



Pune Hosts Mini Olympic Games

PG 5

Festive season brings chaos at Pune Airport

PG 3

Thane's accidental pink marvel, an underlying concern

PG 4

Autos Crisis in Pune

PG 2



05th January, 2023

New Year Edition '23

06 Pages

Maharashtra Gears Up for Possible Covid-19 Crisis

Mock drills ahead of COVID relapse scare

Swara Garge



The pandemic crisis rises.

Mumbai: Amid a rise in cases, the government has decided to reintroduce Covid19 testing for International travelers. The active tally for cases in Mumbai city stands at 51. JJ hospital and Seven Hills hospital conduct mock drills as the state gears up for the New Year.

A total of 1300 hospitals in the state have conducted mock drills and the same focuses on the infrastructure facilities and manpower at disposal. Essentials like oxygen, PPE kits and medicine stocks have been checked as a part of the drill. The authorities have conducted training for the medical teams. Real-life scenarios have been emulated to check preparedness of the hospitals and the BMC plans to take over the Seven Hills to tackle the Covid19 situation.

Continue PG 5

A Gift of Development to the Nagpurkar: Infrastructural Rise Within the Orange City

Nagpur welcomes mass development on the on-set of New Year.

Akshay Acharya

Nagpur: Over the last few months, the second capital of Maharashtra has seen various infrastructural development projects estimated around 75000 Crore which includes Railways, Metro, Highway, Health as well as sanitation programs.

The list of New year gifts for Nagpurkars includes, the inauguration of Phase I Nagpur metro which includes 2 metro train lines i.e. Aqua line from Lokmanya Nagar to Prajapati Nagar and Orange Line from Khapri to Automotive square, Laying foundation stone for Phase II of Metro, which in turn is a leeway for redevelopment of Nagpur and Ajni Railway station, Flagging off the 6th Vande Bharat train between Nagpur in Maharashtra and Bilaspur in Chattisgarh, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated these projects and is expected to be invited back soon for the airport modernization project. The PM also laid the ground for Pollution Abatement for the Nag River Project under the National River Conservation Plan. To enhance the tourism sector in Nagpur, Futala lake has been adorned with the largest Futala fountain and music show and infrastructure like floating restaurant to be made. The sudden boom in the Infrastructure projects



Development project on the go in Nagpur. *Twitter.*

boom in the Infrastructure projects had many developments during my various reactions from the Nagpurkars. tenure."

Dharmendra Acharya, ZRUCC member, Central Railways said, " Being a ZRUCC member in Central Railway since last 6 years, I am involved with issues for development of Nagpur & Ajni Railway station & also development of public amenities. During My tenure , I have seen the establishment of a new Car to Coach platform, establishment of escalators at various platforms for benefits of the passengers, ATM at platform, medical facilities, battery cars for senior citizens, better equipped waiting rooms and recently proposed massage parlor and saloon for passengers. So above all, I have seen

Dr. Sandeep Parate, a Consultant Pathologist from Nagpur said, "Metro trains are used for specific routes and areas and for people to reach from one stop to the other." It is a convenient and way to reach our defined destination. Though the metro helps the people in moving from one corner of the city to other it does not help in reducing traffic and congestion on road. Due to the bridges of metro trains the roads of Nagpur get occupied by the huge pillars which consumes the most of the space on the roads.

Continue PG 5



The New Year's Eve - Thailand. *Druti Banerjee*

Indians for Thailand: Welcoming New Year With A Blast

Druti Banerjee

The celebrations for New Year in Thailand is one of the most popular times for the country to receive a surge in tourism, and according to KAYAK, one of the World's leading travel search engines, Indians top the list of being the most to enter the country to celebrate their start to a New Year. Thailand, among most travel locations around Asia, is the



The New Year's Eve - Thailand. *Druti Banerjee.*

Continue PG 6

Rishikesh to Host G-20 Events; ODOP Products in Focus

The promotion of Local Economy under the One District One Product Scheme to be in Highlight

Prakhar Dobhal

Rishikesh: Known as the Yoga capital of the world, Rishikesh is set to host two G20 summit events in 2023. Having taken over the presidency from Indonesia on December the 1st Central Government has identified 56 locations for the summit events.

It is the first time that India will preside over the G-20, and the slogan "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" or "one earth, one family, one future" has been chosen to be the motto for the same. The takeover from Indonesia was crucial as the country faced challenges conducting meetings due to the differences on the Russia-Ukraine war. A total of 200 meetings have been planned to take place across India, and two events are planned to take place in Uttarakhand.

