



HARD TALK

Actor Vidya Balan says the tragic death of Sushant Singh Rajput has become a media circus

LEISURE P2



SUN TEMPLE REOPENS

Sun Temple in Konark reopens for visitors after remaining shut for over five months

DOWNTOWN P3



HARD TIMES

The pandemic has brought hard times for many farmers and has imperiled food security for millions

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We should honour it. It took blame for our past and present failures and may come in handy for future too!

SHORT TAKES

Lightning kills 6 people in state

Anandapur/Jaleswar: At least six people including a 12-year-old girl were killed and two others injured after they were struck by lightning in different places of Odisha Tuesday, police said. While four persons were killed in separate lightning incidents in Keonjhar district, two others died and as many received injuries in similar mishaps during rain and thunderstorm in Balasore district. The minor girl died as lightning struck her when she was playing in front of her house at Pandua village.

Petrol prices rise, ATF turns cheaper

New Delhi: Fuel prices have risen again after a one day pause as oil marketing companies (OMC) increased the pump prices of petrol once again by 5 paise per litre Tuesday. The OMCs, however, reduced the price of aviation turbine fuel (ATF) by close to ₹1,500 per kilo litre (kl) and kept the price of non-subsidised cooking gas and auto gas unchanged from last month. With minor increase in petrol prices, the pump price of the fuel in Delhi has gone up to ₹82.08 a litre.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	38900.80	↑ 272.51
NIFTY	11470.30	↑ 82.80
DOLLAR	73.59	↓ ₹0.32
EURO	87.70	↑ ₹0.07
GOLD	₹51,528	↓ ₹173
SILVER	₹68,280	↑ ₹962

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	31.8°C	32.0°C
TEMP MIN	27.8°C	26.5°C
Humidity	95%	87%
Rainfall	Trace	Nil
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

10 YEARS TO TELCOS TO CLEAR AGR DUES

10 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL DUES TO BE PAID UPFRONT BY MARCH 31, 2021

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 1: The Supreme Court Tuesday granted 10 years to telecom firms such as Vodafone Idea, Bharti Airtel and Tata Teleservices for paying the Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR)-related dues to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) with certain conditions.

The SC asked telcos to pay 10 per cent of the AGR-related dues by March 31, 2021. A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra held that the demand made by the DoT and the verdict delivered by the top court in the matter are final. The bench asked the Managing Directors or Chief Executive Officer of the telcos concerned to furnish undertaking or personal guarantee within four weeks for payment of dues. Failure to pay the instalments of the dues would incur penalty, interest and contempt of court, the bench cautioned the telecom firms.

The top court said that issue of sale of spectrum by telcos facing insolvency proceedings shall be decided by the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT). The bench delivered its verdict on the issues, including the time line for staggered payment of AGR-related dues amounting to about ₹1.6 lakh crore.

While pronouncing the verdict, the bench said that till the last instalment is paid by the telcos, their bank guarantees furnished to the DoT would be kept alive. During an earlier hearing, the bench had also heard arguments on the point as to whether spectrum can be sold by telecom companies facing proceedings



under the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) and how the AGR-related dues can be recovered from them.

The top court had in October 2019 delivered verdict on the AGR issue, primarily its definition for calculating government dues of telecom companies such as licence fee and spectrum usage charges. The DoT in March this year moved a plea seeking permission for allowing staggered payment of the dues by telcos over a period of 20 years.

The bench reserved the verdict on July 20 on staggered payments, saying that it will not hear "even for a second" the arguments on reassessment or recalculation of the AGR-related dues. Prior to this, it had asked the telecom companies to file their books of accounts for last ten year and give a reasonable time frame for clearing the dues.

It had said that the period of 15-20 years sought by some telcos was not reasonable and had asked the Centre as to



how it would secure the payment of dues by them. The DoT had earlier said that no demand has been raised against Reliance Jio and Airtel for part dues of Reliance Communications (RCOM) and Videocon respectively.

On August 21, the top court directed the DoT to apprise it of spectrum sharing done by telecom companies and how much is the liability of the sharers.

It asked the DoT secretary to file a specific affidavit apprising it about who was using the spectrum from the date of grant of licence and from which date the respective sharing of spectrum has taken place. It had asked the DoT what was the amount paid by Reliance Jio for using 23 per cent of Reliance Communication spectrum. On August 20, the top court had expressed concern over non-payment of AGR-related dues by telecom companies which are under insolvency saying "without paying for the horse, telcos are taking a ride".

OSRTC buses to ply from today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: With further easing in Covid restrictions allowed, state-run Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) has decided to resume services on 29 routes across the state from Wednesday.

CMD of OSRTC Arun Bothra said they are resuming regular service on 29 routes in 14 depots from Wednesday onwards. He said no standing passengers will be allowed in buses. Wearing of masks will be compulsory for all commuters. No one will be allowed to board buses without masks, Bothra said. The passengers are requested not to crowd in the buses. Additional cleaning measures have been put in place to disinfect buses, he added.

In accordance with the policy and direction of the Chief Minister, the OSRTC has been active in helping JEE candidates. On requisition by authorities, buses are being provided for movement of students, Bothra said.

However, private bus operators are not in a mood to resume operations in a full-fledged manner due to low turnout of passengers. "Until people do not feel comfortable to move in buses, it is difficult to start operation in a full-fledged manner," said All Odisha Private Bus Owners Association spokesperson Debasish Nayak. He requested the government to create awareness among people so that they can travel in buses.

Transport minister Padmanabha Behera said he hopes bus services will return to normalcy "Though we resumed government services, we had to suspend it due to low passengers. When footfalls rise, more owners will come forward to run their buses," said Behera.

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Covid penalties go up many folds

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: To ensure strict adherence to Covid-19 regulations by people, the state government effected sharp increase in fines for violations of norms that could go up to ₹1 lakh.

The health and family welfare department revised the Odisha Covid-19 regulations, 2020 to raise the fine slabs. Now, one will pay ₹1,000 for not wearing masks and splitting in public for first two offences and ₹5,000 for third time onwards.

If over 10 people gather at one place, person organizing the event will pay ₹1 lakh fine. In case of any exigencies, concerned District Collector or municipal commissioner will give the permission in writing.

For violation of physical distance norms, one has to pay ₹2,000 for the first offence and ₹10,000 for subsequent offences. In case of commercial establishments,

the owner of the shop will pay ₹50,000 for the first instance and ₹1 lakh for subsequent offences.

The government has allowed participation of a maximum of 50 persons including bride and groom for a marriage function and 20 for funeral function. If the norms are violated in a marriage function, the government will impose ₹1 lakh on the organiser. Individuals participating in the marriage will pay ₹2,000 for first time and ₹10,000 for next offences.

Similarly, for violation of regulations in funeral functions, the fine amount for the organiser was fixed at ₹50,000 while the individuals participating in the function will have to pay ₹2,000 first time and ₹10,000 for further offences. All officers not below the rank of additional BDO, additional tehsildar, police SI and zonal officer or deputy commissioner of ULBs can impose fines.

Security brass discusses tack to deal with China

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 1: India's top security and defence authorities are currently meeting to discuss the fresh Chinese incursions in Indian territory at Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh. "A high-level meeting is underway to discuss the ongoing situation and future strategy in Ladakh," said a government source.

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, Army Chief General MM Naravane and Director General Military Operations Lt Gen Paramjit Singh are holding discussions on the further course of action.

The meeting is happening after Indian and Chinese troops were engaged in a brief skirmish at the southern bank of the Pangong Lake. The Chinese brought in close to 450 troops but the Indian Army said an attempt to change



the status quo was thwarted.

Sources said Chinese People's Liberation Army with help of ropes and other climbing equipment started climbing at a table-top area between Black Top and Thakung Heights at Pangong Tso, south bank. Hearing the commotion Indian Army was alerted and swung into action.

Earlier, Indian intelligence agencies had alerted Indian Army about the Chinese's PLA plans to change status quo in other areas along Line of Actual Control. Thereafter, despite skirmishes between both armies things did not escalate. When Chinese troops saw the strength of Indian Army troops, the skirmishes stopped.

Odisha No 1 in deaths due to short-circuit, 2nd in snakebites

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: Odisha saw a rise in deaths due to accidental fire caused by electric short-circuit in 2019. The latest report by the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) on 'Accidental Deaths and Suicides' for 2019 revealed that the state tops the list of states with the highest number of deaths caused by electric short circuit while it is among the top three states with most deaths due to accidental fire in 2019.

As many as 970 accidental fires in Odisha during 2019 resulted in deaths of 971 persons that included 768 male and 203 females. Only Kerala and Madhya Pradesh saw more deaths. Meanwhile, the number of male victims in Odisha due to fire accidents far exceeded the number elsewhere during 2019.

Similarly, fire due to electric short circuit resulted in deaths of 279 persons including 265 male and 14 females in 2019 – the highest in

the country. Odisha reported only 12 and 11 deaths due to fire caused by short circuit in 2018 and 2017 respectively. The state recorded 23 times more casualties due to short circuit fire in 2019 as compared to the previous year's toll of just 12.

Uttar Pradesh recorded 188 deaths and 48 injuries in as many as 224 fire incidents due to electric short circuit during the same year.

The report also revealed that 1,466 persons died due to natural causes in 2019 as compared to 1196 in 2018. The number of deaths due to lightning declined to 271 in 2019 from 299 in 2018. The report also brought to the fore a continuous spike in the number of deaths due to venomous snakebites. As many as 1,047 persons comprising 801 males and 246 females fell victim to snakebites in the state in 2019. The toll under this category was 973 in 2018 and 844 in 2017.

Similarly, other animals killed 112 while reptiles killed 16 persons in 2019. 106 persons died after they accidentally ate poisonous insects in 2019.

Meanwhile, fewer deaths happened due to drowning in 2019 as compared to the previous year. As many as 1,234 persons drowned in 2019 as compared to 1,275 in 2018. Boat capsizing incidents drastically dropped in 2019. However, 443 persons died after they fell into water in 2019 as against 375 in 2018.

NO FARMER 'SUICIDE'
The report claimed that no farmer has committed suicide in the state during 2019. This ran counter to a statement made by a minister on the floor of Assembly that two farmers had committed suicide in the state. Meanwhile, various political parties accused the state government of suppressing facts related to farmers' suicides after similar claims by the NCRB report in 2018 as well.

ACCIDENTAL DEATHS & SUICIDES REPORT, 2019

Loan moratorium extendable by 2 yrs, Centre, RBI tell SC



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 1: The moratorium period on repayment of loans during the COVID-19 pandemic is "extendable" by two years and several steps have been taken to help the stressed sectors, the Centre and the RBI told the Supreme Court Tuesday.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan was informed by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre and RBI that the economy contracted by nearly 24 per cent in the April-June quarter due to coronavirus-related lockdown and restrictions. The bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and MR Shah, said it would hear Wednesday the pleas which have raised the issue of interest being charged on instalments which have been deferred under the RBI's scheme during the moratorium period.

At the outset, Mehta told the bench that the Centre has filed its affidavit in the matter. When the court said it has not yet received the affidavit, he said the bench should look into it and the matter be listed after two-three days.

