

# 7152 candidates file papers No Covid Restrictions for Urban Poll

Bhubaneswar(KCN): As many as 7,152 candidates have filed their nomination papers for election to various posts in the

Councillor and Corporator in the civic bodies. On the last day of filing of nominations, on Monday alone,

all three major political parties, BJD, BJP and Congress have filed their nomination for Bhubaneswar Municipal Corpora-

their nominations till March 14 (excluding government holiday). So, the final number of candidates in fray for urban poll will be

Bhubaneswar(KCN): As Covid-19 situation has improved a lot in Odisha, the State Election Commission (SEC) has decided to conduct the general election of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) without Covid-19 restrictions.

State Election Commissioner, Aditya Prasad Padhi said here today while talking to Media Persons that the daily Covid count has come down to below 200 and the test positivity rate (TPR) has also remained in between 0.25 to 0.3 percent in the State, during the past few days.

So, the Commission has decided that there will be no Covid-19 restrictions during the voting and campaigning for the urban election in the State, he said. However, if the cases increase in coming days, necessary instructions will be issued in this regard, SEC Mr.Padhi said.

For the first time, there will be direct election to the post of Chairperson and Mayor in the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). So, two EVMs will be deployed in each booth, one for the chairperson/mayor and another for the Councillor/ Corporator.

SEC Mr.Padhi said one presiding officer and four polling officers will be engaged in each booth for smooth conduct of the election.

Unlike the Panchayat polls, the polling officials can cast their vote, if he/she is a voter of the concerned ULB. The Commission will issue a certificate for this purpose, he said.

Informing about the setting up of the strong room to store the EVMs, Mr.Padhi said, the SEC has issued a detailed SOP for this pur-



pose. There will be three strong rooms in each ULB; one is for strong EVMs meant for councillor/corporator, another for chairperson/mayor and the third one for the reserve EVMs. For safety of the EVMs, the strong rooms will have a double lock system with keys of each lock with two separate officers. Armed police will be deployed for 24X7 and CCTV cameras with digital video recorder (DVR) will be installed from date of commissioning till completion of counting, he added.

In the SOP, the Collectors have been asked to seal all other doors/ windows of the strong room using brick-masonry or concrete and install a main switch CONTINUED ON: P-7



Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

According to the State Election Commission (SEC), 693 candidates have submitted their nominations for the post of Chairperson and Mayor while 6,459 candidates have filed papers for the post of

highest 5,045 candidates have filed their nomination documents. Of which, 504 nominations were filed for Chairperson/Mayor position and remaining 4,541 for Councillor/ Corporator chair.

In the meanwhile, the mayor candidates of

tion (BMC), Cuttack Municipal Corporations (CMC) and Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC). As per schedule announced by the SEC, scrutiny of the nomination papers will be done on March 9. The candidates can withdraw

known after that, said sources.

This time, elections will be held for 47 Municipalities, 59 Notified Area Councils (NACs) and three Municipal Corporations on March 24. The election results will be declared on March 26.

## A day after Shivaji statue inauguration by PM Narendra Modi, tile from canopy falls; NCP blames haste

PUNE(KCN): A day after Prime Minister



Narendra Modi unveiled the statue of

Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj in the Pune Municipal Corporation headquarter premises, a tile piece from the structure's canopy fell down on Monday. While the NCP said it was a reminder of how the BJP was trying to push forward with inaugurations in a hurry for political gains, the PMC's building department said the tile piece of the the canopy, which is above the statue of the

CONTINUED ON: P-7

## 2022 Assembly elections: Exit polls predict win for BJP in UP, AAP in Punjab

NEW DELHI(KCN): Several exit polls forecast a clear majority for the BJP in

(NDA) getting 211-277 seats and its main challenger in the Samajwadi Party-led

also unanimous in predicting a big win for Delhi Chief Minister Arvind

The ruling Congress was mostly predicted to be securing the second spot in



Uttar Pradesh and the Aam Aadmi Party in Punjab while being mixed in their predictions for Uttarakhand.

Exit polls on CNN News 18, Republic TV and News X channels showed the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance

alliance getting anywhere between 119 and 160 seats in Uttar Pradesh.

CNN News 18 predicted 262-277 seats for the BJP and allies and 119-134 for the SP and allies in the 403-member state assembly. Most of them were

Kejriwal-led AAP in Punjab, with one exit poll on India Today projecting up to 76-90 seats in the 117-member assembly.

TV9 Bharatvarsh-Polstrat, however, predicted 56-61 seats for the AAP in Punjab, making it the frontrunner.

Punjab. In Uttarakhand, Both the Congress and the BJP were favoured by different exit polls to win the assembly polls. Some exit polls predicted a hung assembly in Goa while forecasting the BJP to have an edge over rivals in Manipur.

## Former Pakistani President Rafiq Tarar dies at 92

ISLAMABAD(KCN): Rafiq Tarar, a veteran Pakistani politician and former Supreme Court judge who served as the country's President from 1997 to 2001, passed away on Monday due to prolonged illness. He was 92.

"My grandfather Mohammad Rafiq Tarar has passed

away," his grandson Ataullah Tarar, a Pa-

(PML-N) leader tweeted.



kistan Muslim League - Nawaz

Tarar had served as Pakistan President

between 1997 and 2001 after being nominated by the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif.

Prior to his foray into politics with the PML-N, Tarar had served as a Supreme Court judge from 1991 to 1994. He also served as the Chief Justice of the Lahore CONTINUED ON: P-7

## CM welcomes Odia students

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has welcomed 77 Ukraine-returnee Odia students, who have landed here at

children have returned safely from war zone after spending harrowing time in the Russia-Ukraine war," the Chief Minister said

the Chief Minister for his support.

Few days ago, Naveen had interacted in a video call with some of the students who had re-

brought all them back to their home State through a special flight of AirAsia.

Yesterday, the Chief Minister had written



the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) on Monday evening.

These students today returned to Odisha from New Delhi who were earlier evacuated from Ukraine with the help of the State Government.

"Welcome our students back to Odisha. It is a huge sigh of relief that our

by using his twitter handle.

"We will continue our efforts to help rest of our students return home safely," he assured.

Mr.Patnaik has interacted with the students and said that his government will make all efforts for continuance of their studies in India. The students and their parents also thanked

turned to the country with the help of the Odisha Government. These students have been evacuated from the war-torn Ukraine through special bus arranged by the Odisha government. After that, they have returned to New Delhi by special flight engaged under Operation Ganga. And, today, the State government has

a letter to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeking his urgent intervention with the National Medical Commission (NMC) and concerned ministries to facilitate continuance of the studies of the medical students returned from Ukraine in India from the stage from which their studies in Ukraine got disrupted.



