



ON WARPATH

Actress Sonakshi Sinha joins a team of cyber experts on an initiative to end cyber bullying on social media

LEISURE P2



UDDHAV CAUTIOUS

Maha CM says he isn't in favour of complete lifting of lockdown in the state just for economic concerns

TWO STATES P7



NEW POLICY

The US shuts doors on new foreign students seeking only-online study in the country

INTERNATIONAL P10

MP CM Shivraj tests Covid +ve



BHOPAL: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has tested positive for Covid-19. This information was shared by him on his Twitter handle.

In the tweet, Chouhan wrote, "My dear people, I was having symptoms of #COVID19, after the test my report has come positive. I appeal to all my colleagues that whoever has come in contact with me, get corona test done. People close to me must move to quarantine." (sic)

In another tweet, Chouhan said, "I am following all the guidelines of #COVID19. I will quarantine myself according to the doctor's advice. I appeal to the people of my state to be careful, just a little carelessness invites coronavirus. I made every effort to avoid it, but people used to come and meet me for various reasons." (sic)

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



There is serious problem with the process. How come honest people are getting recruited?

BSE Class X exam results by July 31

CUTTACK: The results of the annual Matriculation examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) in Odisha for Class X is likely to be published by the end of this month, a senior official said Saturday.

"The exact date and time of the publication of results would be announced in a day or two," said BSE President Ramshis Hazra here Saturday. The results will be uploaded in the board's official website www.bseodisha.nic.in, sources said.

Around 5.6 lakh candidates appeared for the examinations held in February and March.

After completion of the examinations March 2, evaluation of answer sheets had begun from March 18. However, it was stopped after two days following the outbreak of Covid-19.

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	35.4°C	35.0°C
	MIN	25.5°C	24.2°C
Humidity		98%	76%
Rainfall		Nil	Nil
			Partly cloudy sky

1 step forward, 2 steps back

Countries where officials eased social distancing, lockdowns are experiencing a second peak more than a month after recording their first

ODISHA RECORDS 10 DEATHS, 1,320 NEW CASES

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha reported 10 more Covid-19 deaths, highest in a single day, taking the state's total death toll to 130, informed the health department Saturday.

The deaths have been reported from Ganjam (3), Balasore (2), Sundargarh (2), Rayagada (1), Jharsuguda (1) and Gajapati (1) districts. The positive tally also mounted to 24,013 with a huge spike of 1,320 new cases in the last 24 hours.

While 887 cases have been reported from different hotspot areas, the remaining 433 are local contacts, said the department.

Hotspot Ganjam district recorded 560 cases followed by Khurda (174), Gajapati (90), Puri (90) and Rayagada (65).

The number of active cases in the state rose to 8,650 while 15,200 patients have recovered so far.

PNN & AGENCIES

New Delhi/ Bhubaneswar, July 25: Though the scientific minds are working 24/7, toiling hard, to develop a vaccine for the Covid-19, it seems the microbial forces are nowhere retreating.

A Reuters' analysis shows: countries where officials eased social distancing lockdowns are experiencing a second peak more than a month after recording their first.

In India, 48,916 fresh cases were reported Saturday after 49,310 Friday taking the total to 98,226 - touching almost a lakh in less than two days. In the last 24 hours, 787 people succumbed to the deadly virus, as there is a huge surge in cases in the hinterlands.

According to the latest data available on the website of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, total number of cases in India reached 13,36,861 of which 31,388 people have lost their lives while 8,49,432 have recovered. The total number of active cases are 4,56,071 cases.



	INFECTIONS (DEATHS)	
	BY MARCH 25	AS ON JULY 25
World	30,532 (2,368)	1,55,81,009 (6,35,173)
India	87 (1)	13,36,861 (31,358)
Odisha	2 (0)	24,013 (130)

The ministry stated that the recovery rate is 63.53 per cent.

The highest spike in cases was reported from Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh.

Maharashtra has recorded 3,57,117 Covid cases out of which 13,132 people have lost their lives, followed by Tamil Nadu with total 1,99,749 cases, and 3,320 deaths.

Delhi has registered 1,28,389 cases out of which 3,777 people have lost their lives. Almost 40 countries have reported record single-day increases in coronavirus infections over the past week, around double the number that did so the previous week, according to a Reuters tally showing a pick-up in the pandemic in every region of the world.

SITUATION EXACERBATING
In the last 48 hrs, India records almost 99K Covid cases. Interestingly, an MIT report has predicted that the country might record 2.87 lakh coronavirus cases per day by Feb 2021, and going by the trend it seems we are heading towards it.

Bulgaria, Belgium, Uzbekistan and Israel, among others.

The Reuters data, compiled from official reports, shows a steady rise in the number of countries reporting record daily increases in the virus that causes Covid-19 over the past month. At least seven countries recorded such increases three weeks ago, rising to at least 13 countries two weeks ago to at least 20 countries last week and to 37 countries this week.

The true numbers of both cases and deaths are almost certainly underreported, particularly in countries with poorer health care systems, health experts and officials say. For this report, the Reuters data was restricted to countries that provide regular daily numbers.

Pak Air Force conducts drills in Gilgit-Baltistan

Speculations are rife in Pakistan and China that the two allies may attack India from two fronts - J&K and Ladakh, respectively

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Gilgit, July 25: As the India-China face-off along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh remains unresolved; Pakistan is carrying out military exercises at its air force base at Qadri in Skardu of occupied Gilgit-Baltistan region.

Top official sources told IANS that Pakistan's Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Mujahid Anwar Khan visited the base Friday to hold some important meetings and oversee the military exercises.

His visit comes at a time when China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) troops remain in an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation with Indian soldiers along the LAC in Ladakh.

However, Pakistan's state radio claimed that Khan visited PAF Base Qadri at Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan Saturday and not Friday. "The Air Chief witnessed various operational activities at the base including rapid deployment of fighter aircraft and combat support elements. He was also briefed about the ongoing development works at the base," Pakistan radio said.

Talking to air force personnel, Khan said that Pakistan was watching the geo-strategic developments in the region. The air chief claimed that India was making massive military procurements.

Pakistan Army has been continually violating ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu & Kashmir for last several months. Official sources in New Delhi said that India is fully cognizant of Pakistan's military exercises in the occupied Gilgit-Baltistan region.

Meanwhile, despite multiple rounds of diplomatic and military levels talks between India and China, it appears that the latter seem to have fallen short of disengagements along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh.

Currently, the People's Liberation Army (PLA) is maintaining over 40,000 troops in the region. "The Chinese have not shown any signs of de-escalation as they continue to maintain their heavy troop deployment of almost 40,000 troops supported by heavy weaponry like air defence systems, armoured personnel carriers and long-range artillery in front and depth areas," sources said.



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3 Students - Among State Toppers, Class X-2020

ANKITA MONDAL	PRIYA SOMADUTTA NAYAK	RITIKA BEHERA	99.2%	99.2%	99.2%
			95% & Above	90% & Above	
			33 Students	81 Students	

4 ODM Students In Odisha's Top-10 Rankers Class-XII (Science | Commerce)

ADYASHA JENA	PRIYANSHU PRANAY	SWATI NATH	SOUGAT SATAPATHY	97.6%	97%	97%	97%
				95% & Above	90% & Above		
				70 Students	211 Students		

10 STUDENTS SECURED 99% & more

JEE ACHIEVERS 2020

PRANAB KRISHN SAHOO	KESHARI MOHANTY	ANIKET DEO	ASHUTOSH DASH	99.85%	99.80%	99.71%	99.65%
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17 QUALIFIERS NTSE 2019

15 KVVPY, 18 NISER, 05 AIIMS

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Fear & greed grip Dalal Street

Along with the markets, prices of Gold and Silver are up. Everything seems right and that's where we might go wrong!

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 25: It is the metal we fall back on when other forms of currency do not work, which means it always has some value as insurance against tough times. Plain rationale: when markets are up, precious metals are down and vice-versa.

But since the last few weeks, there is unease and tension. Be it the border face-off with China or Covid exacerbating across the globe; the consequential effects on economy and the hope for a vaccine; many factors are coming into play between the

When interest rates are zero or near zero, then gold is an attractive medium to have because you don't have to worry about not getting interest on your gold. The gold price will rise as uncertainty in the markets is rising

MARK MOBIUS | FOUNDER, MOBIUS CAPITAL PARTNERS



bulls and the bears fight! The point of contention is—how come both the bullion prices and the markets are up. Nifty has crossed the coveted 11,000-mark and even Friday when the Dow Futures were trading lower after a terrible Thursday, the Nifty recovered from day lows; thanks to Reliance.

Meanwhile, Gold prices in India continued their record-breaking rally this week with rates piercing through the Rs51,000 barrier. On MCX, August gold futures settled 0.6 pc higher Friday at ₹51,010 per 10 gram after hitting a new high of ₹51,184 earlier in the ses-

sion, tracking a rally in global markets. Silver futures on MCX edged higher to finish at ₹61,221 a kg. On a weekly basis, gold rose about 4 pc while silver surged about 15 pc.

SILVER NOT RELIABLE

The gold-silver ratio recently made an all-time (as in forever) high well over 120 to 1. This is an all-time low in the price of silver, as measured in gold (the proper way to measure it, really). However, one of the biggest dangers of silver is that price fluctuations can be less predictable than other commodities.

leisure



ZETA-JONES, DOUGLAS ANNIV PLANS REVEALED

Hollywood couple Catherine Zeta-Jones and Michael Douglas have decided not to throw a bash to celebrate their 20th wedding anniversary, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. "We won't be doing any great big party," Zeta-Jones told *People magazine*.

'NOT EVERY FILM YOU DO HAS TO HAVE CRITICAL ACCLAIM'

Actress Joey King says she understands the fact that not every film she does has to be critically acclaimed. Joey was speaking in the context of her latest release, *The Kissing Booth 2*. The teen rom-com has opened over the weekend on OTT, but hasn't impressed the critics very much.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You feel lost and thoroughly depressed today. This will make you turn towards spirituality, says Ganesh. You will devote more time to meditation and will pray a lot. Despite the adverse circumstances, Ganesh says you will make a good deal of material headway.

TAURUS
This is a bright, rosy day for students and scholars, particular who are engaged in, or are looking forward to higher studies, specializing in a particular professional stream. This a great day for making plans for higher studies abroad. Do not miss this opportunity. Plans made today are likely to materialize. The day also promises to be positive and eventful for employed people, assures Ganesh.

GEMINI
You will be afforded full co-operation by your relatives and friends. You will also be able to provide a solution to their problems by utilising your practical thinking. You will be influenced by your emotions while choosing between multiple alternatives. You need to carefully weigh the pros and cons of any decision you make today, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Ganesh advises you to be careful before signing any document. A hard time for share brokers and traders. So be on the guard during deals and transactions. Average time for business. Ganesh tells you to be self-confidence.

LEO
You will pay serious attention to your work. You will feel that you have no option but to work hard. You will not be in the mood for socialising. This is only a temporary phase, hence there is no need to worry. You will be back to your usual gregarious self in no time at all, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Ganesh advises you to quantify your worth in the spheres of emotions and sentiments. You will prepare yourself for everything, from games to peers to family. However, at the same time you will realise your shortcomings. Ganesh foretells that from today on the artist in you will begin to come to the fore.

LIBRA
Ganesh says your nature of spending wisely is highly appreciated as it is a good thing to save money for the future. This nature of yours will not allow you to spend money on useless things. You will be able to buy a home or a vehicle in the near future with these savings of yours.

SCORPIO
You wish to make an image makeover in your office. You are tough and determined, and your work knows no limit when it comes to achieving your targets. You will love to brainstorm and give innovative ideas to colleagues and bosses. However, don't give away your best of ideas to anyone, advises Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
A fresh and renewed you, today all your focus is on your kith and kins. This includes sneaking some time off for your beloved as well! Romantic conversations and intimacy will add some spark to the day. After family, friends too come to take their share. An exciting evening in store for you!

CAPRICORN
Whatever field you are in, your career matters will top your priority list. You will put your personal life on the back burner for a while. This change of places will surely bring you great rewards as your performance will drastically improve and everyone will appreciate your efforts. Credit goes to your family members and well-wishers for believing in you in the toughest of times and supporting you along the way, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
You will aim for the bull's eye today. Whatever you'll do today, will be done with your focus set firmly on your target, says Ganesh. You will not waste your resource on something unfruitful, and such an attitude will make your journey smoother and faster. By the end of the day, you will surprise everyone around with your spectacular performance.

PISCES
You will find favourable conditions at work as you co-ordinate with your colleagues and seniors to tackle tough problems. You will be able to get the desirable results for all the effort you put in, in the office, says Ganesh.

Bad Boys directors want SRK in Hindi version



NEW DELHI: Moroccan-Belgian directors Adil el Arbi and Bilal Fallah love the world of 'Bollywood'. In fact they have an eye on Hindi filmmaking.



The director duo feels an Indian version of their recent Hollywood hit, *Bad Boys For Life*, would be a good idea. They even have a star in mid, for someone who could lead the 'desi' version of the franchise - Shah Rukh Khan.

At the time of the release of *Bad Boys For Life* earlier this year, Indian filmmaker Rohit Shetty had expressed his desire to remake the popular Hollywood franchise in Hindi. Asked how they envision the 'desi' version, Adil said: "Well, you know, it would be an honour to begin with. Because Bollywood is like the biggest movie industry in the world, and we come from Morocco. They're big Bollywood fans, and the biggest star in the world is still Shah Rukh Khan. So we hope that he (the Indian director) would have Shah Rukh Khan in the movie." Bilal agreed: "I would be super excited to see a Bollywood version of *Bad Boys*. I'm behind it."

Cyber bullying: Sonakshi fights back



MUMBAI: Actress Sonakshi Sinha has joined Special IGP of Maharashtra Pratap Dighavkar and a team of cyber experts, on an initiative to end cyber bullying on social media. "Social media was made with the intention to spread love and positivity. Unfortunately, it has become a toxic place with the rampant rise of cyber bullying and mental harassment. I have been a victim of trolls and abuses myself," said Sonakshi, about joining the campaign, *Full Stop To Cyber Bullying*. As part of the campaign, there will be five live in-

teractions featuring panelists. These interactions will be streamed live on the actress's social media handles. The goal of the campaign is to raise awareness about cyber bullying, so that trolls, abusers, harassers, and bullies on Internet become aware of the legal consequences of their actions. The first interaction will air July 26.

Sonakshi's decision to join such an initiative comes after she quit Twitter over a month ago.

SUNNY'S NEW MEDITATING PARTNER!

MUMBAI: Actress Sunny Leone has a new meditating partner, which happens to be a lizard! Sunny took to Instagram, where she posted a video of herself using a heart filter, with Indian classical music playing in the background. In the video, she points out towards a lizard resting on a plant. "Just the lizard and I this morning!! Meditated together," she wrote alongside the video, which currently has 670K likes. Recently, Sunny had posted a

black-and-white video on Instagram where she is seen working out on a stationary cycle. "All gyms have closed again! So back to the boring home gym! Just when we felt things might return to a little normalcy NOPE!!! As you can see my level of excitement is soooo high! Lol but better than getting COVID," Sunny captioned the video.



Books that can make you escape during Unlock 2

SARANG MAHAJAN'S INKREDIA IS A LAND WHERE HUMANS AND NON-HUMANS LIVE TOGETHER IN BALANCE, BUT WITHOUT EVER FACING EACH OTHER

NEW DELHI: Finding an escape to change our outlook is always an affirmative action. While the lockdown might have led to your fill of reading, assembling your thoughts in how to face the world in the Unlock phase, might be just the right thing one needs. Reading is the perfect means to educate and keep one occupied.

Here are the top five books from different genres which you can indulge in:

And She Quit Her Job
Authorised by Surabhi Verma, the book inspires millennials to break the cycle of a 9 to 5 job and opt for an unconventional career option. The book is a step by step guide on how to build a successful career as a freelancer and make the right choices. The author believes her book is written for those who are stuck in a never-ending rat race and urges them to think beyond the conventional.

One Day, Life Will Change
It is on the story of love and inspiration to win in life when it hits you hard by Saranya Umakanthan. Love... does it mean running around

the trees or vacationing in Switzerland, singing tra-la-la in the snow? Is it about gifting teddy bears and roses to your partner? Pick up a copy to get the answer.

Mutual Funds..
The book, *Mutual Funds: A Powerful Investment Avenue for Individuals* by RK Mohapatra aims to enlighten readers, especially youngsters on how to invest, instruments in which to invest, and

where to get started. The book is a meticulous introduction running into 182 pages and six chapters and a simple guide about Mutual fund's products that describe the benefit of investing.

The Worst Daughter Ever
This book by Aarti V Raman tells about heroine LJ Raghavan's rights. So, LJ has to go home and face her cousins and her mom and dad who are perpetually disappointed in her life choices. Then there is the fam-

ily lawyer, Banjeet 'Ben' Dewar who LJ is very attracted to because; hello! good guy lawyer who looks hot. How LJ navigates the two weeks and resolves all her internal and external conflicts, whether she and Ben get together form the plot of the book.

Inkredia: Luwan Of Brida
It is a fiction by Sarang Mahajan. Inkredia is a land where humans and non-humans live together in bal-

ance, but without ever facing each other. When 17-year-old Luwan finds himself in a grave danger, he has to make a daring choice. The village that kept him safe all these years can't protect him anymore. Either he can stay and die or he can enter the dangerous world outside and make journey to a city that will keep him and his sister safe. But there is a good chance that this journey itself will kill him.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

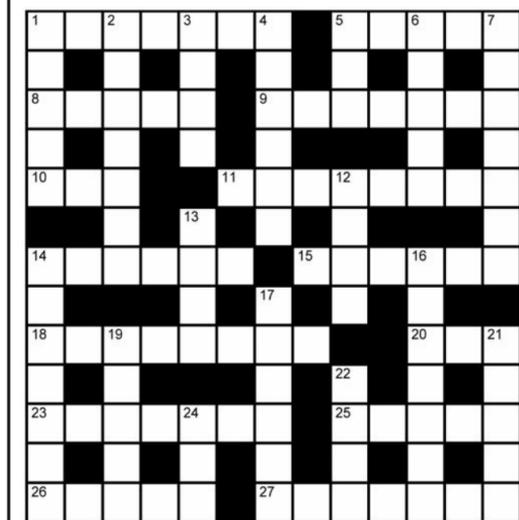


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Seaport
 - 5 Renaissance fiddle
 - 8 Eskimo boat
 - 9 Pimiento powder
 - 10 Apply gently
 - 11 Gulf of Venice neighbor
 - 14 Persian Gulf kingdom
 - 15 See eye to eye
 - 18 French pastry
 - 20 Captain's journal
 - 23 Contemptible
 - 25 Sufficient result
 - 26 Poison ivy
 - 27 Game break (4-3)
 - Down**
 - 1 Harrier, e.g.
 - 2 Storm follower, at time
 - 3 Sturdy trees
 - 4 River feature
 - 5 Cemetery initials
 - 6 Constructed
 - 7 *Canterbury Tales* author
 - 12 Links club
 - 13 Coffee grinder
 - 14 Heyerdahl's transport (3,4)
 - 16 Odysseus's detainee
 - 17 Cloak-and-dagger word
 - 19 Go to pieces
 - 21 Belgian urban centre
 - 22 Raffia, e.g.
 - 24 True laurel

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.