Mehta said several steps have been taken for stressed sectors. "Let the Centre, RBI and bankers put their heads together on the aspect of interest on interest," he said. "The moratorium is extendable by two years," he added. Mehta said authorities have utilised the time and narrowed down the issue to the point on interest. "There are stressed sectors and national economy has contracted by 23 per cent," he said, adding, "I have filed the affidavit and heavens will not fall if the matter is taken after two-three days or tomorrow."

Charlie Hebdo, attacked in 2015, reprints Mohammed caricatures

AGENCIES

Paris, Sept 1: The French satirical paper whose staff was decimated in a violent attack by Islamic extremists in 2015 is reprinting caricatures of the Prophet Mohammed cited by the killers, declaring "history cannot be rewritten nor erased."

The announcement Tuesday came on the eve of the first trial for the January 2015 attacks against Charlie Hebdo and, two days later, a kosher supermarket.

The killings touched off a wave of violence claimed by the Islamic State group across Europe. Seventeen people died — 12 of them at the editorial offices — along with all three attackers. Thirteen men and a woman ac-



paper best known for vulgar irreverence said that although it had declined to publish caricatures of Mohammed since the attacks, doing so for the opening of

the trial was necessary. "The only reasons not to stem from political or journalistic cowardice," the editorial said.

As the attackers, brothers Chérif and Saïd Kouachi, walked away from the carnage, they cried out "We have avenged the Prophet." Claiming the attacks in the name of al-Qaida, they then killed a wounded policeman point-blank and drove away.

Two days later, a jailhouse acquaintance of theirs stormed a kosher supermarket on the eve of the Jewish Sabbath, killing four hostages and claiming allegiance to the Islamic State group. The Kouachi brothers had by then holed up in a printing office with another hostage. All three attackers died in near-simultaneous police

raids. The supermarket attacker, Amedy Coulibaly, also killed a young policewoman.

The caricatures re-published this week were first printed in 2006 by the Danish newspaper Jyllands Posten, setting off sometimes violent protests by Muslims who believe depicting Mohammed is blasphemy.

Charlie Hebdo, which was then little-known outside France and regularly caricatures religious leaders from various faiths, re-published them soon afterwards. The paper's Paris offices were firebombed in 2011 and its editorial leadership placed under police protection, which remains in place to this day. Laurent Sourisseau, the paper's director and one of the few staff to have survived the at-

tack, named each of the victims in a foreword to this week's edition.

"Rare are those who, five years later, dare oppose the demands that are still so pressing from religions in general, and some in particular," wrote Sourisseau, who is also known as Riss.

Three of the accused, including the wife of one of the attackers, will not be at the trial because they are abroad and it's not known if they're alive or dead. Most of the 11 who will appear in court say they knew it was for a crime but claim they had no idea it was for mass killings.

Among those inside the market was Lassana Bathily, an employee whose home village in Mali was just 20 kilometers from that of Coulibaly's.



DEPP WANTS \$50MN TRIAL DEFERRED AS IT CLASHES WITH FILMING SCHEDULE

Actor Johnny Depp has put in a request to delay the \$50 million defamation trial as it overlaps with his *Fantastic Beasts 3* shoot. Depp has filed a suit against former wife Amber Heard which was listed for a hearing, reports *deadline.com*.

JORDAN WISHES HE HAD MORE TIME WITH BOSEMAN

Actor Michael B. Jordan has penned an emotional Instagram tribute for his friend and colleague Chadwick Boseman. "I've been trying to find the words, but nothing comes close to how I feel. I wish we had more time," he wrote.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today you will feel like going green, and Ganesh approves. You could plant a sapling, or organise some dustbins to keep the neighbourhood clean. If you wish to make the world a better place to live in, do it but take it step by step.

TAURUS
Hoist the sails and prepare to leave port. Your sugar-coated words will seal business deals with ease, predicts Ganesh. The activity and action may slow down as the day progresses. Resist the urge to get sentimental as it could lead to conflicts that will haunt you in the days to come, warns Ganesh.

GEMINI
Emotions, not acidity, will be the cause of your uneasiness. Something important is going on in your life and you are nervous. It can be related to a matter concerning law, ethics, prejudice, education, or social customs. You are, however, likely to win admiration from all quarters for your fine taste in arts, says Ganesh.

CANCER
The day looks set to be an ordinary day, for both work and play, says Ganesh. Yet, if you are planning to participate in an event or a competition today, march ahead, by all means. There will, practically, be no one who'll be able to compete with you.

LEO
Your competitors will try to malign your reputation today. They will try to spoil your image and impression in front of others. You need to be courageous and nip their efforts in the bud. You need to delegate decision-making activities to others today. Your wrong decisions need to be buried by you, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Give people a word of encouragement and motivate them to achieve bigger things, advises Ganesh. Don the thinker's cap and you may find yourself in contemplation. Criticism will hurt you, but be as unflappable as you can and proceed to your target, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
It is your friends who prove to be lucky and beneficial for you today, especially if they happen to be walking the corridors of power, says Ganesh. Do not hesitate to start that new joint venture today. See your popularity grow by leaps and bounds as you get due recognition for your abilities and efforts.

SCORPIO
There is nothing more enchanting and alluring to you than some passionate time with your love interest. The only problem that Ganesh sees here is that there may be too many love interests. Your chosen partner, though, may get to see a different side of you in the evening.

SAGITTARIUS
Benevolence will be your middle name today. Being frank and open-minded will have its own advantages. You might just give your life partner a patient ear. This will make them feel treated well, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
Today, you will not be in the right mood to work or produce expected results. Mounting work pressure may further dampen your self-confidence, foretells Ganesh. The dullness will vanish in the air by the evening and you will be back to your happy self.

AQUARIUS
You may find your schedules running haywire today! Your workload may be daunting, especially if you're an administrator. However, Ganesh says your diligence and commitment will tide you through.

PISCES
Financial bearings will be at the fore front of your attention today, feels Ganesh. Bank accounts, stocks, loans and other such things will dominate your thoughts and words. Earning money will be your primary goal and you will focus on those methods that will be most profitable to you, today.



Now Vidya opens up on Rhea's 'media trials'

Mumbai: Actress Vidya Balan Tuesday stated that it was unfortunate how the tragic death of Sushant Singh Rajput had become a media circus. She also criticised the 'media trials' of actress Rhea Chakraborty.

Vidya's contention came in response to Telugu actress Lakshmi Manchu's

tweet about Rhea Monday. Lakshmi had tweeted seeking justice for both Sushant and Rhea. She had added that she would want colleagues to stand up for her if she ever faced the situation that Rhea was currently going through. In the note, Lakshmi also said that 'media trials' had made a 'monster out of a girl'. Her post was re-

tweeted by actress Taapsee Pannu, who agreed with her.

In response, Vidya wrote: "God bless you, Lakshmi Manchu for saying this out loud. It is so unfortunate that the tragic and untimely death of a beloved young star Sushant Singh Rajput has become a media circus."

IANS

Manushi starts campaign on nutrition

Mumbai: Former beauty queen and actress Manushi Chhillar is starting a social media campaign on nutrition. She wants to tell people about the positives of eating right.

"I have been told repeatedly that we are what we eat and we have to be very cognizant about what we intake," said Manushi on National Nutrition Week, which commenced on Tuesday.

She added: "Proper nutrition has manifold health benefits and through my social media,

I intend to tell as many people as possible about the positives one can unlock by eating right."

Manushi credits her doctor parents for inculcating the knowledge about how proper nutrition can be a game-changer.

"My parents are doctors and they have always told me that our eating habits define our total health. With this learning, I have been able to lead a very balanced

life because awareness about nutrition is key for anyone to understand whether they are planning their meals correctly," she said.

IANS

Tiger stuns fans with 220 kg deadlifts

Mumbai: Action star Tiger Shroff has left his fans in awe by lifting a whopping 220 kilos of weight.

In a new Instagram video the actor has shared, he is seen doing deadlifts with 220 kilos.

Looking totally in shape in a black vest and black pants, Tiger seemed to be in the mood for some banter, too. He mentioned the weights were heavy!

"Excuse the war cries...that felt heavy af @rajendradhole #220kgs-deadlift," he wrote.

Tiger's friends and colleagues were stunned seeing the video.

His rumoured girlfriend and ac-



trix Disha Patani dropped clapping emojis, while Tiger's mother Ayesha Shroff wrote: "Insane".

Actor Sikandar Kher wrote: "Super. next time try a bicep curl with that."

Tiger's sister Krishna Shroff's beau Eban Hyam commented: "Beast mode".

Rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh said: "O balley Shera."

IANS



Urvashi showcases her 'warrior style workout'

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela works out like a warrior, going by her new post on social media. An Instagram video Urvashi has posted sees her doing pull-ups with rapper Cardi B's number WAP playing in the background.

"#WapChallenge done right in weighted pull ups warrior style workout thank you @iamcardib @theestallion & @kyliejenner," she captioned the video.

Urvashi is currently in Hyderabad shooting for her debut Telugu film, *Black Rose*. The film is directed by Sampath Nandi.

IANS



An online storytelling session underway

Project Jedi to hone kids' creative skills during pandemic

BHUBANESWAR: Statistics reveals that children across the world have been least affected by the outbreak of coronavirus. They either haven't suffered at all or have escaped with mild symptoms. However, the enormous psychological toll the lockdowns have on the psyches of the kids, those belong to economically weaker background in particular, is being ignored.

In a bid to support and engage such kids creatively, Unmukt Foundation, a city-based organisation has recently launched an initiative titled *Project Jedi*. For the uninitiated, Jedi members are powerful protagonists of Star Wars series, assigned as the guardians of peace and order.

"Our project primarily aims to mentor children to better their communication skills, to make them aware on environmental issues, and to create independent learners. To accomplish this objective, we focus a lot

on mentorship because they're the one who would be in direct touch with the kids," said Shweta Agarwal, a co-founder of the foundation.

Under this initiative, students from IIMs, NITs, and other top colleges from diverse educational backgrounds have joined the programme. This apart, entrepreneurs and people who work for corporate houses have also joined this campaign. The team conducts virtual classes and mentorship workshops for *Jedi* members to keep them emotionally healthy during this pandemic.

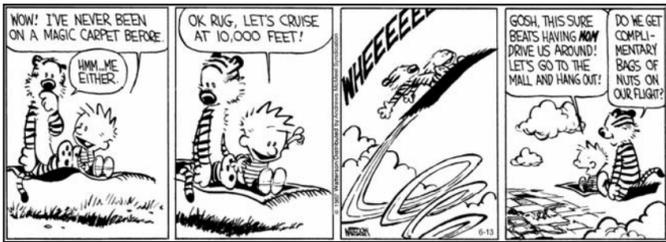
Shweta said the project is a story-based module as children have innate attractions for stories. Stories can instil virtues in children, make them aware of their own culture and roots, broaden their horizons by exposing them to different cultures and heritage, strengthen cognitive and listening skills, and make academic learning easier, she added.