## Jilla Parisad Member Social worker Pradipta Mahali Feliciated by SKP

Cuttack Sadar(KCN) : Cuttack Sadar Block Zone 5 newly elected Jilla Parisad

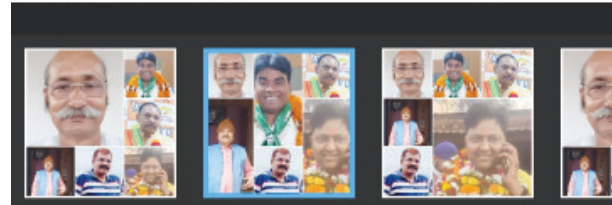


Member Social worker Pradipta Mahali Feliciated by leading cultural organization Saraswati Kalaparisad(SKP),Kandarpur. This program of Felicitating and Sahitya Sabha presiding by President Prativa

Satapathy in presence of Secretary Natyakara Ashok Pattnaik, Dance teacher Chitta Ranjan Pradhan, Vice president Prafulla Das, senior Actor Daitari Pradhan, Social worker Sridhar Swain, Dance teacher Akshay Ojha, Singer Ranjan Jena, Educationalist Bikram Nanda, Subhakankhai Bhoi, Priyanshi Sahoo, Manoranjan Sahoo, Binayak Majhi, Satyanarayan Bhoi and all students at Kalabihar SKP office. For information best politician, Youth leader Pradipta Mahali doing variety of Seva for betterment of society as for his best quality he previously feliciated by some organization at Cuttack Sadar.

## Nomination for Municipality election ends with some translucent factors

Barbil(KCN):While Badbil Municipal many parties are Council as per their



hoping for a party-wise referendum, the BJD and the BJP have fielded their own candidates for the chairman post of party's high command. Laxman Mahant on behalf of the BJD and Dillip Mishra on behalf of the BJP filed their

nomination papers on March 7. It is to note that Dillip Mishra was chaired as chairman while Laxman Mahant was vice chairman. In addition, Bijay Kumar Swain on behalf of the Congress, Imam Azhar and Grabiell Munda as the independent candidate have filled their nomination. "Even though the party seems to be one from the outside, but there seems to be some internal conflict within the party," said one political analyst. While interacting with the voters different people have opined differently. Dillip Mishra has managed very smoothly in his tenure and Barbil municipality awarded twice may fascinate people to cast in his favour. He too have good number of BJP Support voters. Laxman Mahant have number of fan following in the area and a good number of voter from younger generation would cast vote in his favour, other remarked. Md Imam being the independent candidate from Muslim community would take maximum number of vote from his community and may stand in as an important factor for vote division. Similarly decedent from all party may conspire against party candidate which might turn calculation wrong, other remarks.

# BJD, BJP announce mayor candidates for BMC

BHUBANESWAR(KCN): Chief Minister and BJD president Naveen Patnaik on Saturday announced the names of candidates for mayor posts of three municipal corporations that are set to go to polls on March 24.

While State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities Sulochana Das has been announced the BJD's mayor candidate for Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Rajya Sabha MP Subash Chandra Singh will be the party's nominee for the post in Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC). Sanghamitra Dalei, president of the women's wing for Ganjam district, has been nominated as the candidate for Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC).

It is for the first time that a Rajya Sabha member has been made a candidate for a city mayor. Singh has more than four years remaining of his tenure as the MP.

The BJP also announced the name of well-known writer and social activist Suniti Mund as its mayor candidate for BMC. The announcement was made by the party's Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi. The saffron party, however, is yet to announce candidates for CMC and BeMC.

Congress has already announced Madhusmita Acharya and Giribala Behera as the party's mayoral candidates for BMC and CMC. It is also yet to announce its candidate for BeMC. Race begins as MAYOR faces revealed

**Sulochana Das**  
Sulochana Das, State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, has been announced as the BJD's mayor candidate for Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC). A former journalist turned politician and ex-spokesperson of the ruling BJD, Das was appointed as the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities in March, 2019.

She is the first State Commissioner for Persons with disabilities appointed by the government. Previously, the Secretary of the Women and Child Development department was ex-officio in charge of the post. Das started her political career in Congress. She had joined the party in 2013 and was appointed as the spokesperson. She was appointed as one of the general secretaries of the party when Prasad Harichandan became the OPCC president in 2015 and also continued as the spokesperson.

Das, however, quit the party to join the ruling BJD in June 2017 because of rampant factionalism in the State unit of Congress. Thanking the Chief Minister for reposing faith in her, Das told media persons that if elected, she will work for the overall development of the Bhubaneswar city with the help of the BMC Commissioner and others.

**Subash Singh**  
BJD Rajya Sabha member and trade union leader Subash Chandra Singh has been an-

## Girl hurt as poachers open fire

ROURKELA(KCN): A college girl was injured after poachers lying in wait to hunt wild boars opened fire at her in a forest within Dharuadihi police limits in Sundargarh district on Sunday. She was identified as 18-year-old Urbashi Naik of the remote Lamti village in Kulta gram panchayat. Sources said Naik along with other village women had gone to the nearby forest at around 11.30 am. Hearing her footsteps, some poachers hiding in

bushes assumed the presence of wild boars and opened fire at the direction of the girl. Naik suffered gunshot wound on her hip and was rushed to the district headquarters hospital. Confirming the incident, Sundargarh SP Sagarika Nath said two persons involved in the incident have been detained and efforts are underway to nab the third accused. Condition of Naik is stated to be stable.

