyasagar Rai said Modi will stay the night at the Diesel **CONTINUED ON: P-7**

Attack on journalist at Joda, Journalist association condemn



Barbil (KCN): A case of fatal attack on a journalist of electronics news channel has come to lime light. They have also threatened to kill him. As per report one person Vijay Mahakud called him over phone near Joda

Cinema hall. Getting the call, the journalist Satya Das reached the place and saw Vijay fighting with some other fellow. He tried to get them out of the quarrel. One person namely Rupun accompanying Vijay attacked Satya

Das. The right leg of Satya is broken. At present he is admitted in Tata Steel Hospital and undergoing treatment. Based on affair lodged at Joda police station, police investigating the matter. Journalists are called the fourth

pillar of the society and attacked on journalist question the law and order situation of the place. Journalist association condemn the matter and demanding early arrest of all culprits.

State advises to Prevent March end rush

Bhubaneswar (KCN): As the Financial Year 2021-22 is coming to an end, the State Government has advised all the Departments to prevent rush of expenditure towards the fag end of March. Principal Secretary, Finance, Vishal Kumar Dev has written a letter to all Additional Chief Secretaries, Principal Secretaries, Commis-

sioner-cum-Secretaries, Secretaries and Heads of Departments of Finance has earlier intimated all the Departments of Government in this regard and revised the deadlines fixed for financial sanction, issue of allotment, re-appropriation and surrender of funds, submission of bills in the treasuries and submission of proposal to the Department for release of funds, etc. The Administrative Departments were also requested to take timely steps for sanction, release, re-ap-

propriation, surrender and drawal of funds by the revised deadlines so as to ensure submission of bills in the treasuries in time as per the deadlines. In view of administrative convenience and the necessity to regulate the submission of different kinds of bills/claims in the treasuries in a phased manner, the Finance

nance, Mr. Dev. The fresh deadline for re-submission of bills after due compliance is March 14, 2022 while all other bills except the above categories can be submitted by March 15, 2022. Extension of this deadline would not be allowed on any account whatsoever, he said. Fresh bills relating to relief expenditure/ expenditure on account of natural calamities, energy charges, telephone charges, house building, vehicle, medical advance, old age pension, disability pension, widow pension, scholarships mid-day meal, Police organizations, election, NPS contribution etc can be made till March 25.



Claims relating to Central Sector Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), the Central Assistance for which is received on or after March 15, can be made till March 25, 2022, informed the Principal Secretary. The last date for submission of Bills relating to PMAY and ITDP etc which are to be paid by transfer credit to the account of the concerned DRDAs/ ITDAs and all other bills which are passed for payment by transfer credit to deposit heads is March 25, 2022. "No bill/ claim of any kind should be presented to the treasury, if the money to be withdrawn cannot be spent on or before March 31. Where the provision is not likely to be spent by March 31, the provision shall be surrendered under intimation to the Finance Department in time," said

Department has fixed fresh deadlines. Now, all bills pertaining to claims under the unit 'Other Contingencies' and purchase of machinery, equipment & vehicles, share capital investment, budgetary support in favour of co-operatives, industrial enterprises, Public Sector Undertakings in shape of loan or share capital investment and subsidy can be made before 9 March. "No Treasury shall entertain any of these bills, after 9 March, 2022 on any account," warned Principal Secretary Fi-

Mr. Dev. Unspent balance of funds drawn out of the Budget Provision for the year 2021-22 should be deposited in Government Account within March end. Such unspent balances should, on no account, be carried over to the next financial year, as it will deflate the expenditure of the subsequent year on its refund to Government Account, he informed. The Controlling Officers and DDOs are advised to avoid submission of bills in the Treasury after the deadlines and ensure encashment of all claims presented in the Treasury/Bank before 31 March, 2022. "Un-authorized parking of Government money in bank account in contravention of financial rules and instructions issued by Finance Department is strictly prohibited. It has been stipulated in the above mentioned circulars of Finance Department that if any such instance of unauthorised parking of money is noticed, the concerned DDO shall be liable for disciplinary action under Rule —15 of the OCS (CC&A) Rules, 1962," warned the Principal Secretary Finance. Mr. Dev requested all departments to take timely steps for drawal of funds by the deadlines stipulated above in the interest of fiscal discipline and effective financial management. It should be noted that there will not be further relaxation in the deadlines indicated above under any circumstances whatsoever, he added.

Multiple Candidates in Race for ZP President of Khordha district

Khordha (KCN): With the ruling BJD set to form Zilla Parishad councils in all the 30 districts comfortably, hectic lobbying has begun within the party for the post's of Zilla Parishad President in the district of Khordha. The president will be elected from among the 30 Zilla Parishad members of Khordha district recently elected in the panchayat polls. While the Zilla Parishad President election will be held on March-13. Those eyeing the posts of ZP President are trying to reach out to the party leadership including BJDs organizational Secretary Pranab Prakash Das through the local MLA and other influential leaders in

the district. Many newly elected Zilla

state capital to push for the post's of ZP

and Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik will take a decision at the right time, said Party senior leaders. Out of the total 30 Zilla Parishad members in Khordha district 14 women BJD candidates were elected in recent panchayat polls. The ZP President post's in Khordha district has been reserved for women candidate. In 2 number zone of Khordha Assembly Constituency BJD minority community candidate Kaishara Begum get highest 20,277 votes, but she is not in the race of ZP President Khordha District. She is a discipline BJD party worker and only to carry out the order of Chief Minister Naveen Pattnaik.



Parishad members including the husband's and relatives of some of the women ZP members are campaign in the

President in the Parishad. Multiple candidates are in the race for the ZP President of Khordha district. Party President

Bamboo artisans in Odisha impacted by betel vine demolition, demand compensation

JAGATISINGHPUR (KCN): If livelihood of villagers in Dinkia, Nuagaon and G a d a k u j a n g panchayats has been affected due to JSW's

sation for their loss of livelihood. As per reports, there are around 1,500 bamboo artisans, mostly belonging to Scheduled Caste, in

sell around 300-400 baskets now as the demand dipped after betel vine demolition. Nearly 2,400 betel vines were destroyed for Posco and

vines, I am hardly able to earn Rs 2,000," she said. Contacted, JSW Assistant General Manager (Media) Rupali



proposed plant, the condition of bamboo artisans from neighbouring villages, solely dependent on vetel vines, is no better. These artisans eked a living by supplying bamboo strips and baskets to betel vines most of which have been demolished now for the plant. This has evoked resentment among the families who are now demanding compen-

neighbouring villages of Erasama and Kujang blocks who supplied the vineyards nearby with bamboo baskets for transport of betel leaves, bamboo strips to bind the creepers and other items. Sources say, these SC families earlier used to supply over 4,000 bamboo baskets for transporting betel leaves to outside states via trains and trucks but are able to

822 have been razed for JSW. Parbati Behera, an SC woman from Balitutha, said her family was making bamboo baskets for nearly five decades but the current scenario has posed a crisis. "It takes two to three days to make a basket and each fetches around Rs 300-Rs 500. I used to make over Rs 10,000 a month. But after demolition of betel

Kar informed that the company is currently conducting a socio-economic study in collaboration with XUMB to assess the livelihood pattern of different target groups such as fishermen, farmers, women self help groups who have lost land in peripheral villages. Based on the findings, a detailed livelihood action plan would be drawn.