FUN post

PEANUTS



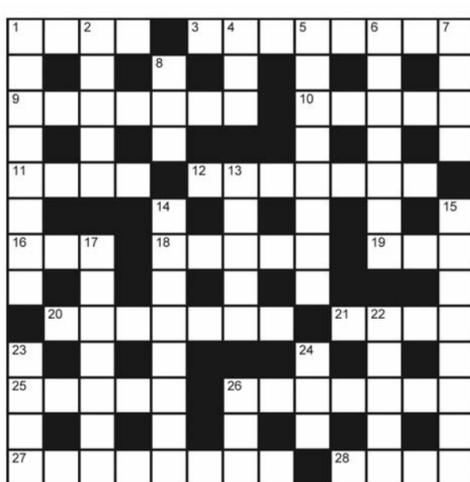
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



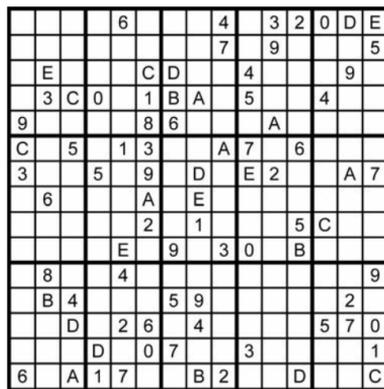
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Madcap
 - 3 Sweater type
 - 9 Conceal
 - 10 Skirt fold
 - 11 Surefooted goat
 - 12 Real
 - 16 Tree juice
 - 18 Museum piece
 - 19 Dutch city
 - 20 Surfer's find
 - 21 Rigging support
 - 25 Italian dish
- Down**
- 1 Most piquant
 - 2 Bead material
 - 4 Epoch
 - 5 Gauge with "add" on it
 - 6 Small explosive
 - 7 Written reminder
 - 8 Morning moisture
 - 13 Lace tip
 - 14 Queensland's capital
 - 15 Demolish (4,4)
 - 17 Salted pub treat
 - 22 Town square
 - 23 Majestic
 - 24 Half a score
 - 26 Egg cells

SUDOKU

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

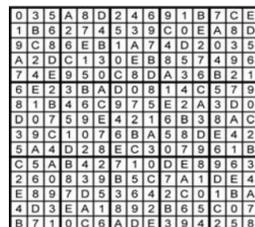


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



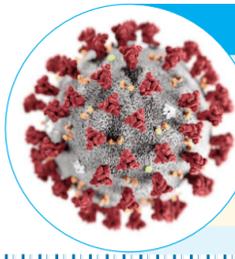
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



STATE MOURNING

The Tricolour hoisted half-mast atop the Odisha Assembly in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to mourn the demise of former President Pranab Mukherjee



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,57,21,294	1,80,15,152	8,56,299
India	36,91,166	28,39,882	65,288
Odisha	1,06,561	80,770	503

2,500 CAN VISIT SUN TEMPLE DAILY

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: With the re-opening of Sun temple at Konark in Puri district Tuesday, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has said that 2,500 visitors would be allowed entry every day in two phases.

Though other ASI-protected monuments in the state like Raja-Rani temple, Udaygiri, Khandagiri, Lalitgiri Buddhist monuments were opened earlier, the Konark temple received visitors only September 1, ASI Superintending Officer Arun Kumar Mallick said.

He said visitors are allowed entry to the monument following all the norms set both by Union and state governments. Wearing of masks and social distancing have been made mandatory for visitors to the heritage site, he said, adding that tourists will also undergo thermal screening before their entry.



Security guards deployed at the entrance of Konark Sun temple, Tuesday

Mallick said visitors can buy tickets by scanning QR code installed outside the temple and make payment online. A total of 2,500 visitors will now be allowed entry every day in two phases. While 1,500 visitors will be allowed to visit the

site between 6am and 1pm, another 1,000 persons can enter the premises in the afternoon hours.

He said though other ASI sites were opened earlier, the Sun temple at Konark remained closed till August 31 due to restrictions im-

SAFETY MEASURES

Wearing of masks and social distancing have been made mandatory for the visitors to the heritage site

Tourists will also undergo thermal screening before their entry into the monument

Visitors can buy tickets by scanning QR code installed outside the temple and make payment online

A total of 2,500 visitors will now be allowed entry every day in two phases—1,500 between 6am and 1pm and 1,000 in the afternoon

posed by Puri district administration.

"We have been allowed to open only non-living temples in the state now," Mallick said, adding that Shree Jagannath Temple continues to remain closed since March 15 as a precautionary measure to check the spread of the infection.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Conmen dupe IMD scientist of ₹5 lakh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: A scientist of India Meteorological Department (IMD) has sought the help Commissionerate Police in connection with an alleged loan fraud of ₹5 lakh involving some staffers of a private bank.

like Aadhaar Card, pay slip of electricity bill from Mallick in 2018.

They asked the bank's agent and other staffers to avail a loan amounting ₹2.50 lakh with an EMI of ₹6,600. His wife also received a cheque of ₹2.50 lakh after a few days. However, the accused, Pradeep, in connivance with bank

The accused have allegedly misappropriated more than ₹5 lakh from the loan amount by handing over a cheque of ₹2.50 lakh



Victim Ashok Kumar Mallick, 52, a resident of Bhitmatangi under Airfield police limits, alleged that his wife along with other women in their neighborhood had formed an SHG and taken ₹4, 19,573 loan from Fullertron India Ltd, a private financier, through Satyam Finance Ltd, at 24 per cent interest January 31, 2016. The SHG used Mallick's salary account for the transaction. Meanwhile, one Pradeep Thakury told Mallick that the SHG members should avail a personal loan from the private bank at much cheaper interest rate and clear the outstanding due with the private financier. He collected documents

staffers never gave the loan sanction letter to Mallick and instead kept it with him.

In 2019, Mallick received a call from the Kolkata head office of the private bank that he had defaulted on paying his EMI of ₹17,550. Upon enquiry, the bank authorities informed him that a loan amount of around ₹8 lakh was credited to his account.

The accused have allegedly misappropriated more than ₹5 lakh from the loan amount by giving the complainant's wife a cheque of ₹2.50 lakh. Sahid Nagar police have started investigations into the matter after registering a case.

3,600 appear for JEE Main

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: Amidst strict enforcement of COVID-19 protocols as many as 3,600 students from the state appeared in the Joint Entrance Examination (Main) Tuesday, official sources said.

The students appeared for the examination in 26 different centres spread across seven cities in the state. The examination would be held in two sittings, from 9am to 12noon and 3pm to 6pm. As many as 38, 236 students will be appearing for the examination in the state. The examination will continue till September 6, said an official.

"Best wishes to all students appearing for #JEEMain2020 during this challenging time. May you all be successful and come through



Students undergo thermal screening before entering a JEE (Main) examination centre in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

with flying colours," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik wished through a Twitter post.

Students are appearing for the

exam at 26 examination centres in seven cities—Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Rourkela, Dhenkanal, Balasore, Berhampur and Sambalpur—while adhering to COVID-19 norms.

Before being allowed entry to the examination halls, the temperature of the students was checked with thermal scanner. They also had to maintain social distancing while entering the examination halls.

The state government has made elaborate arrangements for movement of students and their guardians by providing them with buses and accommodation.

"The arrangement made by the state government has helped many students in getting the opportunity to appear in the examination. It has immensely helped the students hailing from rural areas," said Nirakar Mallick, a JEE aspirant from Kendrapara district.

Mo Parivar's support for aspirants

BHUBANESWAR: BJD's Odisha-Mo Parivar team provided logistical and other required support to the candidates appearing for the JEE and their parents.

The team has opened six centres in Bhubaneswar and 20 centres in Berhampur, Cuttack, Sambalpur, Rourkela, Balasore and Dhenkanal to help the JEE Main candidates.

As per the instructions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Odisha-Mo Parivar team distributed water bottles, hand sanitisers and snacks

to the students along with logistical support to the students who faced hurdles in reaching the examination centres. JEE Main examination started Tuesday and will continue till September 6.

Mo Parivar convener Arup Patnaik along with members encouraged the students in Bhubaneswar while MLAs Debi Ranjan Tripathy and Souvik Biswal were present at the help desk in Cuttack. Local MLAs and senior BJD leaders were present at the help centres in other towns.

Swargadwar restriction extended till Sept-end

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 1: A day after the state government came out with guidelines for Unlock 4.0, the district administration here Tuesday extended the ban on cremation of bodies at Swargadwar by people from outside the district till the end of September.

However, the residents of Puri district can cremate the bodies of their relatives at Swargadwar cremation ground by following the Covid-19 guidelines, said the administration.

People from across the

state and outside usually prefer to perform the last rites of their near and dear ones at Swargadwar cremation ground due to its mythological importance and close link with Jagannath culture.

The district administration had imposed a ban on the cremation of bodies from outside Puri district at Swargadwar July 7 to check the spread of novel coronavirus. Moreover, the administration had imposed restrictions on the immersion of ashes of deceased people from other districts in Puri sea.

Include Odisha in IRAD to monitor road safety: Govt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: The state government has urged the Centre to include Odisha under Integrated Road Accident Database (IRAD) system to ensure proper monitoring of rising road mishaps.

in the state as a pilot project immediately. All required steps will be taken for successful implementation of the scheme. In the state, we have a lead agency on road safety with full time staff to monitor road safety activities," Padhi said in his letter. At pres-

CENTRAL DATABASE SYSTEM

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) with support of IIT-Madras and NIC has developed the IRAD system

At present, the state government is manually collecting data on fatal accident or cases with grievous injury by the officials of RTO and police



The collection of information through IRAD would help expedite the process of identification of black spots apart from prioritising and designing the short/long/medium term measures to mitigate these hazards

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) with support of IIT-Madras and National Informatics Centre (NIC) has developed the IRAD system. The ministry has planned to roll out the project in six states with highest fatalities from road crashes—Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh on pilot basis. Later, it will be extended to whole country.

Moreover, the state government wanted to be included in the project on the pilot phase. State Transport and Commerce secretary Madhu Sudan Padhi has recently written to MoRTH director (Road Safety) Paresh Kumar Goel in this regard. "It is requested to launch IRAD

ent, the state government is manually collecting data on fatal accident or cases with grievous injury by the officials of RTO and police. The collection of information through IRAD would help expedite the process of identification of black spots apart from prioritising and designing the short/long/medium term measures to mitigate these hazards and monitoring the impact of these road safety measures, he said.

Moreover, Padhi said, digital recording of accidents directly from the spot using a hand-held tablet and geo-tagging of the accident location will also ensure accuracy. It will also help achieve faster, better post-processing, analysis and presentation of data.

FLOODING WOES



Villagers travel on a boat in flood-hit Banki area of Cuttack district, Tuesday

PIC: MAUSAM NANDA

BDA thrust on planner-citizen interaction

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) Tuesday celebrated its 38th foundation day with release of its annual report and distributed the prizes for children of BDA staff who scored above 90 per cent marks in Class X exam. During the event, BDA Vice-Chairman Prem Chandra Chaudhary said that engaging interaction between architects, city planners and residents would help make Bhubaneswar a well-planned city.

Chairing the meeting, the vice-chairman of the development authority stated that the BDA has undertaken some major projects including the Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP), which incorporates child-



38th foundation day

friendly city planning keeping in mind the next 20 years of vision.

Similarly other projects such as affordable housing, online building plan approval system, road networks revamped for improved connectivity, town planning schemes have been introduced with a focus on housing for all.

