



THANKFUL ASH

Actor Aishwarya Rai Bachchan expresses gratitude to fans for praying for her family

LEISURE P2



ARMY GETS 'FREE HAND'

J & K admin lifts circular under which Army had to obtain a special certificate to acquire land

TWO STATES P7



A NEW HOPE

Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine protects monkeys against virus, according to a study

INTERNATIONAL P10

NEW EDUCATION POLICY

5+3+3+4 REPLACES 10+2

Cabinet approves new National Education Policy (NEP), HRD Ministry to be renamed 'Education Ministry'

WHAT IS 5+3+3+4 DESIGN?

NEP proposes new curricular and pedagogical structure, with 5+3+3+4 design covering children in the age group 3-18 years

Under this there will be

- 5 years of the Foundational stage: 3 years of pre-primary school and Grades 1, 2;
- 3 years of the Preparatory (or Latter Primary) stage: Grades 3, 4, 5;
- 3 years of the Middle (or Upper Primary) stage: Grades 6, 7, 8
- 4 years of the High (or Secondary) stage: Grades 9, 10, 11, 12

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the draft of New Education Policy (NEP 2020), and also renamed the HRD Ministry as Education Ministry. The new policy proposes new curricular and pedagogical structure, with 5+3+3+4 design covering the children in the age group 3-18 years.

Besides, a single regulator for higher education institutions, multiple entry and exit options in degree courses, discontinuation of MPhil programmes, low stakes board exams, common entrance exams for universities are among other highlights of the NEP.

The policy, which was framed in 1986 and revised in 1992, had not been revised since then.



The Cabinet also approved changing the name of the HRD Ministry to 'Education Ministry'.

"NEP 2020 aims to increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education including vocational education from 26.3 pc (2018) to 50 pc by 2035. At least 3.5 crore new seats will be added to higher education institutions," HRD Higher Education Secretary Amit Khare said at a press briefing.

"The policy envisages broad based, multi-disciplinary, holistic Under Graduate education with flexible curricula, creative combinations of subjects, integration of vocational education and multiple entry and exit points with appropriate certification. Under Graduate education can be of three or four years with multiple exit options and appropriate certification within this period," he added.

Among the key reforms in the policy are a single regulator for all higher education institutions except for legal and medical colleges, common entrance exam for admissions to universities and colleges to be conducted by the National Testing Agency (NTA) and common norms to be in place for private and public higher education institutions under the Central government's new Education Policy.

"Affiliation of colleges is to be phased out in 15 years and a stage-wise mechanism is to be established for granting graded autonomy to colleges. Over a period of time, it is envisaged that every college would develop into either an autonomous degree-granting college, or a constituent college of a university," Khare said.

Elaborating on the reforms in school education, HRD Secretary Anita Karwal said, "Board exams will be low stake. The focus will be on testing concepts and knowledge application. Home language, mother

tongue or regional language to be medium of instruction up to Class V."

She further said "school curriculum will be reduced to core concepts and there will be integration of vocational education from Class VI."

The new education policy was part of the Bharatiya Janata Party's manifesto ahead of the 2014 general election.

In May 2016, a 'Committee for Evolution of the New Education Policy' under the chairmanship of TSR Subramanian, former cabinet secretary, submitted its report. Based on this, the Ministry prepared a document called 'Some Inputs for the Draft National Education Policy, 2016'.

OTHER TAKEAWAYS

- Teaching up to at least Grade 5 to be in mother tongue or regional language
- Sanskrit will be offered at all levels and foreign languages from the secondary school level. However, "no language will be imposed on any student"
- Instead of exams being held every year, school students will sit only for three - at Grades 3, 5 and 8
- M.Phil courses to be discontinued and all the courses at UG, PG and PhD levels to be interdisciplinary
- All higher edu institutions, except legal and medical colleges, to be governed by a single regulator
- Integration of vocational edu and introduction of coding from Grade 6
- Report cards to be comprehensive report on skills and capabilities instead of just marks and statements

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UNLOCK 3.0

Gyms will reopen, schools stay shut, night curfew lifted

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), here Wednesday, issued guidelines for the 'Unlock 3.0', which will come into effect from August 1.

According to the guidelines, restrictions on movement of individuals during night have been scrapped, and yoga institutes and gymnasiums have been allowed to open from August 5.

International air travel has been permitted in a limited manner under the 'Vande Bharat' mission. Further opening-up will take place in a calibrated manner.

It has also been decided that schools, colleges and coaching institutions will remain closed till August 31. Besides, cinema halls, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, auditoriums and Assembly halls shall remain closed.

Metros and large congregations continue to be prohibited. The Independence Day events at national, state, district, sub-division, municipal and panchayat levels and 'at home' functions have been allowed with following social distancing norms and other health protocols.

There will be no restriction on inter-state and intra-state movement of

FROM AUGUST 5

- ALLOWED**
 - Inter-state and intra-state movement of people and goods
 - International air travel of passengers in a limited manner under the 'Vande Bharat' mission
 - Independence Day functions with social distancing
- NOT ALLOWED**
 - Cinema halls, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, auditoriums and Assembly halls
 - Social/ political/ sports/ entertainment/ academic/ cultural/ religious functions and other large congregations
 - Metro Rail services

people and goods, including those for across land-border trade under treaties with neighbouring countries. "Movement by passenger and Shramik special trains; domestic passenger air travel; movement of Indians stranded outside the country and of specified persons to travel abroad; evacuation of foreign nationals; and sign-on and sign-off of Indian seafarers will continue to be related as per the SOP issued," the ministry said.

Only changing the name of the Ministry won't help. The Centre needs to allocate sufficient funds for education sector. Introduction of vocational course is also a welcome step, but it will require infra development. The Centre should keep in mind that no one should be imposed with any language

SAMIR RANJAN DASH | SCHOOL & MASS EDUCATION MINISTER



Girls outshine boys in BSE Class X exams

BARGARH EMERGES AS THE BEST-PERFORMING DISTRICT

- Girls' pass percentage: **81.98**
- Boys' pass percentage: **77.80**
- Overall pass percentage: **78.76** (+6.41 YoY)



Students of Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir, Baramunda strike a pose after declaration of results in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

overall pass percentage in the examination was 78.76. School and Mass Education minister SR Dash said, "4,21,256 out of the 5,34,843 students passed the examination."

"The pass percentage this time is 78.76 per cent against last year's 72.35 per cent which is 6.41 per cent more," the minister said.

Of the 2,62,738 girl students, 2,15,367 passed the examination with a pass percentage of 81.98. Of the 2,47,451 boy students, 1,92,501 passed the examination with a pass percentage of 77.80 per cent, the minister said. The minister added 1,279 candidates passed the examination with A1 grade (above 90 per cent), the number was 1,180 last year.

While congratulating the successful candidates, the minister said: "Those who have failed should not consider this as their last examination. They will get enough opportunities in life to prosper."

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Now that this decades-old issue is resolved, we'll have to come up with something new for polls in coming decades!

5 of 36 Rafale jets are home

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: Five of the 36 medium multi-role Rafale fighter jets built by French aircraft manufacturer Dassault landed safely at the IAF airbase in Ambala Wednesday afternoon. Significantly, the frontline IAF airbase is likely to be used in case of conflict at the northern or the western borders.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said in a tweet, "The Birds have landed safely in Ambala."

"The touchdown of Rafale combat aircraft in India marks the beginning of a new era in our Military History. These multirole aircrafts will revolutionise the capabilities of the @IAF_MCC," (sic) the minister added.

Interestingly, the new additions, the fighter stable of Indian Air Force, are named after current Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria.

Of the two squadrons of the Rafale fighters, one would be based in Ambala for the western borders in Pakistan, while the second squadron would be based Hasimara in West Bengal and will be dedicated for the China border where Indian and Chinese People's Liberation Army troops are engaged in a border standoff, which left 20 Indian and unknown number of Chinese soldiers dead following a bloody



IAF Sukhoi Su-30MKIs escort Rafales as the jets move towards Ambala Air Force Station

The state-of-the-art Rafale jet can reach almost double the speed of sound, with a top speed of 1.8 Mach

The Rafale is combat proven, having been used by the French Air Force for its missions in Afghanistan, Libya and Mali

BASIC RAFALE SPECIFICATIONS

- Wing span: 10.90 m
- Length: 15.30 m
- Height: 5.30 m
- Overall empty weight: 10 tonnes
- External load: 9.5 tonnes
- Max. take-off weight: 24.5 tonnes
- Fuel (internal): 4.7 tonnes
- Fuel (external): up to 6.7 tonnes
- Ferry Range: 3,700 km
- Top Speed: 1.8 Mach at high altitude
- Landing ground run: 1,500 ft
- Service ceiling: 50,000 ft

clash June 15. The five Rafale jets joined the Indian Air Force Wednesday and the ones to follow after this will not have the India specific changes that make them more lethal and potent.

19-yr-old Bolangir girl helps rescue 6K trapped workers

July 30 is 'United Nations World Day against Trafficking in Persons', established to raise awareness of the plight of human trafficking victims, and promote and protect their rights

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: She was trafficked once and till now she has rescued more than 6,000 victims of human trafficking. Meet Manasi Bariha.

This tribal girl from Bolangir has created ripples in the state for showing courage, determination and presence of mind in rescuing more than 6,000 of her co-workers and many others from nearby brick kiln centres in Tamil Nadu.

The 19-year-old Manasi Bariha along with 355 other workers from different parts of Odisha like Bolangir, Nuapada and Kalahandi among others had gone to work at a brick kiln of Pudhukuppam in Tiruvallur.

The men (kiln owner's associates) pulled out lathis and went berserk on us. We were bleeding profusely. Some were left grievously injured and needed urgent medical attention. Many suffered head injuries

MANASI BARIHA | RECALLS THE HORROR SHE FACED AT THE BRICK KILN

The working conditions at the brick kiln were horrible, victims said. The workers were forced to toil beyond normal working hours and paid a meagre ₹250 per week. They were kept in shanties and had to attain their brick production targets. The workers sweated it out and hoped that once they complete their targets, they could leave. But, even after completion of the work, the kiln owner did not let them go. Victims say that the owner asked his men to resort to violence to make the workers stay. Workers were dragged out of their shanties and forced to continue making bricks. She anyhow was able to sneak away and dialed up all her cell phone contacts. She shared the disturbing images at the shanties and at the kiln, seeking help.

Soon the government officials and police were alerted and help arrived. An FIR was lodged against the owner and associates; most of the culprits were caught.

The government also enquired about other brick kilns in the area and learnt about migrant workers trapped in difficult conditions. Majority of them were Odia workers. Subsequently, workers in as many



VULNERABLE LOT

About 89 per cent of NGOs surveyed for a study say trafficking of both adults and children for labour will be "one of the biggest threats" in the post-lockdown period as household incomes of the most vulnerable deplete.

MORE P9

as 30 brick kilns in Tiruvallur were rescued and allotted special trains for their travel so they can return home safely. And everything happened during these lockdown days.

Experts fear that the Covid-induced lockdown may make the poorer section of the society more vulnerable to trafficking.

"Unorganised and migrant workers are the most vulnerable to trafficking which has clearly taken the shape of an organised crime now with Covid-19 and the uncertainty surrounding it," said Neenu Thomas, Director (Odisha Projects), International Justice Mission.

71% state returnees 'won't migrate if' given regular jobs

AGENCIES

Sambalpur, July 29: Around 71 per cent of the migrants who have returned to Odisha from across the country due to the global virus pandemic are not interested to migrate elsewhere if they find stable employment opportunities in the state, a study said.

The study, involving a telephonic survey, was conducted in four western Odisha districts of Sambalpur, Bolangir, Deogarh and Bargarh.

As many as 227 migrant returnees - 88 from Bargarh, 75 from Sambalpur, 35 from Bolangir and 29 from Deogarh - were interviewed as part of the survey.

The study on migrant labourers, 'Perception of returnee migrants on COVID-19 and its impact on social and migratory status', was conducted by the Centre of Excellence Regional Development and Tribal Studies of Sambalpur University.

It was found that the people from the four districts of western Odisha migrate primarily for employment as they are unable to get stable jobs within the state, said Prof Arun Kumar Acharya.

Mentioning that many people proceed to Tamil Nadu from Bolangir district to work in textile units in the southern state, Acharya said, there is no textile factory in Bolangir though cotton is cultivated in the region.



ANISTON ON GETTING EMMY NOD

Actress Jennifer Aniston is ecstatic to get nominated for an Emmy Award for the first time in 11 years. Aniston received a nomination for Outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series, for her portrayal of Alex Levy in *The Morning Show*.

ASHLEY PRAISES HARRY

Singer Ashley Roberts finds *One Direction* star Harry Styles cute. In an interaction with *The Sun's* Bizarre column, Ashley praised Harry a lot, reports femalefirst.co.uk.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Whip up some excitement in your life — put on your walking shoes and go explore some unknown destination, suggests Ganesha. Keep yourself busy, but take care not to overdo anything.

TAURUS
You will find yourself at the crossroads and each turn and twist will come with its share of pros and cons, says Ganesha. Your sentiments may have an ill-effect on your health. You may spend quality time with family members and friends, hoping to shield the burden thrust upon your soul.

GEMINI
Today, you will decide to become a bit more conscious about your health. You may or may not join a gym or measure your calories, but you will definitely sit up and take notice of your lifestyle and unhealthy food habits, predicts Ganesha.

CANCER
Today, you are likely to experience something life-changing. A small incident, an observation, a tragedy, a disaster, or a simple thought may change the course of your life. You, however, may not be able to take the changes well.

LEO
Your passionate and emotional nature contributes in a big way to your sudden outbursts of emotions, says Ganesha. Today, your anger may erupt abruptly. This makes it very likely for you to get carried away irrespective of your surroundings and circumstances, both at work and at home.

VIRGO
Close members of your family and friends will take up most of your time today. Students will have to pay more attention to studies as exams are upcoming, and they will have to learn to balance study and free time. Ganesha says today is a good time to buy property.

LIBRA
"Every man has specific natural abilities", said Aristotle. This seems to be true for you today. Your natural talents will be acknowledged and documented at work. This might prompt your equals to hold you up above the rest, and for your seniors to positively encourage you to scale greater heights.

SCORPIO
"It's a dream come true," you may utter these words in surprise today, feels Ganesha. Your paternal home is ready or you may just get the keys of your much desired vehicle. You may have an extended celebration by receiving or giving gifts to your closed ones.

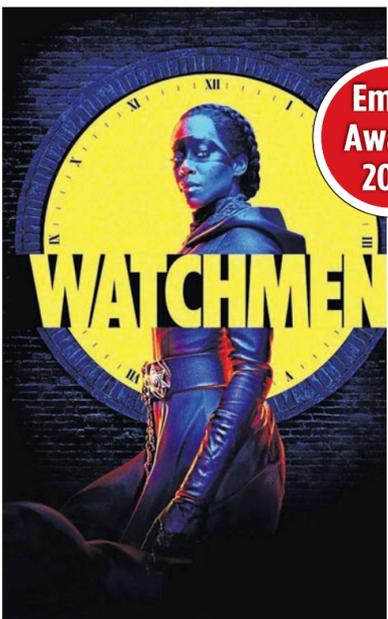
SAGITTARIUS
The day is bright and the seas are calm today. For a change, you shall spend time with your life partner and help them in household chores. Even routine jobs like cooking and cleaning will weave an intricate bond between you two.

CAPRICORN
A good day always begins with a good start. It will be a good day for you today as you will start the day with a positive attitude to life, says Ganesha. Your unremitting dedication and determination will not only put you ahead of others, but will also help you get an edge over them.

AQUARIUS
You are a polished diamond. Adversities come and go, yet you remain unruffled. Today, you manage to please your boss, and beloved, and that is a feat! It is yet another day of contentment.

PISCES
Do not let your emotions influence your strategies in any way. Mixing business with sentiments is only for super spies. Keep a close check on your emotions and do not get carried away. Travel for business purposes is indicated, says Ganesha.

Watchmen leads nomination list



Los Angeles: The superhero series, *Watchmen*, leads the nomination list at the 72nd annual Emmy Awards, with 26 nods.

Regina King's *Watchmen* is followed by *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* with 20 nods. Jason Bateman, Laura Linney and Julia Garner's *Ozark*, and Brian Cox's *Succession* scored 18 nominations each, while *The Mandalorian*, *Saturday Night Live* and *Schitt's Creek* had 15 nominations each, reports variety.com.

Saturday Night Live star Leslie Jones was joined by Laverne Cox, Josh Gad and Tatiana Maslany while announcing the nominations. The Emmy Awards, hosted by Jimmy Kimmel, will air September 20.

Emmy Awards 2020

Ayushmann plays cross-functional athlete in his next

Mumbai: Actor Ayushmann Khurrana will be seen playing a cross functional athlete in an upcoming film directed by Abhishek Kapoor. The film is pitched as a progressive love story.

The yet-untitled film is set in north India and its shooting schedule will begin in October.

"Ayushmann and I are both known for a certain kind of cinema and this film is definitely a special one for both of us. We want audiences to come back to the theatres and watch movies as a community, and for that we will spare no effort. We strive to bring our best game for this one," said Abhishek.

The filmmaker says he is going to present Ayushmann in a never-seen-before avatar.

The *Bala* actor is excited about creatively collaborating with Abhishek.



Ash thanks fans after Covid recovery

Mumbai: Actress Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has penned a note to express her gratitude to fans for praying for her and her family in their Covid-19 battle.

Aishwarya, her husband Abhishek Bachchan, father-in-law Amitabh Bachchan and daughter Aaradhya were diagnosed with Covid-19 earlier this month. She and Aaradhya have tested negative and have been discharged from the hospital. Aishwarya used

her Instagram handle to tell her fans that she is "overwhelmed" with their love.

"Thank you so so much for all your Prayers, Concern, Wishes and Love for my darling Angel Aaradhya and for Pa, Ab... and me... truly overwhelmed and forever indebted... God bless you all," she wrote.

"All my Love always and Prayers for the well-being of you ALL and all yours... Truly, Deeply and Heartfelt... Be Well and Be Safe God bless... love you all too," she added.

She also shared a picture of her daughter Aaradhya's hands joined in a 'namaste' while she made a heart sign with her hands.



INDIA'S OLDEST THEATRE PERSONALITY

Curtain falls on Kashinath at 108

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: An era came to an end Tuesday night with the demise of Master Kashinath Sahoo, the oldest theatre personality of India. He was 108.

"My father was active till the end. He skipped his breakfast Tuesday after feeling little feverish. We never imagined he would no more be with us in the evening," said a shocked Debendra Sahoo, his elder son here Wednesday. Several members of Odisha Natya Sangh including Prasanna Mishra, Dhira Mallick, Manoj Pattanaik, Haren Sahoo, Prakash Moharana, and Ashok Kar grieved the death.

Born to Radhamani and Bandhu Sahoo of Haripur village near Pipili, September 7, 1913, Kashinath was the youngest among eight siblings. Known for his simple lifestyle, Kashinath had a gamut of talents, all rolled into one. He was an actor, director, dance exponent, musician, organiser, educationist and a prominent social worker.

Popularly known as 'Master' Kashinath took to stage when he was five. He worked in famous troupes like Minerva Theatre (Kolkata), Hajuri Theatre, Haribandhu Sundara's Rasa Party, Balanga's Banamali Theatre, Art Theatre and Annuapurna A. He acted in hundreds of historical, mythological, social and family dramas. Kashinath also directed many plays.

However, his role as 'Dharama' in the play *Konarka* made him a household name in Odisha. He played the character more than a hundred times. Hence he was often addressed as 'Dharama' as the role he portrayed became synonymous with him in real life.