March 3 is 'Vishwa Kannada Cinema Day', says Bommai at BIFFes launch

BENGALURU: Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday inaugurated the Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFes) at the Dr Babu Rajendra Prasad International Convention Centre. The film festival would henceforth be inaugurated on March 3 every year, he said, and the day would be celebrated as 'Vishwa Kannada Cinema Day' to mark the release of the first Kannada talkie film, Sati Sulochana. "Cinema is an extremely influential medium and Kannada cinema is vital for the growth and nurturing of Kannada language and culture. We have to resurrect theatre culture where families and friends get together to watch a film. To be at the forefront, film mak-

ers must make movies not only for entertainment but also with a good social message," Bommai said. Actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who released the festival brochure, Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy chairman Suneel Puranik, actress Bharathi Vishnuvardhan, director Priyadarshan and actor Puneeth Rajkumar's wife and film producer Ashwini Rajkumar were present. Offline screenings will take place at PVR Cinemas in Orion Mall, Dr Raj Bhavana (Kalavidara Sangha) in Chamarajpet, and Suchitra Cine Academy (Puravankara Auditorium) in Banashankari 2nd Stage. Bommai applauded the efforts of the organisers who executed the plan in 35 days.

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Mohanlal, Akshay Kumar to launch trailers of 'Marakkar: Arabikkadalinte Simham'



The highly anticipated trailer of Priyadarshan's 'Marakkar: Arabikkadalinte Simham' will be launched by Mohanlal and Akshay Kumar on March 6 on their Facebook and Twitter

pages at 5 pm. While Mohanlal will launch the Malayalam trailer, Akshay will release the Hindi version. ALSO READ | Mohanlal is March 6 on their about others in

Priyadarshan's star-studded period drama? Ever since the first footage was shown at the Aashirvad event a few months ago, followed by the launch of the teasers, film buffs have been wait-

ing to take a look at a more elaborate trailer. The film's promotions are going on in full swing and the makers recently the Tamil poster featuring, in addition to Mohanlal, Manju Warrier, Keerthy

Suresh, Arjun Sarja, and Prabhu. Marakkar is set to have a grand release on around 5000 screens worldwide on March 26. The big-budget period epic also stars Suniel Shetty,

Pranav Mohanlal, Kalyani Priyadarshan, Fazil, and Madhu among others. It is bankrolled by Aashirvad Cinemas, Confident Group, and Moonshot Entertainments.

Kajol's short film 'Devi' hit with plagiarism allegation



MUMBAI (KCN): An ex-student has accused the makers of Kajol-starrer "Devi" of plagiarising his short film "Four". The film depicts how nine women belonging to different strata of society are brought together by circumstance and end up forming a sisterhood after they share their stories of abuse.

Directed by Priyanka Banerjee, the short is produced by Niranjana Iyengar and Ryan Ivan Stephen. In a Facebook post, Abhishek Rai alleged the movie has "heavy resemblance" with his own short film, which he wrote and directed in 2018. ALSO READ | Devi short film review: 13 minutes, nine women

and one stark reality "Here's something I'd like to bring to everybody's notice. We at AndaKurry Productions, made a short film when we were in film school, two years back called 'FOUR' that dealt with a premise of rape victims sitting together in a room when a new victim arrives. And yesterday,

a film named 'Devi' was uploaded to LargeShortFilms's YouTube channel that has heavy resemblance and the premise is also of the film we made," Rai said. Here is the short film 'FOUR' by AndaKurry Productions: He said it is "ruthless" on the part of "Devi"

makers to claim his work as theirs. "Our film was a student (film) with very little production design, bad audio and stuff, but still it's a child of our own imagination and it's ruthless how anyone can just pick up a piece of thought and claim it to be theirs." The film is an intellectual property of

Asian Academy of Film & Television. No one has contacted him regarding any kind of query. Now, I have not been contacted by large short films or the makers of the film regarding any kind of query," he claimed. The makers of "Devi" remained unavailable for comment when contacted.

Reminiscence of Biju Babu

Biju Babu was a great Indian and a prodigious Oriya too. He dedicated his entire life to build a great egalitarian and democratic India. His



life was a saga of sacrifice and adventure. His ability to create confidence among the people of Odisha and inspire them was phenomenal. He had a remarkable capacity to transmit his cheerful strength to others. For that Julian Huxley, the great Zoologist of International fame and the brother of eminent world philosopher Aldous Huxley speaking about Biju Pattnaik has rightly said "A memorable Indian whose adventures will surely fill a book. As per the remark of an eminent Economist the long life can be read as something of a history of India back to the time when the country was run by the British. And he gave Indian politics a rare fresh of colour. When Dr Ram Manohar Lohia was seriously ill and admitted in Wellington hospital New Delhi almost in a stage of coma. It was almost the daily routine of Biju Babu to come and see Dr. Lohia in the hospital which proves his servitude. The affectionate feelings of Mr Pattnaik to words Dr Lohia one day familiar with the "Quit India Movement of 1942 lunched by Mahatma Gandhi were well aware of the fact that Biju Babu along with Dr Lohia, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Aruna Asaf Ali and Achut Patwardhan kept the flag of 1942 movement flying after Gandhiji's arrest. Biju Babu was a young pilot then. He was courageous enough to make the supreme sacrifice by actively responding to the clarion call of 'Do or Die' of Mahatma Gandhi. He was arrested and put behind the bars along with other leaders.

Such dynamic figure Bijupatnaik was born in Cuttack, Orissa on very holy day on 5th March, 1916 in the lap of Ashalata Devi and Laxminarayan Pattnaik. Although his father Laxminarayan Pattnaik was in judicial service but was a great nationalist and also a prominent leader of the Oriya movement. The two architects of modern Orissa like Utkal Gourav madhusudan Das and Utkalmani Gopabandhu evocated Biju Babu. Biju Babu inherited the qualities of fearlessness, strongness and love of Orissa right from his parents. He had two brothers and one sister. He had his early education in

Mission primary School and Christ collegiate school at

Uma Shankar Prasad

Cuttack. In 1927 he admitted in the famous Revenshaw Collegiate School where Netaji once was a student. He passed matriculation with first division and got admitted in science class of the famous Revenshaw College Cuttack. In his student carrier he was an accomplished sportsman and led the university teams champion in football, cricket, hockey and Athletics for three consecutive years. He discontinued studies for a B.sc degree to undergo training as a pilot at the Aeronautic Training Institute of India and Delhi flying club. In fact as a child Biju was fascinated by aero planes and from his school days, he had decided to make his carrier in flying. His great pleasure was flying and his exploits as a pilot provided his carrier with a metaphor that endured from the frolics of his youth to his ambition to be a politician and Industrialist. He married Gyan in 1939. And the guest of the wedding arrived in Tiger Moths. He showed his penchant for the extraordinary at a very young age. Like his role model Napoleon, he seemed to have deleted the word 'impossible' from his dictionary. When Japan entered the war in 1941, Biju Pattnaik evacuated British Families from the advancing invaders. He pioneered risky operations across the Himalayas to help the Chinese revolutionaries in Chiang Kai Shek's China. He once flew all the way to Stalingrad on yet another mission. The British Government Particularly appreciated his efforts to evacuate British Families from Rangoon when the Japanese invaded Myanmar during World War - II. Aruna Asaf Ali, who was one of the prominent fighters of the Quit India movement, has said- "Among the thousands who came forward to take up the challenge, Biju Pattnaik was one of the most fearless, and who mobilized his fellow pilots and inspired them to help the "Underground Directorate". In 1971 Biju Babu formed a state party in Orissa named 'Utkal Congress'. He then did not look back and never joined the Congress till the end of his life. After the victory in Bangladesh war in 1971 Indira Gandhi was very ruthless in dealing with those in opposition parties. But in this crucial movement a ray of light reflected and some young men invited Mr Biju Pattnaik & Rabi Ray to their village in Cuttack District to address their club. Like 'Blessing in Disguise'