"BDA is the leading agency to ensure proper planning in the city to help the city grow in a planned and self-sus-

tainable manner. Besides, BDA has been more people-friendly in its approach to address various complaints and grievances of public through adopting a participatory method," Chaudhary said.

During the event, the vice-chairman also unveiled the BDA Annual Report -2020, which has chronicled the performance of six different major branches of the authority and Bhubaneswar

Urban Knowledge Centre (BUKC), a technical wing of BDA. The BUKC works in catalysing research on global best practices and planning for innovative projects under Smart City Proposal to make the city more livable.

Furthermore, Chaudhary urged more engaging interaction between architects, city planners and residents to make Bhubaneswar a well-planned, culturally vibrant, environmentally sustainable, physically resilient and people-friendly city in the coming days.

At the conclusion, Chaudhary felicitated and handed over certificates to four children of BDA employees, who have secured more than 90 per cent marks in HSC examination. The awardees include Jitendra Prusty, Spandan Dash, Sarthak Sovan and Saroj Kumar Baral.

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4. Diploma In Food Production	1 1/2 Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	
5. Diploma In Housekeeping Operation	1 1/2 Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	
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Toll crosses 500 with 11 fresh deaths

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: State's COVID-19 tally rose to 1,06,561 Tuesday as 3,025 more people tested positive for the infection, while 11 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 503, the official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

As many as 1,844 fresh infections were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,181 people tested positive for COVID-19 during contact tracing, said the official.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, reported the highest number of new cases at 666, followed by Cuttack (312), Mayurbhanj (215) and Ganjam (207), the official said, adding that 24 other districts reported less than 200 new cases each.

Khurda, Mayurbhanj and Puri districts reported two fresh fatalities each, while one patient each died in Cuttack, Ganjam, Jagatsinghpur, Kandhamal and Rayagada districts, added the official.

Ganjam district accounted for 191 of the 503 COVID-19 deaths in the state, followed by 67 in Khurda, 36 in Sundargarh and 32 in Cuttack, the official said, adding 53 coronavirus patients have died due to other ailments so far.

The state has so far tested 18,39,854 samples for COVID-19, including 50,421 Monday.

Meanwhile, 3,484 persons recovered from the infection.

The recoveries include 890 from Khurda, 314 from Jajpur, 302 from Rayagada, 253 from Ganjam, 162 from Kendrapara and 143 from Cuttack.

The total recovered cases of



VITAL STATS

- 1,844 fresh infections were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,181 people tested positive for COVID-19 during contact tracing
Khurda district reported the highest number of new cases at 666, followed by Cuttack 312, Mayurbhanj 215 and Ganjam 207
Ganjam district accounted for 191 of the 503 COVID-19 deaths in the state, followed by 67 in Khurda, 36 in Sundargarh and 32 in Cuttack
With 3,484 fresh recoveries, total recovered cases of Odisha now stand at 80,770

CMC offices now restricted precincts

CUTTACK: The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) has imposed restrictions on people's visit to its two offices for 15 days to check the spread of novel coronavirus.

The municipal body has asked people not to visit its two offices—Vikash Bhawan and Biju Bhawan—for 15 days as part of its war against the deadly virus. It has advised people to avail all services

through online, sources said. "The restrictions on people's visit to our offices will be in force till September 15. Only the officials and employees of the CMC can enter into the offices. People can visit CMC's website to apply for birth and death certificates," said an official.

Notably, some employees of the CMC have been tested positive for COVID-19 recently.

Odisha now stand at 80,770.

2 MLAs, actor test +ve

Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar (North) MLA Susant Kumar Rout, Bari MLA Sunanda Das and veteran actor Ajit Das tested positive for novel coronavirus, Tuesday.

In a Facebook post, Rout said,

"Today I have tested Covid-19 positive and in home isolation. Now I am stable. All those have been in close proximity to me in the last few days are requested to please get themselves tested, if necessary(sic)"

Twin cities see 505 cases

The twin cities of Bhubaneswar

and Cuttack reported 307 and 198 COVID-19 cases Tuesday.

According to Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), of the fresh cases, 135 were from quarantine centres whereas 172 were local contact ones. Among the fresh cases, 20 were detected from OUAT Colony here. With this, City's COVID-19 tally stands at 10,732.

On the other hand, 301 COVID-19 patients in the City recovered from the viral infection, taking the total recoveries in Bhubaneswar to 6,635.

The Temple city has so far seen 42 COVID-19 deaths. The active cases in City stand at 4,043, the BMC said.

The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC), meanwhile, said it detected 198 COVID-19 cases (124 quarantine cases and 74 local contact ones) in its jurisdiction Tuesday. It added that 318 persons also recovered from the disease.

COVID BLUES



Members of All Odisha Private Schools' Association demonstrate near the Directorate of Elementary Education at Unit-IX in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to press for fulfillment of their demands including financial assistance for the teachers

Cong, BJP pay homage to ex-President Pranab



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: Several Congress and Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) leaders from the state, Tuesday, paid their tributes to former Indian President Pranab Mukherjee after the latter died in his 80s.

Separate condolence meetings were organised in the state capital by both the parties. Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjan Patnaik and BJP state president Sameer Mohanty took part in the condolence meetings.

"The great leader has contributed immensely to the country through his illustrious political career. His services were unmatched. I pray god to give strength to his family members to bear the loss they have suffered due to the death of the luminary," he said.

The event was organised at the Congress Bhawan here and was attended by senior party leaders like Suresh Routray and others. Several party leaders garlanded the photograph of the former President of India.

Similarly, at the BJP State Headquarters the state president paid homage to the departed soul. Several other party leaders like Bhruagu Buxipatra and others were also present.

"On behalf of BJP, we organised the condolence meeting. He has worked for more than 50 years in different areas of expertise dur-

STUDENTS MOURN MUKHERJEE

Students of Utkal University and other institutes mourned the demise of former President Pranab Mukherjee, the elder statesman of India and Bharat Ratna who served the nation for decades. As a mark of respect, students lighted candles and observed two minutes' silence near the university premises Tuesday.

Suvarn Swain, a student of Pharmaceutical science, said, "We lost a great visionary personality of Indian politics. He is one of the few politicians who had a good image throughout his political career. He visited Utkal University as the President of India in 2013 for the 45th Convocation of the university."

Similarly, Central University of Odisha, Koraput also paid tribute to the departed soul. I Ramabrahman, Vice-Chancellor, Asit Kumar Das, Registrar; P Durgaprasad, Visiting Professor; senior administrators and faculty and non-teaching staff paid floral tributes.

ing his political career. This was a great loss to the country as the country lost a former President and a seasoned political leader," Mohanty said.

TWIST IN ACTIVIST ADITYA'S DEATH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: In a fresh twist, the father of deceased social activist Aditya Dash claimed that Dash was being repeatedly pressurised by a Gujarat-based woman to marry her.

His father Nandi Kishore Dash told the media that the details regarding the psycho lady have been handed over to Crime Branch much earlier. He claimed that the CB has not taken any steps to look into this angle.

Aditya's father also informed the media that he is yet to see the lady. Meanwhile, members of a social organisation Tuesday met Governor Ganeshi Lal seeking CBI probe into the death. Notably, Aditya's body was found lying on the track near Lingaraj Road Railway station July 7, 2020.

BJP seeks timely aid for flood victims

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: Several BJP leaders Tuesday visited different villages in flood affected areas of Puri and Kendrapara districts and took stock of the situation.

The leaders demanded timely action from the state administration in the affected areas. They claimed that many deserving victims of the flood in rural areas have been waiting for government assistance. Party leaders Pradipta Kumar Naik, Lekshashree Samantsinghar and Baijayant Panda visited parts of the affected districts and interacted with the flood victims in Puri and Kendrapara districts.

While Naik and Lekshashree visited parts of Puri district, Panda took stock of the flood situation in Kendrapara.

Naik accused the state government of not delivering government assistance on time.

XUB ORIENTATION PROG HELD IN CITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

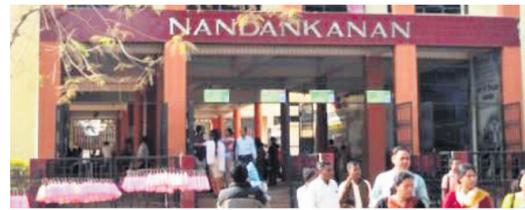
Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: Xavier University Bhubaneswar (XUB) Tuesday held its common inauguration programme for various courses for this academic session.

Students of MBA-SM, MBA-UMG, MURP, MBF, MA - Mass Comm, M Tech - DSA, MPPG, BSc Mass Comm, B Com, BBM, BSc SD, B. Tech - CSE, BSc Econ, BA LLB and BBA LLB participated in the virtual inauguration and orientation programme, said a release issued by XUB.

Associate Dean (Admissions) Bikram K Bahinipati addressed the participants and shared the batch profile across the schools. Deputy Registrar Antony Raj SJ welcomed the students to XUB.

Vice Chancellor Fr Antony R Uvari SJ delivered the inaugural address. He advised the students to be the torch bearers to the world.

NZP may reopen in Oct with COVID norms



POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, Sept 1: The Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here may reopen from first week of October if sources are to be believed. The zoo authorities have given a proposal in this regard to the state government Tuesday.

Notably, the zoo has been closed for the last five months in the wake of COVID-19 outbreak.

The Additional Director of NZP Amulya Kumar Parida said that after the reopening of the zoo, proper arrangements will be put in place for the tourists as per the COVID-19 guidelines like whole body sanitisation of the tourists' before entering the zoo and hand wash facility for the tourists at select spots within the zoo premises.

NZP has remained out of bounds for tourists for the last 5 months in the wake of COVID outbreak

All the guidelines issued by the Union and state governments will be strictly followed on the zoo premises. Thermal screening of visitors will be conducted at the entry point, added Parida.

Parida also said that the zoo authorities will allow limited number of tourists at a time to ensure distancing.

"The state government will take proper action regarding the opening of the zoo as per the COVID-19 situation in October," Parida said.

BAGALA LAND SOLD ILLEGALLY: PATRA

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 1: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) national spokesperson Sambit Patra Tuesday alleged that the state government has done illegal plotting and sale of Bagala Dharmasala land in Puri.

Addressing the media here, the BJP spokesperson referred to a couple of letters shared between the state Tourism department and India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), which had taken up the renovation work in Puri, and alleged that the state government had brought fake charges of delay in project against the ITDC to withdraw the project.

Citing to a letter by ITDC to Odisha Tourism department, Patra said the ITDC had awarded the Jagannath Vishram Sthali project at Bagala site to a construction company in May 2019 through an open tender against an amount of Rs 20.88 crore. Immediately after that, the work had begun for the construction of Vishram Sthali. Despite repeated requests from ITDC, the state government didn't allow continuation of the work. He questioned the decision of the state government for stopping the work at Bagala Dharmasala site.

LOCKDOWNS PROVE BOON FOR ECoR INFRA PROJECTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 1: Taking the COVID-induced lockdowns to its advantage, East Coast Railway (ECoR) has completed many infrastructure and safety related works. These works could have otherwise hindered the train services and required traffic blocks.

ECoR judiciously utilised the lockdowns to augment and maintain infrastructure for safe train operations and emphasis was given on execution of long pending construction and maintenance works. In normal times, about 491 hours could have been taken for complete these works by affecting train services and taking traffic block.