The holy city of Rishikesh is set to host the events in May and June. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has expressed his gratitude for the opportunity, and said the summit will



The Holy City gears up for G20.
Courtesy: Zee News

provide a platform for the state to display its culture, philosophy and build an identity worldwide.

The event will promote the products from the State that fall under the One District One Product (ODOP) scheme. The scheme aims at boosting the local economy through promoting local products. Under the ODOP scheme, the Centre has identified a total of 739 districts. In an exhibition in New Delhi, the symbolic artwork of Kedarnath, Badrinath Temple, Laxman Jhula Rishikesh and Ghantaghar Dehradun were displayed. Apart from the symbolic

artwork of Nainital, organic products include red rice of Uttarkashi, honey, bal mithai of Almora, honey from Champawat, Gagar made of copper from Bageshwar and other products. Jackets made of Nettle Fiber (Kandali), Pahari Cap of Brahm Kamal Nishan, Woollen shawls from Pithoragarh district, Mufflers, products made from Moonjh grass of Udham Singh Nagar district were on display.

Products from Uttarakhand were liked by the selection committee and can soon be announced for gifting. The events will bring not only national but international attention to the state. However, it is a task for the state government to prepare for the events. The first and the biggest challenge for the authorities is waste management. On one hand the city is filled with waste while on the other hand Ganga continues to be polluted at historic rates. Another issue the authorities will have to tackle is traffic. Despite a great influx of tourists every year, the city lacks reliable traffic plans, and is prone to jams. Regardless of the venue, the summit provides an excellent opportunity for the state to portray its culture and heritage to the world.

Bihar Citizens May Have to Trade a Drink for Prison

Rishika Aradhya



The illegal alcohol in Bihar. Courtesy: TOI

Bihar: Ravi (name changed for anonymity), works as a help in a small school. He comes to work drunk very often. The thing is he lives in Patna, the capital city of Bihar, a dry state. He says he gets his alcohol from the Ganga ghat where the smuggler hides it in a sack under the ghat stairs and discretely gives it to him. When asked if he is scared of consuming spurious alcohol, he says yes, but says he needs alcohol at the end of the day, when asked why he, remains quiet.

70 lives has been claimed by alcohol even after Bihar became a dry state in 2016 and the state government has called for strict action; several kingpins in the case have been arrested.

Even with strict rules and checking, illegal alcohol traders find a way. Montey (name changed for anonymity) is a part of the illegal alcohol trade in Bihar. He says that even with the recent strictness after the hooch incident, they cannot stop the trade because the last week of December is when they sell the most. He has even stocked up alcohol in anticipation of the demand.

According to Montey, the excise department has put up checkpoints at Bihar borders. However, they purposely get caught, so that in the chaos, at least eighty percent of the consignment goes unnoticed.

He mainly caters to a particular section of Patna who has enough disposable income to buy illegal alcohol which comes at a very expensive rate. When asked if he sells to the labor class, he says no.

After the recent hooch incident, the excise department in Bihar has tightened up its noose around illegal alcohol trade.

Checkpoints at borders have increased and they check vehicles rigorously now more than ever. In Patna, if one gets caught drunk, they have to pay a fine ranging from ₹50,000 (for first-time offenders) to ₹1,00,000 (for repeated offenders) or be imprisoned for a minimum of one year to a maximum of five years.

Gadkari Inaugurates India's 2nd Longest Cable Stayed Bridge in Goa

Noopur Bhandiwad

Goa: Union Minister Nitin Gadkari inaugurated Phase I of the much awaited Zuari River Bridge in Goa on Thursday, December 29, 2022. The inaugural ceremony was held in the presence of Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and others.

The bridge forms an important link between North and South Goa and cuts travel time up to 30 minutes for people commuting between Canacona in the South and Panaji in the North. The 8-Lane bridge built across river Zuari approaches from Bambolim in the North and stretches till Verna in the South.

The new bridge solves burning traffic issues faced by daily commuters. Smita Ajkaonkar, who was a regular commuter on the bridge, recalled an incident when an accident caused a traffic jam for almost an hour. "With the new bridge, I expect the traffic and vehicle commute to be smooth", she said.



Goa inaugurates Zuari Bridge.
Courtesy: Mumbaikar Boy

Lakhs of tourists who had arrived in the state to celebrate the new year added to this road load. In fact, a severe traffic gridlock ensued for more than 3 hours on the evening of December 26. Dozens of vehicles remained trapped till 11 in the night, many of which contained passengers travelling to Dabolim Airport.