both the friend had a heart-to-heart talk there for the first time

about the state of the nation existing then. Both of us agreed for the formation of a National alternative of all opposition parties at the centre would go a long way to save the country from the impending authoritarian rule of Smt Indira Gandhi. Biju Babu was such a veteran leader who lost no time in getting the active cooperation of two former Chief Minister Sri Hare Krishna Mahatab & Sri R.N. Singdeo in this regard. The net result of this efforts was formation of Pragati Dal consisting of 'Swatantra Party (Sri R.N. Singdeo), Utkal Congress (Sri Biju Pattnaik) and the Sanjukta Socialist Party (Sri Rabi Ray) formed in Orissa. The lurching of pragati Dal was bound to catch the imagination of the people in the state.

Bijupatnaik is considered as a pioneer of the Industrial growth of Orissa and established a string of industries in misson. He set up the Kalinga Tubes, the first modern Textile Mills at Choudwar, Orissa, the first Refrigerator factory at Jobra, Cuttack and a low shaft Furnace at Barbil. He started his own airline, the Kaling Airways and in 1947 carried soldiers in to Kashmir, when he was threatened from across the newly created border sky. At great risk, he landed the first platoon of troops in Srinagar. In 1951 he established the Kaling Prize for the popularization of Science and entrusted the responsibility to the UNESCO. In the year 1946 when he was elected to Orissa assembly from that period like a colossus, Biju strode Orissa's political arena for more than four decades. Whether in power or in the opposition, he was one of the most influential politician of the country. His flagship industry was one time Asia's largest pipe manufacturing plant. The resounding success in 1961 midterm poll established him as a superb party organizer and the brief period of his administrative stewardship built his image of a dynamic man who could electrify the people of the state with a sense of urgency and keep bureaucrats on their tiptoes. Within that little span of time Mr Patnaik laid the blue print for Orissa's development and the state was on the threshold of a new of industrial revolution. He not only accelerated the process of development, but was able to locate a number of new industries in the state- the MIG factory at Sunabeda, Balimela Dam, Public Corporations, Panchayat Industries, the

Express High way and a lot many. His ambitious projects, which he named as "Decade of Destiny" was meant to elevate the state to a new height. Biju could not tolerate red-tapism. He would have a thing done immediately and not suffer any delay. Result he was charged with administrative impropriety. To the official his advice was, be loyal to me not to the government but to the destinies of this state and to the prosperity of the people. There is a fine example when a speeding motor truck carrying stones for Paradeep Port was stopped by a traffic policeman, the driver humorously replied that the speed suggested by the policeman would delay the port work by several years, when Biju Babu wanted everybody to work at top gear. As per Biju Patnaik "A people cannot grow unless the industries were developed and established here." I would expect my officials to become thinkers and administrators in turn. I would expect them to become leaders of men not leaders of the longest notes on the files. The period of Mr. Pattnaik, between 1961-67 is aptly described as the golden era in the history of education of the state. At his initiative the Regional College of Education was set up at Bhubaneswar. The Regional Engineering College at Rourkela was established in 1961, the Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology was set up and during the Chief Ministership of Biren Mitra when Biju was the Chairman of the State Planning board. Universities were established in Berhampur and Sambalpur. Thus Biju Babu is responsible for the giant leap forward of education in Orissa.

He was a prominent figure in Odisha's political landscape over four decades. He displayed unflinching courage and ability, astuteness as he served state and the country in different capacities as Chief Minister, Union Minister with integrity and dignity. He was a great architect for Odisha. A long illustrious career came to an end on the 17 April, 1997 when Bijupatnaik passed away at Delhi. In his death Odisha lost a greatest figure. At a stretch he was Wily, volatile, flamboyant, dynamic, reckless, daredevil, dam efficient. Such a man like Biju Babu will never take birth again in the soil of Odisha. But Biju Babu left a proud legacy like Nabeen Pattnaik our beloved Chief Minister.

Columnist and Editor Margadarshi

Evolution of India's Trade Negotiations

India's accession to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement in The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) of 1948 was the first multilateral agreement under UN aimed at boosting economic recovery by reducing barriers to trade. Even though India was one of the 28 founding members of GATT, it was not a serious stakeholder in multilateral trade negotiations. 16 YOJANA October 2020 April 2017 also proved beneficial to it for improving logistics efficiencies and bringing down trade costs for its exports. Reform of WTO Presently, talk on reform of the WTO has gathered momentum in the wake of unilateral measures and counter-measures imposed by mostly USA and China. Developed countries are seeking to graduate few emerging countries like India, China, Brazil, South Africa etc. from the status of 'developing countries' by withdrawing Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT). The principles of S&DT enshrined in GATT and adopted into the WTO system, was based on the premise that developing countries and LDCs, faced with developmental challenges, require certain buffer to cope with external competition. India strongly opposed this distorted view arguing that development parameters of developing countries are not even remotely close to those of developed countries and putting them in the same basket as developed countries is unfair. Another challenge in WTO for developing countries is effort by plurilateral groups to push for new issues on the WTO Agenda for rulemaking such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, MSME and gender. For India and developing countries, Doha Development Round remains unfinished and new issues run the risk of undermining the 'development' agenda. India needs to maintain a delicate negotiating balance on reform of WTO without undermining the principle of Special & Differential Treatment and the development-

centric agenda of WTO. Tariff and Non-Tariff

TDammu Ravi

Barriers Understanding how tariffs and non-tariffs impact trade is crucial for trade negotiations. The rationale for high tariffs is to protect domestic industry from external competition and enhance revenue collection for the State. WTO member countries had bound their tariff rates for each line of product; developed countries



bound 99% of their tariff lines to below 5% rates and developing countries bound their rates to 98% but with varying peak rates, within which they can maintain flexible applied rates. Member countries list their commitments in their schedule and offer them on Most Favoured Nation (MFN) basis as per GATT Article 1 i.e. "preferences to be offered to all members on an equal basis in a non-discriminatory manner". This flexibility was considered necessary for developing and LDCs to withstand global trade distortions caused by sudden surge in imports of certain products. India brought down its applied rates significantly from an average 100% rates in the 90s to currently around average 15% for industrial products and 25% per cent for agriculture products. Several lines kept under Open General Licensing system (OGI), not

meant for trading in support of MSMEs, were finally abolished in 2005.

The game of tariffs in trade negotiations has always been deceptive. While developed countries have seemingly cut down their tariffs, they have surreptitiously erected nontariff barriers in the form of standards, regulations, licenses, port restrictions, testing etc., ostensibly to deny market access to others and protect their domestic industry. WTO Agreements on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) have defined rules on standards but these are not enforceable. As Standards are voluntary in WTO, countries tend to take advantage of the ambiguity in the Article 20 of GATT that allows governments to restrain imports in order to protect human, animal or YOJANA October 2020 17 plant life or health, provided they do not discriminate or use it as disguised protectionism. For developing countries coping up with these high standards is hard as they add up costs. Moreover, tendency to often shift goal posts makes the game even more challenging. Trade negotiators would need to be particularly adept at tackling these unseen walls in global trade.