Among the major works eight Limited Height Sub-ways (LHSs) have been completed at various places, including closure of three manned level crossing gates by providing alternate paths. This would have taken 74 hours of traffic block, affecting train services.

Moreover, 16 bridges under ECoR



have been rebuilt during the Lockdown. This would have taken about 69 hours in normal times.

Further, four girders of the Foot over Bridge (FoB) at Bhubaneswar Railway station have been launched during the period which could have been taken three hours of traffic block.

Similarly, 23 sets of thick wave switches have been renewed during the lockdowns so that the crossings will be safe when the trains pass. This work could have taken 70 hours by blocking train traffic.

Likewise, 60 rail panel works have been accomplished during lockdown which could have taken

BOOSTING MOBILITY

ECoR judiciously utilised the lockdowns to augment and maintain infrastructure for safe train operations

Among the major works eight LHSs have been completed at various places, including closure of three manned level crossing gates by providing alternate paths

16 bridges under ECoR have been rebuilt during the Lockdown. This would have taken about 69 hours in normal times

more than 12 hours by suspension of train services. Ballast cleaning works have been completed on 21 km tracks during the period which could have taken 194 hours during normal time. In ballast cleaning, mud is cleared from the ballast to keep the line free from creating jerks. Ballast tamping works have been

undertaken on 68.5 km track during the period which could have taken 43.30 hours in normal time. The ballast tamping will keep the sleeper fit with ballast so that the trains would run smoothly.

Apart from this, FoB girders were lunched at Charbatia and Gurudijhatia stations in connection with 3rd and 4th line work between Salegaon-Rajathagarh Stations, at Kapilas Road in connection with Bhadrak-Nergundi 3rd line work and at Talcher Road station in connection with Sambalpur-Talcher doubling work.

Completion of these pending works will increase mobility of trains with more safety.

This apart, many important projects have been executed during the lockdown period that include installation of lifts, PF surfaces, PF sheds, raising of PF, improvement in circulating areas among others. Safety and maintenance works related to Electrical, Mechanical and Signals have also been taken up during the period.

72.2MT freight load till August

BHUBANESWAR: The ECoR has loaded 72.2 million tonne freight till August 2020 of the current financial year. This has been achieved despite lockdown and closure and also less workforce in industries and in mineral units. In August only, ECoR has loaded 15.11 million tonne freight which is 0.76 million tonne more than the corresponding period of last year - a 5.3% rise. During the first five months of the financial year, ECoR has utilised about 7,135 wagons per day. In August, the wagon utilisation of freight loading per day was 7,378 - 5.2% more than August 2019. An additional 363 wagons per day have been utilised in August, 2020.

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Bodies of 3 minor girls fished out from pond in Koraput dist



POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Sept 1: The bodies of three minor girls were found floating in a pond at Debaganj village in Koraput district, Tuesday. The identities of the deceased girls were not known immediately. However, due to the heart-wrenching incident a pall of gloom descended in the locality.

Sources said family members of the three girls had filed missing complaint at Nandapur police station Monday night. In the complaint it had been mentioned that the three had gone out for plucking guava at an orchard. Notably, the three minor girls were

in the same age group and were studying in the same class.

Tuesday morning some women who were going to have a bath spotted footwear floating in the pond and informed the fire personnel regarding the matter.

Family members of the three girls had filed missing complaint at Nandapur police station Monday night

On being informed family members of the three girls and fire personnel reached the village and recovered the bodies.

Even though the exact reason behind the incident is yet to be ascertained, police said the incident may be one of drowning. However, keeping all angles in mind, police have started a probe into the death of the three minors.

2 cops suspended, IIC transferred over custodial death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jeypore, Sept 1: As many as two police officials of Jeypore Sadar police station were suspended while the IIC was transferred in connection with the custodial death of a person in the police station in this district.

SP Mukesh Kumar Bhamo has placed ASI Sapan Sarkar and constable DK Majhi under suspension

SP Mukesh Kumar Bhamo has placed ASI Sapan Sarkar and constable DK Majhi under suspension on charge of dereliction of duty. The Sadar police IIC was transferred to the headquarters while Town police IIC Raghunath Majhi was appointed in his place. Laxmipur SDPO AK Nayak has been asked to probe the matter and submit a report.

Gopalram Paswan (44) of Nagore in Rajasthan, who was arrested over his involvement in smuggling ganja, allegedly ended his life while being under police custody by hanging himself with a bed cover inside a bathroom of the police station August 29.

19 kg of ivory seized

THE VALUE OF THE TUSKS IN GREY MARKET IS PEGGED AT ABOUT ₹10 LAKH

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 1: In a major haul, Anandapur wildlife division in the district recovered 14 elephant tusks weighing 19 kg from Bayapita under Harichandanpur police limits Monday night. The value of the tusks in grey market is pegged at about Rs 10 lakh.

Sources said the forest officials were tipped off on ivory pieces being smuggled in a car Monday night. The officials immediately swung into action and as per the direction of Anandapur DFO (Wildlife) Ajit Satpathy, a team was formed. The team after giving a long chase in Singbila jungle, waylaid the car. They carried out a search. As many as 14 tusks, four mobile phones and a car used for smuggling the tusks were seized.

Three persons have been detained for their involvement in the smuggling. Of them, while one is a resident of Keonjhar district, the other two hailed from Jajpur and Bhadrak districts respectively.

When contacted, DFO Satpathy said the identities of the smugglers are yet to be ascertained as they were not cooperating. Soon their original identities will be ascer-



The seized items

tained. It is suspected that they have long been in the illegal tusk trade. The involvement of a well-managed racket cannot be ruled out.

It is alleged that lapses in monitoring of the movement of the elephants under Keonjhar forest division recently came to light. The department suspended a forester and a forest guard June 18 for negligence in duty after two elephants were found electrocuted by poachers in Joda section of Champua range June 14.

Apart from poaching, accidents and electrocution, the animals have been facing a threat from the shrinking forest cover and loss of habitat owing to mining.

Soon their (smugglers') original identities will be ascertained. It is suspected that they have long been in the illegal tusk trade. The involvement of a well-managed racket cannot be ruled out

AJIT SATPATHY | DFO (WILDLIFE), ANANDAPUR



Cops along with the accused held

The report said over the last three months, five elephants were found dead in Champua and Barbil ranges where the animals are said to be unsafe for various reasons.

Statistics have it that since 2010 till date, Keonjhar forest division alone has reported 51 elephant

deaths. In 2010-11, the district saw deaths of nine elephants while four died in 2011-12.

Nine elephants died in 2012-13; four each in 2013-14 and 2014-15; six in 2015-16; two each in 2017-18 and 2018-19; six in 2019-20 and five in 2020-21 (till date).

AMID FLOOD, THEY REEL UNDER DARKNESS

ALREADY BATTERED BY CYCLONE AMPHAN, CONDITIONS WORSENER AFTER COVID STRUCK AND NOW THE FLOODS— IT IS TESTING TIMES FOR THE PEOPLE OF JAJPUR AND KENDRAPARA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Kendrapara, Sept 1: It has been three days that flood affected thousands of villages in Jajpur and Kendrapara districts as Baitarani and Mahanadi rivers kept swelling. Now, restoring electricity remains one of the biggest challenges for the district administration apart from facilitating essential services.

While flood is a regular affair in these areas, amid administrative apathy and lack of long-term planning, the current situation in the flood-hit villages appears to be a journey back in time.

Hundreds of electricity sub-stations are submerged in floodwater leading to complete darkness in the flood-hit areas. In addition to that telecommunication and several other essential services have come to a halt in these areas.

"We are marooned and this darkness has only increased our pain. Worse, with rising cases of snakebite during such times, the prevailing darkness poses a direct threat to our lives," said Sambhu Pradhan from Serapur under Bari block in Jajpur district.

Sambhu went on to explain how promises of long-term solutions were made in the past and nothing ever came of it.

With the rainy-day stocks gone in the floods, thousands of flood-hit villagers staying in temporary huts



HUNDREDS OF ELECTRICITY SUB-STATIONS ARE SUBMERGED IN FLOODWATER LEADING TO COMPLETE DARKNESS IN THE FLOOD-HIT AREAS

THE CONDITION OF WOMEN IN THESE MAKESHIFT TENTS IS TO BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED; MANY DO NOT HAVE A COOKING GAS CONNECTION

on river embankments are a common sight across these districts. Amid lack of basic necessities such as food, drinking water and medicines, hoping and praying for floodwater to recede is the only thing they are counting on.

The condition of women in these makeshift tents is to be seen to be believed.

Many do not have a cooking gas connection. Surrounded by floodwater as far as the eye goes, it is next to impossible for them to collect dry firewood as well. Worse, many families in these areas do not even have anything to cook. With local water bodies contaminated by floodwater, drinking water has become a luxury.

Women managing families with young kids and old men under such conditions are harrowing to say the least. Supply of medicines or availability of doctors in flood-hit areas amid the already stressed and corona-battered healthcare system is negligible, locals here said.

"It becomes very difficult and unsafe after it gets dark. We have to either burn candles or lamps. Some of us do not even have those and we share whatever we have among each other," said Samuka Das from Namatara village in Rajkanika block of Kendrapara district.

Samuka is staying with her six-member family in a temporary kutcha house near the river embankment.

"While past experience suggests that floodwater will eventually recede with or without administrative support, waterborne disease is something which will claim many lives who struggled and survived the flood," Das added with a heavy heart.

Another woman here pointed to the issue of hygiene and sanitation. With most toilets now submerged under floodwater, open defecation is the norm. Residents realize how this can lead to further contamination, but they have no better choice.

Large parts of Aul, Rajkanika, Marsaghai, Garadapur and Pattamundai blocks in the district are partly submerged and reeling in darkness for the last three days.

According to Kendrapara district

We are marooned and this darkness has only increased our pain. Worse, with rising cases of snakebite during such times, the prevailing darkness poses a direct threat to our lives

SAMBHU PRADHAN | RESIDENT, SERAPUR, BARI BLOCK, JAJPUR

It becomes very difficult and unsafe after it gets dark. We have to either burn candles or lamps. Some of us don't even have those and we share whatever we have among each other

SAMUKA DAS | RESIDENT, NAMATARA, RAJKANIKA BLOCK, KENDRAPARA

emergency officer Sambheet Satpathy, 2.60 lakh people from 160 villages in the district have been affected by flood. Unofficial numbers could be higher.

Picture, however, is pretty much the same everywhere.

That said, Satpathy claimed that the administration will try to restore power supply as the floodwater recedes.

Life, of course, will go back to normal until the next flood arrives.

Will Bhadrak farm sector recover from the deluge?

Official reports say 4.32 lakh people are affected by floods in Bhadrak



A part of the river embankment at Rameswarpur under Dhamnagar block caves into Genguti river

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak/Chandbali, Sept 1: Though there has been a let-up in flood situation in Bhadrak and Balasore, farm activities in Bhadrak district have been left beyond repairs due to a swelling Brahmani.

According to reports, 618 villages of 116 panchayats under seven blocks and 10 wards in four municipalities have been affected by floods. Official reports say 4.32 lakh people were affected by floods in Bhadrak. Of them, 17,648 affected people were accommodated at 106 relief centres in Bhadrak. Meanwhile, some of them have returned to their homes.