## STF moves for property forfeiture

Bhubaneswar(KCN): The Special Task Force (STF) of Crime Branch has moved the Competent Authority and Administrator of NDPS Act, Kolkata for forfeiture of ill-gotten property of a drug mafia. In chapter V (A) of NDPS Act (Section A- Z), there is a provision of seizing and forfeiture of ill-gotten property (illegally acquired property from Narcotics business in the last six years). During investigation, the STF has seized properties worth of Rs 2 crore, acquired by one Anil Kumar Pandi, a native of Ganjam district, out of illegal contraband ganja (cannabis/marijuana/weeds) business. The Competent Authority and Administrator of NDPS Act, Kolkata, who is a quasi-judicial authority under NDPS Act has been requested for forfeiture of the illegally acquired

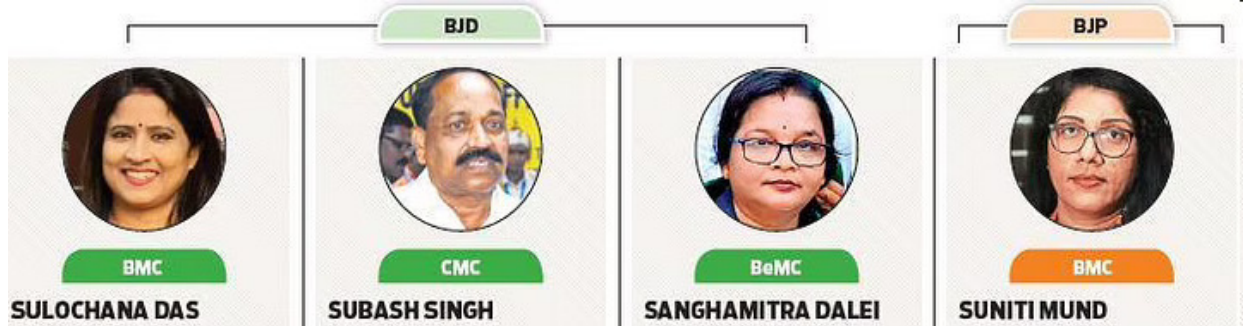
property, said an official of STF.



In this case, contraband ganja around 10 quintals, one Tata Truck and other incriminating materials were seized on August 13, 2021. The seized properties include one palatial three storied building

having luxurious facilities including a swimming pool and 33 plots and bank deposits etc. while the building has been evaluated by PWD R&B to be of worth around Rs 1.5 crore, valuation of other properties is in process. It is also suspected that he might be having such properties in Gujarat and Maharashtra too. The Odisha police is in touch with Gujarat police in this regard. A detailed proposal for confirmation of seizure/ forfeiture of the properties earned out of contraband drugs business was sent to the office of Competent Authority, Kolkata as per provision of the NDPS Act, 1985.

It is worth mentioning that Anil Pandi is one of the most wanted drug traffickers having multiple cases in Gujarat and Odisha. Earlier his brother Sunil Pandi was arrested by Gujarat police. Anil Pandi is absconding evading arrest. Court has issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against him. The STF has already declared a reward in December last year, as the accused has been absconding since long.





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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."



# Women, SDG and Sustainability

Can you imagine without women how the world would remain? Without women how your family would revive? Without women how you would survive? We accept that we are here because of her. She remains here. She revives our family and helps to survive. She is the creative force. She loves unconditionally. She works relentlessly. She can multitask. She is in our surroundings, staying with us as sister, mother, aunty etc. In form of sister she prays for us. As a mother she protects us, as a teacher she educates us and so on. She is gift of God. Above all she is women and about half of total population. Further, it is recognized the gender female socially from nurture to nature. They have been taken whole responsibility to nurture us since childhood. Still they feel deprived in 21<sup>st</sup> century. Still they are harassed, tortured, dominated, exploited and deprived. In ancient age, women are also respected, honored, privileged. In reference to various gospels, the women role is vital and important for a society. Manuscript describes women as creator of creatures. Hence, their born to bring up should not controlled or influenced.

An interesting quote by Sonia Sotomayor, the third woman to serve in the High Court of the United States: "Until we get equality in

education, we won't have an equal society." Education brings up our society. Quality and participation develops eternal education of human. So it can be fruitful, if the sex ratio, women participation in education, development and anywhere in a constructive manner ascertain on equality. Treating equal since birth to death in every sector as like as boys would not only make opportunity for girls or women but also it will be very helpful to build a better gender equality in the beautiful world.

Where there is a scope for women there is certain development in a sustainable way. Because they create, contribute and collaborate to development in socially, financially, culturally. There they participate in decision making, protecting environment, managing family, taking leadership and so on. Here the report shows 250 million adolescent girls live in poverty. 60% of chronically hungry people are women and girls. Less than 2 cents of every international development dollar goes to girls. If such figure persists, equality will be go away. Every person in world must go forward to achieve the objectives of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Every people must be aware on the SDG in rural as well as urban areas. Every Political, cultural, social groups have a common goal i.e SDG. Each family should have a plan under SDG. Because SDG can bring equality among women

**Subhanarayan Satapathy**

**On the Occasion of International Women's Day on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2022**

and for a sustainable tomorrow along with other development aims. Knowledge sharing among people at every corner of world shall be ensured. The civil society organizations having women leadership shall be strengthened to create awareness in community and to motivate women towards their holistic development. People should also plan for SDG at Community level. All people including lead role of women can ensure equality in planning and execution of work. Involvement of women will indicate the collective effort. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was met us seven extraordinary women young champion of the earth who are using their power to save planet. One of them is Mindy Lubber, who is CEO and President of [Ceres](#), a non-profit organization that uses hard data to show investors and corporations that clean technologies, like solar power, wind energy and water recycling, are not only environmentally and socially responsible, they're also good business. Under the leadership of Nemonte Nenquimo In 2019, the Waorani people successfully stopped oil drilling in the Ecuadorian rainforest – protecting 500,000 acres of the Amazon from exploitation, safeguarding lives and livelihoods, and establishing a legal precedent for regional indigenous rights. Another women leader Julia Carabias Lillo has drawn on science to inform the

blueprint for tackling the crises of climate change, biodiversity and pollution. The report explains that unsustainable production and consumption is degrading the Earth's ecosystems and, consequently, harming human well-being. Similarly Nzambi Matee developed a machine that compresses a mixture of plastic and sand into sturdy bricks that are both lighter and more durable than cement. Using her own money to fund Eco Star and taking her message to Instagram, Fatemah Alzelzela built a following of more than 20,000 people. Since its launch in 2019, the company has recycled over 3.5 tones of plastic, 10 tones of paper and 120 tones of metal. Alzelzela Says, "We can all take action and inspire others to take action on a bigger scale". Xiaoyuan Ren, is the founder of MyH2O, an app that charts groundwater quality so that people can find clean sources of drinking water. Niria Alicia Garcia runs 480 kilometers over the course of two weeks, every year for the protection of all wildlife. They have been tackling some of the planet's biggest environmental threats, from climate change to species loss, to pollution. So these are some significant part of examples of women contribution or ensuring SDG for sustainable tomorrow. Like instances need to establish in our state, community and family. An improved scope for women in family establishes a healthier and sustainable environment with equality.