India's Share in World Trade India's share in the world merchandise exports at the time of our independence in 1947 was 2.2%; it dropped to 0.5% in 1983 and marginally raised to 0.7% in 2000. 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 bil-

lion (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 nontariff 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.

Trade in services has assumed high importance 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.

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India abstains from UN Human Rights Council vote

Continued from page-1

nuclear plants, the largest in Europe.

"The only way to implement a no-fly zone is to send NATO fighter planes into Ukrainian airspace, and then impose that no-fly zone by shooting down Russian planes," Stoltenberg said.

"We understand the desperation, but we also believe that if we did that, we would end up with something that could end in a full-fledged war in Europe."

"We have a responsibility as NATO allies to prevent this war from escalating beyond Ukraine," he said.

The Ukrainian government and a former British prime minister are pushing for a special criminal tribunal to prosecute Russian President Vladimir Putin and his allies over the invasion of Ukraine.

Former Prime Minister Gordon Brown said the call for a body to investigate the "crime of aggression" was based on the tribunals that prosecuted senior Nazis after World War II.

The Netherlands-based International Criminal Court is already investigating allegations that Russia has committed war crimes in Ukraine. But while it can investigate genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, Russia has not signed up to a separate ICC statute under which nations pledge not to commit "crimes of aggression."

Brown said that "this act of aggression by Russia ... cannot go uninvestigated, unprosecuted and unpunished."

"Putin must not be able to escape justice," he said. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba welcomed the call for a tribunal, which is backed by legal experts and academics from around the world.

"We are fighting against an enemy who is much stronger than us. But international law is on our side," Kuleba told a meeting in London by video link from Ukraine.

The Dutch military says it has begun housing refugees who fled Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Defense Ministry said Friday that the first 120 refugees arrived a day earlier at a military base in Harskamp, a village in the central Veluwe region.

The Harskamp base can house 950 refugees. It also is home to a sprawling firing range where Dutch troops regularly practice live fire exercises.

Another group of 50 Ukrainian refugees arrived Friday in the western town of Waddinxveen, where they are being housed in a local sports hall.

The town's mayor, Evert Jan Nieuwenhuis, greeted the new arrivals and told local broadcaster Omroep West it was "heartbreaking. It brings tears to your eyes."

He said he was glad the town could do something to help the refugees fleeing the conflict in Ukraine "even if it is just a drop in the ocean." Turkey's foreign minister says Ankara wants to bring Russia and Ukraine's top diplomats together for talks during an international diplomacy forum in the country next week.

Speaking Friday to reporters in Brussels where he attended a NATO meeting, Mevlut Cavusoglu said Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has confirmed his attendance at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum to be held in the Mediterranean coastal city between March 11-13.

Cavusoglu said a meeting between Lavrov and Ukraine's Dmytro Kuleba could be possible, but added that he was not certain Ukrainian officials would be able to attend.

Turkey, which has close ties to both Ukraine and Russia, has been trying to balance its relations with both. It has repeatedly offered to mediate between the two.

BRICS bank put on hold all new transactions in Russia due to Ukraine crisis

The New Development Bank of the BRICS bloc has put all new transactions in Russia on hold citing the "unfolding uncertainties and restrictions", amidst the Ukraine crisis. The NDB's move came a day after the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank put on hold all its projects in Russia and its ally Belarus.

India abstains from UNHRC vote

India on Friday abstained in a vote in the UN Human Rights Council that has decided to urgently establish an independent international commission of inquiry as a result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

The 47-member Council voted on a draft resolution on the situation of human rights in Ukraine. The resolution was adopted with 32 votes in favour, two against (Russia and Eritrea) and 13 abstentions, including India, China, Pakistan, Sudan and Venezuela. (READ MORE)

Whole World is Against You': Ukraine Ambassador tells Putin

'Whole world is against you' Ukraine ambassador tells Russian President Vladimir Putin after UN vote.

With online posts in Hebrew and appeals to Jews to "cry out" in response to Russia's invasion, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky

has invoked his faith to rally support for his embattled country. The 44-year-old comedian-turned-president told the Times of Israel in 2020 that he had an "ordinary... Jewish upbringing", explaining "most Jewish families in the Soviet Union were not religious."

The Ukrainian state nuclear company said that three Ukrainian troops were killed and two wounded in the Russian attack at the Zaporizhzhia plant. International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi said two people were injured in the blaze that broke out.

Ukrainian firefighters extinguished a blaze at Europe's biggest nuclear plant that was ignited by a Russian attack and no radiation was released, U.N. and Ukrainian officials said, as Russian forces pressed their campaign to cripple the country despite global condemnation.

The head of the United Nations' atomic agency said that a Russian "projectile" hit a training center at the plant. Ukraine's state nuclear regulator earlier said that no changes in radiation levels have been recorded so far after the Zaporizhzhia plant came under attack. International Atomic Energy Agency Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi later said no radioactive material was released, but that two people were injured in the fire that broke out at the plant.

UK - "The reckless actions of President Putin could now directly threaten the safety of all of Europe," Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in a statement.

"This just demonstrates the recklessness of this war and the importance of ending it and the importance of Russia withdrawing all its troops and engaging good faith in diplomatic efforts," Jens Stoltenberg, the head of military alliance, said. "Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi condemns the heinous attack by Russia on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, an attack on everyone's security," a statement said.

"The European Union should continue to react with unity and with the utmost determination, together with its allies, to support Ukraine and protect European citizens."

"This kind of attack is madness," Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Store said, expressing "strong condemnation."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky say he has informed the leaders of the U.S., Britain, the European Union and the International Atomic Energy Agency about the dire threat of nuclear disaster after Russian troops shelled a nuclear power plant.

"Only urgent action by Europe can stop the Russian troops. Do not allow the death of Europe from a catastrophe at a nuclear power station," he said

He's calling on politicians and citizens to pressure Russian leadership to stop Russian troops. NATO chief Jens Stoltenberg on Friday decried Russia's "recklessness" over the shelling of a nuclear power plant in Ukraine and demanded Moscow stop the war against its neighbour.

Europe's largest nuclear power plant was hit by Russian shelling early Friday, sparking a fire at one of its six reactors and raising fears of a disaster that could affect all of central Europe for decades, like the 1986 Chernobyl meltdown.

Australia's foreign minister says 45 million Australian dollars have been frozen in an Australian financial institution under new sanctions in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Foreign Minister Marise Payne on Friday declined to identify the institution or who owned the money. Australia has imposed sanctions against more than 350 Russian individuals including President Vladimir Putin.

Supreme Court on Friday took note of the Centre's submission that it has evacuated 17,000 stranded Indians from the conflict zone in Ukraine, saying it appreciated the efforts but was concerned about the anxiety of people.

Ukrainian nuclear regulator says no leaks of radiation have been detected at the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant.

The Supreme Court on Friday took note of the Centre's submission that it has evacuated 17,000 stranded Indians from the conflict zone in Ukraine, saying it appreciated the efforts but was concerned about the anxiety of people.

Around 3,000 Indians have returned to the country in 15 flights under Operation Ganga from countries neighbouring Ukraine in the last 24 hours. It is estimated that around 18,000 Indian nationals have left Ukraine since the initial advisories were issued. This includes some Indians who had not registered with the Embassy of India in Kyiv previously.