Latest report says 96 relief centres have given shelters to 14,100 flood victims. The district administration has been providing free cooked meals to them.

Several teams of NDRF, ODRAF and firefighters have been working in relief and rescue operations

with 23 boats in flood-hit Dhamnagar and Bhandaripokhari areas. Three people in Bhadrak have reportedly died due to floods. Around 28 mobile medical teams have been mobilised in various flood-hit areas.

The preliminary survey said that 43,442 hectare of farmlands in Bhadrak were inundated. Collector Gyanaranjan Das said that after floodwater recedes, the government will carry on assessment of the damage to crops and houses. Relief materials are being distributed among the flood affected people while safe drinking water has been supplied to some villages.

As per government guidelines, compensation will be paid to the affected farmers, he added. Huge tracts of farmlands are under floodwaters in Chandbali area.

Water levels in Baitarani, Salandi and their distributaries are decreasing while in some areas floodwater is spreading in farmlands. In this block, 18,197 hectare of farmlands are under floodwaters. As per the preliminary survey, 2,733 houses have been damaged.

Meanwhile, a part of the river embankment at Rameswarpur under Dhamnagar block caved into Genguti river. Besides, the embankments have developed cracks at different places, triggering panic among people.

The tales of despair in Jajpur

THE DISTRICT HAS FACED FIVE MAJOR FLOODS IN 15 YEARS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Bari, Sept 1: The flood in Baitarani and Brahmani rivers in Jajpur district is being stated the most devastating flood in the 21st century, a report said.

The claim is not unfounded as this flood has affected over 9.81.245 people in 836 villages of 180 panchayats across 10 blocks. Moreover, the flood has claimed the lives of five people while the casualty among livestock is 14,898 in the district.

Notably, the state has suffered five major floods during the last 15 years. This has led to huge loss of lives and properties and broken the financial backbone of the people which is predominantly an agricultural district.

The district recorded 341.2mm normal rainfall in August but it has received 695.82mm rainfall due to change in climatic conditions, experts opine. The flood occurred in the district due to heavy rainfall in the upper catchment areas of Baitarani and Brahmani rivers.

Observers claimed error in designing of river embankments and sub-standard works has led to recurrence of flood in the district year after year. Moreover, apathetic attitude of political representatives and department officials and favouritism shown to contractors has resulted in this impasse.

Sources said the district faced a major flood in 2005 in which over 1.40 lakh people in 220 villages of Jajpur and neighbouring Bhadrak dis-



Family members of a snakebite patient at Routsahi village under Bari block in Jajpur district have a harrowing time as they carry her in a cooking pot while negotiating floodwaters to reach hospital. Sources say no help came from Bari block office or emergency services despite several requests. The woman was rushed from Ratnagiri PHC and then to Barchana where she is presently recovering

had sought a report in August 2017 on the damaged river embankments and the loss of life and properties.

In past, several ministers and political leaders during their visits to the district have promised to take up repairing and strengthening of the weak embankments in the district.

trict were affected. Later, in 2011 flood affected over 4.91.114 people and 2,61,540 livestock in 499 villages of the district. Cultivation in 27,615 hectare of farmland was damaged. At least 13 persons died while 8,221 houses were fully damaged.

Over 1,07,317 people in 229 villages were severely affected in 2015-flood while 1,24,076 persons in 132 villages were affected in 2017-flood. Three people also died in the 2017-flood.

However, this year's flood is the most devastating which has caused untold sufferings for the people living in riparian villages of the district.

Locals alleged that the then state Revenue minister Maheswar Mohanty

TENDER CALL NOTICE NO: 3719/CW/2020, Date: 27.08.2020
No. n-16:- Sealed tender in the prescribed form to be eventually drawn up in PWD Form P-1 (Percentage Rate Bids) in conformity with detailed Tender Call Notice are invited by the District Project Coordinator, RTE-SSA, Koraput, on behalf of Government of Odisha for tenders for construction of ACR Building G+1 & Play Ground with post & Gallery at Hanjariguda PUPS of Semiliguda Block under DMF Grant for the year 2019-20.

Sl. No.	Detail of Tender
1.	CONSTRUCTION OF ACR BUILDING G+A & PLAY GROUND WITH POST & GALLERY AT HANJARIGUDA UPS OF SEMILIGUDA BLOCK, EMD: Rs.14,400/- & Tender cost: Rs.6,000/- (C&D Class Contractor)

1. The Tender Documents will be available in the District Website i.e. (www.koraput.nic.in) from 27.08.2020 to 22.09.2020 up to 5.00 PM and can be downloaded from the website.
2. The Tenders will be opened at 11.00 AM on 23.09.2020.
3. Other details can be seen in the District Website www.koraput.nic.in.
Sd/- District Project Coordinator, RTE-SS, Koraput
OIPR-27035/11/0011/2021

Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation Ltd.
(A Govt. of Odisha Undertaking)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, L.I. DIVISION, BARGARH
E-Procurement Notice-03/2020-21
E-mail- eeolicbgh@gmail.com, Phone-06646-246126

No.CAD-433:-
No. 1625 / Dated: 31.08.2020

- Name of the Tender : Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bargarh Inviting Officer
- Name of the work : Power supply, Installation of pump sets and energisation of 14 Nos. CLIPS in different blocks of Bargarh District
- No. of Packages : 14 Nos.
- Tender Amount : Varies from 13.80 lakhs to 37.22 lakhs
- Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal for online bidding from 10.00 hrs dated 04.09.2020 to 24.00 hrs dated 15.09.2020.
- Last date and time of receipt of bids in the portal up to 24.00 hrs. Dated-15.09.2020
- Last date and time of clarification upto 17.00 hrs Dated-14.09.2020.
- Date of opening of technical bid (Cover-1) at 11.00 hrs. Dated-16.09.2020.
- Date of opening of financial bid (Cover-2) will be informed after evaluation of technical bids.
- Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal of Govt. of Odisha i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
- Subsequent corrigendum/addendum if required shall be available in the above portal.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bargarh
OIPR-32277/11/0004/2021

Govt. of Odisha
Sports & Youth Services Department
ODISHA - SAI REGIONAL BADMINTON ACADEMY
SAHEED NAGAR, BHUBANESWAR
TENDER CALL NOTICE
No. TT-06:- Sealed tenders are invited from the reputed Firms/Caterers/those who have valid food License under Food Safety & Standard Act - for contract of running the Mess as per Diet Chart for Odisha SAI Regional Badminton Academy, Saheednagar, Bhubaneswar.
All the details are available in the website of Sports & Youth Services Department i.e. www.department.sportsodisha.gov.in. The last date for submission of Tender is 19.09.2020 till 3 PM at Odisha-SAI, Regional Badminton Academy, Saheed Nagar, Bhubaneswar.
Sd./- Director, Administration
Odisha SAI/RBA, Bhubaneswar
OIPR-29008/11/0002/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION-II, BALASORE
No. O-304:-
e-procurement Notice for road works | Bid Identification No. Online tender/ 06/RWD II BLS/2020-21

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
Name of the work	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender online for bidding	Last Date & Time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender in O/o EE RW Divn-II, Balasore (Single cover)	
Road Work.	06 of 2020-21	07.09.2020 at 5.00 P.M.	18.09.2020 up to 5.00 P.M.	21.09.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	
Total No. of works					
29 Nos.					
Estimated cost					
Estimated Cost Rs. 1.78 lakhs to Rs. 33.63 lakhs					
Class of Contractor					
"B" and "C" and "D"					
Time of Completion					
As per TCN					

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Executive Engineer, R.W. Division-II, Balasore
OIPR-25052/11/0003/2021

FOCUS GENDER & RELATIONSHIP

SOME GAIN, SOME PAIN



The reason of law seems clouded by the validation of illegitimate social sentiments. Would the tone of the judgement have been the same if the case involved a heterosexual couple? Because of this, what could have been a truly path-breaking judgement falls short of its potential

spondents' behaviour that actually amounts to criminal conduct has been sanitised while the need for the petitioner's protection has been diluted. It is also interesting to note that these directions have been passed even though no counter was filed by Rashmi's family praying for any specific relief.

While Rashmi and the petitioners are the clear victims in the case, the court has throughout the judgement placed greater emphasis on their obligations, which are not an issue. The court reminds Rashmi about her obligations under the Maintenance and Protection of Parents and Senior Citizens Act 2007 even though there is no counter-affidavit that she has been neglecting her mother. As a response to the concerns aired by Rashmi's family, the court directs the petitioner to take good care of her. This, even as there is no material on record to suggest any ill-treatment of Rashmi by the petitioner.

There could be attempts to sugar-coat the criminal nature of the respondent's conduct and instead offer a sanitised account of their behaviour. The court states that it hopes Rashmi and the petitioner do not cause any worry to their families and do not give the society an excuse to raise an accusing finger at them.

One gets a feeling that while the court has found the law to be on the side of the petitioner, its own sympathies are not. The reason of law seems clouded by the validation of illegitimate social sentiments. Would the tone of the judgement have been the same if the case involved a heterosexual couple? Because of this, what could have been a truly path-breaking judgement falls short of its potential.

The writers are faculty members at National Law University, Odisha. Suman focuses on issues of gender, criminalisation and access to justice. Rangin focuses on issues of civil liberties and accountability of constitutional functionaries.

In a recent judgement, the Orissa High Court has affirmed the right of non-heterosexual couples to live together. The court also declared that the rights of a woman in such a relationship will be safeguarded under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. In doing so, the court backed the rights of the couple to live a dignified life, under Article 21 of the Constitution, and furthered the spirit of landmark cases such as NALSA versus Union of India (gender identity) and Navtej Singh Johar versus Union of India (decriminalisation of homosexuality). However, what could have been a historic judgement remains progressive only to an extent.

The case arose from a writ of habeas corpus filed by a 24-year old transgender for reuniting him with his live-in partner Rashmi (fictitious name), who was forcibly separated from him by Rashmi's mother and uncle. Rashmi's family members were also forcing her to get married against her will and in violation of her sexual orientation. The petitioner claimed that the recognition of live-in relationships under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act is not confined to heterosexual relationships and even though they could not marry under the current legal framework, they having attained majority have the right to live together. While the court granted the relief, there are certain significant aspects that prevent it from becoming a path-breaking judgement.

To begin with, the court empathises with Rashmi's family for their inability to accept her relationship and seems to be validating patriarchal notions about a woman's freedom to choose her life partner. The court talks about how Rashmi's decision will affect her mother and her younger sister who have to live in the society and that the girl's decision to settle down with a person of her choice is viewed by the family with trepidation. The court highlights Rashmi's nature of choice to justify the attitude of her fam-

ily and makes this a ground to remind Rashmi about her duties towards her family. These observations by the court show its reticence in treating non-heterosexual relationships at par with heterosexual relationships.

Further, by normalising the rejection of love-marriages and homosexual relationships, the court appears to have missed an opportunity to establish the pre-eminence of constitutional rights over social prejudices. As an institution designed to protect constitutional rights, the court is expected to steer clear of any unwarranted validation of archaic social morality. It ought to condemn the prevailing social biases and prejudices against sacred constitutional values of dignity and equality of human beings.