Kashinath established the first movie theatre of Pipili, 'Bijoyshree Talkies', which still continues to host films. Among his socio cultural activities, Kashinath was among the founders of the 'Pipili Mahavidyalaya' and the 'Jawahar Vidyaapeeth' to promote education in the area. He also played key role in formation of 'Pipili Sanskritika Parishad' and several other cultural organisations.

Kashinath will remain a sparkling star in the annals of Odia theatre, said many persons associated with theatre and other works of art in Odisha.

he was honoured with 'Buddha Samman', 'Konark Jyoti Samman' and felicitated on several occasions by many organisations in Odisha. He also performed in several 'Garjat' states of British India and was awarded gold medals many times. The state Culture Department, in collaboration with Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi and Odisha Natya Sangh felicitated him at Bhanja Kala Mandap September, 8, 2013 after he scored a century in life and published a souvenir in his honour.

Not many know that Kashinath was a true Gandhian who had scripted nearly half a dozen skits to encourage freedom fighters. He was part of the group that walked with the Mahatma from Dandamukundpur till Pipili, May 12, 1934.

Kashinath established the first movie theatre of Pipili, 'Bijoyshree Talkies', which still continues to host films. Among his socio cultural activities, Kashinath was among the founders of the 'Pipili Mahavidyalaya' and the 'Jawahar Vidyaapeeth' to promote education in the area. He also played key role in formation of 'Pipili Sanskritika Parishad' and several other cultural organisations.

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Threads of love by kids with autism

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Raksha Bandhan is a festival of love, faith, trust and security but the pandemic has dampened the spirit of this occasion. However, at a time when life has come to a standstill, some special children have made an effort to bring many siblings closer with their designer rakhis.

Needless to say, this has come as a huge relief to many young girls who would have to spend a lot to buy their choicest rakhis from costlier sites with the shops dealing with non-essential goods remaining shut due to lockdown. It is Ability

Bazaar by We4You Charitable Trust, a city-based philanthropic organisation, which is delivering these rakhis designed by the autistic children to the buyers of Bhubaneswar. While the initiative taken by the organisation has offered an opportunity to the kids to use their creative minds, it has also helped them make some money.

"It is not only in Bhubaneswar, we are getting orders from across the country and executing them with the help of Speed Post. We are overwhelmed by buyers' response", says Abhaya Mohanta, the founder of the organisation.

Ability Bazaar is committed to not let the coronavirus take the sheen of this beautiful festivity.



Rakhis designed by autistic children

PEANUTS



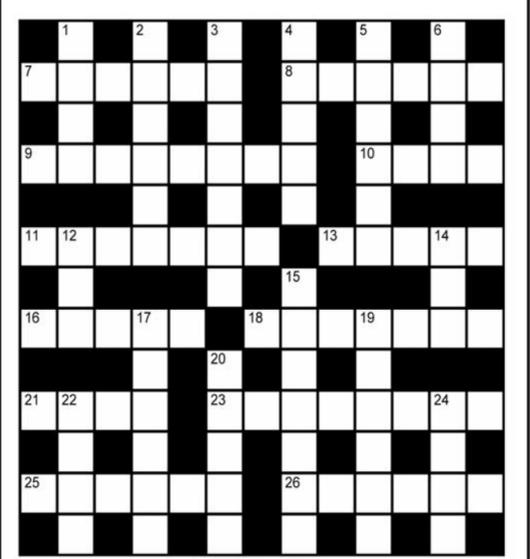
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



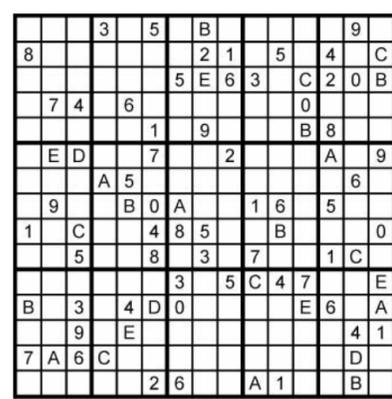
FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Respite
 - 8 Stickers
 - 9 Caribbean island
 - 10 Small amount
 - 11 Movie theatres
 - 13 Tooth trouble
 - 16 Shooting game
 - 18 Military officer
 - 21 Decant
 - 23 Funnyman
 - 25 Pig
 - 26 Almost
- Down**
- 1 Ionian gulf
 - 2 Speculate
 - 3 Kind of
 - 4 Squirrel away
 - 5 Wild ox, e.g.
 - 6 Picnic pest
 - 12 Squid's squirt
 - 14 Astonish
 - 15 Speak highly of
 - 17 Exclamation of satisfaction
 - 19 Tough going
 - 20 Disdain
 - 22 Woodwind
 - 24 Cobblers' tools

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



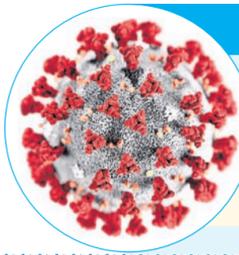
SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



HOMAGE TO BIJAY

Members of 1990-batch Alumni Association of Drama department in Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya pay tributes to actor Bijay Mohanty at Bindusagar tank in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	1,69,31,916	1,04,95,080	6,64,302
India	15,38,899	9,91,205	34,285
Odisha	29,175	18,939	159

Govt will pull out all stops to save lives: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Wednesday, assured all MLAs that his government will put every resource in its command in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic and save peoples' lives.

Addressing a sensitisation workshop on the novel coronavirus for MLAs, Naveen said, "Funds will never be a constraint when it involves protecting our people. We will put in place whatever best treatment available in any part of the world and make it accessible to our people free of cost."

From travel to quarantine, testing, tracing & treatment, food, accommodation, everything has been provided free of cost. When hospitals are charging lakhs of rupees for treatment in many states, the Odisha government is providing everything free of cost, he said.

The state has recently started plasma therapy, which showing encouraging results. He appealed to all the legislators to encourage plasma donation and educate people at large to follow social distancing,



The CM appealed to the MLAs to encourage plasma donation and educate people to follow social distancing, wearing of masks and practice hand-washing

BOOSTING MORALE

The state has recently started plasma therapy, which showing encouraging results

Patnaik saw a Gopabandhu Das, a Madhubabu, a Maa Rama Devi and a Parvati Giri in the sacrifices of the Covid warriors

wearing of masks and practice hand-washing.

The Chief Minister said the pandemic has had a huge economic impact globally, nationally and locally. Every family in the world has been affected. "Our state, through a series of livelihood interventions and industrial sector initiatives, is trying to kick-start the economy. I am hopeful that our efforts will bear fruit," he hoped.

Patnaik was all praises for the Covid warriors. "It is because of their hard work, dedication and sacrifice that more than 18,000 people have been cured and Odisha

has saved more people than most states of the country," he stated.

"It's not an easy task to work continuously in an environment of uncertainty, but our Covid warriors, in spite of getting infected, in spite of their families getting infected, in spite of their lives been lost, have put up a valiant front for the last 150 days," he further said.

Patnaik saw a Gopabandhu Das, a Madhubabu, a Maa Rama Devi and a Parvati Giri in the sacrifices of the Covid warriors.

Stating Odisha has seen so many calamities in the past, the CM said, "It is in our blood to fight with our might and come back stronger. I am sure the Odisha that will evolve post pandemic will be much

stronger and prosperous."

Speaker Surya Narayan Patro praised the CM for his vision to fight the virus and laid emphasis on strict implementation of all Covid norms. Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik appealed to all lawmakers to join hands together in the fight against Covid-19.

Congress legislature party leader Narasingha Mishra proposed to set up a House Committee to examine the Covid situation.

At the beginning of the workshop, the leaders paid homage to the departed Covid warriors by observing a minute's silence. Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy made a detailed presentation on Covid situation in the state and action taken in this regard.

Bio-toilets in ECoR trains for clean, corrosion-free tracks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: In an attempt to ensure clean and eco-friendly travel for the passengers and fulfilling its commitment towards the 'Swachh Rail, Swachh Bharat' campaign, the East Coast Railway (ECoR) has successfully completed 100 per cent installation of bio-toilets in its trains.

These bio-toilets convert the human waste into water and biogases with the help of bacteria. This mechanism of bio-toilets is very helpful in sustainable management of solid waste.

All the 3,247 ECoR coaches are now fitted with eco-friendly bio-toilets. Out of these, 2,534 are Integral Coach Factory (ICF) and 713 Linke Hoffmann Busch (LHB) coaches that have now been equipped with bio-toilets.

The installation of bio-toilets in ECoR coaches will not only help maintain cleanliness by prevent-



ECO-FRIENDLY MEASURE

All the 3,247 coaches under ECoR are now fitted with bio-toilets

Bio-toilets convert the human waste into water and bio-gases with the help of bacteria

Venturi Sytem invented by ECoR ensures proper cross-ventilation of fresh air in the toilets

Litter bins are provided in every toilet fitted with bio-tanks to avoid dumping of waste in toilet pans

ing discharge of human waste on railway tracks, but also protect tracks from corrosion. "And, hence, it will reduce the maintenance cost of railway assets, and improve safety of train operation," said ECoR sources.

ECoR has also improved the functioning of bio-toilets by introducing the Venturi System concept. This new system ensures proper cross-ventilation of fresh air in the

toilets. It will overcome the issue of foul smell from the bio-toilets. ECoR is also providing soft flush system in bio-toilets for easy flush out of waste. Litter bins are provided in each toilet fitted with bio-tanks to avoid dumping of waste into toilet pans.

For awareness of passengers about proper use of bio-toilets, pictorial messages are displayed in coaches about Do(s) and Don't(s).

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NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

SERVICE TO THE DEITIES



(Top) Darpadalan chariot of Devi Subhadra being dismantled with utmost care in Puri, Wednesday. The chariot would be reassembled and preserved at Sri Jagannath Ballav mutt in the Holy City. (Bottom) Patara Bisoyi servitors design 'rakhis' for the upcoming Raksha Bandhan festival at Srimandir

BJP slams BJD over case against party MLAs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Hitting out at BJD over alleged police action against BJP MLAs Jay Narayan Mishra and Nauri Naik in Sambalpur, the state BJP Wednesday alleged that the BJD is trying to suppress the voices against injustice by using 'illegitimate tactics'.

Speaking to reporters here, state BJP president Samir Mohanty said, "As the Covid-19 situation is worsening by the day in Sambalpur district, a delegation of BJP led by the two MLAs were trying to reach out to the district Collector to submit a memorandum in this regard. But they were stopped and handled by the police."

MLA Jay Narayan Mishra had barged into the Collector's office with hundreds of his supporters. If he wanted to submit a memorandum, he could have done it with a limited number of people

Even the police registered a strong case against the two MLAs. This act of police is unethical and anti-people, Mohanty said.

He further alleged that the state government is taking action against others even for a petty violation of Covid norms, but is turning blind eye to the violations by their

own leaders. Showing pictures of some BJD leaders violating the Covid guidelines including helicopter tour of BJD leader Sanjay Das Burma, the BJP leader said, "It seems like the BJD government has a different set of rules for a different set of people." Even after this incident, Mohanty said his party will not stop raising the issues and voices against injustice. On the other hand, BJD spokesperson Sasmit Patra criticised Mohanty for supporting and favouring the violation attempted by their MLAs.

"MLA Jay Narayan Mishra with hundreds of his supporters had barged into the Collector's office. If he wanted to submit a memorandum, he could have done it with a limited number of people," Patra

said. The way Mishra carried himself with mask open and with a crowd is a very bad example of how a people's representative should behave in public in the time of pandemic, he stated.

The BJD leader further said Mishra is well known for misbehaving with government officers in Sambalpur as well as with his senior party leaders in the past.

"He is presently out on bail in a murder case. His continued misbehaviour during the Covid pandemic is extremely unfortunate. It seems that Mohanty has probably forgotten how his own party people had attacked him in Sambalpur in March 2017 and who was behind this attack," Patra reminded.

Experts welcome edu policy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the National Education Policy 2020 Wednesday, making way for large scale, transformational reforms in both school and higher education sectors. This is the first education policy of the 21st century and replaces the thirty-four year old National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986.

Parents, teachers and educationists of the state largely approved the new policy. Basudev Bhatt, chairman, Odisha Parents Federation, said, "We welcomed this move before new academic year 2021. The increase of spending on education is praiseworthy."

Bijaya Kumar Sahoo, advisor, Odisha Adarsh Vidyalaya, said, "The much-awaited New Education Policy (NEP) 2020, has got the Cabinet approval. I welcome the emphasis on three languages as



Changing the pedagogical structure from a 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 system is in line with international educational standards

the medium of instruction till Grade 5. No language will be imposed on any student." Mahadeo Jaiswal, Director, IIM Sambalpur, said, "We welcome the move by the Cabinet to rename the HRD ministry to the Education ministry as the role of the department is to further and provide education. Allowing global

institutes to set up campuses in India is also a positive move as it will increase competition. This will open up our education system and will help sustain talent in the country. Changing the pedagogical structure from a 10+2 system to a 5+3+3+4 system is in line with international educational standards."

Renowned medical hall shut down as staffer tests positive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Wednesday closed a very popular medical store at Babuji Nagar here after one of its staff tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

As per BMC sources, 13 other staff and the proprietor of the medicine store have been asked to undergo home quarantine for 14 days as a precautionary measure. The civic body will collect swab samples of all the employees for Covid-19 test.

"The standard Covid-19 protocols have been initiated. Contact tracing has already begun to isolate others who have come in contact with the infected persons," said Anshuman Rath, South East Zonal Deputy Commissioner (ZDC) of BMC, who led the enforcement team. "All the staffers of the store are under our direct watch as they reside in different places in the city. So, we told the store management to get the details of persons who visited the store from their database. Their phone numbers will be available in the billing database, and we told them to send individual messages asking them to contact BMC in case of symptoms," the ZDC informed.

I-Day celebration to be low-key affair

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: In view of Covid-19 pandemic, this year's Independence Day celebration will be a low-key affair.

The government has decided to organise the state-level function at Exhibition Ground here.

The entire world including India and Odisha is fighting an unprecedented pandemic and various rules and regulations have laid down to minimise the effects of coronavirus on public health.

Chairing a meeting to chalk out preparedness for the day, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathi directed all officials concerned to ensure proper enforcement of the Covid guidelines like proper hygiene and social distance during the preparation and observance.

The parade will not be held in the



MAJOR DECISIONS

ONLY THREE TROOPS OF POLICE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FUNCTION WHICH WOULD BE HELD AT EXHIBITION GROUND

THE DAY WOULD BE CELEBRATED WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF PEOPLE, INCLUDING THE COVID WARRIORS

LIVE VISUALS OF THE CELEBRATION WILL BE CONNECTED TO ALL THE MEDIA THROUGH COMMON FEED SO THAT PEOPLE CAN WATCH IT ON TV AT THEIR HOMES

same way as that of previous years. The police band will perform the national anthem while troops from the three police forces, including the band party, will greet the national flag and the chief guest of the occasion. It was decided at the meeting that the day would be celebrated with the participation of a limited

number of people, including the Covid warriors.

The live visuals of the celebration will be connected to all the media through common feed so that people can watch it on TV in their homes. Tripathi directed the departments concerned to ensure construction of proper stage, bar-

ricading, drinking water supply, sanitation, law & order and ancillary arrangements.

Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay, Home secretary Sanjeev Chopra, I&PR secretary Sanjay Kumar Singh, twin city Police Commissioner Sudhansu Sarangi attended the meeting.

AADHAAR HURDLE

PDS ration eludes 8.5% beneficiaries

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: A study on four most migrant-prone districts of Odisha has revealed that around 8.5 per cent of the PDS beneficiaries were deprived of ration either due to non-availability of Aadhaar or lack of Aadhaar-ration card linking.

The study was conducted in four districts - Bargarh, Bolangir, Kalahandi and Nuapada - by Right to Food Campaign.

According to the survey, "About 8.5 per cent families out of 59 who had ration cards reported that

there were one or more family members excluded from ration cards due to non-availability of Aadhaar or non-seeding of Aadhaar."

The report also said that 13 per cent of the respondents surveyed had to go hungry for more than one day due to non-availability of food at home which the survey termed as "the worst situation."

The study recommended non-requirement of Aadhaar during this pandemic, universal coverage of PDS, setting up of community kitchen in villages and others.

Barchana MLA in home isolation

Bhubaneswar: Senior BJD leader and Barchana MLA Amar Prasad Satpathy put himself in home isolation after his personal staff members tested positive for Covid-19. Through a video message, Satpathy said, "My staff members have developed Covid-19 like symptoms and later tested positive. Local administration advised me and my family to remain in home isolation for 14 days as we came in direct contact with them."

NHRC seeks ATR on Aditya's death

HITTING THE STREETS



People under the banner of World Human Rights Protection Organisation demonstrate near Reserve Bank of India regional office at Unit-III in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, demanding loan waiver in the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic



File photo of Aditya Dash

Motivational speaker Aditya Dash was found dead along the railway tracks near Lingaraj Temple Road station here July 7

Though police strongly suspected Aditya committed suicide by jumping in front of a running train, his friends and relatives alleged foul play and conspiracy

The rights body has warned the Commissioner of Police that it would invoke coercive process for personal appearance of the concerned authority if the report is not received within four weeks

tracks near Lingaraj Temple Road station here July 7.

The petitioner informed the commission that the police was yet to establish the cause of Dash's death while the Government Railway Police (GRP) had registered a murder case.

Aditya's widow Bidyashree, on the other hand, has demanded a detailed investigation into the case so as to ascertain the exact reason behind her husband's death.

Aditya's friends have claimed that they have a few 'screenshots' and 'videos' related to the case.

Demanding evidence and circumstances that led to Aditya's death, they said they would make the 'evidence' public if the police fail to reveal the truth, the petitioner said.

As the wife and friends of the deceased were engaged in mudslinging, the cloak of mystery is to be lifted from the death of

the social worker, who was receiving threats from criminals as he launched an anti-liquor agitation, he added.

The CCTV footage of the railway station near which Dash was found dead is missing, the petitioner said, adding that the post-mortem report, his handwriting, diary, the forensic laboratory and circumstantial evidence shrouds the mystery over the death of the social activist.

The delay in arresting the culprits, exposing the truth, and uncovering the mystery over Dash's death pose a serious question on human rights as it involves the role of police, intelligence and law and order of the state, Tripathy contended.

The petitioner requested the NHRC to ensure fair investigation by agencies like CBI or CB-CID of the state or by an independent team of experts immediately so as to uncover the mystery behind the death and ensure safety and security of all the RTI activists.

16,789 prisoners released in state

Govt issues online learning SOPs for divyang students

OVER 1K FRESH INFECTIONS TAKE VIRUS TALLY TO 29,175

New symptoms of viral infection emerging: RMRC



A total of 16,639 under-trial prisoners (UTPs) and 150 convicts have been released from various jails in state between March 20 and July 28 in the wake of coronavirus pandemic

At least 1,202 prisoners have been shifted from some overcrowded jails to other prisons during that time period

Services Authority are the other members of the panel.

As per the recommendation of the high-power committee, a special committee has been formed for each district in state for temporary release of the prisoners, sources said.

The district judges, district collectors, superintendents of police, superintendents of the district jails and the secretaries of the district legal services authorities have been included in the special committees.

It is learnt that the authorities of various jails have introduced several precautionary measures to check the spread of Covid-19. The system of e-Mullaqat has been launched for the meeting of prisoners with their family members. Lawyers have been asked to talk to their clients through video-conferencing.

Bhubaneswar, July 29: In order to create an inclusive environment where every student including the divyangs get equal opportunities in education, the Department of Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Wednesday issued a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for online special education of students with disabilities.