The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) has announced the start of a fundraising campaign to provide aid to the Ukrainian people, assessing the urgent needs at the level of 400 million euros (over \$441 million), Deputy Regional Director UNICEF Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia Philippe Cori said.

The US on Thursday (local time) invoked the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Moscow Mechanism to establish an expert mission to examine reported human rights abuses & violations of humanitarian law by Russia in Ukraine.

Union Minister VK Singh said that seven flights with 200 Indian citizens on each flight have been sent to India in the last three days. The Minister

of State for Civil Aviation further informed that some students who reached Warsaw and have their relatives and friends have decided to stay with them and they are safe in Poland.

Calling for the assassination of Russian President Vladimir Putin, US Republican Senator Lindsey Graham asked whether there is a Brutus or a "more successful" Colonel Stauffenberg in the Russian military.

Amid intense fighting between Russia and Ukraine, the Russian military on Friday seized a TV broadcasting tower in the southern city of Kherson.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has Kremlin battling for hearts and minds at home

Russian President Vladimir Putin is locked in a vicious struggle not only to subjugate Ukraine, but also to keep his own citizens united in support of Kremlin policy. But as Ukrainian fighters capture the admiration of the world in Twitter posts and TikTok videos, even the illusion of Russian unity is beginning to crumble.

Putin's approval has stayed strong over the years? war in Ukraine could change that Since his ascension to power in 2000, Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, has maintained levels of approval among the Russian public that would be the envy of most world leaders. Prior to the recent invasion of Ukraine, Putin's approval rating stood at 71%, according to an independent pollster. Contrary to widespread belief, research has found that this support is not a fiction or an artifact of massaged polling numbers.

Ukraine's emergency service says that as of 06:20, the fire at Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has been extinguished.



The International Atomic Energy Agency said on Twitter that it's been informed by Ukraine's nuclear regulator that there has been no change

reported in radiation levels at a nuclear power station shelled by Russian troops. The agency said its Director General Mariano Grossi was in touch with Ukraine's Prime Minister Denys Shmygal and the Ukrainian regulator and operator about the situation at the Zaporizhzhia plant.

US President Joe Biden spoke with his Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky to receive an update on the fire at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and urged Russia to cease its military activities in the affected area and allow access to emergency responders, the White House has said.

A top American Senator has urged the Ukrainian government to end racial discrimination at its border, a prickly issue that has been pointed out by numerous students who have been frantically trying to flee the war-ravaged country.

A top American Senator has urged the Ukrainian government to end racial discrimination at its border, a prickly issue that has been pointed out by numerous students who have been frantically trying to flee the war-ravaged country.

For days, a massive Russian military convoy has sat, largely stalled about 15 miles outside Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, which is believed to be the central target of Moscow's war. Eight days into the war, the expanse of Russian supply trucks, troops and weapons has been plagued with fuel and food shortages and logistical challenges, including weather and mud.

Ordinary Russians are also feeling the impact of the sanctions, from payment systems that won't operate and problems withdrawing cash to not being able to purchase certain items. Russian and Belarusian athletes are now banned from the Paralympics Games for their countries' roles in the war in Ukraine when the Games open Friday.

Support for joining NATO has surged to record levels in Nordic neutrals Finland and Sweden. A poll commissioned by Finnish broadcaster YLE this week showed for the first time more than 50% of Finns support joining the Western military alliance. In neighboring Sweden, a similar poll showed those in favor of NATO mem-

bership outnumber those against.

Moscow has warned it would be forced to take retaliatory measures if Finland and Sweden joined the alliance.

Maj. Gen. Andrei Sukhovetsky, the commanding general of the Russian 7th Airborne Division, was killed in fighting in Ukraine earlier this week. His death was confirmed by a local officers' organization in the Krasnodar region in southern Russia. The circumstances of his death were not immediately clear. Sukhovetsky, who was 47, took part in Russia's military campaign in Syria. A funeral ceremony will be held in Novorossiisk.

Tuz told Ukrainian television that shells were falling directly on the Zaporizhzhia plant and had set fire to one of the facility's six reactors.

Russia has acknowledged nearly 500 Russian troops have been killed so far and around 1,600 have been wounded.

Ukraine has not released similar casualty figures for its armed forces.

The U.N. human rights office says at least 227 civilians have been killed and 525 wounded in Ukraine since the start of the invasion on Feb. 24.

Ukraine's State Emergency Service has said more than 2,000 civilians have died, though it's impossible to verify the claim.

The United Nations announced 1 million people have fled Ukraine since the assault started. This amounts to more than 2% of Ukraine's population, though some of those fleeing Ukraine are citizens of other countries.

The U.N. refugee agency has predicted up to 4 million people could eventually leave Ukraine,

a country with a population of 44 million.

The EU Commission says it will give temporary residence permits to refugees fleeing the violence and allow them to study and work in the 27-nation bloc.

How Are Negotiations Going?

A member of Ukraine's delegation sent to speak with the Russians said both sides have agreed to establish corridors for civilians to safely leave combat zones.

The corridors will include cease-fires along

the path, said Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Zelenskyy.

Humanitarian supplies could be delivered though



the corridors, which were the Ukrainians' main demand heading into their second round of negotiations Thursday in Belarus, in the Brest region that borders Poland.

Ukraine's state emergencies agency now says at least 33 civilians have been killed and another 18 wounded in a Russian strike on a residential area in the city of Chernihiv, a city of 280,000 in Ukraine's north.

A Ukrainian official who attended talks with Russians on Thursday said that "regrettably, we haven't reached results we were hoping for," but emphasized the importance of humanitarian corridors, saying that many cities have been besieged by the Russian troops and are experiencing a dramatic shortage of food and medicines. French President Emmanuel Macron said Thursday that he has again asked his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin to halt attacks on Ukraine, but that Putin won't do it.

CEO of a top cryptocurrency transaction-tracking firm on latest sanctions

The CEO of a top cryptocurrency transaction-tracking firm said Thursday that it was not yet seeing any large-scale evasion of Western sanctions on Russian businesses and individuals using the virtual currencies.

U.S. officials say Russia has fired 480 missiles at Ukraine as Russian troops make more progress in the south, but are largely stalled in the north. The official says about 90% of the Russian combat power that had been arrayed around Ukraine is now in the country.

A member of Ukraine's delegation in talks with Russia says the parties have reached a tentative agreement to organize safe corridors for civilians to evacuate and for humanitarian supplies to be delivered.

A free physiotherapy camp organised by ABMMS, Barbil

Barbil(KCN):VridajanSevaSansthan, Udaipur, Rajasthan in association with AkhilBharatiyaMarwadi Mahila Sammelan, Barbil has organised a free Physiotherapy camp at Hari OmmBhawan, Barbil. A week-long camp starting from 27th February to 3rd March

2022 aims at serving people with various musculoskeletal and neurological conditions. People from Barbil and the adjoining area approached this camp for treatment. they were treated with physiotherapy, and also evaluated, guided for further treatment.