CM Pramod Sawant reiterated the fact that such traffic jams will be a thing of the past due to the new

Zuari Bridge. "Owing to the connectivity that the bridge provides, we'll be able to transport agricultural produce efficiently and also provide a more convenient access to the Mormugao port", he added.

Apart from being the country's 2nd longest cable-stayed bridge, tourists can enjoy scenic views from the upcoming observatory and revolving restaurants on top of the towers. The project will also consist of a walkway leading up to the restaurants and an art gallery as other centres of attractions. Calling it an 'architectural marvel' on Twitter, Gadkari informed that the bridge deck is built on-site using cutting edge robotic welding technology.

Ride or Die: The Auto-matic Challenge of Pune

Auto v/s Rapido:
Pune's Dilemma

Harshita Mathur and Sneha Ticku

Pune: Pune residents are facing the wrath of the dispute for domination between local auto and Rapido drivers since December 12.

Rapido bike taxis have been operating in the city even after the RTO rejected their license for two and 3-wheeler taxis. The RTO even organised squads and confiscated 18 bike taxis so far.

A case has also been registered against 37 auto drivers as a result of the unions' protest against Rapido. In response to this, the latter filed a petition in the Bombay High Court which was later disposed of. The High Court has ordered the State Government to review their decision.

"Working for Rapido was my only source of income. Customers usually booked bike taxis even for further distances as they found it cheaper and faster. But this issue has caused a decline in customers which is affecting my family of 6", stated Mahendra Kumar, a Rapido bike taxi driver operating in Sus Gaon.

It's One Hill of a Ride for Students from Universities near Lavale

Shubhiksha GV

Pune: "I was visiting my daughter and booked a cab to go to the city. The driver accepted on one condition - 'that we cancel the ride on the app and still pay him the same amount'. With no other autos around, we had no choice and accepted it," said Nagalakshmi, 47, parent of an SIMC student who visited the Lavale Hilltop Campus of SIU.

The Lavale campus of Symbiosis International University is located 17 km away from the Pune Railway Station and 27 km away from the Pune Airport. Students eager to participate in the city life often prefer to travel by auto rickshaws - either booked on an app or running autos.

"The first time I planned to go home from college, I had a bus to catch at 5 pm from Pimpri. Around 3:30 pm I was trying to get an auto. However, since I couldn't book on Ola or Uber till 4, I ended up calling an auto wala, who charged me Rs. 700. I had to pay the quoted amount because I was desperate," said Yash Singhvi, a student from SIBM.

Mahesh Ranawade, an auto driver, says, "I'm based at Sus Gaon and am always



Auto strike in Pune. Courtesy: Trak

available when informed early. I'm available as an Uber also, but I prefer to maintain personal clients. My fare will be whatever it shows on the metre plus half of it. It is very difficult to get to the hilltop at an average fare. I regularly pick and drop off Symbiosis students to airports and (railway) stations."

Despite the university offering bus services to the city from the campus twice everyday, the inflexible timings becomes a major con and forces the campus residents to opt for a local auto.

"Getting an auto is one of the most gruelling tasks here on campus. Moreover, most autos cancel the ride as soon as they read 'Symbiosis hill top' as a pickup point.

Sometimes the local auto drivers argue, sometimes they pitch more money making it really difficult to rely on this mode of transportation," stated Nirupam Biswas a student of SIDTM.

The Bounce-back of Pune's Bhimthadi Jatra after Pandemic

Millets were the flavours of the season, taking from "special millets lunch" hosted by the Central government for parliamentarians and journalists in Delhi, to Bhimthadi Jatra in Pune.

Kruti Dave and Khushi Vats

Pune: After two years, the Bhimthadi Jatra resumed itself in its best possible potential, recording the highest ever footfall of around 5 to 6 lakhs, as per the organizers. Jatra had a special section attributed to millets and millet products for commemorating the forthcoming International year of Millets in 2023.

The four and a half day rural festival that started on December 21st, 2022 concluded itself on December 25th. The Jatra is organized annually by the Agriculture Development Trust in collaboration with Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth Rahuri on the grounds of New Agricultural College, in Shivaji Nagar, Millets were the highlight of the agricultural culture this time.

"Last year, we intentionally put up fewer stalls, in the wake of the



Bhimthadi Jatra '22. Courtesy: Bhimthadi Jatra Gallery

pandemic. We had less than 200 stalls last year, but this year, we wanted to go big and that's why we put up 360 stalls," said Sae Paware Negi, Trustee of the Agriculture Development Trust.