In a letter to all collectors, Deputy Secretary, Ambika Prasad Pattanaik stated that the SOP has been issued to provide a clear and concise procedure for the DSSOs, BSSOs, chief functionaries of the schools, principal/headmaster/teachers of the special schools, parents and students with disabilities on the responsibilities of each stakeholder in terms of different activities.

"In order to continue the education of the students of special schools, it has been decided to continue online education of the differently-abled students," the letter read.

Education Min lauds e-learning initiative

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Union Minister of Education Ramesh Pokhriyal virtually launched the India Report on Digital Education, 2020 recently. The report elaborates on the innovative methods adopted by Ministry of HRD, Education Departments of States and Union Territories (UTs) for ensuring accessible and inclusive education to children at home and

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 29: State's novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) tally crossed 29,000-mark after 1,068 more people tested positive for the disease, while the death toll rose to 159 with five more patients succumbing to the viral infection Wednesday, an official of the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

The total number of coronavirus patients in Odisha now stands at 29,175, the official pointed out, adding that the five deaths were reported from Ganjam, Balasore, Kandhamal, Malkangiri and Puri. Another COVID-19 patient from Bhadrak also died, but the cause of his death was attributed to 'non-COVID reasons', the official said.

Of the 1,068 fresh cases, 662 were detected from different quarantine centres while 406 were found through contact-tracing exercises. Ganjam reported the highest of 245 new cases, followed by Khurda (194), Sundargarh (112), Gajapati (88), Koraput (66) and Cuttack (61), added the official. Meanwhile, 878 persons recovered from the disease,

FIRST WOMAN PLASMA DONOR IN ODISHA

CUTTACK: Tanvi Sharma, a last year MBBS student at SCB Medical College and Hospital, is the first woman in state to donate plasma for the treatment of Covid-19 patients.

Tanvi had left for her home due to the lockdown over deadly virus. However, she was tested positive for Covid-19 when she returned to her college to appear for the final examination, sources said.

Tanvi Wednesday volunteered to donate plasma at SCBMCH after her recovery from Covid-19 infection, sources added. The Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department has praised Tanvi for donating plasma voluntarily. The department also acknowledged that she is the first woman to donate plasma in Odisha.



partment also acknowledged that she is the first woman to donate plasma in Odisha.

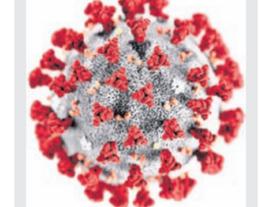
Of the new cases, 98 were quarantine cases, 39 were local contact cases, the civic body said, adding that 75 persons who had tested positive for COVID-19 recovered Wednesday. The Cuttack Municipal Corporation, on the other hand, said that 56 coronavirus cases were detected from the city Wednesday, taking the tally to 833.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Sanghamitra Pati, director, Regional Medical Research Centre (RMRC), said Wednesday that COVID patients have started to report new symptoms over the past few months.

Pati was speaking at a webinar arranged by the Press Information Bureau (PIB). She said that besides the usual dry cough, fever and respiratory ailments, other symptoms have also come to the fore.

"We have now seen other symptoms like diarrhoea, body pain and other symptoms related to haemodynamics," she said.



The official also said that the COVID epidemic is not likely to go early but the population can learn to better manage the disease through well established precautionary measures. She also tried to allay the fears of the population on cases of contradiction of COVID reports.

She also agreed that the state needs to test more people in the state. The RMRC director also said that there are intra-state variations of COVID cases with hotspots in many areas. She also said that the situation in Ganjam seems to be improving now.

"We can also improve the situation in Odisha by maintaining social distancing and other prevention measures," she added.

JOYOUS CLICK



A teacher of Saraswati Shishu Vidya Mandir at CDA Sector-9 in Cuttack takes a selfie with students after declaration of results of the annual HSC examinations Wednesday

Now, designer outfits for COVID Sachetaks

AROUND 2,500 COVID SACHETAKS ARE ENGAGED IN 67 WARDS OF BMC TO HELP SENIOR CITIZENS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: COVID Sachetaks of the Capital City got an identity boost as they were given specially designed T-Shirts and Caps by the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and sponsored by Trijal Enterprise Pvt Ltd, which they will wear while carrying out their daily activities across the city.

At present, around 2500 COVID Sachetaks are being engaged at 67 Wards of BMC to help senior citizens staying alone in meeting their daily requirements and carrying out awareness activities at community level.

The Civic Body has organized a special programme at the premises of its main office this afternoon where Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary handed over the T-shirts and Caps to five COVID Sachetaks and lauded their efforts in the fight against the pandemic.



"This (T-shirts and caps) will certainly encourage and motivate our COVID Sachetaks to carry out their noble job in a more vigorous way in the days ahead. The contribution of COVID Sachetaks in fight against the pandemic has been amazing and praiseworthy," the Commissioner said.

He also thanked and appreciated P. Gopal Krishna, Founder and Mentor of the city-based Trijal

Enterprise, for sponsoring the T-shirts and Caps.

"COVID Sachetaks are doing a remarkable job in Bhubaneswar during this challenging time by taking care of the elderly persons and senior citizens. And, we feel so happy and proud for being associated with the BMC in the fight against COVID-19," said P. Gopal Krishna, who was present at the occasion.

The officials who were present

at the programme are Suwendu Sahoo, Deputy Commissioner (Sanitation) and Ansuman Rath, Zonal Deputy Commissioner (South East Zone) of BMC. Notably, the BMC has formed a Sachetak committee in each of 67 wards and assigned tasks to it on coronavirus. Each committee consists of volunteers, mentors, doctors and prominent persons. Their responsibility is to identify the symptomatic persons so that immediate help can reach them.

The COVID Sachetaks also help and encourage senior citizens to download the Sachetak app which provides information on nearest doctors, necessary medicines, drug stores for home delivery and others. The app has also the phone number of the caregiver of the vulnerable person's family. If a family has no persons to be caregiver then a COVID Sachetak is attached to him or her to take care of him as a caregiver.

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All eyes on Tirtol Assembly seat after Bishnu's demise

Locals decry 'no job scope' in mining firms

POST NEWS NETWORK

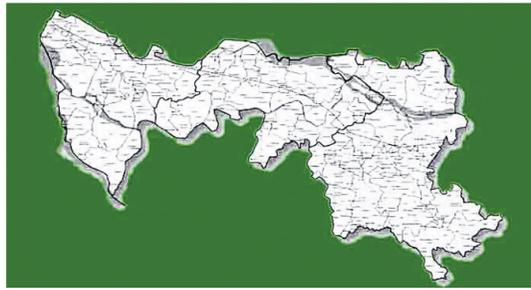
Jagatsinghpur, July 29: Even if by-election to Tirtol Assembly constituency seems a remote possibility, political activities have gathered momentum after the demise of ex-MLA Bishnu Charan Das.

As per rules in the Representation of the People Act-1951, a by-election should be conducted within six months of a representative's demise. Amid lockdowns and Covid-19 outbreak in Jagatsinghpur district, there is a little possibility of a by-election.

On the other hand, debates are raging in every nook and corner of the constituency as to who would be fielded by which political parties. Ticket aspirants from BJD, BJP and Congress have aggressively started their political activities.

Elections for Tirtol constituency, reserved for SC since 2009, was held in 2019 April 29. BJD's Bishnu Das had got 54.18% votes (93,967 votes). He had defeated his nearest rival and BJP candidate Ramakant Bhoi who got 30.9% votes (53,581 votes). The Congress had fielded candidate Devi Prasad Mallick who secured 13.73% votes.

The names of BJD aspirants like



Bishnu's son Bijaya Shankar Das, chairperson of Odisha State Commission for Women Minati Behera, local parliamentarian Rajashree Mallick's husband Asutosh Mallick, ex-MP Kulamani Samal, ex-MLA Rabi Bhoi, last election's dropped out aspirant Yudhisthir Sethy, Kendrapara district's leader and ex-MLA Sipra Mallick are in the air.

Reacting to this, a close associate of Bishnu and Bisanpur sarpanch Basant Mahapatra said, "The BJD will get sympathy votes if the party fields Bijaya Shankar. However, the party workers will abide by whatever decision BJD leadership takes in this regard."

"Whatever decision the party supremo takes will be binding on us and we will work for party candidates," Jagatsinghpur MLA Prashant Kumar Muduli said.

Coming over to the saffron camp, BJP was in second place in the last general election. "We have already accelerated our efforts in Tirtol Assembly constituency," local leader and Jagatsinghpur district BJP president Satyabrata Mohapatra said.

The BJP has been focusing on strengthening the party's organisational structure in Jagatsinghpur district. Within a few days the party will reach out to voters at panchayat levels, Mohapatra added.

Even as the name of ex-MP Bibhu

'NO' BYE-POLL NOW

Amid lockdowns and Covid-19 outbreak in Jagatsinghpur district, there is a little possibility of a by-election

The names of BJD aspirants like Bishnu's son Bijaya Shankar Das, chairperson of OSCW, Minati Behera, local MP Rajashree Mallick's husband Asutosh Mallick, ex-MP Kulamani Samal, ex-MLA Rabi Bhoi, last election's dropped out aspirant Yudhisthir Sethy, ex-MLA Sipra Mallick are in the air

Local residents are not happy with development works taken up by the state government. As against this, political strategies of BJP and Congress are also not satisfactory

Prasad Tarai is being debated these days, he has made his stand clear by saying, "I am not in the race and not an aspirant for MLA ticket but will certainly contest election as an MLA candidate from Tirtol if my party decides so."

As previous election's BJP can-

didate Ramakant Bhoi had got over 53,000 votes, there is a fair chance that he might be fielded again. Giving his views, Ramakant said, "I will certainly get the party ticket and win with a good margin."

In the Congress camp, the party's state scheduled caste cell coordinator Debendra Mallick, previous election's Jagatsinghpur MP candidate Pratima Mallick as well as her brother and defeated MLA candidate Devi Prasad Mallick are in the race for Tirtol MLA seat.

However, the Pradesh Congress Committee president Niranjan Patnaik had earlier formed a committee for by-elections led by Chiranjib Biswal. Veteran leader and Jatni MLA Suresh Routray has been appointed as the political observer for Jagatsinghpur district.

"Strategies would change in keeping with changes in future political scenario. Local residents are not happy with development works taken up by the state government. As against this, political strategies of BJP and Congress are also not satisfactory. Tirtol by-election will be a unique experience for local voters and the rate of voting could drop," local political analysts and intelligentsia opined.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 29: Resentment brewed among locals in Jajanga area under Joda mining circle of Keonjhar over lack of livelihood scope in mining companies.

They alleged that lease holders of the mines have been neglecting local people in their work. Contractual agencies from other states have been roped in for mining work.

Scores of people from Kamalpur, Bandhuabada, Jamita, Bholabada, Jajanga, Lahuniposi, Guruttan and Jurudi have taken up the issue with the Collector.

Besides, they have intimidated their plight to Champua sub-collector, Bamebari IIC, Barbil tehsildar and the district labour officer. Aggrieved people have long been protesting for jobs in mines, but their demand has allegedly been pushed aside by the mining firm.

"The economy of the district solely depends on the mining sector. But mining firms operating in the locality is depriving the locals of their livelihood while they have



engaged machines in their work," they fumed.

About 80 per cent of the population in the area is living below the poverty line. Earlier, people used to depend on forests for minor forest produce, but forest cover is vanishing due to mining activities, they pointed out.

With decline of forest cover, their livelihood and wildlife are at stake. People are sitting idle in the mining rich area without getting work at hand.

"The companies have snatched out rice bowl and engaged machines in its work. We were left jobless in our land," they added.

They have formed an outfit Yuva Shakti Development with which they have been protesting for the cause of job scope for them.

2 staff of FMMC test Covid positive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, July 29: After two employees of Fakir Mohan Medical College and Hospital in Balasure district tested positive for Covid-19 Wednesday, the district administration sent all the employees of the medical college to home isolation.

Sources said a female administrator and a male clerk of the medical college tested positive for the virus. Though there is no official notification regarding how the duo contracted the virus, they had visited Balasure District Headquarters Hospital on several occasions for official work.

Earlier, some patients and medical staff of the DHH tested positive for the virus.

The district administration

has started a sanitisation drive at the college campus as a preventive measure to contain the spread. Contact tracing of the two has been initiated by the authorities.

The two patients have been sent to a dedicated Covid-19 hospital.

It may be mentioned here that with 29 new positive cases reported Wednesday, the total number of Covid-19 cases in the district has increased to 914. On the other hand, 242 patients are undergoing treatment while 666 patients have recovered from the disease.

With one patient succumbing to Covid-19 Wednesday, the district's death toll now stands at three. Three other Covid-19 patients died in the district due to other illnesses.

No social distancing at nurses' interview

KEONJHAR: Tight security arrangements at the DHH here notwithstanding, hundreds of women Tuesday breached coronavirus restrictions and turned up for nurse interview. Hundreds of women, some without masks and some with babies in their arms, started arriving on DHH premises. There was hardly any social distancing among them. Local residents were bewildered to see such a huge gathering at a sensitive place like



the DHH. According to them, entry to the DHH has been restricted these days after a surge in Covid cases. Outsiders are not allowed into DHH premises unless they have an emergency. Even if they are allowed, they are being subjected to thermal screening. But all these measures were thrown into winds Tuesday when Keonjhar district's COVID-19 cases is on the rise these days. Huge gathering triggered panic in locality.

Keonjhar farmers fret over unrepaired canals

MONSOON WOES



POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, July 29: Local farmers in Keonjhar face acute irrigation problems as there has been erratic rainfall in the district due to unsatisfactory monsoon. Most farmlands have become dry and paddy seedlings have died out.

"Even as the local farmers have already started farming activities, they apprehend drought-like conditions in the days ahead. Hardly there was monsoon rain over past three months," some farmers said.

Several villages of Nuagaon panchayat under Sadar block in Keonjhar district have concrete irrigation canals in the region. Similarly, an irrigation canal which passes through Baradapal area bor-

dering Kenduposi has no water at all for the purpose of irrigation.

Allegedly, the canal has not been repaired for past two years. The farmers in Keonjhar district have demanded construction of a concrete canal supposedly from Baradapal area up to Narasinghpur several times, but in vain. Water of a nearby river cannot be utilised for irrigation purposes unless and until the canal is repaired. Notably, local youths of Kenduposi panchayat had earlier tried to repair the soil cast and dilapidated irrigation canal.

"Keonjhar district administration should be proactive and construct new concrete canals in order to facilitate better irrigation of farmlands," some farmers of Baradapal area said.

Drought fears in Subarnapur

SUBARNAPUR: With the state witnessing a deficit of around 12% of rainfall, the situation is extremely severe in the coastal pockets.

The Meteorological Centre said, Sonepur district witnessed 31 per cent rainfall deficit till date which is far less than its surrounding districts in western Odisha.

With no rains, farmers of Ullunda block are a worried lot as agricultural activities have lagged behind this year.

Farmlands have become dry without usual rain. Reports say, farming activities kicked off in the district early this year with a few spells of rain during the onset of monsoon.

Farmers had sowed their fields on time but they have made no progress after that as the plantation process needs ample amount of water in the field.

Sonepur has irrigation facility only in Dunguripalli and Binika blocks where agricultural activities have not been affected due to shortage of rain.

Dinabandhu Kumbhar, a farmer from Ullunda block, said, "We are in despair over little rain. We were

Farmers have sowed their fields on time but they have made no progress after that as the plantation process needs ample amount of water in the field

about to start paddy plantation but no rainfall occurred in this area. Plants cannot withstand such a situation without rain."

"We didn't receive as much rain during this monsoon as is required for paddy crop. Some farmers had harvested rain water, but is not enough for crops," said Jogindra Manandia, another farmer from Ullunda block.

Prasant Satapathy, deputy director for agriculture in the district, admitted the deficit rainfall.

"Four blocks are experiencing shortage of water due to less rain," he said.

Several other districts in the state have been hit hard by deficit rainfall too.

2 Malkangiri civic bodies shut till Aug 2

MALKANGIRI: With Covid-19 cases on a rise in Malkangiri district, the district administration Wednesday announced a three day shutdown in Malkangiri Municipality and Balimela NAC areas. The shutdown will be in force from 9 pm of Thursday to 11:59 pm August 2. The district administration is on its toes to implement the shutdown in order to prevent possible spread of Covid-19 in the two civic bodies. Police patrolling as well as deployment has been escalated at different squares, main roads and national highways of the shutdown areas. During the shutdown, hospitals, nursing homes, medicine stores, petrol pumps and shops selling fruits, vegetables, grocery and milk shall remain open. All other shops, private and government offices will remain closed. However, fire station, electricity office and emergency section at collector's office will remain open. The total Covid tally has increased to 445 Wednesday.

Kin told about patient's death 4 days later

BERHAMPUR: A clear case of medical negligence came to the fore after family members of a Covid-19 patient was informed about the death of the man after four days of his passing away in Ganjam district.

The deceased has been identified as Basant Kumar Sahoo (49) from Ganapati Nagar area of Berhampur.

Family members of Sahoo accused TATA COVID Hospital at Sitalapalli of negligence. Sahoo was admitted in the COVID hospital July 19 after he tested positive for Covid. He was

LAPSES AT TATA COVID HOSPITAL



in contact with his family members till July 24. Later his phone went switched-off.

Worried over this, Sahoo's kin contacted the helpline number to know about his health condition. A hospital staff informed them about Sahoo's critical condition.

Till July 27, the kin were being informed about Sahoo's critical condition. A day later, hospital authorities informed them about Sahoo's death July 28. "Yesterday, the hospital staff informed us about his death since July 24," said Sahoo's brother-in-law.

TATA COVID Hospital CEO Dr Sangram Keshari Patra said, "After the death of Sahoo July 24, we had been searching for the contact address of his kin. His body was preserved for four days and the hospital authorities informed BeMC and Aska BDO to inform Sahoo's kin about his death."

Brick bridge built in British era goes down in Balasure

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baliapal, July 29: A brick bridge dating back to the British era under the Balasure works department limits, which was in a dilapidated state due to lack of adequate maintenance over the past years, caved in Tuesday.

The bridge which is located at Ghantiadi area on Baliapal-Basta main road is reported to have caved in later. Following the collapse of the bridge, a large crater of five to six feet deep was created on the road.

Passenger buses, trucks and several other vehicles got stranded on this main road for long hours. On being informed, a junior engineer of the department reached the spot and covered up the crater with sand-filled bags. Subsequently, vehicular movement was restored.

Worthy to note, Baliapal-Basta main road at Ghantiadi area had received cosmetic repair in 2009. However, the brick-made bridge of olden times was not allegedly re-



A new bridge will be constructed soon in place of the old one after obtaining approval of PW department

paired at that time. On being contacted, assistant engineer of Balasure works department Manoranjan Behera said, "As the brick-made bridge was of British Era and had run down over past several years, it caved in. However, the bridge was not dismantled in 2009 as it was strong then".

A new bridge will be constructed soon in place of the old one after obtaining approval of departmental higher-ups, Behera added.

Kin shun patients despite recovery from leprosy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 29: Shunned by kin, over 400 recovered leprosy patients have failed to return to their homes and living a life of deprivation and obscurity in two separate settlements in this town, a report said.

This is in contrary to the tall claims of the government of a leprosy free society as the recovered patients live here with all the roads to their homes closed.

The Centre and state government are providing all assistance and help by involving social outfits to build a leprosy free society.

This has helped in reducing the number of leprosy patients in the country. However, this is off little help for these recovered patients as they are never welcomed back into their family fold due to the superstition and stigma attached to the disease. They continue to remain neglected and shunned by their own family members live a life of deprivation and obscurity. The trial and tribulations of re-

covered patients of Hatibari Kushthashram in Jujumura in this district is a case in this point. Many of the patients living in this leprosy home have recovered after getting necessary care and treatment.