D	0			8	B	2	7		C		
	9	5	0						A		2
			7			5	B	3		1	
2	3			E		8		9	0		
4	C		B		1						E
				D			E	0	7		1
B								9			3
8						9				5	4
6	E	7	C	4		2					B
				1		D	0			5	C
				8	2		4			3	
		9	5			D	C		1	3	
B	4	7	C		8			5			
	6		D		A	3				8	
2	D			4		B			9	C	5

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

F	O	L	I	A	G	E	P	A	P	E	R	A
A	E	B	V	R	E	A						
L	U	M	B	A	G	O	A	D	A	P	T	
S	U	N	G	L	W	S	T					
E	R	R	E	D	V	A	N	O	I	L		
				O	E							
G	E	M	I	N	I	K	I	P	P	E	R	
T	I											
R	U	T	H	E	N	R	I	T	E	S		
A	T	T	F	A	A	A	O					
S	H	E	E	P	A	C	E	R	B	I	C	
O	N	P	N	L	O	K						
L	A	S	S	O	T	R	I	P	O	D	S	

SUDOKU

C	6	3	9	8	7	5	2	4	8	D	1	0	E	A
2	9	0	E	A	6	1	D	8	B	4	3	C	5	7
E	7	8	3	1	0	9	A	2	5	C	D	4	6	
1	4	5	D	C	2	E	7	3	6	0	A	B	8	9
A	D	8	0	5	4	6	C	B	7	9	E	2	1	3
5	C	D	6	9	3	7	8	E	A	1	2	4	B	0
B	E	A	5	2	C	9	4	1	3	7	0	8	6	D
6	8	1	7	E	0									
		9	5			D	C		1	3				
B	4	7	C		8			5						
	6		D		A	3				8				
2	D			4		B			9	C	5	6		

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



RISKING LIFE

A vendor sells tea in violation of the Covid-19 lockdown norms alongside the Old Malgodown road in Cuttack, Saturday

PREP FOR FEST

Artisans prepare decorative pieces for the upcoming Jhulana Yatra at Jagannath Ballav Mutt in Puri, Saturday



In pursuit of fat-pay job, City man loses ₹20L to fraudsters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Cocking a snook on cyber security, the tricksters have duped a general manager (GM) of a big company of more than Rs 20 lakh on the pretext of providing him a better job.

There is a surfeit in cybercrime cases amidst the pandemic which has turned a headache for the Odisha Police. The crooks have been following different tactics like online sale of liquor, expiry of Paytm KYC to trick the gullible netizens into their trap.

Sources said the victim, identified as Pankaj Kumar Das, 52, is a resident of KIIT Square at Patia under Infocity police limits here. The complainant is currently employed as the GM of a big company. Recently, unknown fraudsters have duped him of Rs 20 lakh on the pretext of availing him a high-paying job in a reputed multinational company.

Eventually, he found a website www.recruitmentzone.in and registered with the site by submitting all the educational and job experiences related documents. Subsequently, the accused persons identified as Uday Shankar, Arav Raghuvansmi, Dinesh Nair, Prakash Mehra and Ayat Quereshi contacted Das claiming them-



TRICKSTERS GALORE

The victim, identified as Pankaj Kumar Das, 52, is a resident of KIIT Square at Patia under Infocity police limits here

Das was dissatisfied with his job and had started searching for a better opportunity like VP or CEO in a reputed company

The cyber crooks after receiving ₹20, 30, 000 from Das ignored his phone calls and also stopped making any contact through mail too

selves as the representatives of the website.

They would regularly contact Das and provide him with fake updates regarding the job he was aspiring for. The accused succeeded in winning the trust of Das with their cordial approach. Das paid the agency the required fees and charges as per their demands and based on their representations. They also assured Das of availing financial assistance from various financial institutions in the form of credit facilities. After receiving Rs 20, 30, 000 from Das, the cyber crooks ignored his phone calls and also stopped making any contact

through mail too.

Das sought the help of Infocity police who asked him to approach cyber police station at the police headquarters in Cuttack.

Additional director general (ADG), Crime Branch, Soumendra Priyadarshi said, "I am aware of online job fraud cases during the pandemic. We have been seriously investigating into the cases. The fraudsters have been operating outside the state and country too. Cybercrime cases have increased manifold during the pandemic and we will shortly begin awareness drive to aware people about the issue."

Spl HC benches for pending cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 25: The Orissa High Court has submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court regarding its 'Plan of Action' for the hearing of cases that have been pending for years. In its affidavit, the HC has mentioned that it would constitute special benches and appoint amicus curiae for speedy hearing of pending cases.

It is worth mentioning here that the SC had expressed concern over old cases in several high courts while hearing a petition filed by a convict who had been given life



In its affidavit, the HC has mentioned that it would constitute special benches and appoint amicus curiae for speedy hearing of pending cases

term by the Allahabad High Court. The apex court had directed the HCs of Odisha, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra to file affidavits describing their 'Plan of Actions' to clear old cases.

Acting upon the order, Orissa High Court Registrar General Malaya Ranjan Das submitted an affidavit to the SC.

The affidavit claimed that the HC has consulted the Director

General of Prisons and State Legal Services Authority to prepare the action plan. The affidavit said that the HC would constitute a division bench and two single benches for speedy hearing of pending criminal cases.

Besides, steps would be taken to delegate some powers to the benches and conduct hearing on a daily basis. Moreover, some amicus curiae would be appointed for speedy hearing of cases.

GAMBLING DEN BUSTED; 4 HELD



POST NEWS NETWORK

Kakatpur, July 25: Kakatpur police claimed to have raided a gambling den at Bhandisahi here and arrested four gamblers on the intervening night of Friday and Saturday. The police team led by inspector in-charge (IIC) Sujit Kumar Das seized Rs 12,300, eight cellphones and playing cards from the gambling den, sources said.

According to police, at least seven persons were gambling at an abandoned cowshed of Naresh Swain of Bhandisahi around 12.30 am. On a tip-off, a 12-member police team raided the gambling den and arrested Naresh Swain, Krushna Behera, Samir Lenka and Deepak Swain while the remaining gamblers managed to flee. Sources claimed that a scuffle ensued between the police personnel and relatives of the four arrested persons when the latter tried to waylay the police van. Assistant sub-inspector of police Suryamani Majhi and homeguard Pramod Kandi sustained injuries in the scuffle.

Taking advantage of the melee, some miscreants snatched away a gun from the police team, sources added.



DRY RIVERBED

Boats remain idle near Naraj anicut in Cuttack, Saturday, as Kathajodi river dried up in the absence of regular water flow

Atibadi award for Binapani Mohanty

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The prestigious Atibadi Jagannath Das Award-2019 was conferred on eminent writer Binapani Mohanty for her contribution to Odia literature on the occasion of Odisha Sahitya Akademi's 63rd foundation day, Saturday.

Some of her best known stories are: Pata Dei, Khela Ghara, Naiku Rasta, Bastraharana, Andhakara Chhai, Kasturi Mruga O Sabuja Aranya and Michhi Michhika.

Mohanty was awarded the Padma Shri in 2020. Many of her short stories have been translated into different languages such as English, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Bengali, Urdu, Telugu and Russian. She has also penned three novels - Sitara Sonita, Manaswini and Kunti, Kuntala, Shakuntala - and a one-act play entitled Kranti.

Eighty-four-year-old Mohanty is a retired professor of Economics. She was awarded by Tourism, Odia Language, Literature & Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi at her residence. In his short speech, Panigrahi said, "Literature lovers



Odia Language Literature and Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, departmental secretary Manoranjan Panigrahi and other dignitaries felicitate novelist Binapani Mohanty with Atibadi Jagannath Das Award-2019, in Cuttack, Saturday

and future writers should learn writing skills from Mohanty as she has taken the art of story writing to another level of supremacy."

Interacting with Orissa POST, Mohanty said, "I'm overwhelmed as Odia Language, Literature & Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, principal secretary of the

department Manoranjan Panigrahi and Cuttack Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani have felicitated me with this huge award at my residence. I gladly accept this award and wish to continue my endeavour in the field of writing. I request the state government to provide facilities to the Utkal Lekhika Sangha which will

I'm overwhelmed as Odia Language, Literature & Culture Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, principal secretary of the department Manoranjan Panigrahi and Cuttack Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani have felicitated me with this huge award at my residence

inspire the members to produce amazing literary works in future."

The director of Odia Language, Literature & Culture, Bijay Nayak, said, "Binapani Devi is the Patadei of Odia literature and she is not only popular in Odisha, but across the literary fraternity of India."

On this occasion, 17 books from Odisha Sahitya Akademi and a tri-monthly magazine 'Konark' were unveiled.

Meanwhile, Governor Ganeshi Lal congratulated the Akademi for its relentless efforts to keep Odia literature high in the minds of the readers.

Food security allowance for schoolchildren till August

EXPLORE OPTIONS TO SELL MDM RICE TO QUARANTINE CENTRES AT ₹32 PER KG AND DEPOSIT MONEY WITH DEOs, GOVT TELLS HEADMASTERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: With the schools remaining shut till end of August in view of Covid-19 pandemic, the state government has decided to distribute food security allowances to students covered under Mid Day Meal (MDM) scheme till August end.

School and Mass Education (S&ME) department has asked the MDM state nodal officer to provide food security allowance including dry ration and cooking cost for 57 days starting from June 14 to August 31, 2020, to the eligible students. Earlier, the government had distributed such allowance to the school students for the March 16-June 13 period.

"While headmasters of schools will look after the distribution of rice to the students, payment of cook-



ing cost for the 57 days will be transferred to their parents' or guardians' bank accounts," the letter read.

The government has also asked the headmasters to explore options to sell the MDM rice to quarantine centres at Rs 32 per kg and deposit the money with the District Education Officer (DEO).

In case of schools having MDM

rice for more than 57 days, the excess rice will be diverted to the nearby schools having deficit MDM rice.

As the school buildings were being used as quarantine centres, the government instructed the concerned officials to sanitise the vacated building and use it as a distribution centre of food security allowance.

In case the building has not been vacated so far, proper arrangements should be made to take away the MDM rice to the nearby school or community centre and use the same as food security allowance distribution centre, the department said.

The government further instructed the officials to follow all Covid-19 safety norms like face masking, hand sanitising, social distancing during the transportation and dry ration rice distribution.

MAN SENT TO JAIL FOR UXORICIDE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The Commissionerate Police, Saturday, produced a man in the court for killing his newlywed wife in a slum Friday evening. The accused, identified as Muralidhar Behera, was caught by the slum dwellers while he was trying to flee after the murder.

The residents later handed over the accused to Airport police that arrested him after registering a case (233/20) under section 302 of the IPC.

The court later sent him to judicial custody.

Police sources claimed that Behera had given some amount to his wife Shakuntala Majhi when she was going to her maternal home. On her return, Shakuntala was enquired by Behera about the money left with her.

However, Shakuntala did not give any answer and reportedly tried to brush off the matter which angered Behera. The argument later turned violent and a livid Behera hit the head of Sakuntala with a heavy hammer.

5 places add to OJEE venue list

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The Odisha Joint Entrance Examination Board authorities Saturday announced five new cities as the OJEE 2020 examination venues.

In view of the current situation caused by Covid-19, five new cities have been added so that students can choose or modify their choices as per their convenience, said OJEE authorities in a statement. The new cities include Angul, Baripada, Bargarh, Jeypore and Keonjhar.

The authorities have also extended the last date for submission of online application form till July 31. Similarly, the

last date for online fee payment has been extended till August 5.

Students who have already completed the application process can modify their choice of examination centres between July 24 and 31.

The courses for which modification of examination cities apply are B.Pharm, MBA, MCA, M.Tech, M.Tech (Part Time), M.Arch, M. Plan, M.Pharm, Int. MBA, LE-Tech (Dip), LE-Tech (BSc), LE-Pharm and B. Tech. (Special OJEE). The authorities are yet to announce dates of examinations and dates for downloading admit cards. They said they would notify the detailed schedule in due course of time after July 31.

De-addiction drive in 10 districts

Bhubaneswar: The Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department has asked the Collectors of 10 districts of the state that have been identified by the Centre for a de-addiction drive. The Ministry of Social Justice had picked 10 vulnerable districts of Odisha under Nasha Mukta Bharat campaign to undertake a drive as part of the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction. These districts include- Cuttack, Malkangiri, Angul, Boudh, Deogarh, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Puri, Rayagada and Sambalpur. The SSEPD department has asked the Collectors of these 10 districts to constitute the District Nasha Mukta Campaign Committee by the end of July 31.

Advertisement for Punjab National Bank featuring a sale notice for immovable properties. The notice includes details of the assets for sale, such as factory land and building, and provides a schedule of the sale. It also mentions the bank's name in Hindi and English, and its status as a government undertaking.

Fresh regulations out for disposal of Covid-hit bodies

FAMILY MEMBERS ALLOWED TO PERFORM LAST RITES WITHOUT TOUCHING THE BODY; THEY CAN COLLECT THE ASH



STRIKING A CHORD

Respecting the religious sentiments of people and religious belief of different sects, the government has decided to allow family members of the deceased to view the body at the time of removal from the isolation room or area

While disposing the bodies at the crematorium/ burial ground, family members will be allowed to perform the last rites according to their religion/ faith without touching the body, maintaining minimum safe distance from the body

Bhubaneswar, July 25: With a spurt in the number of Covid deaths in the state, the government issued fresh guidelines for management and disposal of dead bodies.

In a letter to Collectors, Additional Chief Secretary to government (disaster management) PK Jena said "The government has taken full responsibility of disposal of bodies of the Covid-19 suspect/ confirmed cases for which the government has sanctioned Rs 7,500 per deceased towards expenditure for disposal of bodies of Covid-19 suspect and confirmed cases."

Respecting the religious sentiments of people and religious belief of different sects, the government has decided to allow family

members of the deceased to view the body at the time of removal from the isolation room or area. After that, the body will be handled and transported in a decent manner.

While disposing the bodies at the crematorium/ burial ground, family members will be allowed to perform the last rites according to their religion/ faith without touching the body, maintaining minimum safe distance from the body. The family members have to follow standard hygienic precautions, such as hand hygiene, use of masks & gloves, no spitting in public place.

The family members can also collect the ash after cremation for performance of last rites. However, they will not be allowed for bathing,

kissing, hugging, among others of the bodies.

A maximum of 20 persons can be allowed in the funeral function including the priest and member(s) and support agency, Jena said.

In case the family members do not wish to take part in the funeral of the Covid-19 suspect/ confirmed case, the body will be disposed of as per custom of the religion/ sect to which the person belongs. If the religion/ sect of the person is not known, either of the procedure may be followed for disposal of the bodies, the letter read.

The government has issued the instructions as people feared for conducting the funeral rites of Covid-hit bodies in various places of the state. So far, 130 persons have died due to coronavirus in the state.



Passengers have huddled together waiting for trains without adhering to social distancing measures and many of them even without masks at Bhubaneswar railway station, Saturday

State Covid tally tops 24K-mark; toll 130

AGENCIES/ PNN

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Odisha's COVID-19 tally crossed 24,000 Saturday as 1,320 more people tested positive for the disease, while the death toll rose to 130 with a record single-day spike of 10 fatalities, a health department official said.

Three out of the 10 new fatalities were from Ganjam, the worst-hit district by the pandemic, two each from Balasore and Sundargarh, and one death each was reported from Gajapati, Jharsuguda and Rayagada, he said.

"Ten people, including a woman, died due to COVID-19 while undergoing treatment in hospitals. This is the highest single-day spike in the death toll. Six of them had comorbidities. The deceased were aged between 30 and 61," the health official said.

With 1,320 new cases, the total number of infections rose to 24,013, he said. A total of 887 new patients have been detected in different quarantine centres, while 433 were found through contact-tracing exercises, the official said.

There has been a steep rise in the death toll during the current month, as the number of fatalities due to



the coronavirus infection was at 25 by the end of June, he said.

"In most of the cases where death occurred, the patients were also suffering from diabetes, hypertension and chronic diseases," the official added.

Of the 130 deaths so far in the state, Ganjam reported 73, followed by Khurda (15), Cuttack (nine), Gajapati (eight), Sundargarh and Rayagada (four each), Angul, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara and Puri (two each).

One death each has been reported from Bargarh, Jajpur, Kandhamal, Nayagarh and Jharsuguda, the of-

icial said. Thirty-three other coronavirus patients had died but their deaths were attributed to "non-COVID reasons", he said.

This is the third consecutive day when more than 1,000 fresh cases have been reported in a day in Odisha, Health and Family Welfare Department's Additional Chief Secretary P K Mohapatra said.

"The surge in the number of COVID-19 cases is temporary. It has increased due to active surveillance in hotspot districts," he said. The fresh cases were reported from 24 districts.

The maximum of 560 new cases

City records 111 fresh cases

Bhubaneswar: The state capital's COVID-19 tally Saturday touched 1828 after 111 fresh cases were reported over last 24 hours. Among these, 62 were from quarantine centres and 49 are local contacts. Moreover, a total of 52 cases among these were linked with previous positive patients while 10 others had a travel history to other states and hotspot districts. While 29 recoveries were reported, Friday, the city's total recovery stood at 863 with 11 deaths. Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar has 952 active coronavirus cases.

were detected in Ganjam, a "coronavirus hotspot" district, followed by Khurda (174), Puri and Gajapati (90 each), Rayagada (60) and Sundargarh (47).

There are 8,650 active cases, while 15,201 patients have recovered from the disease. A total of 12,733 samples were tested in the past 24 hours, the official added.

COASTAL AREAS GET DEFICIT RAINFALL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Except for Ganjam, all other coastal districts in the state have received deficit rainfall of 23-47 per cent till July 25.

According to data available with the Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre, five coastal districts—Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak and Balasore along with Khurda, Cuttack, Jajpur and Sonepur have recorded less than normal rainfall.

Puri district has recorded a deficit rainfall of 47 per cent while Khurda and Kendrapara districts each received 40 per cent less rainfall so far. Jajpur recorded 39 per cent deficit rain followed by Cuttack (36 per cent), Balasore (32 per cent), Sonepur (25 per cent) and Bhadrak & Jagatsinghpur (23 per cent each). The shortage of rainfall in Puri, Khurda and Kendrapara may affect agricultural activities in the pockets where irrigation facility is not available, sources said.

The state as a whole has recorded a 6 per cent less than normal rainfall till July 25. However, the situation is better than last year in the state as the state had witnessed 32 per cent deficit rainfall till this period last year, said director of Bhubaneswar Met Centre, HR Biswas. The monsoon has become weak in the state. But, rainfall activity is continuing in many parts of the state, he said.

Commenting on the deficit rainfall in coastal areas, the director said, "Usually coastal areas receive rain under the influence of low pressure areas in Bay of Bengal. But, this year, the sea has not witnessed low pressures like past years." Biswas added.

MORE BEDS IN CITY

BMC WILL BE ADDING 850 MORE BEDS FOR COVID-19 CARE INCLUDING 31 ICU BEDS



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: With the state capital seeing a surge in COVID-19 cases, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday announced that it will be adding 850 more beds for COVID-19 care including 31 ICU beds.

Briefing the media, BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary stated that apart from additional beds, the civic body would also be setting up three COVID Care Homes (CCH) with 50 beds each. While COVID hospitals are designated for serious cases, CCHs are dedicated for mild and asymptomatic cases.

"While the High-Tech Medical and Hospital in collaboration with BMC is coming up with a 550-bedded exclusive facility for COVID care, the Chandrasekharpur-based Aditya Ashwini Hospital is coming up with a facility of 150 beds exclusively for the treatment of COVID-19 patients," Chaudhary said.

"Moreover, out of these 150 beds at the Aditya Ashwini Hospital, 31 will be of ICU facility. Meanwhile, the three CCHs will come up within the three administrative zones of BMC and they will come up with the funds provided by the MLA Local Area Development Fund of MLAs concerned," he added.

cases from the city have been asymptomatic. However, if they show symptoms, there is a standard operating procedure (SOP) which includes calling 1929 or 104 helplines or other contact numbers provided by the BMC. Only after inspection from Rapid Response Teams (RRTs) a decision is made to shift them to a COVID care facility or to a hospital," the Commissioner added.

He also mentioned that home quarantine was initially resisted by denizens fearing social stigma and a further spread. However, after being pursued by BMC volunteers and with training and orientation, the move is now getting a good response.

Cases fewer in slums than non slum areas

Sharing the strategies adopted by the BMC, Chaudhary assured people that the spread of infection is under control in slum areas. As per the ongoing active surveillance, the number of COVID-19 positive cases is more from non-slum areas. "Till now 418 positive cases have come from slum while 1,410 persons tested positive from non-slum areas in Bhubaneswar so far. We have formed a committee in each slum. Active contact tracing is being conducted successfully with active cooperation of committee members," he said.