"This year, women entrepreneurs from 23 districts of Maharashtra and

around 10 different states have stalls in the Jatra. We have women entrepreneurs from Afghanistan as well, to support them in becoming self-reliant", she added.

The theme for Bhimthadi Jatra in 2022 was sustainability. The Jatra

was based upon the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. Sae Paware Negi, daughter of Sunanda Paware told us that to help sellers overcome the losses incurred by them during the pandemic, they have targeted people with higher purchasing power. Introduction of urban and fusion products like, cheese makhanas, italian khakhra and bohemian clothing apparels, was an attempt to rejuvenate covid struck rural entrepreneurs and MSMEs. "This year, we were selective about sponsors, so that we could ensure that our entrepreneurs gain more and more share of the profit earned by them. Ferrero Rocher is a sponsor because they employ more than 40% of rural women in their factory at Baramati. Similar is the case with Baramati Agro Ltd.", she added.

Thane's Accidental Pink Marvel, An Underlying Concern

Thane bursts out in vibrant pink as flamingos migrate all the way to Thane this season

Shrutika Patil

Thane: The wetlands of Thane are painted in hues of pink and white, every winter. The Greater and Lesser Flamingos arrive in Mumbai, Thane, and the neighboring areas as winter approaches. These birds move from countries like Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Israel, as well as from Indian states like Gujarat and Rajasthan. Mumbai saw an excruciating flock of 10,000 birds in 2007, with their numbers increasing rapidly, to an estimate of 130,000, this year the count is three times the numbers registered in the past 20 years. Thane Creek is one of the places they frequently visit during this season

It was only in the 1990s flamingos began to fly in large numbers to Mumbai. As the city expanded in the 1970s and 1980s, the amount of untreated sewage flowing into Thane Creek increased, fostering the algae that serve as the flamingos' primary source of food and transforming the area into a feeding site for the birds.



Flamingo season in Thane. Courtesy: RoundGlass Sustain

Greater flamingos eat mussels, shrimp, and cyanobacteria (also known as blue-green algae), whereas lesser flamingos primarily eat cyanobacteria. The cyanobacteria cover the Thane Creek mudflats in greater numbers than in other creeks in the state, according to Pranit Tambe, a marine biologist based in

Mumbai. He also adds that Cyanobacterial density appears to increase after November, when flamingos begin to arrive. So the sewage in the creek promotes biological growth of blue-green algae, which is food for the flamingo.

The Thane Creek Flamingo Sanctuary

(TCFS) has been given the status of a Ramsar site by The International Wetlands Convention. With this, TCFS is now a part of an "international network, wherein the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources would contribute to sustainable development," said Leena Nandan, secretary, Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The Ramsar Convention, also known as the convention on Wetlands, is an international environmental agreement that establishes the framework for National and international cooperation. Thane is struggling to handle wastewater and increasing pollution in its many urban waterways, which serve as important fishing grounds

Amidst Festive Season Passengers Encounter Chaos at Pune Airport

In the midst of the Christmas-New Year week, Pune airport passengers face problems

Tanveer Singh Kapoor and Divya Prata

Pune: With the festive winter season in full swing, Pune International Airport is currently dealing with extreme congestion issues as there has been a drastic increase in the number of travelers. This swift rise has led to Pune airport witnessing a footfall of 28,000 passengers at present.

The Pune Airport (PNQ) is basically a customs Airport which is located near the Air Force Base of India in Pune. It caters to both civil and international flights and is under the control of the Airports Authority of India.

Numerous issues are being faced by the people at PNQ. Among the major complaints being discussed by travelers are long queues, server issues, flight delays and cancellations, and the hold ups at luggage collection belts.

Druti Banerjee, a SIMC student who traveled from Pune to Kolkata on December 23rd, said, "The staff wasn't able to issue my boarding pass as their server was down.



Pune airport amidst the festive season packed with passengers. Courtesy: Druti Banerjee

They were writing everything manually and asking us to use the virtual boarding pass we received after web check-in." She further added, "The security check line was huge. It took me an hour each for both security check and luggage check-in. Moreover, my flight got delayed by 3 hours."

A passenger even used the means of social media to ask for help from the

authorities for such a crisis-like issue and asked them to provide the passengers with immediate solutions. A similar issue was raised by Ishika Roy, a student of SIMC, who reported that the boarding queue was extremely chaotic and disorganized that the passengers had to wait for 40 minutes in line to board their flight.