However, they have failed to return home as their family members are not ready to accept them back due to the superstition and stigma attached to the disease.

Unable to return home, over 400 recovered patients are now living in two leprosy colony at Nuapada and Negativapada in the town. The matter came to fore when this correspondent met some male and female patients who have recovered from the disease.

A woman who has recovered from the disease said she is living here since last 12-years. Family members dropped her here after she was afflicted with the disease.

She has recovered fully since long but living here as her family members have refused to take her back home. She was living with another recovered patient but has become alone after the death of



that person. She has now become helpless and earning her living from goat rearing and the rations she receives under PDS scheme. She is pondering how to spend the rest of her life.

Another man is afraid of being ostracized by the members of his caste. He feels the hatred and quizzing eyes of his neighbours and villagers whenever he tries to visit his house comprising his

two sons and a daughter. Such a situation has forced him to live here, he said.

He earns his living by collecting firewood from jungle and selling them in the local market.

Another recovered man has two sons and three daughters. He said that he is fully cured now but that has failed to free him from mental agony. He is afraid to return home. He thinks that he might well be

accepted by his family members but his neighbours will never allow him to live in peace. Moreover, his staying at his house might pose problem in the marriage of his children while his family members will be ostracized in the society.

Notably, eminent physician, Gandhian and social worker Dr Issac Santra known for his contributions for the eradication of leprosy in the country founded a leprosy home at Hatibari in 1957.

The Odisha governor is the head of the leprosy home while it is managed by Hind Kushtha Nibarana Sangh. It is spread over 560 acre land having 10 ponds, fruits and flower gardens and a health centre. The inmates here get all the healthcare facilities provided by the government.

In 2005, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared India leprosy-free and included the Hatibari Kushthashram in it. Then 456 leprosy patients were undergoing treatment at the home which has now come down to 160.

FOCUS COVID-19

SCHOOLING AS CASUALTY



A Save the Children survey in India found that two-thirds of children stopped all educational activities during lockdown. The danger now is that a perfect storm of lost schooling, increased child poverty, and deep budget cuts will lead to unprecedented reversals in education

lost the equivalent of 1.5 years of learning. Imagining that outcome on a global scale gives a sense of what is at stake. Education empowers people, reduces poverty, improves health, and the human capital that it generates shapes the destiny of countries. Lost education will erode that capital, effectively placing the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals beyond reach. Governments should now be investing to prevent that outcome. Unfortunately, education budgets are being hollowed out by recession and the diversion of public spending – and international aid – to healthcare and economic recovery. As a result, governments in low and middle-income countries could end up spending \$77 billion less than planned on education over the next 18 months.

So, what can be done to avert disaster? In its new global Save Our Education campaign, Save the Children has set out a three-part agenda for recovery.

The first priority is to keep learning alive during lockdowns. Governments should do all they can to reach children through radio, TV, and remote-learning initiatives. Countries such as Ethiopia, Uganda, and Burkina Faso have developed ambitious national distance-learning programmes. They and others need more donor support to implement them at scale.

Second, the pandemic creates an opportunity to address the wider

learning crisis. Too many children are being taught at the wrong level, owing to schools' rigid application of poorly designed curricula. Every child returning to school should undergo a learning assessment aimed at identifying those in need of support. Remedial teaching programmes such as those pioneered by organisations like BRAC and Pratham can then prevent these children from falling further behind, thereby reducing the risk of future dropout.

Third, increased international financing is critical. Most of the world's poorest countries, especially in Africa, entered the economic downturn with limited fiscal space. That room for manoeuvre is now shrinking further as recession bites and external-debt problems intensify.

Rich country governments have responded to Covid-19 by tearing up their fiscal and monetary policy rulebooks and underwriting ambitious national recovery plans. They should be equally bold in supporting education in developing countries. More effective leveraging of multilateral development bank balance sheets is an obvious starting place. The Education Commission has advocated establishing an International Finance Facility for Education to provide loan guarantees, thus enabling the World Bank and other institutions to borrow cheaply on international markets and lend the

funds to developing countries. Every \$1 of guarantees under this scheme could unlock \$4 of financing for education. This approach, which would include rigorous debt-sustainability evaluations of recipient countries, could mobilise resources on a scale commensurate with the crisis. Aid donors and the World Bank should support it.

To its credit, the Bank is front-loading resources already allocated to the International Development Association, its concessional lending arm. But an unprecedented crisis surely demands more than that. The Bank should establish a supplementary IDA budget of at least \$35 billion and step up its support for education.

Debt relief is another potential source of financing. The G20's Debt Service Suspension Initiative for IDA members (the world's 73 poorest countries) is a small step in right direction. Unfortunately private and Chinese creditors, which account for over half of these countries' debt-service payments (about \$25 billion this year) have shown scant interest in participating. As a result, countries like Cameroon, Ethiopia, and Ghana are currently spending two or three times more on debt service than they do on primary education.

In effect, countries are meeting short-term debt payments by eroding long-term human capital. Allowing the claims of private creditors to rob children of their right to an education is morally indefensible and economically ruinous. That is why Save the Children has proposed a mechanism through which debt obligations can be converted into investments in children.

We can measure the health impact of Covid-19 on adults by tracking infection rates and deaths, and we can gauge its economic effects in terms of lost GDP, higher unemployment, and rising public debt. The education emergency is less visible to policymakers. But it will leave millions of the world's poorest children carrying the scars of diminished opportunity for the rest of their lives. We can – and must – protect their future.

The writer is CEO of Save the Children, UK. @ProjectSyndicate

The beautiful thing about learning," the great blues guitarist BB King once wrote, "is that no one can take it away from you." Born and raised in poverty, King understood the value of education as a force for change. If only political leaders responding to the Covid-19 pandemic had an ounce of his insight.

The pandemic is now mutating into a global education emergency. Millions of children, especially the poorest and young girls, stand to lose the learning opportunities that could transform their lives. Because education is so closely tied to future prosperity, job creation, and improved health, a setback on this scale would undermine countries' progress, reinforcing already extreme inequalities. Yet this emergency has yet to register on governments' pandemic response agenda.

Lockdowns have shut more than one billion children out of school. For an estimated 500 million, that means receiving no education at all. A Save the Children survey in India found that two-thirds of children stopped all educational activities during lockdown. The danger now is that a perfect storm of lost schooling, increased child poverty, and deep budget cuts will lead to unprecedented reversals in education. This is an emergency layered on a pre-existing crisis. Even before the pandemic, 258 million children were out of school, and progress toward universal education had stalled. Now, increased child poverty alone could result in 10 million children not returning to school. Many of these children risk being forced into child labour or early marriage (in case of adolescent girls). Meanwhile, already abysmal pre-pandemic learning levels, which left half of children in developing countries unable to read a simple sentence after primary school, are set to worsen.

Path-breaking research on the impact of the 2005 earthquake in Kashmir, Pakistan, captures the risk to learning. Schools were closed for three months. When they reopened, attendance quickly recovered. But four years later, children aged between three and 15 who lived closest to the fault line had



Kevin Watkins

THE EDUCATION EMERGENCY IS LESS VISIBLE TO POLICYMAKERS. BUT IT WILL LEAVE MILLIONS OF THE WORLD'S POOREST CHILDREN CARRYING THE SCARS OF DIMINISHED OPPORTUNITY FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES



The thoughts of the Divine are like white doves of peace and sweetness.

THE MOTHER

Leather luxury

Many years ago, I spoke to the Mercedes people in India and told them to stop using leather for their car seats. They didn't ban it, but they made it optional. Now, the responsibility is on the buyers.

Unfortunately, very few rich people use their money judiciously. The more they make, the more they want to show other people that they are better than them. And this 'better' involves eating strange things: cancerous livers called Pâté, pregnant fish eggs called Caviar, rare poisonous fish like Fugu.

Killing old and blind wild animals while sitting on sofas: it's called canned hunting in Africa. Wearing crocodile, snake and zebra skins. I could go on forever on how the rich spend their money to cause suffering and destroy the world.

One of the most common ways is leather seats in their cars. Some 75 per cent of luxury cars use leather seats. PETA has calculated that 1.5 million car leather interiors are produced in a year. It takes eight cow skins to make one car interior. 12 million cows are killed just for luxury cars in the US alone. Multiply that with the cars of Europe and the millionaires in India who love to show off (until they get raided).

Why do rich people aspire to dead animal skin or 'leather'? The reasons given by the manufacturers and buyers are: It gives a luscious feel and look. It is elegant. It is stain resistant and resistant to smells. It is easier to clean. All three reasons are simply not true. Luscious feels and looks are completely subjective, and nothing could be more inelegant than resting your bottom on dead animals. So we will go on to the facts: Leather costs much more – upto \$2,000 per seat. Not just the leather itself but, because it heats very fast in summer and retains cold becoming hard and cold in winter, it needs air-conditioners, heaters and seat warmers – raising the cost and increasing the unhealthiness of the car interior.

Leather has a peculiar smell. In order to turn cow and calf skin into leather, it requires several hundred chemicals, so dangerous that they kill all life in the waters in which the leather factories throw their waste. These chemicals seep out and pervade the air with their own odour. Get into a leather-using car: the smell is worse than cigarette smoke.

In fact, all leather is soaked in the beginning in perfume. Tanned hides smell awful and once the perfume wears off, the seat goes back to smelling awful.

Leather is extremely high maintenance. Body oil and dirt collect on the surface of leather and act like fine sandpaper, breaking down the protective chemicals on the dead skin so that visible cracks develop on the surface. No moisture is tolerated, so if you get in when it is raining, and you are damp, you can harm the seats and cause an even more putrid smell. Sweat, alcohol can do the same.

Leather absorbs dirt and spills, vomit and chocolate spots, pus and nose goo, which means it can stain and become discoloured more easily. Leather is also easier to scratch, so it's not a good choice for your vehicle if you have dogs, cats or children, unless you cover the interior to protect it.

Leather needs cleaning and conditioning every two months to keep it looking good. The cleaners cost as much as the seats. Some seats have to be taken off and given to a dry cleaner. Leather ages disgracefully. Nothing looks worse than worn out leather seats. Look at old shoes. That's what the seats are going to look like in a few years, or even a few months, if you don't keep conditioning them.

During the summer the seats can get hot enough to hurt you. If you leave the windows up on a sunny day the temperature in the car can exceed 200 degrees. This is because, unlike cloth, leather absorbs heat. Leather steering wheels can get so hot that they cause burns. It is impossible to immediately hold on to them, so air-conditioners have to run for at least 10 minutes before you can get in. In summer, leather seat owners have to use towels or cloth coverings. In winter leather gets chilly and cold, so cold, that the car temperature goes down and heating has to be used – before you get in.

While the top of the line cars have heated armchairs, the less luxurious models still do not include them. And that means that in winter you will have a 'frozen' armchair, and in the summer, one that will practically burn you if you dare to sit down after leaving it in the Sun.

When you first purchase the car, the new leather seats are very stiff. It takes months for the skin to become flexible and comfortable. By then it has absorbed so much oil and sweat that it needs cleaning with chemicals and then goes back to being stiff!

Most leather used for cars is not good. It has very little natural grain. The original hide of the cow was so scarred from the way it was treated that the tanner had to sand the skin down to make it even and scar free.

Look at the suffering leather causes. Cows and calves, that are earmarked for car seats in the ranches, are thrown and held while being branded on the face with burning hot branding irons. Look at the videos of PETA on YouTube on what happens in Brazilian ranches - the main suppliers of car seat leather. The video shows workers branding calves on the face, and electro-shocking and beating gentle cows and bulls. Their throats are cut while they're still conscious and able to feel pain, and their skins are pulled off.

A new animal entrant for the rich is lambskin. Is this pain worth your bottom-rest in a Jaguar, Toyota, Volkswagen, and Volvo?

If animal suffering and environmental pollution is not enough for you, look at your comfort. Do you want to own your car, or do you want it to own you? Remember that saying "God has no respect for money. Look at the people he gives it to."

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org



Maneka Gandhi

Some 75 per cent of luxury cars use leather seats. PETA has calculated that 1.5 million car leather interiors are produced in a year. It takes eight cow skins to make one car interior

SPECTRUM POLITICS

Defections – laws, rules & confusion

Raj Bhavans became the venues for protests by members of the Congress party in many states on 27 July "to highlight the gravity of the issue and draw people's attention to violations of the Constitution" in Rajasthan. The question of determining defection from political parties and the various possibilities of using the law by diverse players is a complicated matter.

This case started in the High Court of Rajasthan when the former Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot complained against disqualification notices issued by the Speaker to 19 rebel Congress MLAs. The Speaker approached the Supreme Court with a special leave petition, saying that a court cannot bar a Speaker from acting on disqualification notice even before a decision is taken. The Speaker later withdrew his petition.

The fault of the rebel members that earned them the disqualification notices from the Speaker was defiance of the whip issued by the Congress and failure to attend Congress Legislative Party meetings on two days. This team of Sachin Pilot challenges the notices

and maintains that it is only seeking leadership change in the "most democratic manner."

Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot along with 100 legislators had reason to stage a dharna on the lawns of Raj Bhavan, demanding convening of the Assembly session, primarily to prove his majority. He did not succeed and ended the dharna after about five hours. A list of MLAs numbering 102 was submitted to the Governor, as his supporters.

The CM met the Governor the next day and insisted on convening the assembly session. Deciding on dates for the Assembly session, fixing the procedures, and setting the agenda are in the domain of the cabinet. The Governor initially questioned the necessity for a floor test when the government was claiming the support of a majority. The revised note of the CM to the Governor mentioned only the need for a special session to discuss the situation on Covid-19 and to introduce six bills.

On 27 July, the Governor agreed to convene the assembly on the condition that 21 days' notice should be given to the members as per rules and social distancing norms

must be followed. As floor test was not included in the agenda, a short notice was not enough.

The legal course, neither in the state nor at the Centre, was so far favourable to the Congress. The alternative, in keeping with the current trend in Indian party politics, is to take the fight outside the courts and on the roads.

The CM's posture was the immediate response to the Rajasthan High Court direction to the Speaker on maintaining the status quo on the disqualification notices he had issued to 18 rebel Congress MLAs and Sachin Pilot, under clause 2(1) (a) of the Constitution's Tenth Schedule. The order itself had come after the Supreme Court refused to restrain the High Court from ruling on the matter on the plea of the Speaker.

The Tenth Schedule including para 2(1)(a) on freedom of speech, vote or conscience of elected members, which was validated by the Supreme Court in 1992, mentions two grounds for disqualification of a member – one, when he voluntarily gives up membership of the party; and the other, if he votes or abstains from voting contrary to any

direction issued by his party, meaning if he violates whip. Pilot asks for deletion of this provision.

A judgement of the Supreme Court in 1994 has clarified that voluntarily giving up membership does not require a formal resignation from the party, but may be inferred from certain actions. It paved way for party action against members for having and/or expressing views different from that of the party or party leaders while remaining within the party. Party discipline overtook inner party democracy.

This judicial interpretation was followed in UP in 2003 when 13 MLAs of the BSP were disqualified for supporting the SP chief to form the government as against their leader's advice to dissolve the assembly. It was an inference by the court that the action of those MLAs was a proof that they had voluntarily given up their membership of the BSP. This provision has remained a contentious issue ever since it was written. Even courts have taken varied stand on what constitutes defection.

The writer is former Director, ICSSR, New Delhi.

S Saraswathi

EVEN COURTS HAVE TAKEN VARIED STAND ON WHAT CONSTITUTES DEFECTION

WISDOM CORNER

The gem cannot be polished without friction, nor man perfected without trials. **CONFUCIUS**

Be a lotus flower. Be in the water, and do not let the water touch you. **OSHO**

Whoever imposes severe punishment becomes repulsive to the people; while he who awards mild punishment becomes contemptible. But whoever imposes punishment as deserved becomes respectable. **ARTHASASTRA**

WORDSWORTH

Synthespian

The electronic characters Woody and Buzz Lightyear in the film Toy Story and the dinosaurs in Jurassic Park have shown that computer imaging systems can generate extraordinarily plausible animated images. The next stage, presaged by that eighties creation named for a multi-storey car park sign, Max Headroom, has been to simulate actors with accurate depiction of movements and expressions; such a character is described by William Gibson in his 1996 novel Idoru: "She is Rei Toei. She is a personality-construct, a congeries of software agents, the creation of information-designers. She is akin to what I believe they call a 'synthespian,' in Hollywood." The state of the art is now such that computer-generated actors, synthespians, can be rendered with considerable realism. Examples include Gollum in the Lord of the Rings trilogy, Yoda in the Star Wars films, and Davey Jones in Pirates of the Caribbean, Dead Man's Chest.

Similipal, tigers

Sir, In the span of the last two decades, the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) authorities have availed around Rs 180 crore for conservation of tigers, but large sums have reportedly been spent on constructing amenities inside the sanctuary, which is diametrically opposite to the actual conservation process. While developing cottages and bungalows for tourists inside the protected sanctuary it is projected in media every year that the STR has earned Rs 17 lakh or a similar amount. If this is the case, then one fails to understand why such a huge amount is spent from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). Either the sanctuary be developed as a protective tiger habitat or a tourist spot as both can't exist together. This is perhaps the reason why there is no increase in tigers' number as recorded over the last many years. One may be amazed to find that the STR itself is sabotaging the tiger conservation work by giving a boost to commercial tourism inside the protected sanctuary; which in turn is a big threat to the big cats. The choice now lies with us, either to develop this area as a tiger reserve or as a tourist destination. **Janaki Ballav Dash, MAYURBHANJ**

Well done, sarpanch

Sir, It's quite remarkable how the Ranipanga Sarpanch under Kotagarh block of Khandhamal district helped dig a 2km-long canal. Such efforts will certainly make India self-reliant in every field. And, kudos to the block development officer (BDO) who assisted the sarpanch in the work. This must open the eyes of our government as to how we can do wonders with the panchayati raj system. If people get employment, that means less of migration. There are government schemes but execution is always a challenge for the administration. There must be more people like Johan Pradhan whose great efforts might not have got publicity. At least, by Johan's efforts, people in the villages will now have better times. **Sunil Pradhan, Kharia; NUA PADA**

Coronavirus, ambulance

Sir, It is regrettable and condemnable that a 108 ambulance driver in Berhampur has refused to take a patient to hospital for treatment as he suspected the patient to be coronavirus-affected. These are difficult times for all, and those engaged in such crucial frontline work should behave in a more responsible manner. **Dikshyaram Das, EMAIL**

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
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Forces no longer need NOC for land acquisition in J&K



DOMICILE RIGHTS

The order cites the extension of the 2013 Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act to Jammu and Kashmir after it was declared a Union Territory in August last year

In view of the law's extension, the circular requiring an NOC from the erstwhile state's home department prior to acquisition or requisition of land by the security forces was withdrawn

Since May 18, more than 25,000 people have been granted domicile certificates, including refugees from Pakistan, Gorkha soldiers from Nepal who had served in the Indian Army and marginalised groups such as sanitation workers from Punjab

AGENCIES

Srinagar, July 29: The administration of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has lifted a requirement set in place by a 1971 circular under which security forces had to obtain a special certificate in order to acquire land in the erstwhile state.

The order allows Indian Army, Border Security Forces, paramilitary forces and similar organisations to acquire land without a 'no objection certificate' (NOC) clearance from the UT's home department.

The order cites the extension of the 2013 Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act to Jammu and Kashmir after it was declared a Union Territory in August last year.

In view of the law's extension, the circular requiring an NOC from the erstwhile state's home department prior to acquisition or requisition of land by the security forces was withdrawn, according to the order.

The move came on the heels of the UT administration agreeing to legal changes to allow construction in the region's 'strategic areas' by the Indian armed forces.