Stating that the civic body has ramped up testing the positive cases have shot up, especially in slums. The BMC has now targeted 1400 tests per day and is reported to add five more RRT teams to step up efforts

"Combined efforts of slum community and increased testing have resulted in detection of 41 positive cases Mahisakhal slum. The slum has been declared as containment zone. With this, the BMC has four slums in containment zones - Sitapur and Trinath Basti, Ganapati Basti in Nayapalli and Harinagar Basti," the Commissioner said.

Home isolation encouraged

Meanwhile, promoting home isolation, Chaudhary said efforts are being made to keep COVID Care Hospitals or Centres reserved for critical patients. The BMC Commissioner also said that 167 persons have been allowed to stay in home isolation over last ten days for patients residing in non-slum areas and having no co-morbid conditions with due procedure and out of which 46 of them have recovered.

"Most of the time, asymptomatic persons don't need any cure or treatment. In fact, 80 per cent of

ECoR cancels trains due to WB lockdown

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) Saturday said that it would cancel several trains in the light of the planned lockdown in West Bengal.

The zonal office Thursday brought the list of trains passing through West Bengal which would remain suspended or partially suspended. "There will be a complete lockdown in West Bengal from July 25 to July 29. Train services will be cancelled/partially cancelled and stoppages would be withdrawn in West Bengal jurisdiction," a statement from the ECoR said.

Cancelled trains
02201/02202 Sealdah Kolkata-Bhubaneswar Duronto Special from Sealdah July 27 and from



Bhubaneswar July 28 will remain cancelled.

2074/02073 Bhubaneswar-Howrah Special July 25 and July 29, from both the directions will remain cancelled.

02246/02245 Yesvantpur-Howrah Duronto Special from Yesvantpur July 28 and from Howrah July 29 will remain cancelled.

Partial cancellations
02703/02704 Howrah-Secunderabad Special will remain

cancelled between Bhubaneswar and Howrah July 29.

02704 Secunderabad-Howrah Special from Secunderabad July 28 will run up to Bhubaneswar and will remain cancelled from Bhubaneswar to Howrah.

02703 Howrah-Secunderabad Special from Howrah July 29 will be cancelled between Howrah and Bhubaneswar and will originate from Bhubaneswar instead of Howrah towards Secunderabad.

Stoppage withdrawn July 29
Stoppage for 02801/02802 Bhubaneswar-New Delhi Special at Purulia Junction July 29 has been withdrawn.

Stoppage for 02823/02824 Bhubaneswar-New Delhi AC Special at Hijli July 29 has been withdrawn.

Two separate test reports spark fear

Buguda: Two separate test reports of a man on Covid-19 infection have sparked consternation among the residents here in Ganjam district, Saturday. Reports said Brahmachari Bisoyi, residing on Main Road in Buguda, got himself tested for coronavirus after he suffered from bouts of fever. He visited the testing centre at Buguda People's College and got himself tested for the virus July 16. The next day he visited Bhubaneswar and got himself tested for the virus at KIMS hospital after his fever failed to recede. However, he was surprised after he received two different test reports Saturday. In the reports he received at Buguda he was pronounced positive while the report received from KIMS hospital declared him negative.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit before Notary, Bhubaneswar, I Gitanjali Majhi, age - 46 years, W/o. Pravat Mangaraj, Plot No. - 663, Lingaraj Nagar, Old Town, BBSR has changed my surname from Majhi to Mangaraj. Henceforth I will be known as Gitanjali Mangaraj for all purposes.

'Israel's real time Covid screening to aid India'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Experts here claimed that technologies developed by Israeli scientists to carry out real time screening of COVID-19 could empower the country and the state in faster testing of the pandemic. They include four breakthrough technologies. Two are related to tests which use saliva samples (using polymine acids and inexpensive biochemical isothermal testing) to screen the disease.

Another one is screening through voice recognition of the infection person. "This could tell if a person has Covid infection by listening to his or her voice. The technology uses artificial intelligence (AI) to listen to a person's voice and determine if he or she has first stage Covid-19 infection. One could



even do the diagnosis through a cell phone," said Dr Manoj Sahu, senior gastroenterologist, associated with World Health Organisation (WHO) for Hepatitis Eradication and Corona Prevention.

The fourth method is a breath analyser. One would breathe into a

tube and the machine which uses terahertz radio frequencies and an algorithm to tell if you have the virus. Initial testing of the technologies has been done in Israel and now the country plans to test these in India.

"This will mean you can be tested as you enter an airport, a

HELPING HAND

The voice recognition technology uses artificial intelligence (AI) to listen to a person's voice and determine if he or she has first stage Covid-19 infection whose diagnosis could be done through a cell phone

Breath analyser is another method where one would breathe into a tube and the machine which uses terahertz radio frequencies and an algorithm to tell if you have the virus

mall or anywhere and be cleared. Real time testing would allow the economy to open again. Mass testing can be done, infections can be detected early, transmission prevented and life can be saved. We can have resumption of the normal life," he said.

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Making life easy for big cats in Satkosia

THE FOREST DEPARTMENT MAKES BID TO RELOCATE THREE VILLAGES IN TIGER RESERVE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, July 25: The forest department is trying to relocate and rehabilitate residents of three villages as they are posing threat to the big cats in the Satkosia Tiger Sanctuary.

If these villages can be relocated, an additional 50 acres can be added to the sanctuary that will facilitate free movement of tigers and other wild animals. Otherwise chances of human-animal conflict continue to grow. Since 2019, officials of the forest department have been persuading villagers to relocate, but to no avail.

The three villages come under the Purunakot, Pumpsar, Tikarpada, Raiguda and Jhilida forest range. Forest department officials are offering attractive sops to residents



Forest department is offering attractive sops to residents of the villages under Purunakot, Pumpsar, Tikarpada, Raiguda and Jhilida forest range

The DFO said the government will provide all facilities to the villagers who are basically living a life of deprivation. They will get thatched houses that will be made pucca later on

if they agree to relocate. A proper rehabilitation package has been worked out for them if they agree to shift.

P Ramaswami, DFO of Satkosia Sanctuary, said the state government will provide all facilities to the villagers who are basically living a life of deprivation. The villagers will be provided thatched houses that

later on will be made pucca, Ramaswami said. The new places will have proper roads, electricity connection and drinking water facilities. At present, these are not available to the residents of these villagers.

Ramaswami also said that each family will be given Rs 10 lakh by the forest department. They will

also receive four decimals of land each for construction of houses. The new settlement will have facilities like ponds, cremation ground, community centre, playground and health centre. The villagers will be included under various welfare schemes of the Centre and the state government like Indra Awas Yojana and Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana. There will be old-age pension for those who cannot work.

It should be mentioned here that the forest department was successful in relocating inhabitants of Raigoda village. Seventy eight families had been relocated to a different place as their village had come under the tiger reserve project of Satkosia sanctuary. Officials are citing this as an example to the residents of the three villages who need to be relocated.

Hopes brighten for 130-km Malkangiri-Jeypore rly route

COLLECTOR ASKS TEHSILDARS TO GO ABOUT ACQUIRING LAND

POST NEWS NETWORK

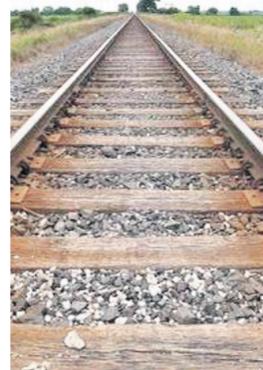
Malkangiri, July 25: People of Malkangiri have long been waiting for railway service. However, acquisition of land for the ambitious 130 km Malkangiri-Jeypore railway project has remained a non-starter.

Meanwhile, the East Coast Railway (ECoR) authorities have sent a letter to Collector Manish Agrawal along with the map of the proposed railway route. In the letter, the railway authorities have given a go ahead for land acquisition.

Acting on the direction, the Collector has directed the tehsildars of Malkangiri-Mathili and Khairput to submit reports about the village-wise land requirements for land acquisition according to the route map.

The ECoR stated in the letter that the railways have received a few village maps and further village maps are required to calculate remaining land requirements from Kadamguda and Mathili tehsils.

"As the final survey is completed, village maps are urgently required for initiating the land acquisition



The railway route will pass through 33 villages under Kadamkunda and Mathili tehsils.

The villages identified by the ECR for land acquisition are Kandikiguda, Salapadar, Siriguda, Kuabiguda, Pokhamamu, Mainsikhal, Badaliguda, Puahariguda, Baliguda, Kuasiguda, Chalanguda, Tangagoda, Pokhanamunda, Gongola, Bijipadar, Pandiripani, Makarpalli, Putajariguda, Jhatikaguda, Ganjaibahal, Bhimarangani, Kukudaguda, Musuakonda, Rosoiguda, Deniguda, Batapalli, Goreguda, Sarjiguda, Malkangiri, Rabindranagar, MV-9, MV-3 and Boilapari.

A requisition for land acquisition for the first 30 km of the stretch from Jeypore to Boipariguda had been submitted to the state government about a few years ago. The work for the project would begin in October 2022. The ECoR has set a target to complete the project in four phases within six years. Malkangiri-Jeypore railway line would pass through four tunnels and 11 stations.

Illegal sand mining rampant in Baitarani

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, July 25: Illegal sand mining and smuggling are rampant on a stretch along the Baitarani riverbed extending from Madhiali area of Bandalo panchayat up to Dandakula area of Sholampur panchayat under Bhandaripokhari tehsil limits in Bhadrak district, locals have said.



"The illegal activity continues unabated with indirect support from local tehsil administration, especially at night. While sand mafias earn handsomely from illegal quarrying, the state government loses crores of rupees from revenue," a local man alleged.

This illegal activity has resulted in ecological imbalance in the region. In some places, the river has been eating into the banks and gradually changing its course as well. Maninathpur, Mudhapada, Dandakula, Nerada, Jhutana and Bandalo village areas on the Baitarani riverbank suffer the most, locals added.

Notably, several panchayats under Bhandaripokhari, Dhamnagar and Chandbali blocks in the district are flood-prone. On being contacted, Bhadrak sub-collector Pitambar Samal said, "The district administration is conducting raids on illegal sand quarries. Penalty is being collected from vehicles engaged in illegal transportation. If necessary, cases are being filed against owners".

Locals allege admin apathy towards Covid-hit areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, July 25: The district administration allegedly is not showing as much interest to attend to Covid-19 cases in local areas as it is showing in district headquarters. This allegation was leveled by town dwellers.

According to locals, a couple from Hemasurapada tested positive a few days ago. Between their test and the arrival of the report, they had visited many local areas and came in contact with several people.

After coming to know that the couple was infected, the administration must have taken immediate steps to disinfect the area. But that did not happen, locals alleged, adding that the administration does not hesitate to take efficient measures in case staff of any office tests positive.

There are many areas like Hemasurapada that recently reported positive cases including Amalapada and Gujratipada in Angul town, Sanatibrida and Arkil panchayat of Kaniha block, Chhendipada and Machhakuta area of Chhendipada block, areas on Nalco's outskirts in Banarpal block and Paikasahi and Thakurgarh panchayat of Athmallick block.

Patients infected with coronavirus were detected from these areas but the administration did not take steps to sanitise the areas, increasing the fear of local transmission. As a result the residents are constantly in a state of panic.

A fire department official on the condition of anonymity said, "We can't go on our own to any area to sanitise them. We are visiting the areas or offices as per the direction of the district administration."

A BJP leader here, Pratap Chandra Pradhan, also alleged that the administration is not taking any steps to sanitise the areas that report positive cases.



Similarly, district Congress president, Biplab Jena said, "The district administration not taking steps to sanitise affected areas is indeed a cause of concern. We will take the matter up with the district collector. And at the same time the sarpanchs can also take steps by utilising the collector's power conferred upon them."

District Collector Manoj Kumar Mohanty was not available for his comments in this regard.

ASI dies of Covid

KODALA: An assistant sub-inspector of police (ASI) breathed his last Friday night after being infected by the deadly coronavirus. The deceased COVID-19 warrior has been identified as Rabindranath Behera (55). He was posted at the Bhanjanagar court.

The ASI had returned home four days ago as he was unwell. Rabindranath's family members rushed him to Kodala community health centre Friday night after his condition deteriorated. But he could not be saved. The doctors declared him dead on arrival. Later, his swab sample was collected and sent for COVID-19 test. The report turned out to be positive.

Lifer escapes on way from hospital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rairangpur, July 25: A murder convict who has been serving lifer at Rairangpur sub-jail managed to escape from the clutches of the jail authorities.

The man was identified as Daman Marandi of Jharadihi under Bahalda block.

Marandi is afflicted with tuberculosis. The jail officials had taken him to the district headquarters hospital for treatment Friday.

On way back home, Marandi wanted to answer to the call of nature at Kundulia under Bisoi police limits at 5 pm. On getting down from the jail van, he managed to give a slip to the jail staff.

The jail authorities have started a search operation in the area.

Tiring police had arrested him in 2013 following a complaint of murder. He was convicted of the crime by the Rairangpur district session court December 19, 2016.

Trial run of electric train on Haridaspur-Paradip rail route

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, July 25: In what is believed to be a historic day for the state, an electric train made its trial run on Haridaspur-Paradip broad gauge railway line in Kendrapara district Friday.

On this occasion, several senior officials of the East Coast Railway travelled by this electric train from Haridaspur to Paradip.

The rail route was examined by running a tower car. Reports said that goods trains will start plying on this route by August end.

Reacting to this, Prashant Nayak, a local intelligentsia, said, "This is certainly a historic day for the people of Kendrapara. Our long-awaited dream came true after the electric train made its trial run."

"After a lapse of 22 years, the new broad gauge railway line would bring in prosperity to the district," a social activist from Kendrapara district Sameer Kumar Chand expressed. In a similar vein, local farmer Bidhubhusan Mohapatra



said, "I welcome the step by the railway authorities. It would certainly benefit local farmers. Moreover, commissioning of the new broad gauge railway line would certainly facilitate transportation of raw materials by small industrial units to meet their requirements."

However, Laxmikanta Nayak, another farmer, said, "Railway authorities did not give priority to constructing siphons at several points along the broad gauge railway line which have added to our woes."

"There is no proper drainage facility and nearby farmlands get submerged in rain water. Many villagers have lost their farmlands for this broad gauge railway line and they were not given adequate compensation," Nayak added.

Online edu falters in rural Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Mahakalapada, July 25: In Odisha, there are more than 62 lakh students in government schools if the state government numbers are anything to go by. With the schools closed amid the pandemic, online education during the lockdown could have been an opportunity.

In many parts of the country, what has helped to promote e-classes is a robust infrastructure for mobile and internet connectivity as well as access to gadgets. However, many areas in the country - especially in rural parts of the country, continue to lag behind. Kendrapara is one of them.

While the education department recently claimed it has initiated online teaching across Odisha, the reality is different when it comes to rural areas where government schools form the core of the education system. A point in case is Baulakani panchayat under Mahakalapada block in Kendrapara district.

Without access to internet connectivity and computer or smartphones, many students are being deprived of their rights to free education here.



Baulakani claimed they do not own smartphones to get their kids avail online education. Let alone smartphones, many have no money to recharge mobile SIMs or purchase data packs.

Rakhal Swain from this panchayat is a BPL cardholder and owns no landed property. Maintaining a family of six during the lockdown is a tough ask for him. Expecting him to support studies for his two children using smartphones is almost cruel. With no school to attend and no smartphone to take online classes, it is being observed that many children in the panchayat are engaged in agricultural work to help their parents financially.

With only seven months to go for the crucial matricu-

lation examination for 2020-21 academic year, as many as 90 per cent of students in the panchayat have not even started the first chapters of the six subjects in the syllabus. With no help forthcoming, how they will manage to complete all the chapters in less than seven months is a matter of concern both for parents and students.

The enormity or the course and the difficulty to get affordable education are taking a toll on the mental health of students. Besides, it is expected to do long-term damage by increasing the dropout rate.

When questioned about the issue, Kendrapara district education officer Sanjib Kumar Singh said he has

sent a letter to his higher-ups for smooth operation of online education in rural areas of Kendrapara.

That said, how the education department and the state government manage to handle the issue in Kendrapara and beyond is yet to be seen.

10 cops infected with virus in Kalahandi

KALAHANDI: Ten more police personnel tested positive for Covid-19 in Bhawanipatna of Kalahandi district. According to sources, the swab samples of the police personnel had been sent for tests. Reports Friday con-

firmed coronavirus positive for 10 personnel. Among the fresh cases, five are from reserve police, three from police station in Bhawanipatna, one each from Sadar station and IRB Battalion. Meanwhile, the district adminis-

tration declared shutdown Saturday and Sunday. Contact tracing has been initiated in some areas.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. 03-SBP-TRD-OT-2020-21, Date : 20.07.2020
Name of the work: CHECKING OF 25KV OHE BY FOOT PATROLLING IN THE SECTIONS TITLAGARH-LAKHOLI, TITLAGARH-SINGAPUR ROAD, LANJIGARH ROAD-JUNAGARH ROAD, SAMBALPUR-ANGUL & SAMBALPUR CITY-SARALA ROAD OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR THE PERIOD OF 12 MONTHS.
Advertised Value: ₹13,97,170.40. EMD: ₹28,000/-. Cost of Tender Document: ₹2,360/-.
Date & Time of Tender Closing: 11.08.2020, 1530 hrs., Date & Time of Tender Opening: 11.08.2020 at 1600 hrs.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete information including e-Tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD)/ Sambalpur PR-179/L/20-21

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, BIJEPUR
At/P.O./P.S. - Bijepur, Dist.- Bargarh, PIN - 768032 (Odisha)
E-mail ID: bijepurnac2018@gmail.com
No. 754 Dt. 24.07.2020

"e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. EO/Bijepur/01/2020-21
Bid documents consisting of specification, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in the Govt. website i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.