**Bijipur, Brahmagiri, Puri**

# Educating the Girl Child - have we done enough?

During the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, Ajuraj, a government school teacher from one of the remotest villages in Kerala had a new plan to teach his students. Ajuraj and his team of teachers decided to take teaching-learning to

the houses of the students. A group of students from the neighbouring areas were called to one house and classes and experiments were conducted there itself. The same pattern of teaching was repeated for another cluster of students in a different house. Ajuraj and his team carried teaching learning-materials including lab items for experiment with them. Walking the entire stretch of the hilly terrain on foot multiple times, he and his team continued their teaching-mission for months until normalcy returned. Students of his school, especially girls were instrumental in this new innovative initiative to successfully take place. Lack of internet connectivity prompted him to take up this rare enterprise. I quoted this initiative here to explain the possibility in which education can take place when encountered with towering challenges.

If a girl is educated, the whole family is educated. It should make meaning beyond mere cliché. There are multiple reasons to which female literacy still stumbles on and collapses without achieving the desired outcome in our country. We are yet to make credible and praiseworthy achievements. Interventions from social, political, regional and religious areas frequently affect the smooth schooling of girls. Typical family situations also adversely affect the girls' learning. An honest analysis of the situation in India reveals that the potentiality of a large number of girls is still untapped. Forced to remain between the

walls of the houses behind the curtains, most of them are susceptible to various exploitations. Government's initiative to bring a law in order to raise the minimum age of marriage from 18 to 21 was repulsive to some and a welcome move for many. Compared to literate women, illiterates are vulnerable to exploitations in places such as markets, homes and workplaces. Being scary and forced to be submissive to the patriarchy, most of them are devoid of a happy life. Basic literacy skills would help them sort out anomalies to a great extent, enabling them to stand on their own feet. Unfortunately, still a large section of the society in India holds the view that to have a male child is a blissful option than to have a female. Reports revealing the statistics on the number of girls away from formal schooling do not give us happy goosebumps.

Efforts to teach our girls should take place at a faster pace, determinant to set greater goals and move in the direction of achieving them. Usually, prone to mistreatments from multiple corners, despite societies across the country making progress with greater resilience, illiteracy holds those who are devoid of the light of knowledge from the mainstream. We know the fact that mere literacy is not education. Education holds the capability to obliterate all kinds of infirmities in societies. A progressive ambiance in every society gradually envisages this ability to correct and conceptualize better options to push its entire system to an articulative stature. Proximity to what we call an accuracy with respect to the achievement is far from reality in a multilateral entity such as India. The existing systems, with all their criticality need to be put for comprehensible exposition and reformations. Gender equality, as stressed by the

**M. R. LALU**

constitution of the nation remains largely lopsided, unable to consolidate the aptitudes of both genders with an egalitarian outlook. Various reports suggest that India is home to millions of 'out of school' children, with girls constituting the maximum. When the country is making multiple leaps in the field of education, indigenising its systems to what the National Education Policy professes, the share of its women literacy is still a mere 65 percent today. The effort to bring in the Right to Education Act (RTE) was a landmark move in the country. But ten years down the line the situation has not progressed much for the girls. The Right to Education has revolutionized the momentum, bringing glitches to the surface, ponderously attending issues and meeting the challenges, acknowledging the necessities of the schools. There is no denying the fact that India has made a noticeable leap in the direction of achieving a certain level of progress in the area of female education. State and central governments' push in this direction can probably overturn breaking bottlenecks to possibilities. According to a report by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, about 40 percent of girls between the ages 15 to 18 years are out of school and among them 65 percent were engaged in household work. 30 percent of the girls away from schools are from extremely poor family backgrounds, who probably could never reach a classroom. Disconcertingly, it is evident from the facts that a large number of families in rural India still prefers to have a boy instead of a girl. This tilting of mind taking a boy as a blessing and a girl, if not a curse, but not considered a welcome gesture, needs to change. A lop-sided sex ratio of 940 females to 1000 males should be taken as an indication of an insistent nonac-

ceptance for the female child. A study conducted by the Central Statistical Organisation reveals the fact that between 2001 and 2011, there was a sharp decline in the share of children to the total population and the larger decline was noticed in the number of female children. Startling findings by some agencies say that India lost about 3 million girls in one decade in infanticide during this period. Unfortunately, we are yet to make a steep recovery from this situation.

Incentivizing the girl child education, making it genuinely affordable, the government's efforts have been consistent. If parents are illiterate, they will be unable to figure out the pace with which the world is progressing with opportunities equally available for girls and boys. Opportunities mushrooming on a day-to-day basis, the girls need to get more access to education to prove their efficiencies and to disprove societies' misconceived notions. As per studies, in 2013 about 22 per cent of Government schools in India did not have appropriate toilets for girls and 58 per cent preschools did not have toilets at all. Under the Swachh Bharat – Swachh Vidyalaya initiative, we have made much progress in filling the lacuna. From the very beginning of his tenure as the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has consistently been giving attention to the fallacies and drawbacks in educating the girl child. Beti Bachao Beti Padhao was a phenomenal step in this direction. But much has to be done to bring our girls to schools and help them experience a world of wonderful tremendous possibilities.

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# China seeing new surge in cases despite "zero tolerance"

BEIJING: China is seeing a new surge in COVID-19 cases across the vast country, despite its draconian "zero toler-

said China needs to "constantly refine epidemic containment" but gave no indication Beijing might ease the

than 80 per cent" with helping prevent a major nationwide outbreak, but critics say it is taking a major toll on the

demic, such institutions were under heavy pressure from the Communist authorities to follow through on demands



ance" approach to dealing with outbreaks.

The mainland on Monday reported 214 new cases of infection over the previous 24 hours, with the most, 69, in the southern province of Guangdong bordering on Hong Kong, which has been recording tens of thousands of cases per day.

Another 54 cases were reported in the Jilin province, more than 1,200 miles to the north, and 46 in the eastern province Shandong.

In his annual report to the national legislature Saturday, Premier Li Keqiang

highly touted "zero tolerance" strategy. ALSO READ | Thousands of Hong Kongers leaving city every day due to COVID scare Li called for accelerating vaccine development and "strengthening epidemic controls" in cities where travelers and goods arrive from abroad.