One also wonders why the court deliberates on the expectation of Rashmi's mother that her daughter would 'change her mind.' It is difficult to overlook the fact that, by doing so, the court passively legitimises the mother's belief that sexual orientation is a matter of choice and that Rashmi may choose

to become heterosexual in future. The court states that the family of Rashmi will have a right to visit her in the residence of the petitioner. Both Rashmi and the petitioner are adults with full constitutional rights to live their life with dignity and privacy. They have complete autonomy to decide who can and who cannot visit their residence. While the court may have had its sympathies towards Rashmi's family, one feels that there is no constitutional foundation for such a direction to be passed.

The court cannot lose sight of the serious problems faced by vulnerable victims such as Rashmi and the petitioner. It must be noted that Rashmi's family took her away forcibly from the house where she lived with her partner. In a situation such as this, the safety of the victims and their well-being are more important than the sentiments of the perpetrators. It could be argued that the court's job is only half-done when the declaration of rights is made conditional to such riders. The illegal nature of the re-

Suman Dash Bhattamishra & Rangin Pallav Tripathy

AS AN INSTITUTION DESIGNED TO PROTECT CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS, THE COURT IS EXPECTED TO STEER CLEAR OF ANY UNWARRANTED VALIDATION OF ARCHAIC SOCIAL MORALITY

Play For Honesty

The Government of India (GoI) has recently announced it will take steps to weed out inefficient and corrupt officials from its ranks. Ministries have been directed to prepare the list of such officials, within the age group of 50-55 years, and recommend action. Obviously the Dept of Personnel & Training (DoPT) will be expected to pursue this vigorously and work wonders in cleaning up one of the world's most dishonest and inefficient government set up.

It is not as if this is the first time ever that the GoI has come up with such a fancy idea. The blazing headlines that such acrobatics attract are, no doubt, of great importance to polish the sheen of the government whenever it is perceived as waning. The government is empowered to review performance of bureaucrats who have reached the age of 50 years or have completed 30 years in service. When the government finds that some of these officials are hampering public interest, the DoPT can invoke the Fundamental Rules 56(j), Rule 48 of Central Civil Services (Pension) Rules 1972 and Rule 16(3)(Amended) of All India Services (Death cum Retirement Benefits) Rules, 1958 to remove the so called erring bureaucrats. These rules have already been used when the Modi 2.0 government compulsorily retired 12 senior Indian Revenue Service (IRS) officers. This was followed by the sacking of 22 officers of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC).

All these drives against corruption have to be seen in the background of the existing machineries that are tasked to keep the system clean. For example, the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) is one such setup that is to report on functioning of the different ministries. When the man adorning the top post in such an organization is himself or herself under a cloud, then expecting truth from reports produced under his supervision becomes suspect. The CAG under Vinod Rai is a great example. His reports on the 2G spectrum allocation and Coalblock allocations that took place between 2004-2009 were not only being regularly leaked to the media before they were officially presented in Parliament but also all these reports fell flat in the various Courts of law later. Along with the 2G and Coalgate scam, there were also the Commonwealth Games scam, KG Basin and Adarsh Housing scams, which could not withstand the litmus tests. These events of the past decade highlight the fact that the government does not possess a single outfit which in itself can be considered honest and efficient. It is not only the CAG that has been caught with its pants down in the past but even today the rumblings within that organisation against the recently appointed head may keep many guessing as to the purpose behind the move of placing a Gujarat cadre officer in that chair by the present government. Maybe this act will reintroduce complete secrecy whereby no findings of misdeeds will ever see the light of day. In a manner, this posting might be a brilliant step to cover-up any wrongdoings of this government unlike what Vinod Rai did to the UPA government. Notably, Vinod Rai, after his retirement, was rewarded handsomely by the Modi government with a plump posting, as was Ranjan Gogoi and many others. The atmosphere has become so very murky that even the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) or the Supreme Court (SC) fail to instill confidence and faith on their functioning.

The trouble in the bureaucracy is primarily twin headed. There are plenty of Babus who are efficient and invariably corrupt. There is also another bunch of Babus who are very honest but extremely incompetent. It is seen that most political bosses prefer to keep the former type close to their office. Every Chief Minister or Prime Minister is known to prefer bureaucrats who can deliver. In their quest for delivering what they have promised the voters, they fall directly and most willingly into the trap of these corrupt and efficient officials. In the Indian democratic system, every political party and leader desires to amass great wealth not only to fund elections but also to sustain political existence. This prompts the elected representatives to seek support of officers who can help garner wealth without getting caught. No money or benefits can be collected without the help of bureaucrats. Therefore, attacking the problem of corruption at the government level should ideally start with removing the opaque system of funding of political parties that exist in India.

Apart from the corrupt politician in league with favored bureaucrats, there are also wheels within wheels of the bureaucracy itself. Many publications have claimed that for every ₹100 collected by corrupt officials, only ₹10 entered the political system. That implies 90 per cent of the wealth generated by dishonesty in the governance system went to the pockets of government executives. When the government expects ministries to shortlist corrupt and inefficient bureaucrats within its fold, the obvious question that arises is who will prepare the list. Senior bureaucrats will certainly be entrusted with this responsibility. They will, most likely, wish to remove those few honest officers who could be creating impediments in the big ticket corruptions that the secretaries might wish to do for endearing themselves to political bosses at the fag end of their careers. If they can please, they can expect a new lease of life to continue with their dishonest practices. To expect honesty and efficiency only at the senior levels is also wrong. Young officers learn the ropes of their trade very early in their careers. Young or old, inefficiency and dishonesty are human characteristic traits. The Anna Hazare type show of honesty has brought great grief to this nation. Getting rid of a few inconvenient officials might be the hidden agenda of this play for honesty but that will never remove corruption or inefficiency within the Indian government system.

WISDOM CORNER

- Angry people are not always wise. JANE AUSTEN
- Great acts are made up of small deeds. LAO TZU
- Art raises its head where creeds relax. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

WORDSWORTH

Thrasonical

This should be put in the category of educated insults, since only those who have swallowed the dictionary or know Latin literature understand what it means. A thrasonical person is a braggart. The original was a former soldier named Thraso, a character in the play Eunuchus (The Eunuch), which was written in 161 BC and became the most popular of the six by the writer whom we know as Terence. Thrasonical started to appear in English in the sixteenth century, in time for Shakespeare to put it into the mouth of Rosalind in As you Like It. She describes Julius Caesar's famous assertion *veni, vidi, vici* ("I came, I saw, I conquered") as a thrasonical brag.

LOL THE WORLD'S SMARTEST MAN?



proclaimed Jordan. "This world needs great athletes, so I must live." Jordan then grabbed a parachute and leaped out of the plane. "I'm the smartest man in the world," bragged Gates. "The world needs smart men, so I must also live!" Gates grabbed a parachute and jumped out of the plane. At this point, the Pope began to speak. "I have lived a long life compared to you, and you may take the last parachute. I will go down with the plane." "You don't have to stay here! The world's smartest man jumped out of the plane with my backpack."

IN JEST THIS

Stepdaughters won't step aside for stepmoms



Melvin Durai

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A STEPDAUGHTER AND A STEPMOM IS SIMILAR TO THAT BETWEEN A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND A MOTHER-IN-LAW

The video of Melania Trump, Donald Trump's wife, and his daughter Ivanka Trump greeting each other at the recent Republican National Convention has been watched more than five million times. At first, it seems to show a friendly relationship between stepmom and stepdaughter. As Ivanka walks toward the president and first lady, Melania flashes a winsome smile, as if to say, "Hi Ivanka, my wonderful stepdaughter. It's so nice to see you again."

But as soon as Ivanka has passed, Melania's expression sours, as if to say, "Why is this witch still hanging around? I wish she would go on a vacation. Somewhere far away like Mars or Venus."

This is not too surprising, of course. If you were organising an international conference for stepmoms and stepdaughters who love each other dearly, you could transport everyone from the airport to the hotel in a single auto-rickshaw. The driver might even be able to pick up a few other passengers along the way.

But a conference for stepmoms and stepdaughters who detest each other would require at least 18 buses. Six for all the stepdaughters, six for all the stepmoms, and six for all the spite.

There are a lot of factors, of



course, that determine the likelihood of a stepmom and stepdaughter getting along. Age plays a critical role. If the stepdaughter is an infant when the stepmom steps into her life, this greatly diminishes their desire to step on each other.

So how old was Ivanka when Donald married Melania in 2005? She was 23 and Melania was 35. That's partly why, when Ivanka sees Melania, she doesn't see a maternal figure — she sees a rival for her father's affection.

Ivanka: "He loves me, not you." Melania: "He actually loves us both. He loves you as a daughter and me as a wife."

Ivanka: "But his love for me is much, much greater than his love for you." Melania: "He loves us both

equally. Ten per cent of his love goes to you, 10 per cent to me, and 80 per cent to himself."

Ivanka: "Ten per cent for you? Yeah, sure. That's what his last wife said, too. She's lucky if she gets a Christmas card these days."

That brings up another factor in this relationship: the number of ex-stepmoms that a stepdaughter has endured. Donald Trump has been married twice before, so Melania not only took the place of Ivanka's mom, Ivana, who is now 71, she also took the place of Ivanka's first stepmom, Marla Maples, who is now 56.

You can't blame Ivanka if she has noticed a disturbing trend: as she gets older, her father's wives keep getting younger.

The relationship between a stepdaughter and stepmom is similar

to that between a daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. Both relationships involve a competition for attention and affection, with marital ties rubbing against parent-child bonds. When both parties are adults and occupying the same home, a turf war can ensue. That's what apparently happened when Trump moved into the White House. His daughter tried to reserve a prime spot for her office in the East Wing, and his wife launched an impressive campaign known as Operation Block Ivanka.

According to Melania's former confidante Stephanie Winston Wolkoff, Ivanka wanted to be known as the First Daughter Lady — the most visible female Trump in the White House. Melania, of course, wanted to be more visible than Ivanka. If Ivanka was the chair of an important meeting, Melania would hold a meeting to import a chair; if Ivanka was wearing a V-necked dress, Melania would wear a W-necked dress; and if Ivanka was hogging the limelight, Melania would hog the lemonlight.

You may ask, what about stepsons and stepfathers, fathers-in-law and sons-in-law? Don't they have similar conflicts? Indeed they do, but I don't want to give my father-in-law another reason to keep his distance from me.

Hail Pranab

Sir, In the demise of Pranab Mukherjee, the nation has lost a great personality rightly honoured with the Bharat Ratna. Sadly, the Congress party never gave him the most-deserving post of Prime Minister even though he was made President of India by the party leadership. I was privileged to get appointments from him both while he was President and after retirement too. He followed the religious tradition of attending Durga Puja in his native village every year for three days even while he was President. He also fulfilled his duty as President to attend the Dussehra celebrations in Delhi by directly coming to the Ramlila venue from his native village. Every President of India, ever since the nation became a Republic, has been attending Dussehra celebrations in Delhi without fail. Mukherjee once told me that he, in his life-time, missed Pujacelibrations in his native village only twice; once on advice from his mother because of his examinations. He was so humble that he was the only ex-President to accept an invitation to be a guest-speaker at an ordinary Rotary Club meet.