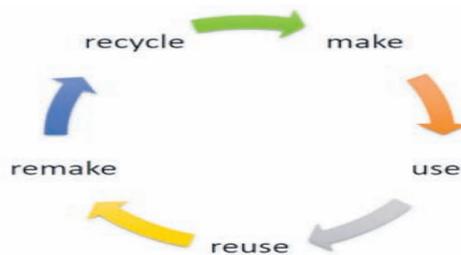
- Nature of Work : Civil Work
- No. of Works : 08 Nos.
- Estimated Cost : As per NIT
- Period of Completion : As per NIT
- Date and time of availability : From 10 hours of 27.07.2020 of the documents in the to 17 hours of 10.08.2020 portal
- Last date/time for receipt : Dt. 10.08.2020 upto 17 hours of bids in the portal
- Bids received online shall : Dt. 12.08.2020 at 11 hours be opened on
- Name and address of the : Executive Officer, NAC, Officer Inviting Bid Bijepur

Further the details can be seen from the procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Officer, NAC, Bijepur

UTKAL GRAMEEN BANK			
(Sponsored by State Bank of India)			
HEAD OFFICE, Club Para, Bolangir, PO/Dist.- Bolangir, PIN-767001			
AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE YEAR 2019-20			
BALANCE SHEET AS ON 31/03/2020			
(Rs. In thousand)			
CAPITAL & LIABILITIES	Schedule	As on 31.03.2020 (Current Year)	As on 31.03.2019 (Previous Year)
Capital	1	7022131	4949233
Perpetual Bond	1(A)	81383	81383
Share Capital Deposit	1(B)	2279360	323367
Reserves & Surplus	2	NIL	NIL
Deposits	3	70470647	64961540
Borrowings	4	2705	64678
Other Liabilities & Provisions	5	3371424	5288628
TOTAL		83227650	75668829
ASSETS			
Cash and Balances with Reserve Bank of India	6	2433284	3105879
Balances with Banks and Money at Call and Short Notice	7	9144247	4800215
Investments	8	36295684	32683472
Loans & Advances	9	23931935	24822387
Fixed Assets	10	76318	92352
Other Assets	11	11346182	10164524
TOTAL		83227650	75668829
Contingent Liabilities	12	509654	447308
Bills for Collection		NIL	NIL
Principal Accounting Policies and Notes on Accounts	17 & 18		
PROFIT & LOSS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st March, 2020			
	Schedule	As on 31.03.2020 (Current Year)	As on 31.03.2019 (Previous Year)
I. INCOME			
Interest earned	13	5116834	3855392
Other income	14	619604	408206
TOTAL		5736438	4263598
II. EXPENDITURE			
Interest expended	15	3379159	3283951
Operating expenses	16(A)	1787324	1581881
Provisions & contingencies	16(B)	1964881	3172084
TOTAL		7131364	8037916
III. PROFIT & LOSS			
Profit before tax		-1394926	-3774318
Less : Tax Provision		NIL	NIL
Provision for Income Tax for the Financial Year			
Profit after Tax		-1394926	-3774318
Loss brought forward	(*)	-8239742	-4465424
TOTAL		-9634668	-8239742
Balance carried over to Balance Sheet		-9634668	-8239742
TOTAL		-9634668	-8239742
(1) Above financial results have been audited by the Statutory Central Auditors M/s Agasti & Associates, BBSR in line with the guidelines issued by NABARD and signed by the SCA on 11.05.2020 and approved by the Board of Directors of the Bank (2) The Financial results have been arrived at as per the standard accounting principles and after considering provisions for Non Performing Assets/ Standard Assets as per prudential norms issued by NABARD and other required provisions.			
Place: Bolangir	(Manmohan Sahoo)	(Ranjit Kumar Mishra)	
Date: 11/05/2020	(General Manager I)	(Chairman)	

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

CASE FOR CIRCULAR ECONOMY



The use and throw model of 'Linear Economy' was replaced by 'Make, Use and Re-use' model for the first time in the report by Walter Stahel and Genevieve Reday for European Commission in 1976

driven open-ended growth model is unsustainable and is the primary driver of global heating leading to the ecological breakdown and climate crisis. In 2012, Kate Raworth, a senior research associate at Oxford University, introduced the idea of a Doughnut economy in order to make human welfare the basis of economic policy rather than the all-pervading pursuit of growth in GDP. Economic welfare was defined as per the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that provide for a set of minimum living standards by the United Nations that should be treated as a matter of right for every human being. She extended the basic circular flow of money and goods model of economics by adding the nine planetary boundaries on the outside and social boundary consisting of SDGs on the inside - thus forming the doughnut. In this model, the economic progress was to be measured in terms of the balance between human wellbeing and protection of life support systems provided by the planet, thus mitigating global warming, ecological breakdown, and climate change. Since its introduction, this post-growth economic thinking has attracted the attention of a range of actors ranging from the UN General Assembly to the Occupy London movement. As many communities, cities, states, and countries start re-examining prevalent strategies and economic policies in light of the current pandemic, the doughnut model is being explored as an alternative and even adopted by cities like Amsterdam for its future.

Gandhi was a lifelong proponent of 'Gram Swaraj' or the 'village republic' which he discussed in his seminal book 'Hind Swaraj'. In it, he had promoted the idea of self-reliance and living within one's means and in harmony with nature. The ideas of CE and Doughnut model seem to be imbued in that spirit of each person taking only as much as required and organising society into self-sufficient communities with a deep concern for our planet.

The author is a visiting research scholar, Hong Kong University of Science & Technology

Mahatma Gandhi said almost seventy-five years ago - "Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed." This was at a time when the world was not yet faced with the threat of sixth mass extinction. Gandhi was driven by the idea of Leo Tolstoy (The Kingdom of God is Within You) and John Ruskin (Unto This Last) who were deeply affected by the all-pervasive inequalities in human existence leading to untold miseries. They were inspired by spirituality in a deeply secular non-religious sense as was Gandhi.

The Nobel prize-winning economist Milton Friedman famously said - "The only corporate social responsibility a company has is to maximise its profits." When such an approach drives much of the capitalist world's business, the natural outcome is a greed-driven, consumerist society that results in fast depletion of natural resources, pollution, environmental degradation, and eventually the accumulated damage that has brought humanity to the verge of extinction. Such an economic model has been based on the so-called linear economy comprising of 'Take, Make, Use, and Dispose'. In such a model, the true cost of goods and services is hidden due to a lack of accounting for the cost of pollution caused to the air, water, land, and sea as well as the remaining value of the product when discarded.

The idea of Circular Economy (CE) goes back to the nineteen sixties when the concept of the open economy, as opposed to the closed economy, was talked about by Kenneth Boulding. The use and throw model of the 'Linear Economy' was replaced by 'Make, Use and Re-use' model for the first time in the report by Walter Stahel and Genevieve Reday for European Commission in 1976. The best way to understand what CE is by examining a real-life case study. Take lighting for instance. It has always been known that a light bulb could be designed to last a lifetime but was never profitable to do so for obvious reasons. However, the current trend is to lease lighting as a service rather than lights as a product which is phrased by the light-

ing company Phillips as - 'Circular Lighting'. Such an approach vastly reduces the huge amount of discarded lights from going to landfill. It incentivises the manufacturer to build the product to last as long as possible, design it for easy re-cycling and also take responsibility for the entire life cycle of the product. Apple is another good example. The company announced in 2017 that they will be making all new iPhones, iPads, and other products from 100 per cent recycled materials. The company has been known for collecting back all its products at the time of an upgrade.

Modern lifestyle dependent on the linear or open industrial processes, uses finite natural resources to create products with a limited service life, that finally end up in landfills or in incinerators. On the other hand, CE is inspired by living systems like organisms that process nutrients that can eventually be fed back into the production cycle. Bio-mimicry 'cradle to cradle' instead of 'cradle to grave', closed-loop, or regenerative are some of the other terms usually associated with it. The World Economic Forum, World Resources Institute, Philips, Ellen MacArthur Foundation, United Nations Environment Programme, and 40 other partners launched the Platform for Accelerating the Circular Economy (PACE) in the year 2018 to scale up circular economy innovations. Global corpo-

IN RECENT TIMES, IT HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT A FREE MARKET-DRIVEN OPEN-ENDED GROWTH MODEL IS UNSUSTAINABLE AND IS THE PRIMARY DRIVER OF GLOBAL HEATING LEADING TO THE ECOLOGICAL BREAKDOWN AND CLIMATE CRISIS



Dhanada K. Mishra



Aakar Patel

The Chinese are sitting on our territory and pointing out to Modi's own statements where he says there is no intrusion, as proof that they are right and we are wrong

Modi's grand announcements

Whenever in your life, you meet with a hardship, take it as a boon from the Divine's Grace and it will become so.

THE MOTHER



The prime minister will lay the foundation stone for the new Ram temple at Ayodhya. It is certain to be a grand ceremony as is the case with things we associate with our PM. It will happen on August 5, which will be the first anniversary of the day Kashmir lost its constitutional status.

Article 370 has not been abrogated as is falsely claimed. It remains on the Constitution. What has been done is to de-operationalise it. It is not known what the point of that action was. In the six months of this year over 200 have already been killed in violence in Kashmir. That is at twice the rate of last year. Under this government, Kashmir is increasing in violence, reversing a long term trend of decline that was seen under Vajpayee and Manmohan Singh. Kashmir is being kept under control essentially through military rule. Kashmiris have no internet and are unable to express themselves. Their pleas to the Supreme Court have gone unheard. Or at least have been put in abeyance like many other things. But of course the grand gesture of 'abrogation' is what the point of it all was. Let us turn to other fields of battle, and our Mahabharata against Covid.

The prime minister has stopped making his 8 pm announcements here and clearly has become bored with the subject. It is true that this plague is one that can only partially be controlled by the government. But there are things that the government can do. Neighbouring Pakistan has appeared to flatten its curve of growth in positive cases. It has fallen consistently from a high of 6800 cases on June 14 to 4000 cases on June 28 to 1200 cases on July 24. India has gone from 11,000 cases on June 14 to 20,000 cases on June 28 to almost 49,000 cases on July 24. Till about a short time ago, Pakistan had half the number of cases as India though their population is only a fifth of ours. Now they seem to have got things under control in a way that India has not. Cases in Bangladesh have also been dropping in the same period. Having made his grand announcement, Modi has moved on. The announcement that he was most enthusiastic about, the 8 pm bombshell of November 8, 2016 has gutted the Indian economy. The government has tried to hide its damage by fudging GDP data. Two weeks ago, the former Reserve Bank of India Governor C Rangarajan said that the government should end the controversy over its manner of calculating GDP. This government's former economic advisor Arvind Subramanian himself has calculated that India is reporting 2.5 per cent higher GDP growth figures than actual ones.

A report in Mint on Saturday said that all economic indicators showed that the government was bluffing. Growth in factory output has fallen from 9 per cent before 2011 to 2 per cent. The Modi government's own National Sample Survey showed that rural consumption grew at minus 1.5 per cent, meaning it actually declined in the Modi years. Even urban consumption fell from 3.4 per cent to 0.3 per cent. Corporate investments went from 23 per cent growth to minus 1.8 per cent. Bank credit growth fell from 14 per cent to 4 per cent, but the GDP growth figures remain the same: 7 per cent before Modi and 7 per cent after, which is unbelievable given all the other data. Unemployment remains at levels it has never touched in history, over 8 per cent. On Friday the RBI said that non-performing assets with banks (meaning dud loans) would rise from the current 8.5 per cent to 12.5 per cent by March and perhaps even higher. The finance minister keeps babbling on about seeing green shoots in the economy, a phrase meaning that there are signs of life. Nobody believes her of course or takes her seriously.

Having made his grand announcement on Make in India, Modi has lost interest there as well. Manufacturing share of GDP in India has fallen from 15 per cent before the announcement to 14 per cent after. Vietnam and Bangladesh have gone up in this time.

Other than announcements it has to figure what this government is good at doing. The Citizenship Amendment Act was passed with great bombast about how Modi would protect the persecuted minorities of South Asia. But the Act's rules have still not been written by the government meaning it is not in force and cannot protect anyone.

On the frontier with China, there is trouble. But Modi has solved it with a stirring speech delivered from Ladakh. There is no action after that. By October, the passes that we use to supply that area will be snowed in. Our soldiers, some 2 lakh of them now, will have to manage without proper habitats. The Chinese built habitats for their forces in the last three years after the incident at Doklam, which Modi took lightly. The Chinese are sitting on our territory and pointing out to Modi's own statements where he says there is no intrusion, as proof that they are right and we are wrong. What was the need to make that statement? It is not clear, but he has moved on from there to the next exciting thing.

Look forward to his speech next week. It will be entertaining and stirring and make lots of promises that he most likely will not be able to keep. But at least he can guarantee us more speeches and announcements.

WISDOM CORNER

- Let the future tell the truth, and evaluate each one according to his work and accomplishments. The present is theirs; the future, for which I have really worked, is mine. **NIKOLA TESLA**
- Happiness is not something ready made. It comes from your own actions. **DALAI LAMA**
- Work is love made visible. And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy. **KHALIL GIBRAN**

WORDSWORTH

Swashbuckling

A swashbuckler these days is somebody who engages in romantic and daring piratical adventures with ostentatious flamboyance. People who have fun with the word, as a writer in the Guardian did recently, usually talk about some film hero buckling his swash. A nice try, but there's no verb buckle hidden in it - the verbal bit is actually swash. You should really say that the hero swashes his buckler, but it's not as good a joke. A member of this breed centuries ago actually did little more than that. A buckler was a type of small shield, held by a handle at the back, whose main purpose was to deflect blows from the sword of one's opponent. Its name is from Old French (escu) bocler, literally "(a shield) with a boss" (this last word, for a protrusion at the centre of something, is itself from French). Someone who swashes is dashing about violently or lashing out with his sword, often in pretend fights. It seems to have been an echoic term from the sound of swords clashing or banging on shields. In the sixteenth century swashbuckler was created from these two words to convey the idea of a swaggering, bullying ruffian or undisciplined lout, who made a lot of noise but to little practical purpose.

SPECTRUM BUILT ENVIRONMENT

A Marshall Plan for planetary health



Tolullah Oni

IT IS NOW CLEAR THAT OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM INCREASES FOOD INSECURITY, OUR STREETS PRIORITISE MOTORISED TRAFFIC OVER PHYSICAL EXERCISE, AND OUR HOUSES INCREASE THE RISK OF DISEASE TRANSMISSION

The pandemic has heightened awareness of significant flaws in our urban infrastructure, and highlighted our lack of attention to how human health, natural systems, and the built environment interact to determine planetary health. It is now clear our economic system increases food insecurity, our streets prioritise motorised traffic over physical exercise, and our houses increase the risk of disease transmission.

The near-universal focus on health prompted by the pandemic presents an opportunity to mobilise all sectors of society toward embracing proactive approaches to inclusive wellbeing. Building resilient and sustainable systems for health, particularly in the context of cities and urban development, will be key in this regard.

At best, the failure fully to address the adverse implications of today's built environments represents a missed opportunity to enable healthy communities. At worst, it actively contributes to disease risk and transmission. In the UK, for example, the higher COVID-19 mortality in poor people has illustrated the short-sightedness of housing policies that fail to place health and ecological considerations at their cen-

ter. One positive feature of the current crisis has been the rapid adoption of innovative measures (including versions of universal income) to mitigate the pandemic's immediate economic impact. This shows that we can address systemic failures quickly when the will exists.

Likewise, we must radically reimagine our built environments so that they both strengthen the immediate pandemic response and serve as vehicles for improving long-term health. And while cities will be the primary testing ground for reforms to promote health and wellbeing, it will also be necessary to overhaul existing health governance systems.

Although global philanthropic initiatives have sought to improve urban health and resilience, undoubtedly with positive results, today's flawed systems need more fundamental disruption. Simply put, the world needs a new Marshall Plan for planetary health - akin to a New Deal for a post-pandemic recovery. Such a scheme would require the agreement and participation of national and local governments, private developers, investors, and multilateral organisations, which will take time. Governments and private-sector actors will need to address three issues in particular. For starters, policy-

makers should not regard resilience only as an end result. Many of the shocks and stressors that drive acute and protracted health emergencies stem from intentional choices by local and global actors. Beyond adaptation to cope with these shocks and stressors, building resilience must therefore involve confronting the decisions that weaken systems by fostering ecological disruption and disease. In addition, policymakers must tackle the "problem blindness" that results from temporal and spatial distance between exposure to health risks and subsequent outcomes, especially for diseases with a long arc.

Finally, policymakers will need to address the "wrong pocket problem," whereby the sector benefiting from an intervention may not be the one that bears the cost of implementing it. This poses a challenge to promoting health through urban development, particularly in the context of siloed public-sector budgets, and will necessitate a redesign of health financing.

Alternatives to the current GDP-based approach to economic development already exist. Bhutan has developed a Gross National Happiness index to guide its policymakers, while the Wellbeing Economy Alliance advocates for a

wellbeing-based economic system and is being embraced by the governments of New Zealand, Iceland, Scotland, and Wales. But addressing the three issues noted above will require finance and investment in systems for health.

The devastating impact of COVID-19 has highlighted the urgent need for ambitious, all-encompassing reforms rather than incremental, piecemeal measures. A global Marshall Plan for planetary health would constitute a radical new approach, and would be an important step toward health-proofing the future of fast-growing cities. In addition to finance and investment from public and private sectors, it will require a social movement (led by the young) to drive the unremitting demand for a healthy post-COVID recovery, supported by research across the sciences, arts, and humanities. Preventing toxic decisions in urban planning and infrastructure development is essential to reduce vulnerability to disease, lessen the need for healthcare, and bring about better cities and better health for all.

Tolullah Oni, a public health physician and urban epidemiologist, is a 2019 World Economic Forum Young Global Leader. @PROJECT SYNDICATE

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST are most welcome to contribute letters (200 words), articles and columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulpur Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Demand for awards

Sir, Most of the people in India demand for the Bharat Ratna and other awards after the death of an eminent personality. In some cases, awards have been given to personalities when they have no vision and memory to recognise even their kin. Honour to any dedicated person after death is applicable in the field of military services. But is it appropriate to felicitate other eminent personalities in the field of literature, sports, arts, and social service after death? We are living in an amazing country where people have no attention towards eminent personalities at the time of their living. But after death, we demand awards for them.

Santosh Kumar Mohanty, SAFA, CUTTACK

Heinous crime

Sir, We are perplexed to know this news that in a Covid hospital, a young doctor molested and attempted to rape a 25-year-old woman patient who was recuperating in an isolation ward at Aligarh in Uttar Pradesh. Everyone expects good administration during the BJP rule. But, what is the Yogi Adityanath administration doing? That doctor committed this heinous crime during a pandemic. We hope exemplary punishment will be given to the accused doctor.

Naresh Mandal, PRACHI NAGAR, BHADRAK

Alarming situation

Sir, Chanceswar is the main industrial area of Bhubaneswar. The number of COVID-19 patients has risen sharply in recent days. As it is an industrial area, hundreds of workers come here every day to work. In the last few days, there has been a rise in the number of people testing COVID positive from various industries. They are infecting themselves as well as infecting the locals. The factory owners do not follow government guidelines. Although, the government has had a lockdown until July 31, regular workers are still working. The factory owners are not making any arrangements for their safety. If this continues, the entire Chanceswar area will be affected by COVID-19 in the next few days. Therefore, there is a general demand for regular inspections of all the industrial units here, sanitisation of the entire Chanceswar area, and declaration of the area as a containment zone for a few days.

Pravat Kumar Mishra, VSS NAGAR, BHUBANESWAR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Highway plan altered to save 400-year-old banyan tree

Mumbai, July 25: Following a sustained campaign by villagers and support from Tourism Minister Aditya Thackeray, the Centre has bowed down to save a four-centuries old banyan tree and a crucial tiger corridor in Maharashtra from various developmental projects, officials said here Saturday.

Thackeray had written to Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar and the Union Coal Ministry for the twin objectives of saving the old tree from a highway project in Western Maharashtra and a commercial mining project that would hit a tiger corridor in Vidarbha region.

The Union Coal Ministry was planning to auction the Bander coal mine in Tadoba Tiger Sanctuary, Chandrapur district, which would have destroyed



more than 1,200 hectares of prime forest land, plus the tiger corridor linking the reserve with sanctuaries in Wardha and Amravati districts.

Bowing to a plea by Aditya Thackeray, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, Forest Minister Sanjay Rathod, former union minister Jairam Ramesh and others, July 21, the Centre

said the Bander Coal Mine auction was withdrawn since the region (Bander) falls in an eco-sensitive zone declared by the Union Ministry of Environment. The massive banyan tree with a shady spread of over 400 sq. metres, standing beside the famed Yellamma Temple in Bhoze village, Sangli district was threatened by the

expansion of the Solapur-Sangli-Kolhapur-Ratnagiri Expressway.

The Yellamma Temple Trust, Bhoze villagers and environmentalists led by Bandu Dhotre recently organised a protest by hugging the banyan tree and sought intervention of Aditya Thackeray in their mission.

Aditya Thackeray wrote a letter to Union Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari July 16, urging that the highway could be realigned to save the tree which is not only historical but also a natural home for many rare birds, mammals, monkeys and insects.

Last Wednesday, a team from National Highways Authority of India visited the spot for a survey and to discuss the issue in detail with Bhoze villagers, the temple trustees and environmentalists.

NHAI officials concluded that it would not be necessary to cut off the banyan tree but trim its branches a bit

for the highway to run beside without causing any obstructions to the traffic and realign the service road to save the tree.

In tweets on the two issues, Aditya Thackeray expressed gratitude to the central ministers and the CM and others for their gesture which had helped save the tiger corridor and the banyan tree in the state.

Last week, CM Uddhav Thackeray wrote to the Centre on the gauge conversion of the 176-km long Akola-Khandwa line passing through India's oldest Melghat Tiger Reserve, and sought a realignment of the project.

In late June, the state government issued a notification declaring 29.53 sq.km in Dodamarg sub-district of Sindhudurg as the Tillari Conservation Reserve which houses many wild animals and also is a tiger corridor for reserved in Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka.