The Airports Authority of India has

reportedly been in touch with the PMC in order to decongest traffic in lieu of the upcoming G20 summit as well as the festive crowd by writing a letter containing various measures to control traffic at the entry and exit points. The airport management has also issued an advisory for the public to reach the airport at least 3 hours in advance in order to have adequate time for completing the pre-boarding formalities during the festive season. In order to expeditiously check passengers' bags and people, three more x-ray machines have been added to the domestic terminal, bringing the total number of x-ray machines there to nine. On the other hand, it has been suggested that the CISF staff be increased. At the moment, 450 soldiers are working at Pune Airport in three shifts. However, this figure is declining when taking into account the amount of travelers. As a result, 41 more jawans will arrive at the airport.

Pune Hosts More Than 40 Events for The Mini Olympic Games

Maharashtra State Olympics commence across 8 organizing districts

Sudeshna Ray

Pune: An 11-day Mini Olympic Games event is being organized by the Maharashtra Olympic Association in Pune. With 41 events and 7,444 players in participation, Pune's Chatrapati Shivaji Sports Complex, popularly known as Balewadi Stadium, will host most of the events for this competition from January 2nd to January 12th.

Organized at the state level after two decades, the Maharashtra Olympic Association is hosting this multi-sport event with an aim to nurture athletes and identify talent that can be taken to the top. Athletics, badminton, wrestling, softball, and several other events are set to be hosted across 8 cities. While the event spans across various cities of Maharashtra, 24 events are being organized in Pune's Balewadi Sports Complex alone.

Pune-based athlete Priyanka Chavarkar who is participating in the 3000m track event for the Mini Olympics elaborated on the extensive preparations for this event. Having trained for over 13 years, she recently won the Silver in the Maharashtra State Senior Athletics Championship in April 2022.



Sandeep Bhapkar with coaches Bhagyashri Keshav Ghule and Anushka Arjun Garje winning gold at the Sub Junior Women's Pair National Rowing Championship 2022 in Srintagar . Sandeep Bhapkar

State Senior Athletics Championship in April 2022.

Talking about their regular practice sessions at Balewadi's practice track, Priyanka shared her take on the current infrastructure for training. "A 15-20 day camp for training would be beneficial for effective training and resting for athletes", she stated.

Amidst a range of diverse events,

there are some that require special infrastructure for organization as well as training. The Mini Olympic Rowing event is one such sport that is being held at MIT ADT University's Loni campus flanked by the Mula-Mutha. As athlete Sandeep Bhapkar shared , "Adventure sports events such as rowing have a lot of variables including the track(water) and its water density including levels

Sandeep, who is participating in the Men's Double and Men's Eight rowing events for the Mini Olympics, has also coached many state and national-level athletes. He believes that the "blind game" which involves rowing backward to the finish line requires prompt training with both outdoor equipment and indoor ergometers. "Endurance building with other adventure sports such as rock climbing, long-distance cycling, and trekking help athletes supplement their preparation."



Priyanka Chavarkar finishes 1st at the Inter University Competition Selection Match at Nashik . Pune City Team, AIU

Maharashtra for Mask-On

Continued from PG 1

BMC has issued a statement stating, "There are more than 2,100 beds ready in government and private hospitals where Covid19 patients can be treated immediately. These include 1,049 ventilator beds and 579 ICU beds. There are 3,245 doctors, 5,784 nurses and nearly 200 ambulances as well."

In Mumbai, the number of active cases rose from 35 on 22nd December to 50 on 25th December. The daily cases in the city, however, remain under 10 per week. The cases are rising after the outbreak of BF7, a variant of Omicron, in China. The country reported a record high 37 million cases in a single day.

Despite the vaccination drives the authorities have reported a poor turnout for the booster dose. Reportedly, only 16% of the state's population has been administered the booster dose and the government is yet to apply any kind of travel restrictions or pass a mandate

regarding masks. However, the state government has told the municipal corporation to be fully prepared and. Amidst the preparation, the government is actively encouraging people to take the booster dose.

Maharashtra health minister, Tanaji Sawant, has issued a 5-point programme to deal with the possible covid outbreak. The programme includes: test, track, treat, vaccinate and ensuring covid appropriate behaviour. The Health Ministry has issued precautionary guidelines for the vulnerable sections of the society. Kids, the elderly and people with chronic diseases have been told to take extra precautionary measures.



Alarming increase in the COVID cases. ZeeNews.