Probe illegal parakeet trade: Wildlife wing to Baliguda forest division in Odisha



BHUBANESWAR(KCN): The State Wildlife Headquarters has directed Baliguda forest division in inquiry into hunting and illegal trading of parakeets, a protected species, in Kandhamal district. Acting on a complaint raised by Khurda Honorary

Wildlife Warden Subhendu Mallik, the office of the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Wildlife was asked to probe into the matter and initiate action against the accused under the Wildlife Protection Act 1972. Mallik had shared a link of a video up-

loaded on YouTube platform where a man was seen climbing atop a tree in the forest to capture parakeet chicks from the nest. "As a parakeet is a protected bird under the Wildlife Protection Act, it is a crime," Mallik said. He added that following his complaint, the

person changed the name of the channel and removed the video from the YouTube platform. Mallik also said that supply of parakeet chicks to different parts of Odisha is still continuing and the birds are being sold openly which is a clear violation of law.

BMC documents water bodies of Bhubaneswar, draws up a list of 44 ponds

BHUBANESWAR: In a first, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has embarked upon documenting all

shared details of these water bodies, including their area and ownership, on the public disclosure section of its website. As

such water bodies by unscrupulous elements and any such attempts can even be flagged by local residents since these wa-

ter bodies are identified. However, the list prepared is provisional. Citizens can submit their feedback and suggestions to include any other pond or water body in BMC jurisdiction missing from the list, said a senior official from the BMC. A number of water bodies having heritage value are being documented and will be added too. Maa Mangala temple tank in Chandrasekharpur and Project Pond at Greater Lumbini Vihar are the two ma-



the water bodies in Bhubaneswar and, so far, found 44 ponds of various sizes located across wards of the capital city. The exercise is aimed at creating a database for future reference and more importantly, help protection of water bodies against encroachment and support effective conservation. The corporation has specified the water bodies ward-wise while specifying the revenue village khata and plot numbers, kissam as well as land title of each pond in the dossier. BMC has

per BMC's documentation, 38 out of 44 water bodies in its jurisdiction are on government land, while remaining six are on private lands and not managed either by the government or BMC. "The main purpose of drawing up a list of these water bodies and put them up on public domain is to raise awareness among people to ensure that these public and community assets remain well protected," official sources said. The dossier will help prevent encroachment of

ter bodies are identified. However, the list prepared is provisional. Citizens can submit their feedback and suggestions to include any other pond or water body in BMC jurisdiction missing from the list, said a senior official from the BMC. A number of water bodies having heritage value are being documented and will be added too. Maa Mangala temple tank in Chandrasekharpur and Project Pond at Greater Lumbini Vihar are the two ma-

Bhubaneswar which boasted of a number natural water bodies has lost quite a few to rampant development and encroachment while lack of care and maintenance has resulted in drying up of the ponds. Nayapalli Haza, earlier spread over seven acres of land and capable of holding rainwater of the entire Nayapalli catchment, has now been reduced to less than one acre due to encroachment from almost all sides. This apart, siltation has also led to shrinking of the water body.

Chilika Development Authority to frame action plan for fishing cats in Bhubaneswar

BHUBANESWAR: The Chilika Development Authority (CDA) in association with The Fishing Cat Project will frame a Fishing Cat Action Plan in Chilika this year to improve measures taken for protection of the species and track the wetland's status. Like tigers' presence indicates the health of a jungle, presence of the fishing cats helps to know how a wetland's health is doing, CDA officials said.

The action plan that will be socio-ecological in nature will also help in introducing small scale wetland tourism in the lagoon. Apart from the action plan, the CDA will also conduct the second fishing cat population estimation in the lagoon from

March second week this year. Chilika Wildlife Division and The Fishing Cat Project will collabo-

rate with the CDA for the estimation. While the phase I of the population estimation was conducted in the north-eastern sector of Chilika establishing presence of 119 fishing cats in 230 sq km area of study, phase II exercise will be conducted in the islands along the coastal strip

of Chilika lake, in between Bay of Bengal and the lagoon. During the estimation, camera traps will be installed at different locations for nearly 30 days. "This is the first time in the world that this globally endangered species' population is being estimated completely outside the purview of protected areas," IUCN Cat Specialist Group member Jim Sanderson said. The



CDA wants to regularise fishing cat monitoring in Chilika just like it is monitoring birds and dol-

phins, said CDA Chief Executive Officer Susanta Nanda. The Fishing Cat Project and CDA had carried out a year-long patrolling and monitoring initiative on the fishing cat by engaging local residents, said Tiasa Adhya, co-founder of the project.

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Folk artistes perform at the inauguration of the 13th Bengaluru International Film Festival on Thursday

LIC IPO set to be delayed to next fiscal year

LIC IPO: The government will take a call on the IPO of the country's largest insurer LIC in the "best interest of the investors", a senior official said on Friday as it is closely watching the

60,000 crore in the current fiscal to meet its revised disinvestment target of Rs 78,000 crore. However, in the wake of the market volatility due to the Ukraine-Russia war,

Speaking at the seventh National Conference on Economics of Competition Law, 2022, he also said the government's desire to come up with the IPO of the state-owned insurer this fiscal year itself.

ALSO READ| Ukraine-Russia war impact: Government may defer LIC IPO

The financial year is ending on March 31, "That is always been our desire, but now with this crisis which has come up, it is also a very dynamic situation. We are closely watching (the situation) and since you know you are dealing with the market all the time, we have to be watchful and make our strategy accordingly," Pandey stressed.

He also said the government is guided by professional advisors and whatever decision is taken, it will be in the best interest

of the investors and the stakeholders.

"LIC is not really any strategic investment but yes it is a very important event, as LIC is a very old organisation to wider public ownership. This is also one of the important objectives of the government. We have brought in several listings in the recent past like Railtel, IRCTC, among others," Pandey said.

He also said that it is because of the LIC IPO proposal that one crore new Demat (dematerialised) accounts have been opened. "LIC alone has brought in something like one crore new Demat (dematerialised) accounts. Now the Demat accounts have gone up to more than 8 crores and a tremendous amount of new energy has also come in terms of retail investors," he added.



market amid volatility caused by the Russia-Ukraine war. DIPAM Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey said that while the government's desire is to come out with the Initial Public Offer (IPO) of the state-owned life insurer in the current fiscal, it is a "dynamic situation".

Through the IPO of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), the government aims to garner over Rs

there might be a rethink on the timing of the LIC share sale.

"There are certain unanticipated events which have taken over right now. We are closely watching the market and certainly whatever the government will do, we will do in the best interest of the investors and also the IPO," Pandey, Secretary of Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM), said.

Rupees 12 hike in petrol, diesel price needed to break-even

NEW DELHI: Petrol and diesel prices, which have been on a freeze for the past four months in view of assembly elections in states like Uttar Pradesh, need to be increased by over Rs 12 per litre by March 16 for fuel retailers to break even. International crude oil prices shot above USD 120 a barrel for the first time in nine years on Thursday before retreating a little to USD 111 on Friday, but the gulf between cost and retail rates has only widened.

With international oil prices - on which domestic fuel retails are directly benchmarked - spiking in the last two months, state-owned fuel retailers "need a massive price hike of Rs 12.1 per litre on or before March 16, 2022, just to breakeven and a price hike of Rs 15.1 is required" after including margins for oil firms, ICICI Securities said in a report.

The basket of crude oil India buys rose to USD 117.39 per barrel on March 3, the highest since 2012, according to information from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of the oil ministry.

This compares to an average of USD 81.5 per barrel price of the Indian basket of crude oil at the time of freezing of petrol and diesel prices in early November last year.