August 5 last year, the Centre revoked Article 370 and related constitutional provisions, effectively scrapping the partial autonomy of the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state had, splitting it into two UTs - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

At the same time, New Delhi imposed a crippling security lockdown, detaining thousands, imposing restrictions on movement and enforcing a communications blackout.

In May this year, India passed a law allowing people from outside Jammu and Kashmir to become permanent residents of the UT, sparking fears of a demographic change and non-locals getting priority in housing, jobs and education.

According to a 2011 Census, Muslims comprised 68.31 per cent and Hindus 28.43 per cent of the 12.5 million people in the erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state.

Since May 18, more than 25,000 people have been granted domicile certificates, including refugees from Pakistan, Gorkha soldiers from Nepal who had served in the Indian Army and marginalised groups such as sanitation workers from the state of Punjab.

"Our distinct social and cultural identity, whether it's our languages or traditions - everything is in danger," Haroon Reshi, a freelance journalist based in Srinagar, told Reuters.

ASSAM FLOODS: 16.55 LAKH STILL IN DISTRESS

Guwahati, July 29: Even as three more persons died in Kokrajhar, Kamrup and Barpeta districts of Assam Wednesday raising the death toll to 107, the overall flood situation continues to improve in the state, officials said.

Respite in monsoon rains during the past one week has made the flood situation improve slightly and officials of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) hoped that in the coming days it would improve further.

Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) officials said that, 16.55 lakh people in 1,536 villages across 21 of the state's 33 districts are still affected by floods, though the number has come down since Friday when over

28 lakh people in 2,543 villages of 26 districts were distressed.

A total of 92,900 hectares of crops are still flooded, but the area has dropped from 122,573 hectares as on July 24.

Quoting reports from the districts, the ASDMA officials said that four major rivers including the Brahmaputra, are in spate in many places in five districts, where both Brahmaputra and Jia Bharali are flowing over the danger levels.

Forest officials said at least 142 wild animals have died due to the floods and 165 have been rescued, even as over 65 per cent of the 884 sq km Kaziranga National Park remains inundated.

The animals that have died in the annual monsoon flood include 15 rhinos, 104 hog deer, eleven wild boars, five wild buffaloes, three por-



NDRF personnel rescue flood victims in Dibrugarh. PTI PHOTO

Tinsukia national parks, and the Pabitora and Tinsukia wildlife sanctuaries were also affected and many wild animals have perished.

ASDMA officials said that of the 16.55 lakh affected people, 13.40 lakh, are in the state's five western districts - Goalpara (419,300), Barpeta (186,344), Morigaon (263,480), Dhubri (221,597) and South Salmara (249,423).

The flood has so far claimed the lives of at least 107 persons, including women and children in 22 districts, while 26 others were killed in landslides since May 22. The Brahmaputra has been flowing above the danger mark in many places in Jorhat, Dhubri and Sonitpur and three other major rivers - Dhansiri, Jia Bharali and Kopili - are flowing above the danger mark in many places in three districts.

eastern Himalayan bio-diversity hotspots of Golaghat and Nagaon districts, the Manas, RG Orang and

FLOATING MARKET



A man rows a boat during daybreak after buying vegetables from the floating market on Dal Lake, in Srinagar, Wednesday. Vegetables traded in this floating market are supplied to Srinagar and other parts of the Valley. It's one of the major sources of income for the lake dwellers. PTI PHOTO

How exotic wildlife is smuggled into Assam

Silchar (Assam), July 29: Assam forest officials have seized some exotic wildlife species, suspected to have been smuggled from Myanmar, and arrested two men from a truck carrying the endangered animals, officials said Wednesday.

Southern Assam's Cachar Divisional Forest Officer Sunnydeo Choudhary said during a routine checkup, forest officials Tuesday midnight intercepted a truck, coming from neighbouring Mizoram, at Lalipur forest sub-beat, carrying the exotic wildlife. The rescued wildlife includes a kangaroo, six Macaw parrots, three Aldabra tortoises and two capuchin monkeys.

"The Aldabra tortoise, one of the world's largest land tortoises and capuchin monkeys are Central and South American primates found in tropical forests from Nicaragua to Paraguay and they are considered among the most intelligent of the world's monkeys," Choudhary told IANS over phone from Silchar.

He said the exotic wildlife might have been smuggled from Myanmar but the entire matter is now under investigation. During preliminary interrogation the driver of the truck Narsimha Reddy and his assistant Navnath Tukaram Daigude said the consignment was destined for Guwahati.

"The detainees said they picked

Although Mizoram's international border with Myanmar and inter-state borders with Tripura, Assam and Manipur are sealed in view of COVID, smuggling of drugs, arms and ammunition is on

up the consignment from Mizoram for delivery in Guwahati. There are instances that exotic animals are smuggled in from Myanmar and moved to Kolkata and other major cities of the country," Choudhary said.

The IFS officer said the veterinary doctors are looking after the health of the wildlife. "In the backdrop of COVID-19 pandemic and dismal trade and business, it's a high time to put an end to such illegal trade of exotic species of wildlife. Let these wildlife live in their natural habitat," Forest Range Officer D. Deori said adding identification of exact species of these animals is underway.

An official release of Assam Public Relations Directorate, Barak Valley Region, said that in its first global report on the illegal wildlife trade, released a week ago, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) described wildlife trafficking as a "global threat", which also has links with other organised crime such as modern slavery, drug trafficking and arms trade.

The illegal trade is estimated to generate revenues of up to \$23 billion a year. Earlier, a big consignment of exotic animals, including venomous snakes and giant scorpions, was seized from a vehicle at Jorabat, about 20 km from Guwahati on the Assam-Meghalaya border. The consignment had come from Mizoram and was to be sold to a trader in Delhi.

Protests against CAA resume

Guwahati, July 29: Peasant body Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) Tuesday staged protests across Assam, demanding the repeal of its leader Akhil Gogoi as well as the repeal of the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The members of the organisation defied prohibitory orders in Guwahati and were arrested, while at other places it formed human chains, performed songs and created artworks in support of their demand. In the state capital, the KMSS supporters defied Section 144 and formed a human chain and shouted slogans, demanding Gogoi's release and repeal of the Act.

"They did not have any permission to stage the protest. So, we arrested them for violating the prohibitory orders," a senior police official said. Gogoi is being treated at Gauhati Medical College and Hospital after testing positive for

COVID-19. He contracted the virus in Guwahati Central Jail, where he was lodged for his alleged role in violent anti-CAA protests last year.

KMSS president Raju Bora said the group has restarted the anti-CAA movement from Tuesday and it will continue till the controversial law is repealed.

"This time, the agitation will be more united and powerful. The BJP government is scared of Akhil Gogoi and that is why they have put him in jail. They want to stop the peoples' voice by imprisoning Gogoi," he added. In Jorhat city, artists, students, educationists, advocates, journalists and common people joined the agitation and performed songs and recited poems, while painters created sketches to press for their demands.

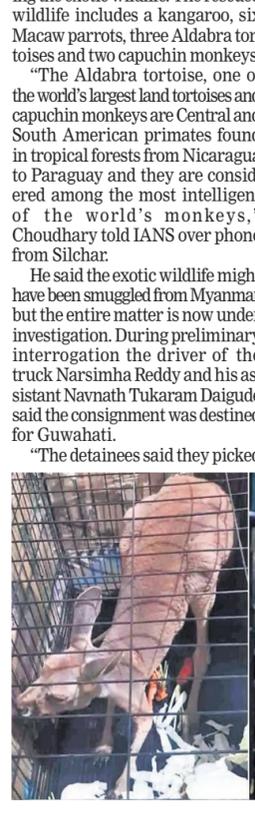
Dergaon, Merapani, Bokakhat and many other places in Golaghat district too witnessed cultural protests. In Dibrugarh, farmers staged a unique protest by planting

rice seedlings on their paddy fields. People also formed human chains at several other places in the district.

In the Chenimari area of Barpeta, which is ravaged by the devastating flood, people protested standing and forming human chains on their country-made boats.

Similar artistic and variety of protest expressions were witnessed in other districts, including Tinsukia, Sivasagar, Charaideo, Nagaon, Morigaon, Dhemaji, Darrang, Kamrup, Bongaigaon, Sonitpur, Goalpara, Dhubri and Baksa. The Haikalandi and Cachar districts of the Barak valley also saw some demonstrations, demanding the release of the RTI activist.

In the midst of intense anti-CAA movement, Gogoi was arrested December 12 last year from Jorhat as a "preventive measure" in view of the deteriorating law and order situation in the state and his three colleagues were taken into custody the next day.



A bridge of hope & challenges across Chenab

New Delhi, July 29: Kashmir's inaccessibility was a wake-up call for then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. When he returned to New Delhi after visiting Kargil in July 1999, he remarked, "We have not attacked any country in our fifty years of independence, but we have been attacked several times and lost our land. We are determined not to lose our land in the future." Preparations for a rail link in the Valley began immediately.

In 2002, the government broke ground on the railway, which it hoped will one day connect Baramulla, Kashmir's northernmost city, to New Delhi. But despite being prioritised by Vajpayee as a "project of national importance," construction on this strategic undertaking was plagued by setbacks.

For example, in 2009, a protracted dispute over gradients broke out between two private companies which had been commissioned to work on separate sections of the line.

But the biggest delay by far has been due to the plan's most ambitious feature, the Chenab Bridge - a mile-long crossing made of blast-proof steel designed to withstand both earthquakes and explosives. When completed, it will be the loftiest railway span in the world, stretching across the Chenab at a height greater than that of the Eiffel Tower.

Scheduled to be completed in 2009, the bridge is the only section of the railway which is still unfinished. The latest target date is the summer of next year. But delays, nevertheless, have persisted. There was also the threat of terrorism that had to be factored in. To be sure, there has been apprehension from day one that the signature Chenab bridge, just 60 km from the LoC with Pakistan, could be a potential target for terrorists. Even the possibility of aerial attacks had to be considered.

In securing the bridge, the DRDO played its part. Under DRDO's advice, the bridge has been so designed that even if one of the 17 piers supporting it is blown up, the bridge will not collapse. The deck of the bridge can withstand a heavy TNT blast. According to the plan, a ring of aerial security will also be provided to safeguard the bridge. In addition, an online monitoring and warning system will be installed on the bridge to protect the passengers and train in critical conditions.

Unsurprisingly, after becoming the head of government, PM Narendra Modi, sought reports to understand the cause of repeated delays. Following this investigation, Modi paid a one-day visit to J&K. In July 2014, while inaugurating the railway's latest link, connecting Katra to Udhampur, Modi declared: "Our aim is to win over the hearts and minds of the people of Jammu and Kashmir through development, soon Kashmir will be prosperous and peaceful. The new rail link will speed up the process of develop-



BRIDGING GAPS

Chenab Bridge -- a mile-long crossing made of blast-proof steel designed to withstand both earthquakes and explosives -- when completed, will be the loftiest railway span in the world, stretching across the Chenab at a height greater than that of the Eiffel Tower

The bridge is being constructed between Bakhal and Kauri in Reasi district. When completed, it will span 1,315 metres and the deck will be 359 metres above the water level, making it the highest rail bridge in the world

ment in the state." Understanding its critical role, Modi directed officials to progress on the Chenab Bridge without any delay.

Modi added that the construction of the bridge is the most challenging task of the whole Kashmir rail link project. But at the same time, after the completion of the bridge, it will be recognised globally as an engineering marvel.

"This is the most challenging project in the 150-year-long history of the Indian Railways. The highest railway bridge in the world, that will connect Kashmir with the rest of India through the rail line will be completed by December 2021," Sanjay Gupta, Chairman of Konkan Railway said in a statement.

According to the Ministry of Railways, the deadline for the completion of the railway project has been moved ahead from June 2022 to December 2021.

Whenever the Chenab Railway Bridge is finally completed, it will be more than just another bridge but a prestigious symbol of how far India and its railway engineers have come since the country's first mile of railway track became operational more than 150 years ago.

For the people of Kashmir, the railway will provide a magnificent opportunity of integrating with the rest of India.

Valley sees decline in stone pelting: Officials

Srinagar, July 29: Incidents of stone pelting have come down sharply in Jammu and Kashmir after abrogation of the special status of the erstwhile state, officials said Wednesday.

Comparing the figures of stone pelting incidents during the first six months of 2020 with previous years, they said the number has fallen down considerably from 944 in 2018 to 211 so far this year.

According to officials, there has also been a reduction in injuries and deaths of security forces as well as civilians.

They said a heavy deployment of security forces helped instil confidence in the public as many of the "trouble mongers" had been identified and packed to various jails ahead of or on August 5 last year when Article 370 of the Constitution was abrogated.

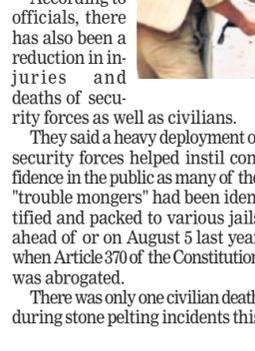
There was only one civilian death during stone pelting incidents this

year whereas the figure for 2018 was 18 and was three for 2019 during the first six months, according to the officials.

Similarly, there were 549 cases of injuries to civilians in 2018 during the first six months followed by 335 in 2019 and only 63 this year, the officials said, adding, the number of injuries to security forces have also come down sharply from 74 in 2018 to 14 this year.

The officials dismissed claims by some human rights groups that Jammu and Kashmir had been under a complete lockdown since August 5 last year.

They said after imposing prohibitory orders in the early hours of August 5 last year which included snapping communication links, landline phones were restored in phases beginning August 17 and a near complete relaxation was done the next day.





NEP FOCUS ON HONING SKILLS

Even as the nation finds itself in the tight grip of the lethal Covid-19, the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre has found in it an opportune moment to push its agenda on education. In fact, the new education policy (NEP) is part of its 2014 election manifesto. The NEP has brought in tectonic shifts in the way we perceive education. Sweeping changes in the structure, content, delivery of teaching and assessment and evaluation of students have come in. The changes have encapsulated students from the nursery to university. A 360 degree somersault, indeed.



Schools to be used for adult education after school hours

Use of schools/school complexes beyond school hours and public library spaces for adult education courses which will be ICT-equipped when possible and for other community engagement and enrichment activities.

More focus on vocational studies at school-level

Every child to learn at least one vocation and exposed to several more. Sampling of important vocational crafts, such as carpentry, electric work, metal work, gardening, pottery making, etc., as decided by states and local communities during Grades 6-8. By 2025, at least 50% of learners through the school and higher education system shall have exposure to vocational education. A 10-day bagless period sometime during Grades 6-8 to intern with local vocational experts such as carpenters, gardeners, potters, artists, etc. Vocational courses through online mode will also be made available.

NCC in secondary and higher secondary schools

Under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence, State Governments may encourage opening NCC wings in their secondary and higher secondary schools, including those located in tribal dominated areas.

NTA to offer common entrance

The National Testing Agency (NTA) will offer a high-quality common aptitude test, as well as specialized common subject exams in the sciences, humanities, languages, arts, and vocational subjects, at least twice every year for university entrance exams.

Minimum qualification for teaching

A new and comprehensive National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2021, will be formulated by the NCTE in consultation with NCERT. By 2030, the minimum degree qualification for teaching will be a 4-year integrated B.Ed. degree. Stringent action will be taken against substandard stand-alone Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs).

The New Education Policy approved by the Union Cabinet is a long due and much awaited reform in the education sector which will transform millions of lives in the times to come



NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

The new National Education Policy, approved by the Union Cabinet, brings the much-awaited reforms and regulatory framework which cater to the needs of a "New India" and unleash the youth's energy for a self-reliant, better India



J P NADRA | BJP PRESIDENT

It is important because there was no change in the education policy in the last 34 years



PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION MINISTER

India got its much-needed education reforms after a gap of 34 years



HARSIMRAT BADAL | UNION MINISTER

Less curriculum

Curriculum content will be reduced in each subject to its core essentials, and make space for critical thinking and more holistic, inquiry-based, discovery-based, discussion-based, and analysis-based learning.

and regular health check-ups, and health cards will be issued to monitor the same.

Tech-based option for adult learning

Quality technology-based options for adult learning such as apps, online courses/modules, online books, and ICT-equipped libraries and Adult Education Centres, etc. will be developed.

Common regulatory body

Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) will be set up as a single overarching umbrella body for the entire higher education, excluding medical and legal education. HECI to have four independent verticals - National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC) for regulation, General Education Council (GEC) for standard setting, Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) for funding, and National Accreditation Council (NAC) for accreditation.

Free boarding in JNVs

Free boarding facilities will be built matching the standard of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas particularly for students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

ricular', among 'arts', 'humanities', and 'sciences', or between 'vocational' or 'academic' streams. Subjects such as physical education, the arts and crafts, and vocational skills, in addition to science, humanities, and mathematics, will be incorporated throughout the school curriculum. Each of the four stages of school education, may consider moving towards a semester or any other system that allows the inclusion of shorter modules.

3-language formula
The three-language learned by children will be the choices of States, regions, and of the students, so long as at least two of the three languages are native to India.

Idea, application and problem-solving
The mandated content will focus on key concepts, ideas, applications, and problem-solving. Teaching and learning will be conducted in a more interactive manner.

Sign language to be standardised
Indian Sign Language (ISL) will be standardized across the country, and National and State curriculum materials developed, for use by students with hearing impairment.

ECCEC to be jointly carried out

The planning and implementation of early childhood care and education curriculum (ECCEC) will be carried out jointly by the Ministries of HRD, Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (HFW), and Tribal Affairs.

Nutritious and healthy students

The nutrition and health (including mental health) of children will be addressed, through healthy meals

Variable models for board exams

Boards may over time also develop further viable models of Board Exams, such as - annual/semester/modular Board Exams; offering all subjects beginning with mathematics, at two levels; two parts exams or objective type and descriptive type.

NIOS, open schools to offer courses

NIOS and State Open Schools will also offer A, B and C levels that are equivalent to Grades 3, 5, and 8 of the formal school system; secondary education programs that are equivalent to Grades 10 and 12; vocational education courses/programs; and adult literacy and life-enrichment programs.

New norms for kids with disabilities

Children with disabilities will be enabled to fully participate in the regular schooling process from the foundational stage to higher education, with support of educators with cross disability training, re-

Dedicated unit for digital learning

A dedicated unit for the purpose of orchestrating the building of digital infrastructure, digital content and capacity building will be created in the MHRD to look after the e-education needs of both school and higher education. A comprehensive set of recommendations for promoting online education consequent to the recent rise in epidemics and pandemics in order to ensure preparedness with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible, has been covered.

Experiential learning
Experiential learning will include hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy. Classroom transactions will shift, towards competency-based learning and education.

National Scholarship portal

Efforts will be made to incentivize the merit of students belonging to SC, ST, OBC, and other SEDGs. The National Scholarship Portal will be expanded to support, foster, and track the progress of students receiving scholarships. Private HEIs will be encouraged to offer larger numbers of free ships and scholarships to their students.

Free school infrastructure can be used as Samajik Chetna Kendras.

Bagless days encouraged

Bagless days will be encouraged throughout the year for various types of enrichment activities involving arts, quizzes, sports, and vocational crafts.