WHY MAHA CM DOESN'T WANT TO LIFT LOCKDOWN



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 25: Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray Saturday said that he was not in favour of complete lifting of the coronavirus-induced lockdown in the state only to address the economic concerns.

He said there was a need to strike a balance between the issues related to health and economy considering the challenge posed by the pandemic.

"I will never say that the lockdown will be lifted completely. But I have started reopening a few things gradually. Once reopened, it shouldn't be shut again. Hence, I prefer taking steps in phases. You can't just think about economy or health. There needs to be a balance between the two," he said.

Thackeray made this statement in an interview published in Shiv Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana' on Saturday.

The ongoing lockdown in the state will continue till July 31. From June onwards, the government had started lifting the restrictions in phase-wise manner under its 'Mission Begin Again' initiative.

"This pandemic is a global war. It has affected the entire world. Those countries which had lifted the lockdown in haste thinking that it was over, were again forced to impose it to curb the spread. In Australia, they had to rope in Army"

he said. "Many people are opposing lockdown. They say that lockdown is affecting the economy. To such people, I would say that I am ready to lift the lockdown, but if people die due to it, would you take the responsibility?...Even we are concerned about the economy," he said.

On the restarting of the suburban railway network in Mumbai, he said, "What if families fall ill and their houses are sealed? Therefore, everything would be done step-by-step."

Speaking about his government which has completed six months in office, Thackeray said that he was leading a three-party alliance government supported by some independents.

"This is not just Thackeray sarkar, but everybody's sarkar, especially that of the citizens of the state, who have accepted this experiment," he added.

After the assembly polls last year, the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress came together to form

the government in the state.

Thackeray said the six-month period has been full of challenges like the coronavirus pandemic and Nisarga cyclone, which hit the coastal parts of the state on June 3.

"I am not bothered about the political challenges. People have faith in me," he said.

Talking about the coronavirus situation in Mumbai, he said, "There was never a need to call the Army in Mumbai. I am proud of the administration which rose to the challenge and set up jumbo field hospitals for treatment of coronavirus patients in the city."

Speaking about the criticism that he has not been to the Mantralaya, the state secretariat, during the pandemic, the chief minister said that technology helps people in doing all the work and there was no need to travel.

"I can be at home and cover the entire state with help of technology and take quick decisions. I am not saying one shouldn't move out. But when you are at one place only while through video-conference you can go everywhere," he said.

"I am not bothered what critics say till people trust me. I am honest with my work," he added. On starting the academic year during the pandemic, Thackeray said e-learning was the only option. When asked about Leader of Opposition Devendra Fadnis's recent visit to Delhi, Thackeray said sarcastically that he might have gone there to take stock of the coronavirus situation in the national capital.

"He goes to Delhi and speaks about Maharashtra's COVID-19 situation since he has given his MLA funds in Delhi," the CM said in an apparent reference to BJP MLAs donating to PM Cares Fund and not to the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

Recently, a survey listed Maharashtra chief minister as the best CM in the country. This caused stomach pain to many," he said. "Coronavirus has many symptoms. Stomach ache may be one of them. Loss of taste is also a symptom," he said sarcastically when he was asked if life has become tasteless for some since the MVA government came to power.

Thackeray also rejected the criticism that his government had hidden the number of coronavirus victims.

"The WHO and Washington Post have taken note of the state government's efforts," he said.

Is New Delhi re-negotiating with NC?

THAT DELHI IS KEEPING ITS 'HOTLINE' ALIVE WITH THE NC GAINS CREDENCE BY THE FACT THAT SO FAR IT HAS REMAINED IN ONE PIECE AND NONE OF ITS LEADERS HAS DESERTED THE PARTY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, July 25: Although Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir are unlikely to be held any time soon, the lack of a powerful alternative to regional players is worrisome for supporters of "the new political dawn in Kashmir".

There had been talk of "a new political dawn in Kashmir" after the abrogation of Article 370. Badly bruised and battered, the two main regional political parties, the National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), initially seemed to have reached the end of their road after they failed to achieve any of their poll promises. The NC claimed it would get internal autonomy and the PDP promised self-rule. For Kashmiris, the two slogans were alike, but both promised to keep the already existing Articles 370 and 35A beyond negotiation. Instead of getting what they promised, the NC and the PDP were left dumbfounded when the state was bifurcated and down-



No crystal ball gazing can reveal the answer to whether or not the NC would be ready to take its new avatar by giving up on its 70-year-long promises to Kashmiris

graded into two Union Territories and Articles 370 and 35A thrown into the dustbin by the Parliament.

The going could just not have been better for new faces with honest backgrounds and intentions to come forward and fill the void, while semi-separatism could no longer work as the separatists had already lost the plot. Those who

had joined or remained in the mainstream political camp by opposing the NC and the PDP had a future, or at least, believed that they had one.

The PDP's house fell apart brick by brick, with almost all its senior leaders, except those personally loyal to chief Mehbooba Mufti, deserting the party. Peoples Conference President Sajad Lone, who called Prime Minister

PARTY AFFAIRS

Farooq Abdullah and his son, Omar Abdullah have been released from detention

Both of them said they would speak about Article 370's abrogation and related developments when the time is right

There was no outburst of rebellion from the father-son duo who were visibly hurt, since the NC has sided with Delhi for over 70 years but its leadership was still locked up in August last year by the Centre

luck at what he called honest politics by formation his own party. Initially, he seemed to gain support, but Faesal has since drifted away from mainstream politics.

Altaf Bukhari, who was expelled from PDP, has formed JK Apni Party with participation from both the Valley and Jammu. Branded "New Delhi's agent in Kashmir", Bukhari has successfully countered the propaganda of his adversaries.

There are reports that New Delhi has revived contacts with NC. The visit of former RAW chief, AS Dulat to Srinagar to meet Farooq Abdullah early this year could not have happened without the Centre's explicit permission. Would Delhi be forced to re-negotiate its political terms with the NC without going back on Article 370's abrogation? Would grant of statehood be good enough for the NC to stand up to its promise of upholding the singularity of Kashmir in the eyes of its supporters? Both these look far-fetched, but politics has always been the art of the possible.

Kashmir saffron gets GI tag



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, July 25: The world famous Kashmir saffron has now got the prestigious geographical indication (GI) certification from the government of India to certify its authenticity and world class prominence.

An official statement Saturday said: "Lt Governor GC Murmu has expressed happiness on the Government of India issuing the GI tag for Kashmir Saffron. This is the first major step to put saffron produced in the Kashmir Valley on the world map with authenticity. With the GI tag, Kashmir saffron will acquire more prominence in the export market and would help the farmers get the best remunerative price."

"Lt Governor while complimenting the director agriculture Kashmir for pursuing GI certification said that restoring the pristine glory of Kashmir saffron is top priority for both the government of UT of J&K as well as the government of India. He further said that with the completion and inauguration of State of Art Spice Park next month, these measures will prove to be the game changer for Kashmir Saffron."

Giving further details, Navin K

Choudhary, Principal Secretary to Government, Agricultural production Department, said that GI certification establishes specific geographical origin and certifies certain unique qualities of the product.

"GI certification enables those who have the right to use sign in order to prevent third party using the sign. This GI certification would also stop the prevalent adulteration of Kashmir saffron and thereby authenticated saffron will fetch much better prices."

UNIQUE SPICE

Kashmir saffron is the only one in the world grown at an altitude of 1600 metres, which adds to its uniqueness and differentiates it from other saffron varieties.

It has longer and thicker stigma, natural deep-red colour, high aroma, bitter flavour, chemical free processing and high quality colour strength

Pampore, the hub of saffron in Kashmir, is expected to have a bumper crop of the spice this season due to initiatives taken by the National Mission on Saffron (NMS)

Under the NMS, a project of ₹411 crore was approved by the Union government under which an area of 3,715 hectare for saffron was proposed to be rejuvenated

J&K sees increase in COVID recovery rate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, July 25: The COVID-19 recovery rate in Jammu and Kashmir increased to 53.10 per cent while the positivity rate stood at 3 per cent as against the national average of 8.3 per cent, officials said Saturday.

The testing rate in the Union Territory has also improved to 44,744 sample examinations per million population as against the national average of 12,742, they said.

"The COVID-19 recovery rate in Jammu and Kashmir has touched 53.01 per cent in 20 days, starting from July 3 till July 23," an officer said.

He said coronavirus infection cases per million in the Union Territory stood at 1,339, though it is far low in Jammu division at 623 as against 1,899 in Kashmir division.

"The overall positivity rate in the Union Territory is 3 per cent as against 8.3 per cent in the country. It is 1.3 per cent in Jammu and 4.7 per cent in Kashmir," officer said.

Jammu and Reasi districts have recorded the lowest 0.8 positivity rate in the Union Territory, while south Kashmir's Shopian district has



witnessed the highest positivity rate at 8.3 per cent followed by Baramulla at 5.3 per cent.

In Kashmir division, Bandipora and Ganderbal districts recorded the lowest 2.3 per cent positivity rate, while in Jammu region, Ramban district had the highest 3.7 per cent positivity rate followed by 2.1 per cent in Rajouri.

The Union Territory also has a considerably low mortality rate of 1.7 per cent as against 2.4 per cent in the whole country. The mortality rate in Jammu is at 0.6 per cent as against 2 per cent in Kashmir.

Pune's 'warrior granny' leaves minister speechless



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Pune, July 25: A 85-year-old woman, who has become popular on social media for displaying stunning martial arts skills and unbelievable stunts with sticks and rods on Pune's streets to earn a living, had an unexpected visitor Saturday - Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh.

A resident of Hadapsar, Shantabai Balu Pawar was happy at the encounter with the minister near her modest home and even performed a few martial arts tricks, leaving Deshmukh visibly impressed, while a large crowd including MLA Chetan V. Tupe and others applauded her impromptu performance.

It was a couple of days ago when actor Riteish Deshmukh shared a video of 'Warrior Granny' which instantly became viral with many celebs, in-

cluding actors Sonu Sood, and Aishwarya Kale, following suit and Pune Police Commissioner Dr. K. Venkatesham commenting: "Talent has no boundaries."

Later, enquiries revealed that Shantabai had learnt her 'lathi-kathi' skills at the age of eight and continues to be an expert even after eight decades, displaying them with practised perfection on roads to earn a living, and touching scenes of her saga were recorded on social media.

Sood has offered to open a small training school where Shantabai can train and impart her skills to the youth, and others have appealed to schools to invite her to conduct workshops for students. Many more have rushed financial and material support as the woman, who has even worked with the late actress Sridevi as a background artiste, is known to support several orphan kids as her own family members.

While Minister Deshmukh greeted her with folded hands, complimented her on her talents and offered her ₹100,000 plus a set of clothes, the Pune police's 'Bharosa Cell' has also extended monetary assistance. Kale shared Shantabai's contact and bank details appealing to people to help 'Warrior Granny' with money, grocery, education materials, professional assignments, etc. to ensure the well-being of her extended family.

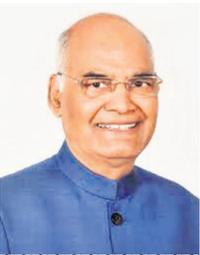


I am not Donald Trump. I cannot see my people suffer (from COVID-19) in front of my eyes

UDDHAV THACKERAY |
MAHARASHTRA CHIEF MINISTER

PRESIDENT RAM NATH KOVIND COMPLETES 3 YEARS IN OFFICE

President Ram Nath Kovind completed three years in office Saturday with the Rashtrapati Bhavan noting that he guided the country in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and met nearly 7,000 people during the year



of the day quote

The conspiracy to demolish the Rajasthan government is clear. This is an insult to the eight crore people of Rajasthan. The Governor should call a session of the Legislative Assembly so that the truth comes before the country

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

In view of the daily rise of corona epidemic in country's largest state Uttar Pradesh, the government should immediately give proper attention to corona testing, facilities in hospitals and cleanliness in COVID centres

MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY

The Chief Minister (Ashok Gehlot) is talking about surrounding the Raj Bhawan. If we call upon the public, people will come on streets to depose him

HANUMAN BENIWAL | RLP CONVENER

GEHLOT READY TO APPROACH PREZ, IF REQUIRED

AGENCIES

Jaipur, July 25: A day after the face-off with Governor Kalraj Mishra over convening of a special Assembly session, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, here Saturday, said he would foil the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) plan of toppling the state government and even "go to the President, if required".

Addressing the MLAs at Fairmont Hotel, Gehlot said if required we would stay in the hotel for 21 more days. The MLAs hailed the Chief Minister by raising their hands. The legislators are camping at the hotel to block any attempt of poaching.

The Chief Minister called a Cabinet meeting at 4 p.m. reportedly to discuss a new proposal for the Assembly session.

While some Congress officials said the Chief Minister was scheduled to meet the Governor during the day, the Raj Bhavan officials told the media, "No such appointment has been sought".

The Governor is facing flak from the Gehlot government for not acceding to its request of convening the Assembly session. The Governor Friday maintained that no one was above the Constitutional decorum.

On convening the Assembly session, the Raj Bhavan said a letter had been sent to the Rajasthan Parliamentary Affairs Department, raising some points, like the date from which the session was to be convened as it was not mentioned in the Cabinet note and no approval had been given by the cabinet.

"Neither justification nor any agenda has been proposed to call the session on short notice. In the

normal process, the 21-day notice is required to call a session," it said.

Instructing the state government to ensure independence and free movement of MLAs, it said as the case of disqualification of some MLAs was under consideration of the high court and the Supreme Court, the state government should take that into cognisance. It also asked the state government to share the details how the session would be called amid the spread of coronavirus in the state.

The Congress MLAs Friday staged a protest at the Raj Bhavan, urging the Governor to give his approval for convening a special Assembly session.

After meeting the Governor Friday evening, Gehlot accused him of working under pressure of "top leaders" and hence, not giving permission to call a special Assembly session. Later, the Chief Minister called a Cabinet meeting at 9.30 p.m.

RAJASTHAN CRISIS

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■ On convening the Assembly session, the Raj Bhavan said a letter had been sent to the Rajasthan Parliamentary Affairs Department



SHORT TAKES

Bank officers arrested for graft

New Delhi: The CBI has arrested two officers of Central Bank of India posted in Narsinghpur district of Madhya Pradesh and a private person for alleged bribery to enhance cash credit limit, officials said Saturday. Anurag Basesia, Manager (Agriculture), and officer Parag Nandanwar, both posted at Goteagaon, Narsinghpur, and Mohan Singh Lodhi were taken into custody by the CBI while exchange was bribe was allegedly taking place, they said. The agency said a case was registered on allegations that the officers were demanding a bribe of Rs 50,000 from the complainant for enhancing the cash credit limit.

Kidnapped minor rescued

Lucknow: A six-year-old grandson of a trader was rescued and four people who allegedly abducted him were arrested after an encounter in Uttar Pradesh's Gonda district on Saturday, officials said. Some persons, allegedly carrying identity cards of the Health Department, had come to a locality in Colonelganj Friday afternoon on the pretext of distributing masks, according to police. Later, the family got a call from a woman for a ransom Rs 4 crore, a police official said.

43 cows die of suffocation

Bilaspur: At least 43 cows died of suffocation in a small room of a panchayat building where they were allegedly locked in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district, a senior official said Saturday. The deaths came to light this morning when villagers experienced a foul odour emanating from the room, and found that some of the cattle had died, said Bilaspur collector Saransh Mittar.

Jaish hideout busted in Pulwama

Srinagar: Security forces Saturday busted a Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) terror group hideout in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district. Police said that acting on specific intelligence input security forces including Police, Rashtriya Rifles (RR) and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) launched a search operation in forest area of Chinphadi Machama (Tral) in the early hours of Saturday. During the search operation one sloping hideout of the JeM militants was busted and subsequently destroyed.

IN COMBAT MODE



Workers construct a new quarantine centre to take care of COVID-19 cases at Nehru Stadium in Guwahati, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

India's COVID tally zooms past 13 lakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

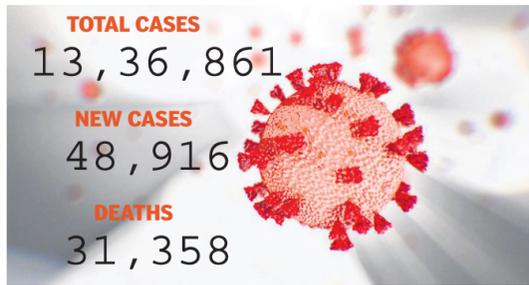
New Delhi, July 25: India's COVID-19 tally zoomed past 13 lakhs Saturday, just two days after it crossed the 12 lakh mark, while the recoveries mounted to 8,49,431, according to the Union Health Ministry.

With 48,916 fresh cases, the country's coronavirus infection tally surged to 13,36,861, while the death toll rose to 31,358 with 757 more people succumbing to the disease in the last 24 hours, data updated by the ministry at 8 am showed.

There are currently 4,56,071 active cases of COVID-19 in the country. Thus, around 63.54 per cent people have recovered so far.

This is the third consecutive day when COVID-19 cases increased by more than 45,000.

Of the 757 deaths reported, 278 were from Maharashtra, 108 from Karnataka, 88 from Tamil Nadu, 59 from Uttar Pradesh, 49 from Andhra Pradesh, 35 from West Bengal, 32 from Delhi, 26 from Gujarat, 14 from Jammu and Kashmir, 11 from Madhya Pradesh



and eight each from Rajasthan and Telangana.

Assam, Chhattisgarh and Odisha have reported six fatalities each, followed by Punjab five deaths, Kerala and Haryana four each, Bihar and Jharkhand three each, and Puducherry, Tripura, Meghalaya and Nagaland one fatality each.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 1,58,49,068 samples have been tested up to July 24 with 4,20,898 samples being tested on Friday, the highest conducted in a

day so far.

Of the total 31,358 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra tops the tally with 13,132 fatalities, followed by Delhi 3,777, Tamil Nadu 3,320, Gujarat 2,278, Karnataka 1,724, Uttar Pradesh 1,348, West Bengal 1,290, Andhra Pradesh 933 and Madhya Pradesh 791.

So far, 602 people have died of COVID-19 in Rajasthan, 455 in Telangana, 382 in Haryana, 296 in Jammu and Kashmir, 282 in Punjab, 220 in Bihar, 120 in Odisha, 76 in Assam, 70 in Jharkhand, 60 in Uttarakhand and 54 in Kerala.

India to purchase 6 more Poseidons

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 25: In a shopping spree for defence equipment amidst the military stand-off with China, India has officially begun the process to acquire six more long-range Poseidon-81 aircraft from the US. At the same time, India plans to fast-track procurement of six Predator-B armed drones.

Already, India is making use of the naval P-8I patrol planes, equipped with radars and electro-optic sensors, in addition to Harpoon Block-II missiles and MK-54 lightweight torpedoes, for surveillance over the Indian Ocean and also eastern Ladakh. Earlier, the Navy had inducted eight Boeing-manufactured P-8I aircraft under a \$2.1 billion deal. Four of these aircraft will be delivered from this December onwards under another \$1.1 billion contract.

According to top defence sources, the "letter of request" for six more P-8Is for around \$1.8 billion has been issued to the US for the government-to-government deal under Pentagon's foreign military sales (FMS) programme. "In turn, the US will soon send the 'letter of acceptance' after congressional approval. The contract may be signed early next year," sources revealed.

At the same time, the armed forces are considering "emergency procurement" of six Predator-B or weaponised Sea Guardian drones from the US in wake of the ongoing confrontation with China along the 3,488-km long Line of Actual Control, particularly in eastern Ladakh.

"While the original plan to acquire 30 Predators will take some more time, the utilisation of the fast-track procurement (FTP) route for acquiring six of these drones -



two each for the three Services - is now under consideration," sources added. Once India acquires these aircraft and drones they will provide a quantum leap in unnamed lethal capability for the armed forces.

The inking of the bilateral military pact with the US called COM-CASA (Communications, Compatibility and Security Arrangement) in September 2018 has paved the way for greater access to advanced military technologies with encrypted and secure communications and data links from the country.