"Zero tolerance" requires quarantines and lockdowns on entire communities and sometimes even cities when as few as a handful of cases have been detected. Chinese officials credit the approach "along with a vaccination rate of more

economy and preventing the population from building up natural immunity. No new cases were reported in Beijing and the city was largely back to normal, although masks continue to be worn in public places indoors. One area that continues to feel the effects of tight COVID-19 control is the religious sector.

Three of Beijing's most famous Catholic churches, Buddhist temples and mosques stated Sunday they had been ordered closed in January with no date given on reopening. Even before the pan-

from leader Xi Jinping that all religious centres be purged of outside influence, including the physical appearance of places of worship. The latest daily case numbers mark some of the highest since the initial outbreak in the central city of Wuhan in late 2019 that is believed to have sparked the pandemic. They bring China's total to 111,195 with 4,636 deaths, according to the National Health Commission.

At present, 3,837 people are receiving treatment for COVID-19, many of them infected with the omicron strain.

# Two of the 'Big Four' accounting firms pull out of Russia



NEW YORK: Two of the so-called Big Four accounting firms are pulling out of Russia over its war in Ukraine.

KPMG and Pricewater house Coopers both said Sunday they would

end their relationships with their Russia-based member firms. KPMG said it was also pulling out of Belarus.

KPMG International said in a statement it would be "incredibly difficult" to have its

Russia and Belarus firms leave the network. KPMG has more than 4,500 employees in the two countries.

Pricewater house Coopers said it has 3,700 employees at its PwC Russia firm

and is working on an "orderly transition" for the business.

The two other Big Four companies – Deloitte and Ernst & Young – didn't immediately return requests for comment Sunday.

# Tiger scare in Khamar

ANGUL: Panic has gripped the residents of Khamar after two buffaloes were reportedly killed by a tiger a couple of days back. Though forest officials neither denied nor confirmed the presence of a tiger in the area, Khamar ranger Chandra Shekhar Garnaik said it is also likely that the buffaloes may have been killed by a leopard. Two days back, carcasses of the buffaloes were found near Pita village under Danda reserve forest. The marks on the carcasses suggested that the animals were killed by a big cat. On being informed by locals, forest officials

rushed to the spot and found pug marks of a large cat in the area. Garnaik said a tiger expert from Satkosia visited the spot on Saturday and took pictures of the pug marks for further examination to ascertain if those were of a tiger or leopard. "Suspecting the presence of tiger, the department has asked people not to venture into Danda reserve forest," the ranger added. Divisional forest officer of Satkosia Saroj Panda said the photos of the pug marks are being examined. "Forest personnel are keeping a close watch in the area where the buffalo carcasses were found," he added.

# UK PM Johnson invites world leaders to build coalition against Putin

LONDON: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson hosts Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Dutch PM Mark Rutte at Downing Street in London on Monday, as the trio visit a Royal Air Force (RAF) base to

100 million directly to the Ukrainian government budget to mitigate financial pressures created by Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion. This grant could be used to support public sector salaries, allowing critical state

the government to move faster and harder when sanctioning billionaires and businesses associated with the Russian government. "These amendments give us the chance to bring even more crippling sanctions

ignations of groups of individuals.

It will also remove similar requirements regarding the appropriateness of discretionary purposes of new regulations made under the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act,



meet members of the UK armed forces.

Downing Street said it marks the start of a week of "focussed engagement" with world leaders to mobilise a global outcry at the "atrocities of Russian aggression" into practical support for Ukraine. The three prime ministers will convene for separate bilateral meetings and a joint trilateral meeting to discuss the next steps to counter attacks ordered by Russian President Vladimir Putin on Ukrainian cities.

"In the time since Russia's illegal and brutal assault we have seen the world stand up tall in solidarity with the indomitable people of Ukraine," said Johnson.

"UK aid is already reaching those who need it most, delivering essential supplies and medical support. While only Putin can fully end the suffering in Ukraine, today's new funding will continue to help those facing the deteriorating humanitarian situation," he said. It comes as the UK said it has allocated an additional USD

functions to keep operating, as well as to support social safety nets and pensions for the Ukrainian people. The grant will be provided through the World Bank Multi-Donor Trust Fund, established last week to support the Ukrainian government. It is said to be on top of the UK training 22,000 soldiers, supplying 2,000 anti-tank missiles, providing 100 million pounds for economic reform and energy independence, and providing 120 million pounds of humanitarian aid including 25 million pounds of match funding to the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) appeal.

The move comes as the UK Parliament is for a vote on Monday on the government's amendments to the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Bill, which fast-tracks action against Russian oligarchs close to the Kremlin and with UK assets.

The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said that streamlining current legislation will allow

against Putin and his regime," said UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss.

"The UK has already led the way by bringing in the largest and strongest package of sanctions in history in response to illegal and unprovoked Russian aggression against Ukraine," she said.

The UK has imposed what it brands as the "largest sanctions package in history" on Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. Most recently, this included a full asset freeze and travel ban imposed against Alisher Usmanov and Igor Shuvalov, two of Russia's leading oligarchs with significant interests in the UK and close links to the Kremlin.

The sanctions also cover Russian President Putin, Sergey Lavrov and more than 300 individuals and entities at the heart of Putin's regime, and Belarus. The amendments are designed to remove the test of "appropriateness" for designations, enabling the government to act more quickly and make changes to further facilitate the des-

speeding up the new sanctions regimes.

The changes are aimed at the UK being able to list all members of defined political bodies such as the Russian Duma and Federation Council.

Meanwhile, the UK Home Office said 50 Ukrainians have been granted visas under a scheme for refugees with family links to the UK.

British Home Secretary Priti Patel said she was "doing everything possible" to speed up efforts to issue the travel permits. "This is the first scheme in the world that's up and running in this short period of time. This is an incredible scheme and we are doing everything possible, surging capacity across every single application centre across the European Union," she said.

The UK has said that 200,000 Ukrainians would be eligible to travel to the UK under the scheme, formally launched last Friday.

The United Nations (UN) estimates that over 1.3 million Ukrainians are fleeing the country amid the ongoing Russian conflict.



# Move for Aromatic Rice Export

Bhubaneswar(KCN): Odisha Government will create conducive environment for boosting up the export of Aromatic Non-Basmati Rice from the State. Considering the paddy production po-

Mahapatra. Principal Advisor to Chief Minister and Chairman Western Odisha Development Council Asit Tripathy along with senior officials from Agricultural and Processed Food Products Ex-

community for production of export quality paddy. Further, Chief Secretary Mr. Mahapatra directed to adopt cluster approach in promotion of the non-Basmati aromatic varieties of paddy cul-

verities. Chief Secretary directed the department to frame a realistic work plan with the suggestions from technical session of the seminar, and inputs from the resource team so that those could be carried forward.