India opens up higher edu to foreign players

AGENCIES
New Delhi, July 29: The New Education Policy (NEP), which is only the third in the country's history after 1968 and 1986, has paved way for foreign universities to set up campuses in India. As per the policy, world's top 100 foreign universities will be 'facilitated' to operate in India through a new law. However, this reverses the BJP's earlier stand on the Foreign Educational Institutions Bill moved by the UPA-II government. One of the central reservations of BJP on the bill at that time was that they would raise the cost of education - high tuition fees, faculty poaching from public universities - rendering it out of reach for a large part of the population. The plan to revive the UPA's plan to permit the foreign universities happened after a strategy paper was shared by the Commerce Ministry with the Ministries of External Affairs and Human



Resource Development and NITI (National Institution for Transforming India) Aayog, in April 2015. The paper had argued on earning more foreign exchange and creating an 'Education in India' brand by internalisation of Indian education. According to the HRD Ministry document, listing salient features of policy, "such (foreign) universities will be given special dis-

CHANGING STAND

WORLD'S TOP 100 FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES WILL BE 'FACILITATED' TO OPERATE IN INDIA THROUGH A NEW LAW

HOWEVER, THIS REVERSES THE BJP'S EARLIER STAND ON THE FOREIGN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS BILL MOVED BY THE UPA-II GOVT

SEVERAL ATTEMPTS HAD EARLIER BEEN MADE BY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENTS TO ALLOW THE OPENING OF FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES' CAMPUSES IN INDIA

their campus and operate under a regulatory framework. Several attempts had been made by previous governments to allow the opening of foreign universities' campuses in India. In 1995, a Bill to permit the entry of foreign universities was drafted but not passed. In 2005-06, another Bill drafted to this end was unable to get the cabinet's approval. Under the UPA government, the HRD ministry under the aegis of Congress leader Kapil Sibal put forth the Foreign Educational Institutions (Regulation of Entry and Operations) Bill, 2010. However, the Bill was unable to gather the requisite support in Parliament and eventually lapsed after the UPA government finished its tenure. Apart from opening up the Indian higher education to foreign players, the new policy marks a significant shift in the format of undergraduate education with the reintroduction of the four-year multidisciplinary bachelor's programme with exit options.

source centres, accommodations, assistive devices, appropriate technology-based tools and other support mechanisms tailored to suit their needs. Every state/district will be encouraged to establish "Bal Bhavans" as a special daytime boarding school, to participate in art-related, career-related, and play-related activities.

No separation of streams
Students will be given increased flexibility and choice of subjects to study, particularly in secondary school - including subjects in physical education, the arts and crafts, and vocational skills. There will be no hard separation among 'curricular', 'extracurricular', or 'co-cur-



Gujarat was on the 12th spot in terms of fresh cases. At one point, our mortality rate was 7 per cent, the highest in the country. Now it's 4 per cent. Our recovery rate is 74 per cent. Gujarat's situation is better in comparison to other states

VIJAY RUPANI | GUJARAT CM

FOLLOWERS OF LORD RAM TO STAY AWAY

The Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust has appealed to followers of Lord Ram not to rush to Ayodhya for the 'bhumi puja' ceremony of Ram temple construction, scheduled to be held August 5



of the day quote

It is perhaps for the first time in our history that we are seeing a Governor reluctant to convene the Assembly despite aid and advice of the elected Chief Minister



AHMED PATEL | CONGRESS LEADER

The Rafale fighter jets are a "modern technological marvel" and will provide a major boost to the Indian Air Force



PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

When the northeast region as a whole will do better, people from other parts of the country will come to northeast rather than the reverse



KIREN RIJU | UNION MINISTER

Raj cabinet drafts another proposal, seeks Assembly session August 14

AGENCIES

Jaipur, July 29: The Ashok Gehlot Cabinet Wednesday cleared another proposal to the Governor for summoning the Rajasthan Assembly, saying a session should be called August 14.

Government sources argued that this meets the 21-day notice requirement on which Governor Kalraj Mishra was insisting. It was not immediately clear if this will end the impasse between the Congress government and the Governor, who has already returned proposals for calling a session three times since last week.

The Cabinet is counting the 21 days from July 23, when its first proposal was sent. But the latest proposal falls short if the notice period is counted from Wednesday. While rejecting the government proposal earlier, Mishra had said a session can be called at short notice if the agenda is to seek a vote of confidence. Otherwise, 21 days' notice is needed, he said.

The session should begin July 31. "Neither the Governor nor the government wants confrontation. The Cabinet has passed a revised proposal for forwarding to the Governor," Transport minister Pratap Singh Khachariyawas told reporters after the evening meeting. "We hope that the Governor will accept the recommendation this time and the deadlock will end," he said.



the revised, fourth proposal.

Earlier in the day, Mishra returned the government's third proposal, saying the Cabinet had refused to state the reason why it wanted a session at short notice.

The Governor said if the government was not stating the reason for holding a short-notice session, it could call a regular session at 21 day's notice. He asked the Gehlot cabinet to resubmit its proposal, giving a 'solid reason' for calling a session at short notice. As the impasse over calling a session deepened, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot held a 15-minute meeting with Mishra at the Raj Bhawan. Hours later, the state Cabinet met to redraft the proposal, setting the new date.

"The love letter has already come. Now, I am only going to have tea with him," Gehlot told party workers at the state Congress office before heading for the Raj Bhawan. On

Tuesday, the state Cabinet had sent its proposal to the Governor the third time, sticking to the July 31 date for holding a session and refusing to mention that it planned to hold a trust vote. In its reaction, the Raj Bhawan said Wednesday that the government had not given clear replies to his previous queries. It reminded that the Governor had asked the state government to redraft its proposal taking into account three points: a 21-day notice, live broadcast of the proceedings if there is a trust vote, and social distancing during the session.

In addition, he had said a short-notice session was possible if a trust vote was on the agenda.

Although the Congress has said it wants to prove its majority in the House, it has been reluctant to state this in the proposal. The Governor had also referred to the coronavirus pandemic then, asking the government to make it clear why it wanted the session summoned at short notice under such adverse circumstances.

At the PCC meeting, Gehlot told Congress workers that there was nothing to worry about as the party's top leadership was with them. Govind Singh Dotsra formally took over as the new chief of the state unit at the meeting. Ashok Gehlot is caught in a power tussle with his now sacked deputy, Sachin Pilot, who has the support of 18 dissenting Congress MLAs. Altogether, the Congress has 107 MLAs in the 200-member assembly and the BJP 72

BOND OF LOVE



Women police officers buy rakhi from a shop ahead of Raksha Bandhan festival in Thane, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Railways halts all new infra work

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: The Railways has halted all new infrastructure works sanctioned for 2020-21 after the government issued orders suspending new schemes, with costs up to Rs 500 crore, till March 2021 due to the financial crunch brought in by the coronavirus pandemic, a Railway Board order has said.

It has also directed zonal railways and its production units to

only take on new works if it was essential for the safety of running trains, that too with the approval of the finance ministry. The Railways has estimated a loss of Rs 35,000 crore to Rs 40,000 crore in the passenger segment and is 18 percent behind so far in freight loading as compared to last year due to the pandemic.

The Railway Board in an order dated July 28 has also said all other work sanctioned in previous years that have made little or no

progress should be halted as well. "New works/ Umbrella works included in Pink Book 2020-21 shall be kept in abeyance.

However, those works which impact the safe running of trains and are considered essential and inescapable may be considered for sanction. Essentiality of such works will be examined by concerned Additional Member, Additional Member/Works and Additional Member/Revenue," the order said.

SHORT TAKES

Three nabbed

Srinagar: J&K police in North Kashmir's Bandipore district arrested three terrorist associates Wednesday, officials said. According to details the three arrested have been identified as Abrar Gulzar of Bagh Bandipora, Mohd Waqar resident of Chittay Banday and Muneer Ahmad Sheikh resident of Quil Muqam Bandipora. Police said as per its records they were involved in various subversive activities besides providing logistic support and assistance to active terrorists operating in Bandipora.

Two killed

Bijnor (Uttar Pradesh): In a bizarre incident, two persons, including a passer-by, were killed when two groups clashed with each other over the purchase of a dog in this UP district, police said Wednesday. Both the groups wanted to purchase the same dog and their argument on Tuesday night took a violent turn when both the sides opened fire at each other. Passer-by Prashant and another person, identified as Surendra, were killed in the shootout. Another person has been seriously injured and admitted to a medical facility in Meerut. SP, Bijnor, Sanjeev Tyagi said that police teams were searching for the absconding accused in the incident which took place in Dhampur police circle.

4 peddlers held

Bangalore: Four educated young men have been arrested for peddling drugs to pub-hopping youngsters in the city and contraband valued at Rs 1.25 crore seized from them, a police officer said Wednesday. "All four accused from Kerala were into supplying drugs procured through international couriers from Germany and Netherlands," Central Crime Branch Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Kuldeep Jain said.

Man found dead

Etawah (UP): A 45-year-old man was found dead in his car near the road leading to Sefai air-strip in Etawah Tuesday. The police have identified the deceased as Gajendra Singh Gudawaria, a native of C-block, Sector 4, Noida. The body was found in a car (UP 16-BM 0452) which fell into the canal. The police, with the help of villagers, pulled the car out of the canal. According to police, the man, who was basically a native of Rajasthan, at present was living in Noida. The police said that the car had a travel pass of five people and Gudawaria was mentioned in it as a car driver.

SUSHANT CASE

Rhea moves SC for probe transfer

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty Wednesday moved the Supreme Court seeking transfer of an FIR from Patna to Mumbai and the stay on the investigation by the Bihar police on the allegations of Sushant Singh Rajput's father that she abetted "suicide" of his actor son.

Rajput, aged 34, was found hanging from the ceiling of his apartment in suburban Bandra in Mumbai on June 14 and since then the Mumbai police has been probing the case keeping in mind various angles.

The move of Rhea to rush to the top court assumes significance in view of the fact that a four-member probe team of Bihar police is already in Mumbai and may seek to interrogate the actress as the FIR lodged at Patna by Rajput's father, K K Singh, contained allegations of severe criminal offences such as abetment of suicide and criminal breach of trust under the IPC.

Advocate Satish Maneshinde, who is representing Chakraborty, said he has filed a petition in the apex court seeking transfer of the case from Patna to Mumbai where the probe in the death case of actor Sushant Singh Rajput is going on.

The move came, four days after Rajput's father K K Singh lodged an



FIR at Rajiv Nagar police station in Patna against Chakraborty and six others, including her family members, accusing them of abetting the actor's suicide.

The case, in which Mumbai police has been busy quizzing Bollywood's big producers and directors like Mahesh Bhatt, Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Aditya Chopra and others to know the reasons behind the untimely demise of the 34-year-old actor, suddenly took a new turn with Rajput's father lodging the FIR against his rumoured actor girlfriend Rhea and six other.

Rhea Chakraborty had also recorded her statement with the Mumbai police. Singh, July 25, lodged the FIR under various sections of IPC including 306 (abetment of suicide), 341 (punishment for wrongful restraint), 342 (punishment for wrongful confinement), 380 (theft in dwelling house), 406 (punishment for criminal breach of trust) and 420 (Cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property).

Troop disengagement remains uphill task

India claims that Chinese People's Liberation Army troops have not moved back as per the agreed consensus arrived at during the disengagement talks between both countries

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 29: Prospects of disengagement of troops at the disputed border between India and China appear to be dim and uphill.

India claims that Chinese People's Liberation Army troops have not moved back as per the agreed consensus arrived at during the disengagement talks between both countries. China claims that disengagement in most friction points is complete.

Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Tuesday in Beijing that disengagement is complete.

Both the countries' military representatives have planned to meet and carry out talks to resolve the dispute again. India has now deployed around 35,000 more troops at the disputed places to match the Chinese deployment in the area. The Indian Army is preparing for a long haul and harsh winter in the high-altitude region.

The Indian government stated that the Chinese troops have not gone back at the friction points. Nothing much has changed on the ground at Gogra and Pangong Lake and Depsang. The Pangong Lake and Hot Springs-Gogra area that is part of Patrol Point 17A still remains



volatile. At Pangong Lake, the Chinese troops did move back from Finger 4 to Finger 5 on the bank but still remain on the mountain spurs or the ridgeline. In fact, the Chinese have only been strengthening their positions between Finger 5 and Finger 8.

The mountain spurs jutting into the lake are referred to as "fingers" in military parlance. China is not complying with the roadmap for a complete pullback drawn out during the Corps Commander-level meet on July 14. PLA troops have not moved back.

The Indian security establishment said that the Chinese retreated

a bit and then returned, so there is a need for "constant verification" of the consensus achieved during the meetings between Indian and Chinese military teams. The two countries are locked in a 10-week standoff at multiple points, hitherto unprecedented, along the border.

China had changed the status quo on the LAC at various places, moving inside Indian territory. India has objected to it and is taking up the matter with China at all levels. On June 15, as many as 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number of Chinese troops were killed in a violent clash in the Galwan valley.

SUNNI BOARD SETS UP TRUST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, July 29: Uttar Pradesh State Sunni Central Waqf Board (UPSSCWB) President Zufar Ahmad Farooqui announced Wednesday the formation of a Trust for construction of a mosque on a five-acre land in Ayodhya.

The board president said that he will be the chief trustee and the chairman of the Trust.

"We made the Trust named Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation. It will oversee the construction of a mosque, Indo-Islamic research centre, library and hospital in the five-acre land allotted to the board in Ayodhya's Dhannipur village," Farooqui said.

They are the founder - UPSSCWB through its chief executive officer, chief trustee/president - Zufar Ahmad Farooqui; trustee - Adnan Farukh Shah, Gorakhpur; Secretary/trustee - Athar Husain, Lucknow; treasurer/trustee - Faiz Aftab, Meerut; member/trustees - Mohammad Junaid Siddiqui; Sheikh Saaduzzaman, Banda; Mohammad Rashid, Lucknow, and Imran Ahmad, Lucknow.

The Supreme Court had in November last year paved the way for the construction of a Ram Temple by a Trust at the disputed site in Ayodhya, and directed the Centre to allot an alternative 5-acre plot to the Sunni Waqf Board for building a new mosque at a "prominent" place in the holy town in Uttar Pradesh.

NGOs fear rise in human trafficking in post-lockdown period

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: About 89 per cent of NGOs surveyed for a study have said that trafficking of both adults and children for labour will be "one of the biggest threats" in the post-lockdown period as household incomes of the most vulnerable deplete.

The study conducted by the Kailash Satyarthi Children Foundation said the non-governmental organisations voiced the concern that "there is a very high likelihood" of an increase in human trafficking in the post-lockdown period for the purpose of labour.

"Seventy-six per cent of the NGOs anticipate human trafficking for the purpose of sexual abuse and child trafficking for the purpose of



sexual exploitation to see an upsurge post the lockdown," it said. The study recommended greater surveillance at village level and alertness on the part of law enforcement agencies.

Titled Impact of Lockdown and Economic Disruption on Low-Income Households with Special Reference to Children, the study is based on re-

sponses of 53 NGOs (phase-1) and 245 households from the trafficking-prone states (phase-2). The phase 1 was carried April 27-May 5 and the phase-2 from May 17 to 24.

The responses of NGOs were sought because of their close links

BIG THREAT

at the grassroots level while the household survey was conducted to develop an in-depth understanding of the impact of lockdown on households from the lowest economic strata.

Eighty-one per cent of the NGOs said families may take cash on credit from local money lenders on high interest rates in the post-lockdown period and as a result, a large number of them may get into the

trap of debt bondage.

"Sixty-four per cent of all respondent NGOs expressed the opinion that incidence of child marriages would increase post the lockdown period. That child marriages post lockdown will increase was stated more strongly by NGOs operating in north central zone (71 per cent) than those operating in eastern (61 per cent) and south west zone (57 per cent)," it said.

The north central zone has states: Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh while eastern region comprises Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam and Sikkim.

The south west zone comprises Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka.

About 85 per cent of all respondent NGOs felt that school dropouts are likely to increase in the post-lockdown period. About 93 per cent NGOs said the families will soon run out of money and 85 per cent believed they may not even get enough food in a day to fill their bellies, the study said.

During the household survey, it was found that "21 per cent of the households are potentially ready to send their children into child labour due to their increased economic vulnerability". "Nearly 85 per cent of the surveyed households reported having absolutely no income at the time of the survey. Before the lockdown, 47 per cent households were in the income range of Rs 3,001-10,000 which came down to 3 per cent during the lockdown," the study said.



There are moments when the nations of the world choose to overcome their differences to meet a particular moment in history. The decision to launch ITER, in the mid-2000s, was one of these moments

EMMANUEL MACRON | PRESIDENT OF FRANCE

UK PM RIDES HERO CYCLES BIKE

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson rode a made-in-India Hero Cycles bike designed in the UK as he launched a new GBP 2-billion cycling and walking drive which is part of the government's anti-obesity strategy to combat COVID-19



of the day quote

South Korea will seek ways to extend stay permits for foreign workers here in a bid to relieve labour shortages in farming and other areas in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic



CHUNG SYE-KYUN | PRIME MINISTER OF SOUTH KOREA

I hope the US will stabilise its ties with China as Asia depends on a stable relationship between the world's two biggest economies to have a secure and predictable environment to prosper



LEE HSIEN LOONG | SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER

UK government's decision to impose a 14-day quarantine on everyone arriving from the European country was unjust



PEDRO SANCHEZ | SPANISH PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

HK could postpone poll

Hong Kong: Hong Kong could postpone a vote for seats in the city's legislature by a year amid fears of a resurgence in coronavirus cases, public broadcaster RTHK reported Wednesday, in what would be a blow for opposition democrats. The pro-democracy camp is aiming to win a historic majority in the Sept. 6 election given widespread resentment of Beijing's imposition of a new security law widely criticised by Western countries as eroding citizens' rights.

Barr condemns 'rioters'

Washington: Attorney General William Barr defended the aggressive federal law enforcement response to civil unrest in America, saying Tuesday "violent rioters and anarchists have hijacked legitimate protests" sparked by George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police.

Storm pummels Caribbean

San Juan (Puerto Rico): Heavy rains pummeled the eastern Caribbean on Wednesday due to a weather system headed to Puerto Rico and other islands that was expected to develop into a tropical storm and unleash flooding and landslides. The US National Hurricane Center in Miami said the storm was expected to move over or near Puerto Rico Wednesday night, then brush the northern shores of Hispaniola the following day while on a path that could take it to the US mainland by the weekend.

Pak soldier killed

Islamabad: A Pakistani soldier was killed in cross-border firing from the Afghan side in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province Wednesday, officials said. An army statement said that terrorists carried out a firing raid from the Afghan side of the bilateral border on a security forces.

Little hope

Khartoum/Dubai: Efforts to bring stability to Sudan's conflict-ridden Darfur region have failed to reassure residents fearful of rising violence which has cast a shadow over peace negotiations. The fall of President Omar al-Bashir in 2019 raised hopes that Arab militias he supported, which have been accused of atrocities, would be reined in under the civilian-military government which replaced him.

Moderna's vaccine protects monkeys against Covid: Study

AGENCIES

Washington, July 29: Moderna Inc Tuesday said its experimental COVID-19 vaccine induced a robust immune response and protected against infection in a study on monkeys.

The candidate vaccine, mRNA-1273, was co-developed by scientists at Moderna and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) in the US. The study, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, complements recently reported interim results

from an NIAID-sponsored Phase 1 clinical trial of mRNA-1273.

On Monday clinics around the US began a Phase 3 trial of the vaccine candidate, with the aim of enrolling 30,000 people to test for safety and effectiveness. In the latest study, three groups of eight rhesus macaques received two injections of 10 or 100 microgrammes (µg) of mRNA-1273 or a placebo. Injections were spaced 28 days apart.