PM reviews micro credit scheme for street vendors

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday reviewed the implementation of a special micro-credit facility for street vendors, stressing that it should not be seen from the perspective of extending loans to them but as part of an outreach for their holistic development and economic uplift.

The PM Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM SVANidhi) aims at facilitating a collateral free working capital loan of up to Rs 10,000 of one-year tenure, to help street vendors resume their businesses post lockdown.

The review meet was informed

that over 2.6 lakh applications have been received, over 64,000 have been sanctioned and over 5,500 have been disbursed.

The Prime Minister expressed satisfaction on the use of end-to-end IT solution through a web-portal and mobile application for administration of the scheme to ensure transparency, accountability and speed, an official statement said.

While noting that the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs is working on a complete IT solution, including mobile application, for seamless implementation of the scheme, the prime minister said that its design should incentivise use of end-to-end digital transactions by the street vendors.

COVID TURNS EID INSIPID FOR GOAT SELLERS

The novel coronavirus pandemic has hit businesses and people who could afford four goats till last year do not have enough money to buy even one this Eid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Shakeel Khan came from Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, around two weeks ago to sell his employer's goats at Delhi's famous caprine market near Jama Masjid. A week away from Eid al-Adha or Bakri Eid, he has not been able to

find any buyers.

With a little money left on him, the 22-year-old spends his nights outside closed shops on Urdu Bazar Road near the famous mosque.

"Had I been able to sell some of my goats and earn something, I would have found a shelter nearby," he says. The novel coronavirus pandemic has hit businesses and people who could afford four goats till last year do not have enough money to buy even one this Eid, says a buyer who approached Khan but could not seal the deal.

Khan's employer had fixed the price of a pair of goats, each weighing around 40 kg, at Rs 30,000. "The price is reasonable," he says.

"Last year, I sold eight goats for



Rs 1.6 lakh - Rs 20,000 a goat. This year, no buyer has offered more than Rs 10,000 a goat so far," says Khan, who has been a regular to the caprine market for five years.

Safeena, 53, and her daughter-

in-law have come from Filmistan area in Old Delhi to buy a goat for the festival July 31.

"We buy a goat every year. This year, our shop remained shut for most of the period," she says. "These

are tough times. We had saved some money for the festival but we cannot afford to splurge," Fariya, the daughter-in-law, says they bought a goat for Rs 15,000 last year.

"This year, we have got only Rs 10,000. It has been hard to find a nice goat in this price range," she says, resting for a while on a bench outside a cloth shop in the market.

Zaid Malik, the cloth shop owner, says the administration did not give permission for selling of goats this year for fear of coronavirus.

"Compared to previous years, there is nothing in the market this time. It would bustle with activity and you won't find any empty space. Now, you can count the number of people on your fingers," he says.

Copious monsoon rains spur summer crop sowing

REUTERS

New Delhi, July 25: Indian farmers have planted 79.9 million hectares with summer crops so far, according to the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, up 18.3% from last year as robust monsoon rains spurred sowing in the world's leading producer of farm goods.

Farmers generally start planting rice, corn, cotton, soybeans, sugarcane and peanuts, among other crops, from June 1, when monsoon rains typically arrive in India. Sowing usually lasts until July or early August.

Monsoon rains play a crucial role in agriculture, which employs 50% of India's 1.3 billion people, as nearly half of the country's farmland lacks irrigation.

The farm ministry provides updates on the provisional sowing figures as it gathers information from state governments. The planting figures are also subject to revision depending on the progress of the June-September monsoon season. As of Friday, planting of rice, the key summer crop, was at 22 million hectares, against 18.7 million hectares at the same time last year. Corn planting was at 7.1 million hectares, up from 6.6 million during the same period last year.

The area planted with cotton totalled 11.8 million hectares against 9.6 million hectares a year earlier. Sowing of soybeans, the main summer oilseed crop, stood at 11.4 million hectares, compared with 9.7 million hectares at the same time in 2019. Soybean output is set to jump by at least 15%. Planting of the protein-rich pulse was at 9.9 million hectares, higher than 7.9 million hectares last year. Sugar cane sowing was unchanged at 5.1 million hectares. India has received 6% above average rainfall since June 1.

Anil Kumar Jha appointed member of EAC

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 25: Anil Kumar Jha, former chairman of Coal India Ltd, has been appointed as the member of Expert Appraisal Committee (EAC) by the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

The Expert Appraisal Committee advises the government on environmental clearance of development projects. The committee was constituted in June 2017 to make recommendations to the Central government as cases of violation in all the sectors increased. It has a chairman and 10 members, including Anil Kumar Jha.

The role of EAC is integral to the process of granting environmental clearance to development projects. According to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006, evaluation of proposals involves four steps: screening, scoping, public hearing and appraisal. EAC are involved in various capacities in all the stages, except for public hearing.



Neither justification nor any agenda has been proposed to call the Assembly session on short notice. In the normal process, 21 days notice is required to call a session
KALRAJ MISHRA | RAJASTHAN GOVERNOR

RESORT IN PALGHAR RAIDED, 23 HELD FOR GAMBLING

Palghar police in Maharashtra raided a resort in Talasari in the early hours of Saturday an arrested 23 people, several of them from neighbouring Gujarat, for gambling, an official said



of the day quote

If the Akalis were at all concerned about COVID care in the state, they should ask the Centre why they had failed to support the Punjab government in this critical time
AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

A grand war memorial named 'Pancham Dham' will be built in Uttarakhand to honour martyrs from the state
TRIVENDRA SINGH RAWAT | UTTARAKHAND CHIEF MINISTER

Only those who loathe the country can describe subsidy as profit. The railways spent more money in running Shramik trains than it received from state governments
PIYUSH GOYAL | RAILWAY MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Two terrorists gunned down
Srinagar: Two terrorists have been killed in an encounter with the security forces at Ranbirgarh Panzinaara on the outskirts of Srinagar Saturday, officials said. IG Police Vijay Kumar said that two terrorists have been killed in the encounter. The identity of the killed terrorists has not been ascertained yet. Earlier, the security forces launched the operation on the basis of a specific intelligence input. Arms and ammunition have been recovered from the slain terrorists.

Woman beaten to death by husband
Banda (UP): A man beat his wife to death with a lathi over a family dispute in Uttar Pradesh's Banda district, police said Saturday. According to City Kotwali police station SHO Dinesh Singh, 35-year-old Zaheda had an argument with her husband on Friday evening, following which she was beaten to death. Her husband left their home in the Mardanaka area of the district after the incident and efforts were on to trace him, the SHO said.

Kolkata cop dies due to nCoV
Kolkata: A Kolkata Police constable succumbed to COVID-19 at a private hospital here, an officer said Saturday. Constable Krishna Kanta Barman posted at Hastings Police Station died Friday, a senior officer of Kolkata Police said. So far, three Kolkata Police personnel have died of COVID-19. Currently, over 270 police personnel of the force are undergoing treatment for COVID-19 at different hospitals, they said.

Man, cousin commit suicide
Shahjahanpur (UP): A 20-year-old man and his cousin committed suicide by hanging from a tree near Pankhakheda village, police said Saturday. Vipin and his cousin, Pooja (18), had gone missing from their houses Friday, SP City Sanjay Kumar said. According to villagers, both were in a relationship since the past two years but their families were against their marriage, the SP said.

IIT-M startup to launch nCoV tracker
New Delhi: A wearable wrist tracker to detect COVID-19 symptoms at an early stage will be available in the market next month with its developer; a IIT Madras incubated start up, raising a funding of ₹22 crore for the purpose. "Muse wearables", the startup incubated at IIT Madras by an alumni group along with a NIT Warangal alumnus, is planning to launch the trackers in 70 countries.

More measures likely to check China re-routing goods into India

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 25: India is looking at ways to restrict inward shipment of goods from China which are being re-routed through other countries such as Singapore and Malaysia with which New Delhi has trade agreements. Experts have suggested that India must make it mandatory for companies that are supplying goods to India to disclose their ownership pattern in detail. New Delhi has already imposed stringent measures including the 'rule of origin', which implies that all global suppliers of goods will have to mention the country of origin to restrict cheap imports from other countries including China. However, authorities said that there is "enough evidence" to suggest that the dragon nation has conveniently circumvented the rule book. Based on the country of origin, goods either attract tariff concessions or duties. Sample this. Chinese manufacturer Xinyi Glass is one of Malaysia's largest flat glass producers, which is also into exporting to other countries. It also has a plant in Canada. The Malaysia plant has a total installed capacity of 3,200 tonnes per day. Industry experts said that Malaysia's requirement a day is about 400 tonnes.

According to Glass Worldwide Official Journal, Malaysia exported \$240.2 million worth of flat glass products in 2018-a jump of 149.7 per cent over the previous year. Kibing Glass Malaysia, also a Chinese company, has set up manufacturing facilities in the southeast Asian country.



TRADE BAN
It is no secret that finished imported goods are priced less compared to those made in India due to the skewed trade agreements
India is looking at ways to restrict inward shipment of goods from China which are being re-routed through other countries such as Singapore and Malaysia with which New Delhi has trade agreements

While New Delhi's imports of glass products increased - Malaysia being one of the countries which exported to India-domestic manufacturers have been complaining of oversupply. This is severely hurting glass manufacturers. "Xinyi Glass began investing in Malaysia in 2014. Its phase-1 project, which started commercial production in May 2017, included a 1200 tonnes/day line for float glass at Malacca," the journal said. India and Malaysia signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) in 2011. Imports from Hong Kong, especially for electric and electronic items, too have been steadily increasing. "We need to have a well thought-out mechanism to curb dumping. We must boost our manufacturers. Due to lopsided trade policies of the past, the manufacturing sector has been systematically destroyed," Swadeshi Jagran Manch national co-convenor Ashwani Mahajan said, adding that Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat must be the

thrusts to generate jobs and become self-reliant. Nirupama Soundararajan, senior fellow and head of research, Pahle India Foundation, said that it is critical for India to reduce its dependence on China. "Indian manufacturers have the required capability but due to the cost factor-imports from China are cheaper - the manufacturing sector has suffered," Soundararajan said. She underlined the need for bringing in measures which will strop indirect trade between India and China. It is no secret that finished imported goods are priced less compared to those made in India due to the skewed trade agreements. Most experts have acknowledged that the free trade agreements have not benefited India and that they need to be revisited. Even before the government put in place stringent measures to restrict imports from China, the dragon had started using other countries such as Singapore and Malaysia besides Hong Kong to ship goods into India.

Varavara's family approaches NHRC seeking his health status

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, July 25: Family members of poet Varavara Rao, accused in the Elgar Parishad case, have moved the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) seeking a direction to a Mumbai hospital, where he is being treated for COVID-19, and prison authorities to provide "transparent" updates on his health status. The petition filed Friday stated that the family was compelled to approach the rights body as they were denied any information about his condition or his treatment at the Nanavati Hospital in Mumbai. "Today, we are compelled to write this letter to you, as we are denied



any information about his condition or his treatment at the Nanavati Hospital," the petition read. From the time he was shifted out of Taloja Jail to St Georges hospital to Nanavati hospital, the only official information provided to the family was that he had tested positive for the COVID-19, they said. Denial of any information on

Rao's health is a direct violation of NHRC's July 13 order, whereby it had specifically directed the prison authorities to provide all the necessary medical care and assistance to the poet with intimation to his family members, they added. Seeking NHRC's intervention, the family sought official updates on his health and line of treatment every six hours. Rao, 80, was undergoing treatment in Mumbai hospitals since July 16 after being tested for coronavirus positive. He is behind bars for about 22 months and had approached the special NIA court, seeking bail on medical grounds and the prevailing COVID-19 situation.

Dalit family in MP forced to live in toilet

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Tikamgarh (MP), July 25: Promise of providing housing to the poor has been made by both Centre as well as state governments but a Dalit family in Tikamgarh district of Madhya Pradesh is forced to live in a toilet for the last several years. However, the administration denied that the family is living in the toilet. Maganlal Ahirwar, his wife and four children live in Keshavgarh Gram Panchayat of Mohangarh area of Tikamgarh district. All of them have been living in the toilet for four years. Ahirwar's wife Phula Devi said she told the authorities several times

that her family didn't get house under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, but no one listened. The couple even got their daughter married in the same toilet. They even got an electricity connection and gas connection under the Ujjwala scheme. Mohangarh tehsildar Dr. Abhijeet Singh told this news agency, "I got to know about the case and have asked for the report. Maganlal Ahirwar came to the office two-three days ago and denied that he was living in the toilet with his family. He has an ancestral house in the village." He might have lived in a toilet earlier but currently he is not living there, Dr. Singh added.

Sub-inspector kills senior, self



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: A Central Reserve Police Force sub-inspector allegedly shot dead his senior with his service weapon before killing himself at a bungalow allotted to the Home Ministry in Lodhi Estate area of Delhi, officials said Saturday. They said an argument had broken out between Sub-Inspector Karnail Singh (55) and Inspector Dashrath Singh (56), both from the 122nd CRPF battalion. The SI first shot dead his senior in their room and later killed himself near the main gate around 10:30 pm Friday. The SI hailed from Udhampur in Jammu and Kashmir and the inspector was from Rohtak in Haryana. Senior officials of the paramilitary force and local police reached the spot soon after the incident, the officials said. "We received information regarding the incident around 10.40 pm. Karnail was found near the main gate of the bungalow while Dashrath was found dead inside their room," Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi) Eish Singhal said. "The incident at 61, Lodhi Estate is an aberration which seems to have been committed in the spur of the moment. An inquiry has been ordered to establish the facts and will be taken to its logical end," CRPF spokesperson Deputy Inspector General Moses Dhinakaran said.

IN A FIRST, PONDY ASSEMBLY MEETS UNDER NEEM TREE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pondicherry, July 25: In an unprecedented sitting prompted after a legislator tested positive for coronavirus, the Puducherry Assembly Saturday held its Budget session under a tree and later adjourned sine die after approving budgetary allocations to the tune of ₹9,000 crore without discussion. The House had its session under a neem tree as the main hall was shut for sanitisation following opposition AINRC MLA NSJ Jayabal testing positive for the virus and being hospitalised on Friday night. The session, which began July 20, had been an eventful one with Lt Governor Kiran Bedi staying away from delivering her customary address to the House to mark the session. She had said the budget did not have her approval, but the Chief Minister presented it the same day, after the House kept her address at abeyance. However, she addressed the members Friday in the midst of an ongoing session, another unprecedented development, even as Health Minister Malladi Rao and three ruling Congress MLAs boycotted it for Bedi pulling up senior doctors and health staff over COVID-19 management.

On Saturday, official sources said this was the first time the House held its meeting at an improvised site. The House passed before adjournment, the Appropriation Bill earmarking ₹9,000 crore for the government tabled by Narayanasamy. All the demands for grants to more than 30 government departments for the fiscal 2020-2021 were passed without discussion by the members. The Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues moved the demands for grants to their respective departments. The Speaker VP Sivakolundhu, who presided over the day's proceedings, later adjourned the House sine die. Earlier, the Speaker and the CM were in a virtual hot search for an appropriate alternative venue to hold the day's proceedings after the main hall of the House was shut as a precautionary measure following a legislator testing positive for coronavirus. Initially, the committee hall on the top floor of the Assembly's annexe campus was sought to be chosen for the day's meeting. However, the Speaker found the space insufficient to accommodate all the Members and officials, and finalised the open space available outside the main building.

MAROONED



People waded through the floodwater as they move to a safer place at Shekhapur Dhab in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district, Saturday
PTI PHOTO

Cinemas may reopen in Aug: I&B Ministry

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 25: The Information and Broadcasting Ministry has recommended to the Union Home Ministry that cinema halls all over India be allowed to reopen in August. I&B Secretary Amit Khare indicated this at a close-door industry interaction with the CII Media Committee Friday. He said his opposite number in the Home Ministry, Ajay Bhalla, will take

the final call. Khare said that he has recommended that cinema halls may be allowed to reopen all over India as early as August 1 - or at the latest, around August 31. The formula suggested is that alternate seats in the first row and then the next row be kept vacant and proceeding in this fashion throughout. Khare said that his ministry's recommendation takes into consideration the two metre social

distancing norm, but tweaks it gently to two yards instead. The Home Ministry, however, still has to revert on the recommendation. Cinema owners, present in the interaction, however, pushed back and said this formula is unwise and merely running films at 25 per cent auditorium capacity is worse than keeping the cinemas shut. The attendees at the meet included media CEOs like NP Singh of Sony, Sam Balsara (Madison), Megha Tata, (Discovery), Gaurav

Gandhi (Amazon Prime), Manish Maheshwari (Twitter), S. Sivakumar (Bennett Coleman and Co Ltd), and K. Madhavan, Star & Disney, and also Chairman, CII Media Committee. The OTT platforms present, including Gandhi of Amazon Prime, did not push back. Some Hindi film producers, notably those of Amitabh Bachchan's "Gulabo Sitabo", have posted their movies on OTT, rather than live out the lockdown uncertainty.

Uniform country-wide COVID cases peak will not happen: Expert

Each state has its own trajectory based on when people there were exposed to the infection

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Hyderabad, July 25: There cannot be a uniform peak in COVID-19 cases in a large country like India and each state has its own trajectory based on when people there were exposed to the infection, a public health expert said. The peak could be witnessed in states like Delhi by this month end or early August while it may be

around September in others such as Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Karnataka, Director of the Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH) here Prof. GVS Murthy said. IIPH was set up under the aegis of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI). In states such as Jharkhand it may take longer time as the spread has started only after the return of the migrant labourers, he said. "So, each state has its own trajectory based on when people were exposed to the infection in that particular state. There is not going to be a uniform peak for the country. There is going to be a number of peaks in the country," he said. For example, Bihar seemed to



be reporting a large number of cases suddenly after all those who migrated to other cities, specifically Mumbai and Delhi, started returning. It takes about 10-14 days for a COVID-19 person to infect others in their families and then the next wave of cases will happen, Murthy, who established and headed the

first Community Ophthalmology Department in the public sector in the country at the All-India Institute of Medical Sciences till 2010, said. Governments need to continue with measures to deal with the virus and the community also should strictly adhere to preventive guidelines such as washing hands and maintaining physical distancing, he said and stressed on taking intense steps in densely populated areas. States like Jharkhand (present total cases 7,564), Chhattisgarh (6,819) and parts in eastern Uttar Pradesh too had reported fewer cases earlier but the spread would start occurring as the migrants have returned now to their homes. "There, the peak will take much

longer. It would be somewhere towards the end of September or October that those states which had low reporting earlier, will have a peak," he said. But, states like Haryana, Telangana, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu should be able to achieve the maximum number of cases by mid-September, he said. All these states which were reporting very high numbers now should not be getting the same numbers beyond mid-September. Some states should achieve the peak by mid-August also. For example, Delhi seems to be on a path where, by the end of this month or early August, it can be said that the peak has been crossed, he said. The same could be the case with

Rajasthan and Punjab, and other states, including Maharashtra, Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh may reach the peak in September, he said. He said the governments need to continue with measures to deal with the virus as the health system would be overwhelmed if there was a sudden rise in cases and if the states are unprepared. "Kerala, you have seen now. They thought they had seen the end of COVID. Suddenly, in the last over 10 days, Kerala has had a much larger number of cases than before," he said. The three Ts Test, Track and Treatment were important to reduce the infections and slipping into serious complications, he noted.

international



We didn't understand (the virus) in the way that we would have liked in the first few weeks and months. And I think, probably, the single thing that we didn't see at the beginning was the extent to which it was being transmitted asymptotically from person to person
BORIS JOHNSON | UK PM

BOLSONARO TESTS NEGATIVE FOR CORONA

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro said Saturday that he has tested negative for the new coronavirus, based on a fourth test since he said July 7 that he had the virus



of the day quote

The intra-Afghan talks have never been so close. This is a defining moment for peace in the war-torn country



ZALMAY KHALILZAD | US SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR AFGHANISTAN RECONCILIATION

We will not privatise PIA rather bring reforms in it and restructure it



GHULAM SARWAR KHAN | PAKISTAN MINISTER

This action, which is consistent with the MTCR guidelines will increase the US's national security by improving capabilities of its partners and increase economic security by opening the expanding drones market to the US industry



KAYLEIGH MCENANY | WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

SHORT TAKES

Former Trump lawyer released

Washington: US President Donald Trump's former lawyer Michael Cohen has been released from prison after a judge ruled that he was sent back to jail in retaliation for writing a tell-all book. Cohen was convicted last year of crimes including tax evasion, lying to Congress and facilitating illegal payments to silence two women, adult film star Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal, who claimed they had affairs with Trump, the BBC reported. After his May release, authorities this month said Cohen violated the terms of his release.