The requirements like establishment of laboratory network in Odisha, creation of a rice warehouse at Paradip port, creation of awareness about Indian and global food practices among the farmers, extension of necessary agri-inputs and technical support to the farmers for production of the non-Basmati aromatic paddy etc were also discussed in the meeting.

Mr. Mahapatra also asked the department of agriculture and farmers' empowerment to constitute a resource team for boosting the rice export, and State will provide all possible support for the purpose". Mr. Mahapatra also asked the department of agriculture and farmers' empowerment to constitute a resource team for boosting the rice export. It was also decided that the team would visit Andhra Pradesh for gaining exposure to the actual practices adopted in export of non-basmati aromatic



tential of Odishan agro-climatic zones, existence of huge genetic diversity of aromatic germplasm, traditional skill of the farmers, and availability of port facilities for foreign trading steps will be taken for creation of conducive eco-system for boosting up the export of Non-Basmati aromatic rice from Odisha.

In another step towards opening new avenues for paddy farmers of Odisha, an interactive session with different stakeholders for promoting rice export from Odisha was held recently in digital mode under the Chairmanship of Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra

port Development Authority (APEDA) of India, agricultural scientists and rice exporters participated in deliberations. Principal Advisor to Chief Minister Mr. Tripathy said, "Odisha as a rice surplus State has bumper availability for export. There are also rice aggregators in Odisha who can be trained and mobilized towards export oriented operations". He advised APEPA of Government of India and Directorate of Agriculture, Odisha to organize ground level workshops with rice aggregators, food exporters, and farmer producer organizations to infuse confidence in farming

## BJD springs a surprise, chooses SHG activist

JAJPUR: Election for Jajpur municipality will witness a departure from the past as BJD has sprung a surprise by declaring Ranjulata Hota, a

Das. Pranab is son of late Janata Dal leader Ashok Das who was a close associate of former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik. For

photocopier shop in the town for a living while Ranjulata coordinates with SHGs to rally for various issues. Interestingly, the woman is said

strive to live up to the party's expectations and people of the municipality by offering my best services," she said. She also expressed



political greenhorn, as its chairperson candidate.

Ranjulata, 53, is a self help group (SHG) activist in the municipality with no prior political experience. Political analysts call this a masterstroke by Jajpur MLA and BJD State organisation secretary Pranab Prakash

the last three decades, chairperson of Jajpur municipality has been from the Das family which is why this move by the legislator is believed to score brownie points for the ruling BJD.

Ranjulata has no political connection and hails from a humble background. Her husband owns a

not to have applied for a party ticket and was reportedly taken by surprise when the party announced her selection.

"Never did I think that I would get into politics and get a BJD ticket for the municipal elections. My candidature came as a surprise and I want to thank our MLA for it. I will

her gratitude to party supremo and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for giving platform to a novice. Jajpur municipality, one of the oldest municipalities in the State, has been the stronghold of Das' kin for years now. As many as nine leaders from the family have been elected to various posts in the civic body in the last six decades.

# Central Query on Council

Bhubaneswar: Odisha Legislative Assembly Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro on Sunday said the Union Government has sought certain clarifications from the State Government on the proposed creation of a State Legislative Council in the state.

Mr. Patro also said that the Union Ministry of Law wrote to the State Government in reply to a letter sent by him.

Department of Parliamentary Affairs would respond to the Centre's query on formation of a legislative council, he stated.

Last month, Mr. Patro had written to the Centre after Union Minister of Law and Justice Kiren Rijiju,

while replying to a question by BJD MP Prasanna Acharya on Febru-

resolution for creating a Legislative Council in the state and the same was

why the Union minister was not properly briefed by officials concerned about the resolution.

Replying to a question, Mr. Patro, during the day, told reporters that the Budget Session of Odisha Legislative Assembly would commence before March 31.

The date would be officially announced after an approval is received from the Governor, he said. The speaker further stated that the Odisha Assembly will soon launch its YouTube channel. This apart, the Assembly will soon start its television channel 'Vidhan Sabha TV' and a monthly magazine titled 'Vidhan Sabha Patrika', Mr. Patro said.



ary 11, said he had no information about any resolution passed in Odisha Assembly for creation of the legislative council. The speaker, in his letter, mentioned that the Assembly on September 18, 2018, adopted a


communicated to the Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha, Union Parliamentary Affairs Ministry and Union Law and Justice Ministry.

Mr. Patro had also said that a probe should be conducted to find out

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# Were ex-CEO of NSE Chitra Ramkrishna and Anand Subramanian planning to turn neighbours?

The Chitra Ramkrishna-Anand Subramanian tale here. 6000-square-feet two-storeyed villa coming up, might have been holding answers to more than



gets curiousest and curiousest by the day. Six years after just that question.

The New Indian Express had recently reported that Chitra, ex-CEO and MD of NSE, sold a 2081-square-feet flat in one of Chennai's prized localities to the wife of Anand, whom she had parachuted into the position of unofficial NSE No 2. The Anands had been living in this apartment well before the sale formally took place on February 23, 2021.

Now it has been confirmed that Chitra turned buyer of a 5283-square-foot plot nearby, exactly two months later on April 23, 2021. Anand, as mentioned in the earlier report, had been supervising the construction of an almost



Anand's forced exit and Chitra's resignation from the NSE and four years after an EY forensic audit named Anand as the Himalayan baba, were the two planning to turn neighbours? Guruguhakripa, the grand villa that is

The house also is testimony to the abiding bonds between Anand's family and Chitra.

Chitra bought this plot, which commanded a market value of Rs 12.9 crore according to official records. But for people in the vicinity,

it was Anand who was calling the shots. The only concession in authority he made were the repeated assertions that this property and the villa happened to be in the name of his wife Sunitha Anand's "cousin sister". Yes, the very same Sunitha whom Chitra said was a "good friend" and the person through whom she knew Anand, according to the 190-page

recalls seeing any inspections being carried out. It must be remembered though that the transaction happened at a time when India was hit by the Delta wave. Anand was said to have enquired about another property across the road diagonally opposite to the plot that was bought. The next everyone knew when construction began a few months later.