ALSO READ: Petrol, diesel price hikes to restart from next week

"With state elections getting over next week, we expect daily fuel price hikes to restart across both gasoline and diesel," JP Morgan said in a report. The seventh and final phase of polling for the Uttar Pradesh legislative assembly is on March 7 and the counting of votes is slated for March 10. "Auto fuel net marketing margin is minus Rs 4.92 per litre on March 3, 2022, and Rs 1.61 in Q4 FY22-to-date," ICICI Securities said. "However, net margin is likely to plummet to minus Rs 10.1 per litre on March 16 and minus Rs 12.6 on April 1 at latest international auto fuel prices." The brokerage said, "steep price hikes are required as the strength in gross refining margins does not suffice for sharp quarter-on-quarter fall in net auto fuel marketing margin".

Oil prices have been on the boil ever since Russia put its forces on the Ukraine border last month. They spiked after it invaded the central Asian nation on fears that oil and gas supplies from energy giant Russia could be disrupted, either by the conflict in Ukraine or retaliatory western sanctions.

Russia makes up for a third of Europe's natural gas and about 10 per cent of global oil production. About a third of Russian gas supplies to Europe usually travel through pipelines crossing Ukraine. But for India, Russian supplies account for a very small percentage.

While India imported 43,400 barrels per day of oil from Russia in 2021 (about 1 per cent of overall its imports), coal imports from Russia at 1.8 million tonnes in 2021 made up for 1.3 per cent of all coal imports.

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

India also buys 2.5 million tonnes of LNG a year from Gazprom of Russia. While supplies at the moment seem to be of little worry for India, it is the prices that are a cause of concern.

Domestic fuel prices - which are directly linked to international oil prices as India imports 85 per cent of its oil needs - have not been revised for a record 120 days in a row.

Rates are supposed to be revised on a daily basis but state-owned fuel retailers IOC, BPCL, and HPCL froze rates on sooner did electioneering to elect a new government in Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and three other states started. Petrol costs Rs 95.41 a liter in Delhi and diesel is priced at Rs 86.67. This price is after accounting for the excise duty cut and a reduction in the VAT rate by the state government. Before these tax reductions, petrol price had touched an all-time high of Rs 110.04 a liter and diesel came for Rs 98.42.

These rates corresponded to Brent soaring to a peak of USD 86.40 per barrel on October 26, 2021. Brent was USD 82.74 on November 5, 2021, before it started to fall and touched USD 68.87 a barrel in December.

Rupee slumps 22 paise, breaches 76-mark against US dollar

MUMBAI: The rupee slumped 22 paise to close at 76.16 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday as investors assessed the global economic impact of the Russia-Ukraine conflict amid rising crude oil prices.

Persistent foreign fund outflows and a weak



trend in domestic equities too weighed on the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened weak at 76.06 against the American dollar and fell further during the session as investors moved away from riskier assets.

The domestic unit oscillated between a high of 75.99 and a low of 76.22 during the session. The rupee finally settled at 76.16 against the dollar, down 22 paise from the previous close. Meanwhile, the US dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against the basket of six currencies, fell 0.27 per cent to 98.05. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.80 per cent to USD 111.34 per barrel. The Russia-Ukraine crisis has remained the most crucial issue for investors this week as they look to assess its global economic impact. Russia is one of the key oil producers, and prices have been rising as global supplies remain threatened by the conflict.

International crude oil prices shot above USD 120 a barrel for the first time in nine years on Thursday before retreating a little to USD 111 on Friday. On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 768.87 points or 1.40 per cent lower at 54,333.81, while the broader NSE Nifty declined 252.70 points or 1.53 per cent to 16,245.35.

Foreign institutional investors remained net sellers in the capital market on Thursday as they offloaded shares worth Rs 6,644.65 crore, according to stock exchange data.

Rahul visits Varanasi's Kashi Vishwanath temple, says PM seeks vote on basis of 'lies'

Continued from page-1

Modi.

On his arrival in Varanasi, both Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra offered prayers at the Kashi Vishwanath temple, days before the eight assembly seats in the district go to the polls.

The brother-sister duo reached the historic temple straight from the airport, temple and Congress sources said.

Hours later, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also visited the shrine dedicated to Lord Shiva. Varanasi is also Modi's Lok Sabha constituency.

Earlier in the day, Union minister Smriti Irani had visited the temple.

After their temple visit, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra left for the Pindara assembly constituency on the outskirts of Varanasi where they addressed a rally in favour of Congress leader Ajay Rai who is up against sitting BJP MLA Awdhesh Singh.

Polling will be held in Varanasi in the last phase of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections on March 7.

Continuing with his tirade against the PM, Rahul Gandhi said, "Actually his 'double engine' are 'Adani and Ambani' (Industrialists). This kind of double engine can never provide employment to people."

He said while Indian students stranded in war-torn Ukraine are sending videos of their painful condition "in the absence of help" from the Indian government, BJP leaders are "dismissing the videos as those of failed students". "We have the only leader in the world who asked people to beat utensils (thali bajao) to chase away coronavirus," he said, targeting Modi.

The Congress leader said PM Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have added a third problem for the people of Uttar Pradesh in the form of stray cattle, along with unemployment and price rise.

In her brief speech, Priyanka Gandhi reaffirmed her party's resolve to promote women-centric agendas if the Congress comes to power.

'Monetary policy is an art of managing expectations,' RBI Governor NEW DELHI: Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday underlined the need for an effective communication strategy at the central banks, stressing that "monetary policy" is an art of managing expectations". The conduct of monetary policy has undergone notable changes in India and across the world, as economies and markets evolved and policymakers gained greater insights into how economic agents interact in a complex economic system, he said while delivering a lecture at the National Defence College here.

Refugee crisis: Tearful goodbyes at Kyiv train station during war in Ukraine

Continued from page-1

country, a number that is already the swiftest exodus of refugees this century and one that could soon skyrocket even further.

Those leaving are overwhelmingly women and children.

Ukrainian men have been ordered to stay and fight in the war.

At the train station in Kyiv crowds of people carrying luggage stand in the cold as they wait for their chance to board a train.

Mothers hold children bundled in winter jackets and stocking caps, some clutching onto stuffed animals.

Men help the elderly get to the train, even using a luggage cart to carry one woman with crutches.

Up and down the platform there are tearful embraces.

Once on the train, many of those leaving press their faces against the windows for a last glimpse at those staying behind.

One woman reaches her hand out the door for a fleeting brush of a loved one's cheek.

UP election: Modi holds roadshow in Varanasi as last phase of polling nears

Continued from page-1

Locomotive Works

(DLW) guesthouse.

Modi's roadshow will cover the three assembly segments of Cantonment, Varanasi North and Varanasi South.

The prime minister will wind up his trip on Saturday with a rally in Khajuria village under the Rohaniya assembly seat, also addressing people from the other five assembly segments under the Varanasi Lok Sabha constituency, Rai said.

During an earlier stay at the DLW guesthouse, Modi had written in the visitors' book that it reminded him of his childhood days when he used to vend tea at Vадnagar railway station in Gujarat.

After the mega Modi event, Varanasi will see another roadshow by Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav from 8 pm to 10 pm.

SP's Varanasi district president Vishnu Sharma told PTI that earlier they had sought permission from the district administration to hold the event from 5 pm to 10 pm.

As the UP elections near their end, Varanasi is abuzz with the arrival of top leaders from all major parties.

Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra landed in Varanasi Friday and headed to Phulpur middle school grounds for a rally after praying at the Kashi Vishwanath temple.

The two reached the rally venue after holding a roadshow of their own in favour of Congress candidate Ajay Rai from Pindara assembly segment.

Post Zilla Parishad landslide in Odisha, BJD eyes majority in panchayat samitis

Continued from page-1

Both the BJP and Congress targeted the BJD for resorting to corruption ahead of the election to the post. Senior Congress leader Santosh Singh Saluja alleged that the BJD is offering Rs 5 to Rs 10 lakh to each Independent candidate and also candidates backed by BJP and the Congress.

BJP leader Prithviraj Harichandan alleged that the BJD leaders are trying to influence the samiti members by any means. "Since the mandate in the panchayat polls has not been completely in favour of the BJD, its leaders are making every attempt to influence the block chairperson elections by muscle and money," he added. In 2017 panchayat elections, BJD supported candidates had won 218 panchayat samitis while Congress and BJP supported candidates won 45 and 29 panchayat samitis respectively.

Dr Padmaja Paul receives first Sukubina Srashta Memorial award for excellence in Odia Literature

BHUBANESWAR: Mohapatra. During the event, story writer and philanthropist popularly



Novelist and short story writer Dr Padmaja Paul received the first Sukubina Srashta Memorial award here on Thursday for excellence in the field of Odia literature. The award was presented to Dr Paul by eminent poet Dr Sitakanta litterateur Dash Benhur said Dr Pal is one of the most deserving yet overlooked writers of the current generation. Dash also spoke about the legacy of Sudhir Kumar Bijayendra Narayan, noted Odia short

Novak Djokovic likely to be seen in action at Roland-Garros with France set to scrap vaccination pass

Novak Djokovic is likely to defend his French Open title as 21st grand slam at Roland Garros in May. week, plays in next month's Monte Carlo Masters.



the French government has announced to scrap its vaccination pass from March 14. The French Open begins at Roland Garros on May 22 and the French government's decision to remove the vaccination pass has reportedly boosted Djokovic's chances of returning in his bid to win his Lately, with the wave of Covid-19 subsiding, the French government has revealed that the restrictions will be removed on March 14. According to reports, the easing of restrictions in France could also mean Djokovic, who was replaced by Russia's Daniil Medvedev as world No 1 earlier this

India vs Sri Lanka 1st Test: Hosts reach 357/6 at stumps on Day 1

MOHALI: Indian cricket's rapidly-rising box-office draw Rishabh Pant owned the centre-stage in Virat Kohli's landmark 100th Test, hammering Sri Lankan bowlers into submission with an enthralling 96 as the hosts reached a commanding 357 for 6 on the opening day of the first Test here.

The 5000 odd spectators, who had come to watch Kohli perform on a grand stage, saw one of the most flamboyant batters in recent history make a mockery of an average Sri Lankan attack. He was especially brutal when it came to going after left-arm spinner Lasith Embuldeniya (28-2-107-2), who was taken for 22 in one over. The deadly silence after Kohli's shock exit for a well-made 45 was there for barely a second and half. Because at that point entered the stockily built 24-year-old from India's engineering city of Rourkee and that was followed by a deafening roar which showed his popularity. On Kohli's day, he had completely over-shadowed the legend. And those who came for Kohli, decided to stay back and savour Pant's mayhem as he started with a signature lofted six off Embuldeniya over mid-wicket fence. Embuldeniya, who must have felt emboldened

when he got one to turn a shade away and tickle Kohli's off-stump, didn't know what hit him. In just over one and half session, Pant nearly reached his fourth hundred in Test cricket before veteran Suranga Lakmal (1/63), in his last international series, breached his defence. There were nine fours and four sixes in his 97-ball knock and one couldn't but feel for the young man who looked completely devastated after another near-miss, the fifth time that he has gotten out in the 90s. The walk back to the pavilion took an eternity as it seemed that one would need someone to drag him out. But coach Rahul Dravid and skipper Rohit Sharma's decision to send him at number five to bring in the left-hander's advantage against a left-arm spinner, had paid the rich dividends they were hoping for. Embuldeniya didn't actually bowl as badly as his figures might suggest and was pitching the ball up, putting his body into the deliveries and getting them to spin away from the right handers. Pant being a southpaw obviously diminished his advantage to an extent and then his decision to stand at least a couple of yards outside the crease made the difference.

Nayak, Dr Gourahari Das and Pradeep Biswal. Sukubina Srashta Memorial Trust was set up in memory of SKB Narayan after his death in July last year. It is aimed at promoting literature, art and culture of Odisha, trustee and daughter Purabi Das said. The first volume of Japani Babu's complete works titled 'Japani Babanka Katha Samahara' published by Paschima publications was released on the occasion. The award will be given annually to deserving candidates in the field of Odia literature, art and culture.

Chelsea will 'stay strong' despite Roman Abramovich sale: Thomas Tuchel

LONDON: Chelsea coach Thomas Tuchel said on Friday he is convinced that the side "will stay a strong club" after Roman Abramovich's dramatic announcement he is selling up following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The Russian billionaire, alleged to have close links to President Vladimir Putin, said it was in the "best interest" of the Champions League holders if he cuts ties after 19 years at the helm. Abramovich has not been named on a growing British sanctions list targeting Russian banks, businesses and tycoons following Putin's attack on Ukraine last week. But the 55-year-old's concern about potential seizure of assets is understood to have sparked his move to off-load the Blues. Chelsea have already reportedly received several serious bids, with Swiss billionaire Hansjoerg Wyss and American magnate Todd Boehly teaming up in a consortium offer. Tuchel, who has led Chelsea to the Champions League, European Super Cup and Club World Cup titles since arriving in January 2021, said Stamford Bridge remained the "perfect fit" for him despite the uncertain situation. "I love working in the Premier League. I love to be in England and feel the tradition and the love for sports in general and football in particular. It's an amazing place to be. Chelsea is from my point of view a perfect fit. I love to be here, I love everything about the club and hopefully it continues. There is now an uncertainty but isn't it always as a football manager?" he said on the eve of his side's Premier League match at struggling Burnley. Tuchel admitted the situation could affect his players but said everything at the club, third

in the Premier League, would react differently. "Highest level" "I hope for the best outcome. Still I think we have something to offer. Still I think Chelsea is a strong club and will stay a strong club. Our owner decided to sell the club but he sells a strong, solid and a very well-organised club on the highest level," he said. Tuchel said the players and staff were briefed on the situation on Thursday by Petr Cech, Chelsea's technical and performance advisor -- a day after Abramovich's announcement. He admitted Cech could offer no assurances but said the focus would remain on results. "It does not make sense to worry too much because we don't have a lot of influence, not to say no influence at all, so that was the bottom line. We are allowed to focus on football and do the best to focus on football," said the German. Tuchel spoke warmly about Abramovich's legacy at Chelsea, a club that have won 19 major trophies since he took charge in 2003. "It is exceptional, it speaks for itself. He is the boss and he is a very, very passionate owner who cares actually about the team, about the club, about the performance personally, which is very rare and makes it very special," he said. Chelsea's 2-1 victory last month against Palmeiras in the Club World Cup final in Abu Dhabi meant they had won every possible piece of silverware during Abramovich's tenure. "At least we closed this cycle for him and for his effort and his passion and commitment to the club. So it was good timing on this matter," said Tuchel.




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