Vaccinated macaques produced high levels of neutralising antibodies directed at the surface spike protein used by SARS-CoV-2 to at-



tach to and enter cells, the researchers said. Animals receiving the 10-µg or 100-µg dose vaccine candidate produced neutralising

antibodies in the blood at levels well above those found in people who recovered from COVID-19, they said. The researchers said the ex-

perimental vaccine also induced Th1 T-cell responses but not Th2 responses. Induction of Th2 responses has been associated with a phenomenon called vaccine-associated enhancement of respiratory disease (VAERD), they said. According to the researchers, vaccine-induced Th1 responses have not been associated with VAERD or other respiratory diseases. The experimental vaccine also induced T follicular helper T-cell responses that may have contributed to the robust antibody response, they said. Four weeks after the second in-

jection, all the macaques were exposed to SARS-CoV-2 via both the nose and the lungs, according to the study.

It found that after two days, no replicating virus was detectable in the lungs of seven out of eight of the macaques in both vaccinated groups, while all eight placebo-injected animals continued to have replicating virus in the lung.

None of the eight macaques vaccinated with 100 µg of mRNA-1273 had detectable virus in their noses two days after virus exposure, the researchers said.

UK strikes pact for 60mn doses of nCoV experimental vaccine

AGENCIES

London, July 29: The UK government Wednesday announced an early access agreement with GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and Sanofi Pasteur for an estimated 60 million doses of an experimental new vaccine being tested to combat COVID-19.

The agreement with Britain's GSK and France's Sanofi, which combined have among the largest vaccine manufacturing capabilities in the world, will supply the UK with 60 million doses of their vaccine based on existing DNA-based technology used to produce Sanofi's flu vaccine.

While it remains uncertain as to which, if any, of the anti-coronavirus vaccines under various stages of development around the world will ultimately work, the British government said the latest



deal helps grow the country's portfolio of vaccine candidates and adds to previous agreements.

"Our scientists and researchers are racing to find a safe and effective vaccine at a speed and scale never seen before. While this progress is truly remarkable, the fact remains that there are no guarantees," said UK Business Secretary Alok Sharma.

If the GSK and Sanofi vaccine

Trump defends use of HCQ

Washington: US President Donald Trump has again defended the use of hydroxychloroquine to ward off coronavirus, saying many frontline medical workers agree with him that the malaria drug works in the early stages of COVID-19 infection, despite mounting evidence that it is ineffective in treating the disease. In May, Trump disclosed that he was taking daily doses of hydroxychloroquine to ward off coronavirus after consulting the White House doctor.

candidate is proven effective in human studies, the UK could be able to vaccinate priority groups, such as frontline health and social care workers and those at increased health risk, as soon as summer 2021. Human clinical studies of the vaccine will begin in September followed by a Phase 3 study in December 2020.

With the latest announcement, the government said it has now secured early access to four different types of immunisation and a total of 250 million doses, giving the UK the "most likely chance of finding a safe and effective vaccine at the quickest speed".

IRAN LAUNCHES UNDERGROUND BALLISTIC MISSILES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tehran, July 29: Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard launched underground ballistic missiles as part of an exercise involving a mock-up aircraft carrier in the Strait of Hormuz, state television reported Wednesday.

Ballistic missile fire detected from the drill resulted in American troops being put on alert at Al-Dhafra Air Base in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates and Al-Udeid Air Base, the forward headquarters of the US military's Central Command in Qatar, the military said.

Troops sought cover during that time. Al-Dhafra also is temporarily home to five French-built Rafale fighter jets on their way to India for that country's air force. It was the latest barrage in a drill that the previous day saw two American bases temporarily go on alert over the launches.

Drone footage captured by the Guard showed two missiles blasting out from covered positions in what appeared to be a desert plateau in central Iran, with debris flying up in the air in their wake. The launches took place on Wednesday, said Gen. Amir Ali Hajizadeh, the head of the Guard's aerospace division.

Special assistants to Pak PM resign amid criticism

AGENCIES

Islamabad, July 29: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan lost two of his key aides Wednesday when they resigned after the assets and dual nationalities of over a dozen of his special assistants were made public, prompting the Opposition to mount an attack on the government.

Shortly after Tania Aidrus, Special Assistant to Prime Minister on 'Digital Pakistan' announced her resignation, Special Assistant on Health Dr Zafar Mirza too quit the high-profile job.

The resignations come amid recent criticism levelled against the government after assets and nationalities of 15 special assistants to Prime Minister Khan were made public last week, revealing that seven of them were either dual nationals or held another country's permanent residency, as well as the details of their assets, the Express Tribune reported. Aidrus, a former Google executive who was appointed as the Special Assistant earlier this year and tasked to head the Digital Pakistan initiative, announced her resignation after documents found that she had a Canadian citizenship and was also a resident of Singapore. Aidrus announced on Twitter that she was



resigning due to the criticism against the government because of her dual-citizenship. "Criticism levied towards the state as a consequence of my citizenship status is clouding the purpose of 'Digital Pakistan'. In the greater public interest, I have submitted my resignation from the SAPM role. I will continue to serve my country and the PM's vision to my best ability," Aidrus tweeted. "I have resigned as SAPM. I came to Pakistan on a personal invitation of @ImranKhanPTI leaving WHO. I worked hard & honestly. It was a privilege to serve Pakistan. I am satisfied that I leave at a time when COVID-19 has declined in Pakistan as a result of a grand national effort," Mirza tweeted. Prime Minister Khan's Special Assistants who have dual nationalities include, SAPM on Petroleum Nadeem Babar (US), SAPM on Overseas Pakistanis Syed Zulfikar Abbas Bukhari (UK) and SAPM on Power Division Shahzad Qasim (US).

China reports 101 new COVID-19 cases

Beijing: China's COVID-19 cases in a single day have crossed the 100-mark for the first time in over three months, sparking the fear of a rebound after Beijing contained it in Wuhan where the contagion first emerged in December last year. The National Health Commission on Wednesday said that 101 new confirmed coronavirus cases including 98 locally-transmitted and three imported ones were reported in the country on Tuesday. Eighty-nine of the 98 locally-transmitted cases were reported in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, eight in Liaoning province and one in Beijing Municipality, the commission said in its daily report.

Indians lead in acquiring Oz citizenship in 2019-20

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, July 29: More than 38,000 Indians became

Out of the over 2,00,000 people who became Australian citizens in 2019-2020, 38,209 were Indians, the highest number on record, followed by 25,011 Britons, 14,764 Chinese and 8821 Pakistanis

Australia's Acting Minister for Immigration, Citizenship, Migrant Services and Multicultural Affairs Alan Tudge said citizenship was an important part of Australia's success as a socially cohesive, multicultural nation.

"Becoming an Australian citizen means more than just living and working here - it's a pledge of allegiance to our nation, our people and our values. When someone becomes a citizen, they make a pledge to uphold Australia's rights, liberties, laws and democratic values. It represents a willingness to integrate into our successful multicultural nation," Tudge said.

"Being an Australian citizen is an immense privilege, which brings both rights and responsibilities. I congratulate all those who have taken this important step," he said in a statement.

CHILLING OUT



Children cool off near a water spray on Schwarzenbergplatz in Vienna, Austria

UNI PHOTO

HK PROTEST LEADER FIRED FROM TEACHING JOB

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong, July 29: A professor and leading figure in Hong Kong's political opposition has been fired from his university job following China's passage of a sweeping new national security law.

Hong Kong University's council voted to oust Benny Tai from his position as an associate law professor in an 18-2 vote Tuesday, local media reported. Tai has been out on bail since being sentenced to 16 months in prison in April 2019 as one of nine leaders put on trial for their part in a 2014 drive for universal suffrage known as the Umbrella Movement.

In a Facebook post Wednesday, Tai said he intended to continue writing and lecturing on legal issues and asked for public support. "If we continue in our persistence, we will definitely see the revival of the rule of law in Hong Kong one day," Tai wrote.

While the 2014 movement failed in its bid to expand democracy in the semi-autonomous Chinese city, protests returned last year following the local government's proposal of legislation that would have seen criminal suspects extradited to face trial in mainland China. Opponents called that a violation of Hong Kong's independent legal system it was guaranteed after being handed over from British to Chinese rule in 1997. Although the legislation was eventually shelved, the protesters' demands expanded to include calls for democratic changes and an investigation into alleged police abuses, growing increasingly violent over the second half of the year.

That prompted Beijing to pass the national security law, saying opposition made such a move impossible at the local level in Hong Kong. Critics have decried the law as part of a major crackdown on political activity, free speech and academic independence that has prompted a prominent opposition group to disband.

Very different, symbolic Hajj in Saudi amid virus

THE HAJJ IS ONE OF ISLAM'S MOST IMPORTANT AND PROFOUND REQUIREMENTS, PERFORMED ONCE IN A LIFETIME

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, July 29: Pilgrims, donning face masks and moving in small groups after days in isolation, began arriving to Islam's holiest site in Mecca on Wednesday for the start of a historically unique and scaled-down hajj experience reshaped by the coronavirus pandemic.

It follows a route the Prophet Muhammad walked nearly 1,400 years ago and is believed to ultimately trace the footsteps of the prophets Ibrahim and Ismail, or Abraham and Ishmael as they are named in the Bible.

The communal feeling of more than 2.5 million people from around the world — Shiite, Sunni and other Muslim sects — praying together,

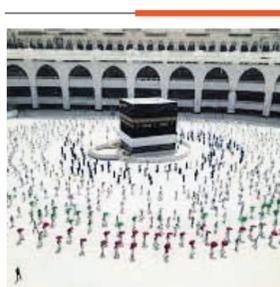
eating together and repenting together has long been part of what makes hajj both a challenging and rewarding experience like none other.

This year, however, pilgrims are eating prepackaged meals alone in their hotel rooms and praying at a distance from one another.

While the experience will be starkly different, it remains an opportunity for pilgrims to wipe clean past sins, deepen their faith and fulfill one of Islam's five pillars.

For the first time in nearly a century, the Saudi government barred Muslims from entering the kingdom from abroad to perform the hajj in order to limit exposure of the coronavirus.

Instead, as little as 1,000 peo-



ple already residing in Saudi Arabia were selected to take part in the hajj this year. Two-thirds are foreign residents from among the 160 different nationalities that

The hajj, both physically and spiritually demanding, is intended to bring about greater humility and unity among Muslims

But rather than standing and praying shoulder-to-shoulder in a sea of people from different walks of life, pilgrims this year are social distancing — standing apart and moving in small groups of 20 to limit exposure and the potential transmission of the coronavirus

the ages of 20 and 50 with no terminal illnesses and showing no symptoms of the virus.

All the pilgrims were tested for the coronavirus, given wristbands that monitor their movement and were required to quarantine at home and in their hotel rooms in Mecca ahead of Wednesday's start of the hajj. They will also be required to quarantine for a week after the hajj concludes.

International media were not permitted to cover the hajj from Mecca this year. Instead, Saudi government broadcast live footage from the Grand Mosque on Wednesday showing limited numbers of pilgrims, moving several feet apart, circling the cube-shaped Kaaba in the first rituals of the hajj.

would have normally been represented at the hajj. One-third are Saudi security personnel and medical staff.

The pilgrims had to be between

of the day quote

In the food processing sector, there are challenges because there is too much seasonality and vulnerability. But these risks can be overcome by insurance and quality inspection. Although not much importance is given to these two, by food businesses, they are important tools in mitigating risks

TARUN RAJAJI | DIRECTOR, APEDA

Our company was committed to follow the US laws (for Tik tok's US biz), and was allowing experts to observe its moderation policies and examine the code that drives its algorithms

KEVIN MAYER | CEO, TIKTOK

If Indian consumers do not support local products then it will be difficult to progress. We need to support our own products, buy local and think global. This is an idea we need to follow thoroughly

SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR | SPIRITUAL LEADER

SHORT TAKES

SpiceJet reports Q4 net loss of ₹807 cr

New Delhi: Budget carrier SpiceJet Wednesday reported a net loss of ₹ 807.1 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2020, owing to the coronavirus-induced lockdown that led to travel restrictions. It had posted a net profit of ₹ 56.3 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous financial year, the airline said in a statement. For the full financial year 2019-20, its net loss stood at ₹ 934.8 crore as against a net loss of ₹ 316.1 crore in 2018-19.

MCL posts highest dispatch

New Delhi: Coal India subsidiary Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd (MCL) Wednesday said it posted its highest-ever single day coal dispatch of 5,17,448 tonnes July 28. MCL dispatched 92 rakes to its consumers: Ib Valley (42) and Talcher (50); a record in company's history, it said. MCL's units achieved a series of new milestones, like highest 22 rakes dispatched by Lakhanpur area; dispatch of 31,106 tonnes to OPGC with a single platform of lower capacity; and the highest-ever despatch of 11 rakes from Hingula area, it said.

CDSL Ventures gets UIDAI nod

New Delhi: CDSL Ventures Wednesday said it has received approval from UIDAI to carry out e-KYC authentication using Aadhaar number. The clearance has been obtained to act as a local Authentication User Agency (AUA) or e-KYC User Agency (KUA), CDSL Ventures said in a statement. Once the intermediaries register under KUA, they can open accounts using Aadhaar based e-KYC. CDSL Ventures said it will facilitate intermediaries to offer seamless online account opening using online Aadhaar based e-KYC.

NBFC assets may de-grow 1-3%

Mumbai: Assets under management of non-banking financial companies are likely to witness a decline in the current fiscal as fresh disbursements have witnessed a substantial drop, says a report. According to a Crisil report, in FY20, the asset under management (AUM) of shadow banking sector is estimated to have grown by 4-6%, a Crisil report said.



With 380 firms and 200 startups, Karnataka is home to about 60% of the biotech firms in the country, which have a 9% market share in Asia and 35% in the Indian subcontinent

CN ASHWATH NARAYAN | DEPUTY CM, KARNATAKA

HK'S ECONOMY CONTRACTS 9%

Hong Kong's economy shrank by 9% in the latest quarter, hurt by the Covid pandemic and facing more potential damage from the loss of US trade privileges due to a security law imposed by China. The center for trade, finance and tourism, was, already struggling before the pandemic prompted the government to impose travel curbs and restrictions on business



WTO to set up dispute panels against India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 29: The dispute settlement body of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has accepted the request of Chinese Taipei and Japan for setting up panels in an ICT tariff case against India, an official source said.

The panels would determine whether India's customs duties on imports of certain information and communications technology (ICT) products infringe WTO norms or not. "Yes, the WTO dispute settlement body has agreed to set up the panels as requested by Chinese Taipei, and Japan in a meeting today. This was the second request of these countries," the source added.



Both Chinese Taipei and Japan have filed separate requests for the establishment of a dispute panel. Earlier, India had blocked the first request of these two countries for setting up a dispute settlement panel at the WTO.

The panels would determine whether India's customs duties on imports of certain ICT products infringe WTO norms or not

Both Chinese Taipei and Japan have filed separate requests for the establishment of a dispute panel

norms of WTO, if a request comes for the second time, the panel is formed. In May last year, both the countries filed a case against India in WTO over the import duties imposed on certain electronic goods, including telephones for cellular networks; machines for reception,

conversion and transmission or regeneration of voice, images or other data; and parts of telephone sets.

They alleged that imposition of import duties on these products by India infringes WTO norms as India has committed zero per cent bound tariffs on these products. India strongly opposed these allegations.

While bound tariffs or duties refer to the ceiling over which a WTO member country cannot impose import duty, the applied tariff is the duty which is currently in place.

India has stated that these ICT products are part of WTO's Information Technology Products (ITA-2) agreement, and New Delhi is not part of this pact. India is a part of ITA-1, signed in 1997.

According to the minutes of a meeting of the dispute settlement body held in February and March, India had stated that it was fully committed to ITA-1 and had been abiding by it over the years.

India reiterated that it had not intended to commit, and would not commit, to any obligations beyond the scope of India's ITA-1 commitment and it has maintained that the products arising out of technological progression could not be covered under ITA-1, as per the minutes of the meeting.

A WTO member country can file a dispute if it perceives that another country's trade policies or actions are violating global trade norms and impacting their local industry.

IndiGo posts worst quarterly loss in five years



REUTERS

Bangalore, July 29: Interglobe Aviation Ltd, which runs India's largest airline IndiGo, reported the steepest quarterly loss in at least five years on Wednesday as travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic hit its operations.

A more than two-month long lockdown that started in March to curb the spread of the pandemic forced the airline to halt its operations, adding to its woes as it was already grappling with higher maintenance costs and weak demand.

The airline said it expects second-quarter average seat kilometers (ASKs) to be around 40% of its ASKs for the same quarter a year earlier.

"The aviation industry is going through a crisis of survival," Chief Executive Officer Ronojoy Dutta said in a statement.

First-quarter net loss came in at Rs 28.49 billion (\$381.31 million), compared with a profit of 12 billion rupees a year earlier. Analysts had forecast a loss of Rs 22.63 billion, according to Refinitiv.

Indigo, which dominates the domestic market, said total debt as of June stood at 235.52 billion rupees, up nearly 28% from a year earlier.

BP, Total not to bid for BPCL



AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 29: Supermajors BP Plc and Total of France may not bid for the acquisition of Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd (BPCL) as foreign investors weigh inflexible locations of company's oil refineries as well as tough labour laws against access to world's fastest-growing fuel market.

Among the probables who could bid to buy government's entire 52.98% stake in India's third-biggest oil refiner and second-largest fuel retailer at the close of bidding on Friday include Russian energy giant Rosneft or its affiliates, Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco) and billionaire Mukesh Ambani's oil-to-telecom conglomerate Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), multiple sources said.

Top consideration for investors is the \$10 billion or around Rs 75,000 crore price tag at current market price, and, after including the requirement to make an open offer for additional 26% stake from shareholders post buying out of the government share, they said.

This price would give buyer ownership of BPCL's three refineries - Mumbai, Kochi in Kerala and Bina in Madhya Pradesh - 16,309 petrol pumps, 6,113 LPG distributor agencies and more than a fifth of 256 aviation fuel stations in the country.

SEBI extends compliance timelines for depositories

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, July 29: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) Wednesday extended the timelines of several regulatory compliance norms for brokers, depositories and share transfer agents till September 30 in view of the pandemic.

Now depository participants can submit their yearly internal audit report (IAR) for half year ended March 31, 2020 by the end of September.

SEBI has eased the compliance requirement with regard to processing of demat request forms by issuer or registrar of share transfer agents (RTA) and depository participants (DP).

In general, processing of demat request forms by issuer or RTA needs to be done within 15 days, while the same for depository participants is within seven days. Now, with the latest decision, the period from March 23 till September 30 shall be excluded for computing the existing time-



lines for compliance.

Further, among other relaxations and extensions, the timeline for systems audit on an annual basis for the financial year ended March 31 has also been extended till September 30.

Sonam Chandwani, Managing Partner at KS Legal & Associates said: "With businesses taking a massive blow on account of the pandemic, adhering to regulatory filing and disclosure compliance norms in a timely manner poses a grave challenge."

She was of the view that the timeline extensions are likely to accord much-needed relief to companies and their stakeholders.

With businesses taking a massive blow on account of the pandemic, adhering to regulatory filing and disclosure compliance norms in a timely manner poses a grave challenge

SONAM CHANDWANI | MANAGING PARTNER, KS LEGAL & ASSOCIATES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 29: Giving rise to an anomalous situation, China imported record high PVC from India in June at a time when the two countries are locked in a tussle at the border amid calls for reducing trade flows.

China imported a record high PVC 27,207 MT of PVC from India in June: more than five times compared to 5,174 MT recorded in May as India accelerated PVC exports during the COVID-19 lockdown, Global Rubber Markets reported.

It is a rare move as the Indian PVC market is net short by close to 2 million MT/year. During the lockdown, India's PVC demand plunged, prompting cancellation of PVC deliveries to India. Suppliers had to move their cargoes to China to clear excess supplies, it added.

Looking forward, market sources said China's PVC imports from India would likely slow as the lockdown ended early-June. For June



delivery, market participants negotiated in May.