"It all happened very quickly. The old house The Peak was well built, around 20 years old. It was a rather good place. The decision seemed to have already been made. The house was pulled down and then a gate in the property was sealed as it was not vaastu compliant. A little while later, work on this building kicked off," a neighbour said. During one conversation, Anand said everything was being done by the book, insisting "I don't intend paying anyone an extra paisa". The relatively fast pace at which the construction was proceeding, however, came as a surprise to many Colony residents.

Anand was quoted as saying that he planned to use the place for poojas. He also reportedly said he had contemplated building a cowshed within but then the idea was dropped considering the hassles involved in keeping cows in the city. The actual plan reveals a modern villa replete with all amenities. Top talent was roped in.

One of the city's best architects was put in charge. The soil report was generated early in July. A structural consultant was also approached. The drawings were sent for reviews to the client on August 18 and September 7. Construction of the villa that has a pooja room almost as big as the hall, a lounge (family TV room), gym and an EB room to house the generator among other provisions began in the month of October.

The rains in November brought work to a halt. The project resumed with renewed vigour in December. It continues in full swing now.

Former Pakistani President Rafiq Tarar dies at 92

Continued from page-1

High Court from March 6, 1989 to October 31, 1991. After Sharif's ouster by General Pervez Musharraf in 1999, Tarar was allowed to continue as president until 2001. Condolences came from across the political spectrum in Pakistan on the news of the veteran politician's demise. Pakistan President Dr Arif Alvi expressed grief over Tarar's demise and offered prayers for the deceased along with extending condolences to his family. Prime Minister Imran Khan made prayers for the former president and his family. PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif remembered Tarar as a "kind and compassionate elder, shrewd legislator, fair judge and very good man".

**No Covid Restrictions for Urban Poll**

Continued from page-1

outside the strong room and disconnect electricity after sealing off the room. The room should be free from dampness, pests, rodents etc. It should be free from flood/water logging risk/cracks/leakage/broken window etc. Provide an exhaust fan on the front side at the highest feasible point for air circulation and install a strong iron grill at the vent/ passage, if required, the Commission told the District Magistrates.

"No other material whether election related or not (except the documents/ materials prescribed by the Commission to be kept with the polled EVMs) to be kept with the EVMs. Before storing the EVMs in the Strong Room, the District Election Officer will have to obtain a certificate from the authority concerned to ensure the quality and physical aspects of the Strong Rooms and the certificate is to be kept on record for future reference," said the SOP. Log book will be maintained for each entry and exit and duty roster and videography will be conducted at the time of the opening and closing of the Strong Room. Fire- extinguishers will also be installed both inside and outside the Strong Room.

The District Collectors have been instructed to inform all the candidates in writing, at least 24 hours in advance, about the date and time of opening and closure of EVM Strong Room. Candidates or their authorized agents will be allowed to remain present during opening and closing of the EVM strong room. The polled defective EVMs (the EVMs which got defunct after recording of some votes/ polling and replaced with new EVMs for recording of further polling) are to be kept together with replaced polled EVMs of a particular polling station in the relevant strong room, for taking up counting of votes recorded in both the EVMs at the time of counting. Reserve EVMs which were not used in the poll, and were returned back by the Sector Officers after poll, will be kept in the "Reserve EVM" strong room. These EVMs will not be kept along with polled EVMs, it said. The Commission also asked the DMs to intimate all contesting candidates 24 hours in advance to remain present or depute their agents for watching the security arrangements of the strong room and allow them to stay outside the inner perimeter on the day of counting. After completion of counting of votes, CUs will be sealed and shifted to Strong Rooms of Treasury/ Sub-Treasury/ safe custody. The CUs to be kept safely in strong rooms as above during the Election Petition period, i.e. 45 days from the date of counting of votes and declaration of results. The Ballot Units (Bus) will be kept in another room(s) in safe custody. The election for 47 municipalities, 59 Notified Area Councils (NACs) and three municipal corporations of Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Berhampur, will be held on March 24 and results will be declared on March 26. Over 41 lakh voters are eligible to cast their votes in the urban poll.

## Petrol, diesel price hike likely this week

NEW DELHI: Petrol and diesel prices are likely to be hiked this week as oil companies prepare to pare losses accumulated from keeping rates steady for over four months in the run-up to assembly elections in five states, including UP, despite international oil prices jumping to a 13-year high of USD 140 per barrel.

West Texas Intermediate crude futures, the US oil benchmark, rose to USD 130.50 per barrel on Sunday evening, its highest since July 2008,



before retreating.

The international benchmark, Brent crude, hit a high of USD 139.13 at one point overnight, also its highest since July 2008. To compound things, the Indian rupee tumbled to a record low of 76.9812 per dollar on Monday.

India relies on overseas purchases to meet about 85 per cent of its oil requirement, making it one of the most vulnerable in Asia to higher oil prices.

The twin blows of oil prices, already up more than 60 per cent this year, and a weakening rupee may hurt the nation's finances, upend a nascent economic recovery and fire up inflation. Petrol and diesel prices need to be increased by Rs 15 a litre for fuel retailers to break even, industry sources said.

Since 2017, fuel prices are to be adjusted daily in line with the benchmark international rate in the preceding 15 days. But rates have been on the freeze since November 4, 2021.

The basket of crude oil that India buys rose above USD 111 per barrel on March 1, 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 four months back.

"With the last phase of polling ending on Monday, it is now expected that the government will allow state-owned fuel retailers to return to daily price revision," an industry official said.

But oil companies are not expected to pass on the entire loss in one go and they will moderate it - raising rates by less than 50 paise a litre every day.

International 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.

While western sanctions have so far kept energy trade out, a prospect for a full embargo of Russian oil and products is leading to the latest rally in international oil prices.

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 its overall imports), coal imports from Russia at 1.8 million tonne in 2021 made up for 1.3 per cent of all coal imports.

India also buys 2.5 million tonne 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 123 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.

Petrol costs Rs 95.41 a litre 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 Delhi government.

Before these tax reductions, petrol price had touched an all-time high of Rs 110.04 a litre 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.

**A day after Shivaji statue inauguration by PM Narendra Modi, tile from canopy falls; NCP blames haste**

Continued from page-1

warrior-king, fell after it was hit by a steel structure when tents and curtains were being dismantled.

"The incident is unfortunate. The ruling BJP, just to gain political mileage, is rushing into inaugurations in a hurry. The structure was readied for inauguration within seven days while the curing period is 21 days," said Pune NCP president Prashant Jagtap.