Orange City Makes It Big In New Year's

Continued from PG 1

The roads which were damaged during construction of the bridges are still not repaired. The footpaths are already occupied by the vendors on the road which creates more problems for pedestrians. With the increasing population of the city, the metro train will give some relief but how much relief Only the future can determine more burden on common people due to the metro is an increase in taxes." Presently, Metro is operating services in a 38 kms stretch covering 38 stations. Our Vision is to provide a safe, reliable, efficient, affordable, commuter friendly and environmentally sustainable rapid public transport system for the Nagpur Metro Region. Daily about 1.25 lakhs Nagpurkars commute by Metro. Commuters are being facilitated by feeder services (viz. Nmc feeder buses, e-rickshaws, e-bikes, bicycles) in 1st & Last Mile connectivity so as to make their journey more comfortable and

economical. This infrastructure project has not only benefited the people of Nagpur but also marked its presence in Guinness Book of World Records recently by constructing the longest double decker viaduct metro." Said a source from Nagpur Metro Rail Project.



Infrastructural enhancement in the orange city.

The Thai-Indo New Year's Retreat



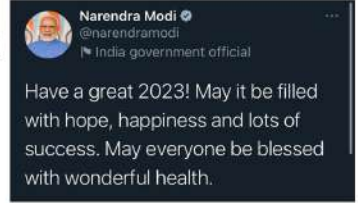
The New Year's Eve - Thailand. *Druti Banerjee.*

Indians flocked to different cities and islands of Thailand to experience the splendour of different parts of the country, enjoying a culture much similar to what Indians themselves are exposed to. On questioning a traveler about such a popularity of the said country for such celebrations, he said that the airfares are much cheaper in comparison to other countries and since Thailand is in Asia, the travel distance isn't much. From any Indian International Airport, it takes a maximum of four hours to reach Thailand.

Thailand warmly welcomes all its tourists from around the world, however, the Indian impact on the country's tourism has been huge. Even the people of Thailand have learnt to bow a little and greet 'Namaste' with folded hands when they see Indians. Furthermore, the shops selling water bottles shout "Paani" out loud upon seeing Indians and treat them with utmost respect. A group who traveled from India to celebrate the New Year of 2023 stated that "the country is a hub for parties, and alcohol is much cheaper there.

Local pubs and clubs don't ask extra for stag entries and other typical charges. They also pointed out that Cannabis, illegal in India, is sold openly in beautifully decorated shops-. Bangla Street, often referred to as the mini Vegas, has strip clubs and pubs with pole dancers. This too creates curiosity and draws party animals to Phuket during the holiday season." The majority within the Thai population practices the religion of Buddhism which has, its roots in India.

With the Inputs of Shalaka Kachare



Ajanta Circus: A Comeback That Hopes for An Audience Return

One of asia's best circuses is back post-pandemic.

Ishika Roy and Mrinalini Majumdar
Kolkata: As the circus makes a comeback on the big screen with Rohit Shetty's 'Cirkus', a renowned circus also resumed entertaining the city after a gap of two years. Ajanta Circus returned to business with its first show on 10th December; nearly two years after it closed down due to the Covid19 pandemic. The attendance seems encouraging for the organisers but there is no 'House Full' in sight yet. Established in 1967, the Circus is one the oldest and finest circuses of Eastern India, and pulled crowds from far and wide. Located at Patuli Circus Ground, South Kolkata, the circus is offering three shows: at 1pm, 4pm and 7pm. A source in the Circus's management stated, "Now that COVID has



Revival of the circus. *Mrinalini Majumdar.*

disappeared, we can travel across the state. Ajanta will be the same old Ajanta again". The circus troupe does not look at 'Cirkus' as a seasonal affair. It is a year-long affair, with a lot of traveling through different districts around Kolkata, within West Bengal.

With the Covid19 cases rising in China and India gearing up for renewed rigour in Covid19 safety precautions, the arrangements at the Circus venue seemed inadequate. The basic protocol of masks and hand sanitizers was missing. Nevertheless, Ajanta Circus

has had its fair share of limitations as well. It has been known for touring all across the country round the year. It features a troupe of 150 odd performers, specializing in trapeze, gymnastics, juggling, balancing acts, motorcyclists to name a few. Ajanta Circus has been known for its mesmerizing performances. In the past, circuses would utilize animals for their tricks. Horses, lions, exotic birds – there was a variety of participation. However, things have changed. An increasing number of communities are prohibiting or restricting the involvement of animals in circuses due to concerns about animal poor treatment and public safety.