Russia clears air

Moscow: Accusations from the US and UK that Russia recently tested anti-satellite weaponry in space are "distorted", Russia's defence ministry said. "Tests carried out [on July 15] did not create a threat for other spacecraft," the ministry said, adding that it had not violated international law, the BBC reported. Moscow said earlier that it had been using new technology to perform checks on Russian space equipment. But the US and UK said they were concerned about the satellite activity.

Curbs eased

Washington: The US government has announced updated export restrictions on unmanned aerial systems (UAS), a move long sought by the country's defence industries. "The President has decided to invoke our national discretion to treat a carefully selected subset of MTCR Category I UAS, which cannot travel faster than 800 km per hour, as Category II," Xinhua news agency quoted the White House as saying a statement Friday.

Gyms reopen

London: Swimming pools and gyms in England are reopening for the first time since the UK went into lockdown as public health officials extol the benefits of exercise in fighting COVID-19. The government has announced a fresh attack on obesity as part of the move, hoping that a fitter nation might be able to minimize the impact of future waves of the virus. But Jane Nickerson, chief executive of Swim England, says that there had been financial pressure on pools even before the pandemic and that without government support many won't open this year - or ever.

CONSULATE CLOSURE

China hits out at US



US federal agents and law enforcement officers entered the Chinese consulate compound in Houston along with locksmiths after the mission was shut down Friday

Chinese officials reportedly vacated the consulate Friday afternoon after the US ordered its closure amid accusations of espionage

In a retaliatory move, China has already ordered the closure of the US consulate in Chengdu

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, July 25: China Saturday lodged a diplomatic protest with the US over the "forced entry" of American officials into the premises of the closed Chinese consulate in Houston and vowed to make a "necessary response" to Washington's action.

US federal agents and law enforcement officers entered the Chinese consulate compound in Houston along with locksmiths after the mission was shut down Friday. The Chinese foreign ministry said it has expressed strong dissatisfaction and opposition to the US law enforcement officers' "forced entry" into the consulate and lodged a diplomatic protest.

"China will make a proper and necessary response in this regard," it said. In a retaliatory move, China has already ordered the closure of the US consulate in Chengdu in southwest China's Sichuan province. The Consulate in Houston is the building of the diplomatic consulate and is also China's national property, the ministry said. According to the Vienna Convention

on Consular Relations and the Sino-US Consular Treaty, the US must not infringe on the premises of the Chinese Consulate in Houston in any way, it said.

Chinese officials reportedly vacated the consulate Friday afternoon after the US ordered its closure amid accusations of espionage, Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported. The Trump administration accused Beijing of stealing intellectual property and claimed that the consulate in Houston was the "epicentre" of China's research theft.

Vans bearing diplomatic plates departed the consulate as the 4 pm Friday deadline arrived. At that point, federal agents checked the locked doors of the consulate and a locksmith was seen working to crack the lock on one door; the Post reported said.

A CNN report also said that after the Chinese diplomatic staff vacated the building, a number of black SUVs, trucks, two white vans and a locksmith's van entered the compound. The Chinese consulate in Houston, Texas, was opened in 1979.

ROYAL RIFT

Prince Harry, Meghan 'did not contribute' to new book

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, July 25: The UK's Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle have denied contributing to a new book about their life in the Royal Family, it was reported Saturday.

Authors Omid Scobie and Carolyn Durand of the book "Finding Freedom", describe a culture of increasing tension between the Sussexes and other members of the Royal Family, reports the BBC. It claims that the couple and Cambridges were barely speaking by March.

They authors said that Harry and Meghan felt their complaints were not taken seriously and believed other royal households were leaking stories about them to the press.

In a statement, a spokesman for

the Sussexes, who are now based in Los Angeles after having stepped back as senior royals earlier this year, said they had not been interviewed for the book. "The Duke and Duchess of Sussex were not interviewed and did not contribute to Finding Freedom. "This book is based on the authors' own experiences as members of the royal press corps and their own independent reporting," the BBC quoted the statement as saying.

For their last public appearance as working members of the Royal Family, Harry and Meghan joined the Queen and other senior royals at the Commonwealth Day service at Westminster Abbey on March 9. They have since begun their new life of personal independence in the US, pursuing charity projects.



Singaporean admits to spying

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 25: A Singaporean national Friday pleaded guilty to charges of being a spy of China, the US Department of Justice said.

Jun Wei Yeo, also known as Dickson Yeo, entered a plea of guilty to one count of acting within the United States as an illegal agent of a foreign power without first notifying the attorney general.

The Chinese government uses an array of duplicity to obtain sensitive information from unsuspecting Americans," said US Assistant Attorney General for the Justice Department's National Security Division John C Demers.

"Yeo was central to one such scheme, using career networking sites and a false consulting firm to lure Americans who might be of interest to the Chinese government. This is yet another example of the Chinese government's exploitation of the openness of American society," he said.

The guilty plea underscores the ways that the Chinese government continues to target Americans with access to sensitive government information, including using the Internet and non-Chinese nationals to target Americans who never leave the US, said Michael R Sherwin, Acting US Attorney for the District of Columbia.

Yeo admitted that he not only pro-



vided valuable information to Chinese intelligence but also that he knowingly recruited others in the US to do the same, said FBI Washington Field Office Assistant Director in Charge Timothy R Slater. "The tactics Yeo used to target cleared individuals on professional networking social media sites are just one facet of the full court press China employs on a daily basis to obtain non-public US government information.

As per the guilty plea, Yeo began working with Chinese intelligence officers as early as 2015, initially targeting other Asian countries, but then focusing on the US.

In response to taskings from his Chinese intelligence contacts, Yeo allegedly worked to spot and assess Americans with access to valuable non-public information, including US military and government employees

with high-level security clearances. After Yeo identified American targets, he solicited them for non-public information and paid them to write reports. Yeo told these American targets that the reports were for clients in Asia, without revealing that they were in fact destined for the Chinese government, the Department of Justice said.

At the direction of Chinese intelligence operatives, Yeo targeted US government employees and an Army officer to obtain information for the government of China.

He admitted he set up a fake consulting company to further his scheme, looked for susceptible individuals who were vulnerable to recruitment and tried to avoid detection by US authorities, said Alan Kohler, Assistant Director of the FBI's Counterintelligence Division.

Indian woman files lawsuit against US

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 25: An Indian woman has filed a lawsuit against the US Citizenship and Immigration Services for the alleged delay in issuing work permits, accusing the authorities of sitting on a backlog of at least 75,000 unprinted Employment Authorisation Documents.

Ranjitha Subramanya, who is on an H-4 dependent visa and her husband Vinod Sinha on H-1B work visa, in a lawsuit filed before a federal court in Ohio said that while her application to extend her H-4 status and Employment Authorisation Document (EAD) was approved on April 7, she did not receive the work authorisation card till date.

As a result, she was forced to stop working for her employer after her initial EAD expired on June 7, 2020. "To date, she has not received her EAD and remains unable to work. Worse, her employer has notified her that she will lose her job if she does not provide proof of employment authorisation by August 9, 2020," said her lawyer Robert H Cohen in the lawsuit.

An H-4 visa is a visa issued by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to the immediate family members of the H-1B visa holders. Spouses on an H-4 visa can apply for an EAD. The lawsuit alleges that the USCIS is sitting on a backlog of at least 75,000 unprinted EADs.

"By delaying or refusing to provide EADs to plaintiffs and class members, defendants have abused their power in an outrageous manner, without any reasonable justification in the service of a legitimate governmental objective, and with either an intention to harm plaintiff and class members or deliberate indifference," the lawsuit said.

US announces new policy

The US immigration authority has issued a new policy stating that freshly enrolled foreign students who are seeking only-online study this fall will be barred from entering the country

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, July 25: The US immigration authority has issued a new policy stating that freshly enrolled foreign students who are seeking only-online study this fall will be barred from entering the country; days after the Trump administration dropped its controversial plan to expel international students if their universities switch to online-only classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The new policy was announced Friday by the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which said that its guidance granting visa flexibility to nonimmigrant students only applies to those who were actively enrolled at American schools on March 9.

Students and Exchange Visitor

SURPRISE MOVE



Program (SEVP) and Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the Department of Homeland Security, in a revised guideline for Fall 2020, asked universities not to issue the necessary visa paper work for those international students who are fully enrolled in online courses.

The designated Dean of Students Office or DSOs should not issue a Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status," for a student in new or Initial sta-

tus who is outside of the United States and plans to take classes at an SEVP-certified educational institution fully online," said the revised guidelines, which was initially issued on March 9.

"As a result, new or initial non-immigrant students who intend to pursue a full course of study that will be conducted completely online will likely not be able to obtain an F-1 or M-1 visa to study in the United States," said the guidelines issued jointly by SEVP and ICE.

"If a nonimmigrant student was enrolled in a course of study in the US on March 9, 2020, but subsequently left the country, that student likely remains eligible for a visa since the March 2020 guidance permitted a full online course of study from inside the United States or from abroad," it said.

China's SCS claims unlawful: Aus

REUTERS

Melbourne, July 25: Australia has joined the United States in stating that China's claims in the South China Sea do not comply with international law in a declaration likely to anger China and put more strain on their deteriorating relations.

The United States this month rejected China's claims to offshore resources in most of the South China Sea, drawing criticism from China which said the U.S. position raised tension in the region.

Australia, in a declaration filed at the United Nations in New York on Friday, said it too rejected China's maritime claims around contested islands in the South



China Sea as being inconsistent with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

"Australia rejects China's claim to 'historic rights' or 'maritime rights and interests' as established in the 'long course of historical practice' in the South China Sea," it said. Australia also said it did not accept China's assertion that its sov-

ereignty over the Paracel Islands and the Spratly Islands was "widely recognised by the international community", citing objections from Vietnam and the Philippines.

China claims 90% of the potentially energy-rich waters but Brunei, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam also lay claim to parts of it.

UK experts call for anti-obesity action to cut Covid risk

The report comes as UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is said to be finalising Downing Street plans for an anti-obesity drive

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, July 25: Supporting people to move towards and maintain a healthier weight may reduce the serious effects of COVID-19, UK experts have concluded in a new report released Saturday.

Public Health England (PHE), the executive body linked to the government's Department of Health, conclude in their findings that being obese or excessively overweight increases the risk of severe illness and death from the novel coronavirus. The report summarises findings from evidence published during the pandemic on the effects of excess

weight and obesity on COVID-19. PHE notes that UK and international evidence suggests that being severely overweight puts people at greater risk of hospitalisation, Intensive Care Unit (ICU) admission and death from COVID-19, with risk growing substantially as body mass index (BMI) increases.

"The current evidence is clear that being overweight or obese puts you at greater risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19, as well as from many other life-threatening diseases," said Dr Alison Tedstone, Chief Nutritionist at PHE. "It can be hard to lose weight and even harder to sustain it, which is why people cannot easily do it on their own. Losing weight



can bring huge benefits for health - and may also help protect against

the health risks of COVID-19. The case for action on obesity has

never been stronger," she said. The report comes as UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson is said to be finalising Downing Street plans for an anti-obesity drive. In an interview recently, he asked the British public to make losing weight a goal for the year as part of efforts to combat the deadly coronavirus.

"Losing weight is, frankly, one of the ways that you can reduce your own risks from COVID," said Johnson, who himself has lost over six kilograms in weight since his own hospitalisation with coronavirus earlier this year.

The PHE report notes that current evidence does not suggest that having excess weight increases

people's chances of contracting COVID-19. However, the data does show that obese people are significantly more likely to become seriously ill and be admitted to intensive care with COVID-19 compared to those with a healthy BMI, which is under 30.

Excess fat can affect the respiratory system and is likely to affect inflammatory and immune function. This can impact people's response to infection and increase vulnerability to severe symptoms of COVID-19. Obese people may be less likely to access healthcare and support, and it is also thought that the novel coronavirus affects other diseases associated with obesity.



In the era of globalisation, it is difficult to label a product based on country of origin as components are being sourced from different countries. This development has given a window of opportunity for brands like Samsung and local Indian brands, to recapture market share

SHILPI JAIN | RESEARCH ANALYST, COUNTERPOINT RESEARCH

INDIA, UK ASSERT ON 'FTA COMMITMENT'

India and the UK have affirmed their commitment to negotiate a free trade agreement (FTA) to further strengthen bilateral economic ties. The issue was discussed in the 14th Joint Economic and Trade Committee meeting earlier and was co-chaired by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and UK Secretary of State for Int'l Trade Elizabeth Truss



of the day quote

The said partnership to store crude oil in the Strategic Petroleum Reserve of the US is not diplomatically and strategically advisable as reported from the agreement drawn between India and the US under the Strategic Energy Partnership ministerial meet



M VEERAPPA MOILY | FORMER PETROLEUM MINISTER

The demand (for gold) is already very sluggish at the moment with only 20-25% business taking place following the economic slowdown, insecurity over jobs, social distancing and lockdowns due to COVID-19. The high price of gold will add on to the already sluggish consumer demand



ANANTHA PADMANABHAN | CHAIRMAN, ALL INDIA GEM AND JEWELLERY DOMESTIC COUNCIL

Indian electrical equipment industry has the capacity, ability and cost competitiveness to effectively service and meet the need of not only Indian industry but also enhance its exports. If we, as a nation are serious on taking China at home, then all of us need to commit to this



RK CHUGH | PRESIDENT, IEEMA

SHORT TAKES

ICICI Bank Q1 profit rises 36%

New Delhi: ICICI Bank Saturday reported a 36% increase in its standalone net profit at ₹2,599 crore for the first quarter ended June 2020. The bank had posted a profit of ₹1,908 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Total income during the quarter rose to ₹26,066 crore from ₹21,405.50 crore a year earlier, the bank said in a regulatory filing. On a consolidated basis, its net profit for the April-June period improved by 24% at ₹3,117.68 crore.

Kharif sowing increases by 18 pc

Kolkata: Riding on favourable rainfall in the third week of July, the area of major kharif crop sowing in the country increased by 18.50% over the corresponding period of the previous year, according to the latest data available with the Ministry of Agriculture. Sowing data of major kharif crops like paddy, pulses, coarse cereals and oilseeds July 24 showed that a total of 799.95 lakh hectare have been covered this year, compared to 675.07 lakh hectare in the last Kharif season.

Infy co-founder sells 85L shares

Bangalore: Family members of Infosys co-founder SD Shibulal have sold 85 lakh shares of the company worth ₹777 crore, according to regulatory documents. A separate statement issued by Shibulal's family office said the proceeds will be utilised for philanthropic and investment activities. Shibulal's son Shreyas sold 40 lakh shares, "representing 0.09% of Infosys Ltd by way of sale on the platform of the stock exchange on July 22, 23 and 24, 2020", as per exchange filing.

Interest rate on gold loans trimmed

Mumbai: Indian Bank has slashed its interest rate on gold loans offered to farmers to 7%. The state-owned lender has reduced interest rate on its short-term gold loan scheme 'Bumper Agri Jewel'. Earlier, interest rate on the product was 7.5%. The reduction has been done considering the present pandemic situation and also to provide easy credit to the needy farmers at a cheaper cost, a release said.

SPECIAL LIQUIDITY SCHEME

STRESSED NBFCs, HFCs SEEK ₹14K cr FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The RBI has provided funds for the scheme by subscribing to government-guaranteed special securities issued by a trust set up by SBICAP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Financing requests of close to ₹14,000 crore have been received under the ₹30,000-crore special liquidity scheme for stressed NBFCs and HFCs whose financial health deteriorated further due to the COVID-19 crisis, said the finance ministry. The scheme was launched July 1.

Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs) came under stress following a series of defaults by IL&FS group firms in September 2018.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has provided funds for the scheme by subscribing to government-guaranteed special securities issued by a trust set up by SBI Capital Markets Limited (SBICAP). The scheme is being implemented by SLS Trust, the SPV set up by SBICAP.

"As on July 23, five proposals involving an amount of ₹3,090 crore have already been sanctioned. Further, 35 more applications have been received seeking financing up to ₹13,776 crore, which are under process," the finance ministry said in a statement.

Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs) came under stress following a series of defaults by IL&FS group firms in September



2018. "Any NBFC including Microfinance Institutions registered with RBI under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 (excluding those registered as Core Investment Companies) and any HFC registered with the National Housing Bank (NHB) under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987 which is complying with certain specified conditions are eligible to raise funding from this facility," it said.

The special liquidity scheme will remain open for three months for making subscriptions by the trust, it said.

The scheme permits both primary and secondary market purchases of debt and seeks to address the short term liquidity issues of non-banking financial companies/housing finance companies, it said.

The instruments will be commercial papers and non-convertible debentures with a residual maturity of not more than three months and rated as investment

Five proposals get ₹3,090 cr

New Delhi: The special liquidity scheme for NBFCs and HFCs has received a positive response from the financial sector, with five proposals, involving an amount of ₹3,090 crore, having already been sanctioned till July 23. The ₹30,000 crore liquidity window for NBFCs and HFCs is being implemented from July 1 as a follow up of one of the announcements under Aatmanirbhar Bharat package made by Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman May 13.

grade. Therefore, it said, those market participants who are looking to exit their standard investments with a residual maturity of 90 days may also approach the SLS Trust.

Farmers to benefit from PMFBY scheme



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Odisha HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company which is country's third largest non-life insurance provider in the private sector, received nod from the Government of Odisha to implement the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) for loanee and non-loanee farmers in Deogarh, Kendrapada, Mayurbhanj, Nabarangapur, Baragarh, Bhubaneswar, Jagajapati, Jagatsinghpur, and Jajpur for Kharif 2020.

The scheme provides insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including pre-sowing, harvesting and post-harvest risks.

PMFBY scheme insures farmers against any losses in crop yield arising out of a wide range of external risks like drought, floods, dry spells, landslides, cyclones, hurricanes, hailstorm, inundation, pests, diseases and others.

For the purpose of determining the loss in the yield, the state government will plan and conduct Crop Cutting Experiments (CCEs) on the notified crops in areas notified for the scheme. In case the yield data, based on CCEs conducted, concludes to be low, then the farmers will be considered to have suffered a shortfall in their yield for which the claims will be payable to the farmers.

All the products under the PMFBY scheme are approved by the Department of Agriculture, Government of Odisha. Farmers of those districts can reach out to their respective banks, Common Service Centres (CSCs) in their district or contact the authorised HDFC ERGO agents to obtain the insurance cover under the PMFBY scheme for the crops listed above.

Jio tops 4G download speed again in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 25: Private telecom service provider Reliance Jio has once again topped average 4G download speed chart for the month of June in Odisha. According to Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) report, Jio topped in average 4G download speed with 23.6 Mbps in the state leaving behind all telecom operators.

Jio topped in average 4G download speed with 23.6 Mbps followed by Airtel with 4.9 Mbps and Vodafone with 3.3 Mbps average 4G download speed, as per the data published on TRAI's MySpeed portal. Likewise, in average 4G upload speed in the state, Vodafone clocked 5.3 Mbps followed by Jio (4.8 Mbps) and Airtel (2.8 Mbps).

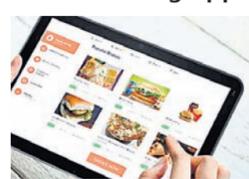
Nationally, Jio continue to rule the roost by achieving 16.5 Mbps average 4G download speed in June while Idea stood at 8 Mbps, Vodafone at 7.5 Mbps, and Airtel averaging 7.2 Mbps 4G download speed in June; revealed the chart, whereas speed of Jio was more as compared to other operators.