PMC chief engineer Srinivas Kandul said the tile piece fell after it was hit by a steel structure during the dismantling of curtains and tents put up for the unveiling event.

"The structure is of the best quality. No sub-standard material was used during the construction of the structure. The certificate of structural stability has also been received from the consultant," he said.



## Procedural lapse stalled Vidhan Parishad progress

**BHUBANESWAR:** Procedural mistake by the State government, and not any deliberate attempt by the Centre, has stalled progress in the matter of formation of Vidhan Parishad in Odisha for which the Assembly had passed

The lapse was that as the Parliamentary Affairs department had moved the resolution in the Assembly, it should have submitted a proposal along with the resolution to the Centre. Only forwarding the resolution by the Assembly

lative council in Odisha from the State government. Soon after the reply of the Union Law Minister in the Parliament on February 10, 2022, Assembly Speaker Surya Narayan Patro had announced that two

ceipt of the resolution by the Centre.

Procedural lapse stalled Vidhan Parishad progress

The Speaker told mediapersons on Sunday that a letter has been received from the Centre regarding the formation of legislative council in Odisha. It has been suggested that there should be interaction with the Parliamentary Affairs department. He said that the response from the Centre containing details about the procedure for formation of legislative council has been forwarded to the Secretary of the Parliamentary Affairs department. He said that the Centre has sought some clarifications, but did not elaborate on it.

The Parliamentary Affairs department of the State government will now have to formally submit a proposal to the Centre on the formation of the Vidhan Parishad in Odisha.



a resolution in September, 2018. The mistake was a glaring one, but nobody in the State government had given a thought till a controversy was raised after Union Minister of Law Kiren Rijiju replying to a question in the Rajya Sabha said that the Centre is yet to receive any resolution in this regard.

secretariat to the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha would not suffice. Sources said that Rijiju had made no mistake while replying to the question of senior BJD MP Prasanna Acharya that the Centre had not received any proposal. The Union Law department has no proposal till date on creation of legis-

letters have again been sent again to the Centre over the matter. In the first letter sent by the Assembly secretariat, all documents relating to the resolution passed in the Odisha Assembly were provided. The second letter was written by the Speaker to Union Law Minister seeking an investigation into the alleged non-re-

## Ukrainian refugee Yastremka falls just short in Lyon final

**LYON (KCN):** The 21-year-old Ukrainian refugee Yastremka only from missile strikes before escaping with fifth career final after being given a



Dayana Yastremka took Zhang Shuai to three sets Sunday in the final of the Lyon Open that the Chinese player eventually won 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

fled her home in war-torn Odessa, Ukraine, last week following the Russian invasion. She spent two nights sheltering in an underground car park

her 15-year-old sister Ivanna through Romania while their parents stayed behind in Odessa. The 140th-ranked Yastremka had a remarkable run to her

wild card to play at the tournament. She beat second-seeded Sorana Cirstea 7-6 (5), 4-6, 6-4 in the semifinals. Zhang won her third career title.

## Sunil Chhetri ruled out of India's Bahrain and Belarus friendlies

**NEW DELHI:** The Indian football team was dealt a huge blow on Monday as its talismanic captain Sunil Chhetri was ruled out of the upcoming international friendly matches against Bahrain and Belarus due to injury. The 37-year-old forward had been named

among the 38-member probables by coach Igor Stimac for the matches to be played in Manama on March 23 and 26. "I was really looking forward to the two friendlies against Baharain and Belarus and it's a shame I'll be missing out," Chhetri told the All India Football Federation (AIFF) website.

## The rise and rise of Kerala Blasters goalie Prabhsukhan Gill as one of India's finest

**KOCHI:** Playing second fiddle is never an easy or comfortable role to play and 21-year-old Prabhsukhan Gill knows that feeling all too well. A few years ago, the young goalkeeper was identified as one of the finest talents in the country after he was included in the 21-man squad of the Indian team which participated in the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup. Throughout that historic campaign, Gill had to warm the bench as Dheeraj Singh was



the undisputed first-choice goalkeeper. At the club level, he was again the understudy of Dheeraj at Indian Arrows which was the developmental project of the All India Football Federation. The squad which played at the World Cup competed in the I-League, but Gill rarely got a look in because of Dheeraj. After Dheeraj made the switch to the Indian Super League, Gill became first-choice at Indian Arrows. However, when it was time for the Ludhiana lad to make the big switch himself, he moved to Bengaluru FC where he was again the second choice behind India international Gurpreet Singh Sandhu. A move to Blasters in 2020 didn't provide immediate opportunities as Albino Gomes remained the side's first-choice goalkeeper. However, this season has been a completely different story as Gill has broken onto the scene and even overshadowed the country's other top goalkeepers. With six clean sheets to his name and conceding the joint fewest goals in the league, Gill has made everyone sit up and take notice and could walk away with the Golden Glove award as well. His match-winning performances this season earned him a call-up to Indian senior

team's preliminary camp for the first time. Veteran football coach Eelco Schattorie, who is cautious in his praise of players called him the "best in India for the future".

And to think that it took an injury for Albino for Gill to finally get his opportunity shows how players have to bide their time without losing motivation or morale.

"I didn't play a lot in recent seasons and it was an unfortunate injury to Albino. But when you get your opportunity, you have to take it. When I started playing games (this season), no one spoke a lot about me or took note but everyone felt I had put in the hard work and it was showing. The key thing was that I never doubted myself or lost confidence and just kept training hard," Gill told The New Indian Express.

Gill has been touted as the finds of the season and after his assured performances, the youngster looks to have sealed his spot as the first choice keeper of Blasters.

"Of course, playing after a long time did create a little pressure because you are expected to do well. I just take a match-by-match approach rather than looking four steps ahead. And it is about performing consistently rather than putting a few good performances and just fading away," he said.

Gill admitted that the sudden spotlight coming his way is a validation of the efforts that he is putting in. The youngster has also now thrown his hat into the ever-increasing pool of top-class goalkeepers in India. Given the compliments given by a seasoned coach like Schattorie, Gill is starting to be mentioned alongside India's top keepers like Gurpreet, Amrinder Singh, Dheeraj, Mohamad Nawaz, and others.

"Of course, all this appreciation is recognition of your hard work and it motivates you to keep pushing harder. I'm humbled by all the praise and it is a delight to be ranked alongside other great goalkeepers in the country. It is incredible that India has so many great goalkeepers in the same generation and everyone will push each other to get better," he said.




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