Polyvinyl Chloride (or PVC for short) is the third most widely produced plastic in the world following polyethylene and polypropylene, and it is used in a wide variety of applications in industry, construction, agriculture, consumables, packaging, power production and public utilities. PVC is highly durable, resistant and flexible, making it useful for use in clothing, pipes, insulation and many other areas.

To curb imports, Indian companies are submitting proposals to the government on ways to reduce import dependence on China.

PARADIP REFINERY BEGINS MAINTENANCE ACTIVITIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Shutdown maintenance activities has commenced at the Paradip Refinery after safe shutdown of running units. Inaugurating the 3-tier Safety Surveillance System, TDVS Gopalakrishna, Executive Director & Refinery Head emphasised on enhanced safety and health measures to ensure an incident free shutdown during the present Covid-induced-lockdown situation.

Refinery officials said, "Since last planned maintenance shutdown in March, 2018, all the units are operating continuously. After running for more than two years it has become absolutely imperative to go for maintenance work of critical equipment of the refinery. Although, initially shutdown was planned during the month of

April, but due to the onset of COVID-19 pandemic and nationwide lockdown the decision was deferred.

Paradip Refinery plays a strategic important role in supply chain management of petro products not only in India but also for export to the neighbouring countries.

Paradip Refinery has recently shipped 15 TMT of 95 RON MS to Bangladesh. Safe, reliable & continuous operation of this refinery is the need of the hour to give much needed impetus for continuation of economic activities in this part of the nation.

Paradip Refinery is taking all precautions for completing the shutdown activities safely and Gopalakrishna appeals to all the stakeholders and the community for their whole hearted support and cooperation.

Tech Mahindra, CyQureX sign global pact

New Delhi: IT major Tech Mahindra and Hinduja Group's CyQureX Wednesday announced a global partnership to jointly offer cyber security solutions. Under the partnership, Tech Mahindra will provide consulting, planning, designing, integration; orchestration and automation of services and CyQureX will prioritise capabilities in the cyber security domain, a joint statement of both the entities said. "We see cybersecurity not only as an essential service but as a key business differentiator for our clients. The partnership with Hinduja Group's CyQureX aligns with our core business proposition, and will further strengthen our position as the cybersecurity partner of choice for our customers globally," Tech Mahindra MD and chief executive officer CP Gurnani said in a statement.



NTPC achieves highest daily gross generation

Bhubaneswar: Country's largest power generation company NTPC Ltd Tuesday achieved the highest daily gross generation of 977.07 Million Unit (MU). NTPC's total generation includes power generated from its subsidiary and JV companies. Five of its power stations Talcher Kaniha in Odisha, Korba, Sipat & Lara in Chhattisgarh, and Koldam (hydro-based power projects) in Himachal Pradesh exhibited exceptional performance & achieved 100% Plant Load Factor (PLF) on the aforementioned day. NTPC's previous best daily generation was 935.46 MU achieved March 12, 2019. Continuing its excellence in operational efficiency, NTPC Talcher Kaniha previously achieved 100% PLF thrice in May 2020. This achievement comes in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic.



IRB Infra to develop Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway stretch

New Delhi: Highways developer IRB Infrastructure Developers Wednesday said it has emerged as the preferred bidder for executing a stretch of the upcoming Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway at a cost of Rs 1,755 crore in Gujarat. The project is a part of the "Bharatmala Pariyojana" phase 1, being executed by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). "IRB Infrastructure Developers Ltd...has emerged as a preferred bidder for construction of eight lanes of Vadodara-Mumbai Expressway in Gujarat on the Gandeva-Era stretch having length 27,500 kms with the project cost of Rs 1,755 crore," a company said in a statement. The project will be executed on hybrid annuity mode (HAM). The project is a greenfield project and the concession comprises 730 days for construction and 15 years operations and maintenance rights thereafter.



Path to recovery in doubt as murky outlook darkens: Poll

REUTERS

Bangalore, July 29: The outlooks for India's reeling economy has worsened again as business activity slows and COVID-19 infections soar, and will probably prompt the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to cut interest rates again soon, a Reuters poll of economists suggests.

The latest findings echo recent criticism of New Delhi's \$266 billion economic rescue package, which does not include new spending, tax breaks or cash support, suggesting more will be needed to turn the economy around.

With India now the third-worst-hit country by number of infections after the United States and Brazil, the risk of renewed lock-

downs after a nationwide shutdown in March-May has risen.

The Indian economy is now likely to contract this quarter and next and in this fiscal year as a whole, according to the July 20-28 poll of nearly 60 economists. Growth had been expected for all of those periods except the second quarter in the previous poll, taken in April.

"India's failure to contain the spread of COVID-19, and the government's underwhelming support package for firms and households, means the economy will suffer its largest drop in output on record this year," said Darren Aw, Asia economist at Capital Economics in Singapore. In the quarter just gone by, the Indian economy is forecast to have shrunk



20.0% - the first double-digit contraction since official quarterly data started being released in the mid-1990s. It will then contract 6.0% and 0.3% in the current and following quarters, respectively, according to the poll.

That compared to a -5.2% forecast

For the current fiscal year, India's economy is forecast to shrink 5.1%, a complete turnaround from the 1.5% growth predicted in the previous poll. It would be the weakest performance since 1979

the last quarter in the April 23 poll, followed by 0.8% and 4.2% growth in the current and next quarters, respectively.

For the current fiscal year, Asia's third-largest economy is forecast to shrink 5.1%, a complete turnaround from the 1.5% growth predicted in

the previous poll. It would be the weakest performance since 1979. Under a worst-case scenario, the economy is forecast to have contracted 30.0% in the April-June quarter, and to shrink 10.0%, 4.0% and 9.1% in the current and next quarters and this fiscal year, respectively. "The health crisis is yet to be addressed and is spreading geographically, which has led to re-initiation of lockdowns and restrictions in many parts of the country," said Prithviraj Srinivas, chief economist at Axis Capital in Mumbai. "With the health crisis yet to be contained, we cannot hope for a smooth recovery."

When asked how long would it take for India's gross domestic product to reach pre-COVID-19 levels, a slight majority of economists, 23 of 44, said within two years.

Inflation is expected to average 4.5% this fiscal year, and the RBI is forecast to cut the repo rate by another 25 basis points at its Aug. 4-6 meeting, and once more next quarter, to a record low of 3.50%.

LIVERPOOL CLOSING IN ON THIRD-PLACED MANCHESTER UNITED AS MOST VALUABLE FOOTBALL CLUB IN THE WORLD AFTER PREMIER LEAGUE TRIUMPH

Reds' massive gain



per cent to 1.143 billion pound, are only 47 million pound behind the Red Devils (1.190bn pound). Their value dropped by 143mn pound from the previous year.

However, both clubs are some way behind leading La Liga duo of Real Madrid and Barcelona, with the former retaining top spot despite making nearly a 14 per cent loss, with the coronavirus crisis causing the total brand value of top 50 clubs to fall for the first time in six years.

The Brand Finance Review shows that Real Madrid are positioned in number one with the total value of the club currently at 1.286bn pound, despite a drop in value of a staggering 205mn pound.

Overall, the effect of COVID-19 on the three main revenue streams for clubs - matchday, broadcasting and commercial - has seen 680mn pound, or 3.7 per cent, knocked off the cumulative brand value of the world's top 50 most valuable football clubs

£1.143bn 6% (£64.3mn)
CURRENT VALUE VALUE RISES BY FROM 2019

London, July 29: After a historic Premier League triumph this past season, Liverpool came close to their English league rivals

Manchester United as the country's most valuable football club, according to the latest edition of the 'Brand Finance Football Annual'.

As far as the world ranking is concerned, Jurgen Klopp's men moved to fourth, only behind third placed United and the Spanish powerhouse Barcelona and Real Madrid, who have been positioned second and first, respectively.

REAL MADRID
£1.286bn 13.8% (£205mn)
CURRENT VALUE VALUE FALLS BY FROM 2019

BARCELONA
£1.280bn 1.4% (£18.1mn)
CURRENT VALUE VALUE RISES BY FROM 2019

MANCHESTER UNITED
£1.190bn 10.7% (£143mn)
CURRENT VALUE VALUE FALLS BY FROM 2019

5TH TO 10TH POSITIONS

CLUBS	CURRENT VALUE	VALUE RISE/FALL
MANCHESTER CITY	£1.018bn	10.4% (£118mn fall)
BAYERN MUNICH	£957mn	19.6% (£233mn fall)
PSG	£876mn	5.8% (£48mn rise)
CHELSEA	£859mn	1.9% (£17mn fall)
TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR	£710mn	3.3% (£23.5mn rise)
ARSENAL	£651mn	18.18% (£150mn fall)

Barcelona's value, meanwhile, increased by 1.4 per cent - meaning there is now just 5.4mn pound between the two clubs at the top of the worldwide rankings - with Barca's value a total of 1.280bn pound.

Overall, the top 10 clubs is made up of six English teams, with Manchester City in fifth after a 10.4 per cent decrease (a total of 118mn pound) in their valuation to 1.018bn pound.

Chelsea dropped a place to eighth, with their value decreasing for the fourth consecutive year, while Tottenham are ninth just above Arsenal by 58.9mn pound, who are in 10th.

The Gunners in particular saw a huge drop in their value, with a decrease of 150mn pound representing an 18.18 per cent drop on their 2019 valuation.

Spurs enjoyed a three per cent increase in their value, largely because of the opening of their new one billion pound, 60,000-capacity stadium.

Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich are the only German side in the top 10 - they're positioned sixth in the table - whilst PSG are the only French club and they sit seventh in the table.

Perhaps surprisingly, there is no Italian club in the top 10, with Juventus situated in 11th, Inter Milan 14th and AC Milan 22nd.

Bundesliga runners-up Borussia Dortmund are placed in 12th, Atletico Madrid are a place behind in 13th, while Champions League quarterfinalists Red Bull Leipzig complete the top 15.

Other Premier League clubs experienced huge increases in valuation, with Leicester City recording a 44 per cent increase to 301mn pound as a result of their season in the upper echelons of the table, even though they just missed out on Champions League qualification Sunday.

PAK SERIES IN BROAD'S MIND

REUTERS

Manchester, July 29: Stuart Broad said he still feels fresh and is keen to reprise his heroics against West Indies when England will return to the Test arena next week for a three-match series against Pakistan. England meet Pakistan in the first of their three-match series at Old Trafford from August 5-9.

The 34-year-old pacer became only the seventh bowler to reach the milestone of 500 Test wickets as he helped England to a resounding 269-run victory over West Indies Tuesday to win the third Test at Old Trafford and clinch the series 2-1.

He took 10 wickets in the Test - for only the third time in his career - and was named man of the series despite his surprise omission from the first Test in Southampton.

"I've never really set any targets and I've learned a huge amount through my career, but what is pleasing me at the moment is that I feel so fresh and excited to play the game and I've done some technical work that makes me feel in a great rhythm," he told 'Sky Sports'.

"Now I'm looking forward to a couple of days off outside the bio-secure environment but also looking forward to being back and playing against Pakistan."

Broad's 500th wicket came at the start of the day when England rushed to try and dismiss the tourists because the threat of rain hung heavily overhead and there were intermittent stoppages.

He trapped Kraigg Brathwaite leg before wicket for the milestone, matching the achievement of his opening ball partner James Anderson whose



500th Test wicket came up at Lord's three years ago when he dismissed the same batsman. "What a stat that is," Broad said. "Jimmy told me in the warm-up, 'you know who it's going to be' and then told me his 500th victim was Brathwaite. The stars have to be aligned for that to happen!"

I think that's going to be a quiz question for many years to come." "When you get a milestone and put in performances, you want them to lead to wins so to get to 500 on a day that we managed to win a Test match and a series feels very great, very special," Broad added.

YUVRAJ URGES FANS TO APPLAUD 'LEGEND' BROAD

New Delhi: India's flamboyant former all-rounder Yuvraj Singh Wednesday doffed his hat to Stuart Broad, 13 years after nearly bringing about a premature end to the England pacer's career with six sixes in an over. Broad, Tuesday, became only the seventh bowler and fourth speedster to take 500 wickets in Test cricket. Yuvraj took to Twitter to ask his fans to applaud the Englishman's hard work and achievement. "I'm sure every time I write something about @StuartBroad8, people relate to him getting hit for 6 sixes! Today I request all my fans to applaud what he has achieved! 500 Test wickets is no joke - it takes hard work, dedication & determination. Broady you're a legend! Hats off," Yuvraj tweeted. Broad was only in his second year in international cricket when Yuvraj famously took him apart in a World T20 match in Durban in September 2007. Broad was dispatched for six sixes in the 19th over of India's innings. Since that forgettable night at the Kingsmead, Broad has gone on to play 140 Tests, 121 ODIs and 56 T20Is for England, bagging 744 international wickets across formats. The two share a cordial relationship. When Yuvraj called time on his international career, Broad posted a picture of the two with the caption, 'Enjoy retirement Legend @yuvofficial'.

India have bowling to rattle Oz: Gauti

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, July 29: Former India opener Gautam Gambhir believes that the Virat Kohli-led side has the bowling attack to rattle the Australian batting line up including Steve Smith and David Warner, who were serving ball-tampering bans in the previous series Down Under.

India are slated to tour Australia in November for a gruelling four-Test series. "Because India have got the bowling attack to rattle the Australian batting line-up even with David Warner and Steve Smith, but yeah, it's going to be a different challenge than what it was last time around," Gambhir said on Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected'.

"So, you would want Virat Kohli to fire, plus the bowlers as well because it's the bowlers that will win you the Test matches," added the southpaw.

Last time in 2018-19, India registered their first ever Test series in Australia but Australia missed the services of Smith and Warner. Gambhir, who was part of the 2007 T20 World Cup and 2011 ODI World Cup winning teams, said this time it will be a different challenge for the visitors.

"Whether it was his (Kohli's) first tour, whether it was second tour, this time around, obviously, he (Kohli) would be gearing up for it because it's going to be a different challenge with David Warner and Steve Smith coming back into the Australian Test line-up," he said.

Five OFC U-18 players to play for senior squad

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 29: Five U-18 players of Odisha FC players have signed professional contracts Wednesday with the club and will play for the senior team in the upcoming season. After an impressive season in the Elite League, defenders Jones Lalithakima and Ronaldo Wairokpam, midfielder Nischay Adhikari and, forwards Rishab Dobriyal and Akshunna Tyagi have been drafted into the senior team.

"They have shown their potential and also helped the team to reach the final round of Elite League. This is the most important and challenging transition phase for them and they have to fight strong to earn their place in the starting lineup," said youth team coach, Sandeep Alhan.

ANAND LOSES TO WORLD NO.3 DING



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, July 29: Former World Champion Viswanathan Anand crashed to his seventh defeat in the USD 150,000 Legends of Chess online tournament, going down 0.5-2.5 to World No.3 Ding Liren in the eighth round.

Going into the match against the Chinese after ending his six-match losing streak, Anand surrendered the first game in just 22 moves late Tuesday.

The duo settled for a 47-move draw in the second before Liren sealed victory in the third game with black pieces in 41 moves.

Anand lies last in the table with six points with Liren and Peter Leko. The 50-year old Indian takes

on Vasily Ivanchuk in the ninth and final round.

World No.1 Magnus Carlsen overcame the challenge of Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi after the four-game contest ended at 2-all. The Armageddon (a tie-break) also ended in a stalemate but the Norwegian won and picked up three points because he played black.

The Norwegian player maintains his position at the top of the table with 22 points followed by Nepomniachtchi (19) and Anish Giri (15). Carlsen has won all the eight matches he has played so far. Giri lost 2-3 to veteran Ivanchuk but is in line to qualify for the last four.

The tournament is part of the Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour. The winner of this event will qualify for the USD 300,000 Grand Final scheduled from August 9 to 20.

RESULTS (ROUND 8): Ding Liren (China) beat Viswanathan Anand (India) 2.5-0.5; Magnus Carlsen (Norway) beat Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia) 2.5-2.5 (Carlsen won after drawing Armageddon with black); Peter Svidler (Russia) beat Vladimir Kravnik (Russia) 2.5-1.5; Vasily Ivanchuk (Russia) beat Anish Giri (the Netherlands) 3-2; Boris Gelfand (Israel) beat Peter Leko (Hungary) 3-2.

1924 Games set stage for Hollywood endings



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, July 29: There was a soon-to-be Hollywood star in the pool, and a soon-to-be Hollywood ending on the track at the 1924 Paris Olympics.

Johnny Weissmuller, the American swimmer who went on to star as Tarzan in a dozen films, won three swimming gold medals at the Paris Games and also earned a bronze medal in water polo.

Weissmuller won the 100-meter freestyle, 400 free and 4x200 free. In the 100 free sprint Weissmuller edged American teammate Duke Kahanamoku, the two-time defending champion in the event who is also the father of modern surfing. Kahanamoku won his golds in the 100 free in 1912 and 1920. The 1916 Games were canceled because of World War I.

After winning two more gold

medals in 1928, Weissmuller became a model and eventually started working as an actor. He starred as Tarzan in 12 feature films.

"I went to the back lot at MGM, they gave me a G-string and said, 'Can you climb a tree? Can you pick up that girl?' I could do all that, and I did all my own swinging because I had been a YMCA champion on the rings," Weissmuller was quoted as saying in his Associated Press obituary from 1984.

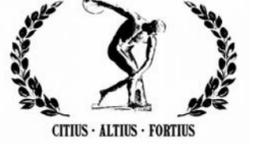
The other story that made its way into movie theaters came in the form of the Academy Award-winning film 'Chariots of Fire'. The movie about two British sprinters, Harold Abrahams and Eric Liddell, centers around their gold-medal performances at the Paris Olympics.

Abrahams won the 100 meters, up-setting a group of Americans in the final, including defending champion Charley Paddock - the first

person to be known as 'the fastest man alive' after his gold-medal performance four years earlier in Antwerp. Paddock finished fifth in the 1924 final.

Liddell, who also played international rugby for Scotland, was a 100-meter runner as well. But because of his deep Christian beliefs, he dropped out of that event when he learned he would have to run in the heats. Instead, he won the gold medal in the 400 meters.

FASTER, HIGHER, STRONGER



The 1924 Games, the second to be held in Paris, were the first to adopt the Olympic motto 'Citus, Altius, Fortius', or 'Faster, Higher, Stronger'. It was also the first to raise three flags at the closing ceremony, one for the International Olympic Committee, one for the host country, and one for the future host country. It was also the first games to house athletes in an Olympic Village.

HISTORIC SWIMMER

There was a gold medalist in the pool who made more of a name for herself in salt water two years later:



Gertrude Ederle won gold in the 4x100 freestyle as well as bronze medals in the 100 free and 400 free. But she achieved international acclaim in 1926 when she became the first woman to swim across the English Channel.

FLYING FINNS



The 'Flying Finns', led by Paavo Nurmi and Ville Ritola, dominated the distance events on the track. Nurmi won the 1,500 meters and the 5,000 meters on the same day, and added another gold in cross-country. Ritola won the 10,000 meters and the steeplechase, as well as finishing second to Nurmi in the 5,000

and in the cross-country event. Nurmi and Ritola combined to help Finland win more gold in the 3,000-meter and cross-country team events.

JUMPING INTO HISTORY



DeHart Hubbard of the United States became the first black athlete to win an individual event at the Olympics, taking gold in the long jump. However, according to Olympic historian David Wallechinsky, Hubbard's feat was overshadowed by teammate Robert Legendre, who had failed to qualify in the long jump but set a world record in the event during the pentathlon a day earlier.

UNLIKELY GOLD

The United States won the gold medal in rugby union, beating France in the final. It was the last time the 15-per-side sport was played at the Olympics. Rugby Sevens, however, was added to the program for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games.