BIZ BUZZ

TPCODL offers secured service

Bhubaneswar: With the rise in COVID-19 cases as well as the fatalities in Odisha, the state government has recently imposed a 14-day shutdown in four districts and Rourkela, that includes Khurda. Under the above challenging circumstances, Tata Power Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL) established comprehensive plans and procedures to ensure continuation of 24*7 operations and maintenance services. The company's detail plan ensures readiness and availability of the critical personnel and facilities necessary to continue providing seamless service to its consumers. TPCODL's front line staffs work round the clock to carry out various operations and also the maintenance of its equipment to ensure that its consumers receive uninterrupted power supply. These front line warriors are the unsung heroes who work day & night and brave the COVID virus. In the capital, as many as 234 technicians, engineers are working round the clock to maintain 8,559 transformers, 2,492 km HT and 4196 km LT line, network.

Hotels to launch food ordering app



Mumbai: The Indian Hotels Company which owns properties under the Taj and other brands will launch a food ordering mobile application Qmin which will be active in Mumbai area from Saturday. According to the company, the application will be available on both Google Play Store and App Store for iOS users, and it will roll out in nine other cities including Delhi, Bangalore and Chennai in coming weeks. "The Qmin app brings signature dishes from the company's iconic restaurants," the company said. "Designed and developed by IHCL in collaboration with Tata Digital, the Qmin app gives guests a differentiated delivery experience through a seamless interface that allows them to personalise their order, curate menus, and track deliveries real-time."

I-T dept responsive to the needs of taxpayers: FM

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 25: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has reserved words of praise for the Income Tax department, complementing officers for being responsive to the needs of the taxpayers during the pandemic times



by relaxing various compliance requirements and addressing the liquidity concerns of the taxpayers. In her message at a function organised to observe 160th anniversary of Income Tax Day Sitharaman on Friday said the efforts of the I-T department towards making the tax administration as taxpayer-friendly and transparent has facilitated voluntary compliance. Therefore, she said, the department will continue to play a critical role in the growth of the nation by keeping to improve and set new standards of professionalism.

She recognised the paradigm shift in its role in recent years, from being just a revenue collecting organization to becoming a more citizen-centric organization.

She cited various reform measures undertaken, including, inter alia, the introduction of a new, simpler tax regime, reduced corporate tax rates as also payment of tax at concessional rates for domestic manufacturing companies'.

UK manufacturing sees record slump amid pandemic



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

London, July 25: UK manufacturing witnessed a record slump in the three months to July due to significant impact caused by the coronavirus pandemic, according to an industry report.

Released Thursday, the Confederation of British Industry's (CBI) quarterly industrial trends survey showed that output dropped in 14 out of 17 sub-sectors in the quarter to July, with the headline fall being led by "motor vehicles & transport, food, drink & tobacco, and mechanical engineering", reports Xinhua news agency.

According to a survey of 356 manufacturing firms, the total new orders in the period fell "at their fastest pace since October 1980", said the survey.

"Manufacturers continue to face extreme hardship due to the COVID-19 crisis," said Rain Newton-Smith, chief economist at the CBI, adding that "output volumes continued to decline at a record pace, while total orders have fallen at their fastest rate since October 1980".

However, firms expected output to begin to recover in the next quarter.

Geopolitical shift: Centre rebooting, revamping economy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 25: The Central government has said that it is rebooting and revamping the Indian economy to make it the global centre of the supply chain in accordance to the shift in the international geo-politics.

In an interactive session with the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ministry of External Affairs Secretary, Economic Relations (ER), Rahul Chhabra, while speaking on the Role of Indian Economic Diplomacy in Making India Self Reliant, said, "Globally there has been a shift in terms of geo-economics, politics and strategy. The Government of India is looking at these changes in an optimistic way by rebooting and revamping the economy."

The government, Chhabra said, is trying to increase the demand and

the income of small farmers. "There is a focus on Micro Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and enhancing public partner-

The government is trying to allow Indian firms to open up in new countries and showcase clear expertise in project planning, design and execution. The regional and cross border connectivity under these projects is a force multiplier, ensuring the seamless flow of goods that are opening up-market to neighbourhoods

RAHUL CHHABRA | SECRETARY, ECONOMIC RELATIONS, MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

ship and being self-reliant. We are trying to turn inwards but trying to make ourselves the global centre of the supply chain," he said.



Chhabra said that India's commercial diplomacy is based on transparency, fairness, equity, dispute and justice. India is trying to develop self-reliance and a strong economy at the same time to regionalise the supply chains and indigenise them

in a structured manner. Textiles, gems, jewellery, chemicals and pharma are some of the sectors where the country can fill in on an immediate basis. India can develop capabilities in electronics, engineering, design, and others. "We are trying to be the phar-

STRATEGIC MOVE

The government is trying to increase the demand and the income of small farmers

India is trying to develop self-reliance and a strong economy at the same time to regionalise the supply chains

The country's engagement with the International Solar Alliance is currently being restricted to the countries near the tropical

country for low-cost manufacturing. Talking about energy security, he said that India's engagement with the International Solar Alliance is currently being restricted to the countries near the tropical. "But we have to universalise it," he said.

On the International Energy Agency India, he said, has a current association status which needs to be upgraded through partnerships in the future. Over the last five years, India has given over 300 Line of Credit projects worth millions of dollars to a lot of countries.

The government, he said, is trying to allow Indian companies to open up in new countries and showcase clear expertise in project planning, design and execution. The regional and cross border connectivity under these projects is a force multiplier, ensuring the seamless flow of goods that are opening up-market to neighbourhoods, Chhabra said.

SHORT TAKES

No COVID threat for BCCI top boss

Kolkata: BCCI president Sourav Ganguly has tested negative for COVID-19 after he gave his sample as a precautionary measure. The former India captain has been in home quarantine for more than a week after his elder brother Snehasish had tested positive for the contagious disease. "He (Sourav) is living with his ailing mother and family, so as a precautionary measure he took the test voluntarily and the report came negative Friday evening," a source close to the BCCI president said Saturday.

Gold dedicated for corona warriors

New Delhi: Ace sprinter Hima Das has dedicated the upgraded gold medal of the mixed relay event at the 2018 Asian Games to the coronavirus warriors, including police officers and doctors, who are working selflessly amid the pandemic. "I would like to dedicate my upgraded gold medal of 4x400 mixed relay event of Asian Games 2018 to police, doctors and all other corona warriors who are working selflessly to ensure our safety and good health. Respect for all corona warriors," Das said in a tweet Saturday. The silver won by the mixed team was upgraded to gold Thursday. The other members of the team were Mohammed Anas, MR Poovamma and Arokia Rajiv.

4 races cancelled, three new added

Paris: Formula One (F1) races in Brazil, Canada, Mexico and the United States have all been cancelled for 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. However, three new races have also been added. F1 organisers said in a statement Saturday that the Eifel Grand Prix (GP) will host a race at the iconic Nürburgring in Germany, October 11, followed by the Portuguese GP in Portimão two weeks later and the Emilia-Romagna GP in Italy, November 1. The US GP was initially scheduled for late October, with Brazil and Mexico then hosting races in November. Hence a total of 13 races will be conducted in the truncated season, the F1 said.

Top players for Rome tennis meet

Rome: Two Grand Slam champions. A finalist from last year's French Open and a handful of top-20 players. They will all feature in the Palermo Ladies Open tennis tournament. The event beginning August 3 marks the return of women's tennis competitions after a five-month break due to coronavirus. Among those who have confirmed to play in the tourney is Simona Halep, 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko and last year's Roland Garros finalist Markéta Vondroušová. "The entry list is incredible. It's practically like a premier," tournament director Oliviero Palma said Saturday.

Minister's target

New Delhi: Union Sports Minister Kiren Rijju said Saturday that India will be competing for a top-10 finish by the time the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics comes calling. He said the government's ambitious 'Target Olympic Podium Junior Scheme' will help India achieve this target. "We will leave no stone unturned," Rijju said. The minister informed that the scheme is for scouting talent as young as 10-year-old and 12-year-old with an aim to prepare them for the Los Angeles Games.

Xavi tests +ve

New Delhi: Former Barcelona star and current Al-Sadd coach Xavi Hernandez has tested positive for coronavirus. Xavi's club in the Qatar Stars League (QSL), Al-Sadd, confirmed this development in a tweet Saturday. The club said that their manager had tested positive for COVID-19 and will be absent for the next few days. Xavi said he will self-isolate.

INDIA'S CHANCES OF A MEDAL IN MEN'S HOCKEY AT THE TOKYO OLYMPICS

Mentality matters, says Reid



Indian men's hockey team's head coach Graham Reid (with cap) during a training session

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 25: An unshakable attitude is what is needed to win an Olympic medal and that is exactly what head coach Graham Reid will try to inculcate into the Indian men's hockey team ahead of the Summer Olympics next year. The 2020 Games have been shifted to next year due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. Exactly a year from Friday, the Indian men and women's teams will be beginning their campaign in Tokyo.

Australian team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, put things into perspective. "The Olympic Games is the toughest competition in the sporting world and therefore a player's mentality has to match it," Reid said in a Hockey India statement released Saturday. "The biggest challenge as a player is to remain focused on the job at hand. The first game brings with it a number of emotions. The player who can control those emotions and stick to the game plan will go ahead," Reid added.

Reid, part of the silver-winning Australian team at the 1992 Barcelona Olympics, put things into perspective. "The Olympic Games is the toughest competition in the sporting world and therefore a player's mentality has to match it," Reid said in a Hockey India statement released Saturday. "The biggest challenge as a player is to remain focused on the job at hand. The first game brings with it a number of emotions. The player who can control those emotions and stick to the game plan will go ahead," Reid added.

TOUCHLINE ROW DURING PL GAME

Lampard regrets using foul language at Anfield

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liverpool, July 25: Chelsea manager Frank Lampard has said Liverpool's staff broke soccer's touchline code when he launched his foul-mouthed tirade this week at Anfield.

Lampard became embroiled in a row with Jürgen Klopp's assistant, Pepijn Lijnders, while Liverpool were beating Chelsea 5-3 here Wednesday, a video of which was widely viewed on social media. Lampard said Friday that touchline dialogue should be confined to just the two managers.

"What is the code? Lots of managers will call for decisions and it may be right or wrong. And then you speak with each other," Lampard said. "But when people on the bench jump up and want to speak across to myself and then smirk and smile and then continue to do so for quite a while, I think that is past the code," the former Chelsea player added.

After the game, Lampard warned new English Premier League champions Liverpool to 'don't get too arrogant', to which Klopp took

issue with Friday. He said Lampard was a young coach who still had a lot to learn. Klopp said he was okay with Lampard or any manager airing their grievances during a game, but not afterwards. "You cannot hit me and my bench with something like that because we are not arrogant," Klopp said at a news conference ahead of Liverpool's last game of the season Sunday at Newcastle.

"Frank was obviously in a really competitive mood and I respect that a lot. From my point of view in this sort of situation, you can say pretty much what you want. For me, after the game it is completely over. But what he has to learn is to finish it with the final whistle and he didn't do that," Klopp pointed out.

INDIAN SPINNER HAS LEARNT TO COOK DURING 'LOCKDOWN'

Poonam rues lack of matches

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 25: Deprived of some much-needed game time with the cancellation of England tour, senior India spinner Poonam Yadav has said it would be extremely difficult for the World Cup-bound players to turn up and 'instantly' deliver after the long coronavirus-forced break. The tour was called off due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"If you turn up at the ground after four-five months, it will be very difficult to perform instantly," Poonam said Saturday. "But we are keeping ourselves fit and when we are allowed to resume group training, we should be back to full fitness in 20-25 days," she added.

Poonam has not seen a proper cricketing facility since turning up at the iconic MCG for the T20 World Cup final in March. With the only scheduled series before next year's ODI World Cup cancelled, she may not get to play an international game in

2020. The fate of the 2021 World Cup, scheduled in New Zealand in February-March, could be decided within the next two weeks.

Last edition's runners-up India are hoping to end their ICC title drought in New Zealand. However, Poonam said it will be a massive challenge.

"It is a massive challenge. I have been bowling here but it is totally different in a competitive environment. We last

played in March and there is still no clarity over our next series," said the senior India player, who has featured in one Test, 46 ODIs and 67 T20s. "The 'lockdown life' however, has allowed Poonam to spend quality time with family in Agra. She can cook now and even ride a 'Bullet', something she could not do earlier for the fear of getting injured.

"To do well at the international level, one has to play competitive matches. It will be difficult for us to achieve high standards without games

POONAM YADAV

"There are many things I have done in this phase. Spending time with family, watching TV are some of the things I have done," informed the spinner.

"I can cook now; my mother always wanted me to learn that. I had never cooked anything other than chai (tea) and Maggi but thanks to the lockdown, I can make a few more items. Also I am helping out in other chores," added Poonam.

STAND AGAINST RACISM

CSA to implement tougher strictures

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Johannesburg, July 25: Cricket South Africa (CSA) has announced plans to address alleged racism in the game after Proteas fast bowler Lungi Ngidi showed his support to the global 'Black Lives Matter' (BLM) movement.

In the wake of Ngidi's support for BLM, 30 former players including Makhaya Ntini came out with allegations of racism during their playing days. Batting great Hashim Amla, who retired last year also, backed Ngidi for taking the stance that he did.



"The national outcry by cricket fans, the greater South African public and broad stakeholder groups could not be ignored," CSA said in a statement Saturday referring to the project named 'Cricket for Social Justice and Nation Building' (SJJN).

CSA will set up a 'Transformation Ombudsman', whose core function will include the management of the independent complaints system as well as overseeing the healing, restoration and uniting process of cricket players, fans, and the nation, starting with the disgruntled former players.

"We are sorry that our cricket players had to endure the emotional hardships that they did; subjugated by their peers along racial lines under our new democracy

3 of SA squad test positive

Johannesburg: Three members of the South African women's cricket squad have tested positive for coronavirus ahead of their training camp for a proposed tour of England. The three members, including one support staff, have been withdrawn from the camp by Cricket South Africa (CSA). The camp is scheduled to start in Pretoria from July 27. "We can confirm that three people have tested positive. They will now self-isolate for a period of 10 days and will take no part in the training camp," CSA said in a release. "They have nil to mild symptoms as our medical team continue to closely monitor them. The players' return to training will be guided by the CSA medical committee's protocols," the release added.

that enjoined us to embrace reconciliation and inclusivity," said CSA board chairman Chris Nenzani.

"SJJN is the first-of-its-kind project meant to rid cricket of apartheid racial discrimination. This is a very important project that all stakeholders must make sure succeeds for the future sustainability of cricket," Nenzani added.

Nenzani came out strongly to condemn those opposed to fighting transformation in South African cricket, which under apartheid-era laws restricted national squads to white players only until the 1990s.

"The fortunes of cricket, its players, stakeholders, and fans are not going to be held to ransom by the wayward few who definitely have no place within our ranks," Nenzani pointed out.

ANAND CRASHES TO 4TH SUCCESSIVE LOSS IN 'LEGENDS' EVENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, July 25: Indian Grandmaster Viswanathan Anand suffered his fourth straight defeat in the USD 150,000 Legends of Chess online tournament, going down 2-3 to Anish Giri of the Netherlands. The former World Champion and Giri played out four draws before the Dutch player pulled off a win in the Armageddon game (a tie-break) late Friday.

Anand, however, picked up his first points of the event. He however, remains at the bottom of the table. He had earlier lost to Peter Svidler, Magnus Carlsen and Vladimir Kramnik.

The Chennai-based Anand, who is making his maiden appearance at the Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour, settled for an 82-move draw in the opening game. The second game lasted 49 moves while the third and fourth games were drawn, setting the stage for the Armageddon. Giri grabbed the decider with black pieces to secure victory and two points.

Russia's Svidler, lost to Ding Liren of China 1.5-2.5 to hand the sole lead to Carlsen. He has 12 points and is followed by Ian Nepomniachtchi (11). Carlsen had no trouble thrashing veteran Israeli Boris Gelfand 3-0.

PSG complete French double



GREAT FEELING: PSG players celebrate with the Coupe de France trophy after winning the title Friday in Paris

AGENCIES

Paris, July 25: Paris St Germain's (PSG) Neymar struck early to secure a 1-0 win over 10-man St Etienne as they claimed a record-extending 13th Coupe de France title here Friday in a near empty stadium as French soccer came out of a four-month break due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Brazilian scored on the rebound in the 14th minute after PSG fellow forward Kylian Mbappe sprinted clear and saw his shot blocked by goalkeeper Jessy Moulin, with only 5,000 fans in the 80,000-seater Stade de France here due to strict health protocols.

Before the game, French President Emmanuel Macron met the players on the pitch but kept his dis-

stance and wore a face mask.

The contest got off to an eventful start with Yann M'Bohon felling Neymar in the opening seconds to earn a yellow card and St Etienne's Denis Bouanga hitting the post in the fifth minute. But it was the Parisians who scored when Neymar pounced on Moulin's save to fire in.

Loic Perrin's rough tackle in the 26th put Mbappe out of the game. The St Etienne captain was sent off in his last game and four other players were booked as tempers briefly flared.

With Ligue 1 champions PSG chasing a quadruple of titles this season, the few fans in the stands breathed a sigh of relief when Mbappe returned on crutches to the bench after the interval, joking and laughing with his teammates.

"It went crack," Mbappe was heard telling Macron of his injury during the trophy ceremony Macron then asked whether anything was broken and Mbappe said, "No, I don't think so."

St Etienne kept finding ways into the PSG box even after going a man down but missed out on adding to their six Cup wins.

"We won the final and that is what matters," PSG coach Thomas Tuchel said. His team had lost last year's final to Stade Rennes on penalties.

EB's aspiration of playing in ISL over

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, July 25: East Bengal's hopes of entering the Indian Super League (ISL) this season were dashed Friday as the organisers of event, the Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) decided not to add new teams for the upcoming edition of the event. The FSDL made it clear during a meeting with club representatives Friday that it will stick to 10 teams for now.

The 2020-21 ISL is scheduled to be held from November to March in a single venue in view of the COVID-19 pandemic. Goa and Kerala have emerged as frontrunners to host the lucrative event. The venue for the 2020-21 season will be announced August 7.

"East Bengal didn't have a chance after April because it takes time with so much of legalities and other important things involved," a source close to FSDL said Saturday. When contacted, a top East Bengal official asserted that ISL doors were still 'open' for them. "There was no official meeting. You can say these are all rumours," the official informed.

SERIES-DECIDER AT OLD TRAFFORD

Broad display puts England in command

AGENCIES

Manchester, July 25: Stuart Broad (62, 45b, 9x4, 1x6) wrested the momentum of the deciding third Test back in England's favour Saturday by smashing a counterattacking innings before the hosts were dismissed by the West Indies for 369 to bring up lunch on day two.

Then Broad, Jofra Archer and James Anderson all got into the act to reduce the visitors to 59 for the loss of three wickets at tea on the second day of the series-deciding game. The West Indian wickets that fell were those of Kraigg Brathwaite (1), John Campbell (32) and Shai Hope (17). Shamrah Brooks (4 batting) and Roston Chase (0 batting) were at the crease when umpires called tea. Resuming on 258-4, England lost a wicket in four consecutive overs to collapse to 280 for eight, with

Ollie Pope (91, 150b, 11x4) falling first and failing to add to his overnight score.

The collapse brought Broad to the middle and the left-hander hit the 'Windies' bowlers to all parts of Old Trafford, reaching his half century in 33 balls. The feat put him tied for third place in the all-time list of England's fastest Test fifties.

Broad's 45-ball innings ended when he holed out in the deep off an ambitious swept volley but by then he had frustrated the West Indies and put England back in charge of a series currently poised at 1-1. His potentially game-changing ninth-wicket partnership with Dom Bess (18) was worth 76 runs.

Shannon Gabriel picked up the wickets of overnight batsmen Pope and Jos Buttler (67). However, Kemar Roach (4/72) was the star performer with the ball for the visitors.

BRIEF SCORES
England 369 (Ollie Pope 91, Jos Buttler 67, Stuart Broad 62, Kemar Roach 4/72); West Indies 59 for three. Match to continue