Subhash Chandra Agarwal, DELHI

Media's role

Sir, Media is a vigilant onlooker. It is the watchdog of the society. It is supposed to be neutral, non-partisan, non-prejudiced and impartial. It is the fourth pillar of democracy. Media sensitises, awakens, informs and communicates with the public. It is not a law and order agency. But, now-a-days, the electronic media is often seen overstepping its limitations and acting as an extra judicial agency. The media trial is anathema to our judicial system which is entrusted to look after regulation of human behaviour in the society. A person is often more sinned against than sinning by the over-zealous electronic media. There are instances of media interference in the activities of the police and the judiciary. Such over enthusiasm by the electronic media is violative of the guidelines of Press Council of India. This media overreach should be discouraged. Such parallel trial and investigation by the media are an affront to individual dignity and right to privacy.

Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Sans rejection order, those excluded from NRC are left in lurch



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Sept 1: COVID-19 pandemic has affected the process for issuing rejection order to every person excluded from the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam even after the final document of citizens was published a year ago, the top NRC official said Tuesday.

NRC State Coordinator Hitesh Sarma told PTI that government officials and employees at the ground level are engaged in work related to the pandemic so they could not recheck the speaking order which describes the exact reason for exclusion.

"The process for issuing rejection orders was intended to be started from today, but now it has to wait for the pandemic to subside," Sarma said.

Stating a rejection order has to be issued to each excluded person, he said, the order needs to have another order - speaking order - attached explaining the exact reason for exclusion from the final NRC. The rejection orders are crucial for the concerned rejected people. They will be able to appeal to the Foreigners Tribunals (FTs) within 120 days only after receiving the rejection orders.

When he scrutinised many of the speaking orders, Sarma said, discrepancies were noticed with many not written in the proper way and so he ordered a recheck.

The final NRC was published August 31 last year by excluding 19,06,657 persons. A total of 3,11,21,004 names were included out of 3,30,27,661 applicants.

The process for updation of the

NRC in Assam was conducted under the supervision of the Supreme Court from 2013.

The NRC state coordinator also informed that Monday he held a video conference meeting with the district Deputy Commissioners (DCs) giving them a detailed briefing on how to recheck the speaking orders. On being pointed out about those excluded from the NRC were

facing varied problems and are in tension with regard to their status as citizen of the country, the state NRC coordinator said, when the rejection orders are issued those disagreeing with the exclusion can challenge it in courts.

Some of those excluded from the register said they were tensed as despite presenting requisite documents with the legacy data to establish their Indian citizenship, they were left out from the NRC. To ease the concerns of those excluded from NRC, the Union Home and External Affairs ministries after publication of NRC had stated that exclusion does not make a resident a "foreigner", and that only Foreigners Tribunals and higher courts can decide on their Indian citizenship.

Abu Latif Barbhuiya of Karimganj district who hopes to go for Haj pilgrimage after the pandemic ebbs said he failed to get passport as the local police is not issuing verification certificate after exclusion of his name from the NRC, whereas his family members are in Rinku Das of Goalpara district is facing a lot of problem in buying a plot of land in his village as he cannot get it registered in his name as he is not in the NRC.

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Gold smuggling: Trouble looms ahead for Vijayan

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 1: With three national agencies all set to again question M. Sivasankar, former secretary to Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, it is going to be uneasy days ahead for the latter.

The Customs, Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA) are now probing the case and have arrested around two dozen people, who were directly or indirectly involved in this case.

Since July 5, when Customs busted the gold smuggling case, Sivasankar has been questioned by these three agencies for long hours. The last time was August 15, when he was questioned for five hours by the ED.

After that, these agencies have been on a massive probe collecting evidence and corroborating it with the arrested. According to sources, these agencies have found that there are some missing links and very soon Sivasankar and a chartered ac-



countant, who has been close to him and prime accused Swapna Suresh, would be asked to appear before one or more of these probe agencies.

The gold smuggling case was un-

earthed when P. S. Sarith, a former employee of the UAE Consulate here, was arrested by the customs department July 5 when he was facilitating smuggling of 30 kg of gold in the diplomatic baggage to

ON A STICKY WICKET

Though Vijayan has been saying that the buck stops with Sivasankar and action has been taken against him, the CPI-M, which often takes a position of high moral ground on issues like corruption and cheating seems to be on a sticky wicket now

With the Congress and the BJP breathing down on Vijayan's neck, it remains to be seen what strategy would the CPI-M take, if something untoward occurs during the course of the fresh round of Sivasankar's questioning

Thiruvananthapuram from Dubai.

It turned murkier when the name of Swapna Suresh, a former employee of the Consulate, and employed with the state's IT Department, surfaced and more so, when her links with Sivasankar, who held the dual posts of Principal Secretary to Vijayan and state IT Secretary, came out.

The IAS officer was subsequently removed from both the posts and then suspended by Vijayan.

What has added to the already beleaguered Vijayan is a fire in the secret section of the General Administration Department in the State Secretariat that took place last week.

With the BJP and Congress alleging that it was a 'created' fire, a team of NIA officials will soon visit the fire spot. Also, their demand for the CCTV visuals at the seat of power is also yet not to be handed over.

Though Vijayan has been saying that the buck stops with Sivasankar and action has been taken against him, the CPI-M, which often takes a position of high moral ground on issues like corruption and cheating seems to be on a sticky wicket now. With the Congress and the BJP breathing down on Vijayan's neck, it remains to be seen what strategy would the CPI-M take, if something untoward occurs during the course of the fresh round of Sivasankar's questioning.

Covid test must for travellers to Arunachal

THOSE ENTERING THE NORTHEASTERN STATE WILL BE TESTED AT THE STATE'S CHECK GATES AND HELIPADS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, Sep 1: All travellers entering Arunachal Pradesh will be tested for COVID-19 by rapid antigen test (RAT) at the state's check gates and helipads, as per the Unlock 4 guidelines issued by the state government.

State Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar issued a notification Monday night on the guidelines which would be effective from September 1 to 30.

The antigen tests of all incoming interstate travellers at the point of entry will be strictly carried out from 8 am to 8 pm. If the travellers are detected as being asymptomatic and negative in the test on arrival, they can report to work or perform their activities in the state following the 'new normal', the guidelines said.

However, they should self-monitor their health for 14 days from the date of their arrival for any Covid-19 symptoms, and immediately seek medical consultation or call the district helpline.

If the people are detected as being asymptomatic and positive in the test, they would have the option for home isolation at their destination district if they fulfil the criteria.

Those who are symptomatic but test negative in the test on arrival, would be shifted to the 'suspect



All travellers are to observe the standard precautions like wearing a facemask, observing physical distancing, frequent handwashing with soap and water or using hand sanitizer, following cough etiquette, while in public areas in the state

case' section of the dedicated Covid health centers or dedicate Covid hospital of the district for RT-PCR/True Nat tests.

If they test negative in RT-PCR/TrueNat, they may be shifted to a non-Covid health facility for management of symptoms and in case they are detected as being positive, they will be shifted to the confirmed case section of such centres and hospitals.

Travellers who are symptomatic and test positive in the test on arrival will be shifted to a Covid Care Centre, a Covid health centre, or a Covid hospital, depending on the severity of their symptoms.

All travellers are to observe the standard precautions like wearing a facemask, observing physical distancing, frequent handwashing with soap and water or using hand sanitizer, following cough etiquette, while in public areas in the state.

Kerala minister's Onam tweet triggers a row

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kochi, Sept 1: Kerala Finance Minister Thomas Isaac's description of Vamana as a 'cheat' has invited the ire of the BJP with the saffron party demanding an apology from the Marxist leader for 'insulting' one of the reincarnations of Lord Vishnu.

BJP state president K Surendran sought an apology from Isaac for insulting the devotees of Lord Vishnu.

In his tweet greeting people on Onam Monday and announcing the floor price for 14 types of vegetables, Isaac said, "we celebrate Mahabali who did not discriminate by caste or creed, not Vamana who cheated him."

"This edition of the harvest festival has something to celebrate. Kerala has announced floor prices for 14 types of vegetables in its drive for self sufficiency in vegetables," he said.

Isaac's tweet did not go down well with Surendran, who said that Vamana being worshipped by crores of devotees is an avatar of Lord Vishnu.

Noting that the biggest Onam celebration is being held at Lord Vamana temple at Thrikakara in Ernakulam district in the state, Surendran said in a Facebook post, "Isaac who insulted Vamana must apologise to devotees of Lord



Vishnu."

According to legend, Mahabali, a generous king who had once ruled Kerala, was sent to the nether world by Vamana. It is said during his rule, the kingdom became so prosperous that Devas (gods of the Heaven) felt jealous about it as Mahabali belonged to the Asura clan and sent Vamana to end Mahabali's reign in Kerala.

Onam, the most popular festival in Kerala, was a low-key affair in the state Monday due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Big celebrations were missing this year as the people largely celebrated Thiruvonam indoors to commemorate the visit of the King Mahabali to the lands and people he previously ruled.

Nagas recall 'Stalingrad of the East'

Between April and June 1944, the Japanese and Allied forces battled across Kohima and the villages around it

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kohima, Sept 1: To Kuozeu Vizo, the landscape was as spellbinding as a rice field, golden and ripe for harvest, but it was her village burned black.

"I still wonder how they even knew which land belonged to whom when they started rebuilding the village," said Vizo, 98. She and fellow Naga people recalled the end of World War II ahead of the anniversary of Japan's surrender September 2.

In April 1944, 15,000 men from the 31st Division of Japan's Imperial Army commanded by Lt. Gen. Kotoku Sato arrived with the aim of taking over Kohima, a hill town that was also the British headquarters in the Naga Hills. The station, on the Indian border with Myanmar, was considered strategically important for Japanese advancement into British-held India.

The face-off that ensued earned nicknames like the "Stalingrad of the East" — it was a decisive turn in the war — and "The Battle of the Tennis Court," referring to the setting around which heavy fighting went on for days, at times involving hand-to-hand combat.

The lines of the court have been preserved in the well-manicured lawns of the Kohima War Cemetery, the final resting place for more than 1,420 British Commonwealth soldiers. Adjoining the administrative center of Kohima is the village area, home to the Angamis, a fiercely independent Naga tribe. Between April and June 1944, the Japanese and Allied forces battled across Kohima and the villages around it.



An Angami Naga boy Viketouzo Miachieo, 22, displays ammunition from World War II that he found a few years ago while cleaning the area beside his house in Kohima village

Kuozeu Kesiezie, 108, vividly remembers sprinting down the base of the Pulie Badze mountain. A British army porter, she had hurried back home after dropping off a load of supplies when she realised she still had an ammunition belt on her shoulder, she recalled with a chuckle.

A population that had never been exposed to life beyond the village saw battle tanks and fighter planes dropping bombs over their beloved land.

But it was war and they had no choice, said Visakoulie Suokhrie, 83. "They had to burn our village down to chase the Japanese out," he said. They returned home to total barrenness — there were no seeds even to

plant anew. The British provided supplies to rebuild homes. They planted "rusulho," or ration rice, a variety that many in Kohima still cultivate.

While many Nagas supported the Allied forces, others backed the Japanese with whom they shared some physical features and in the hope that they would help the Nagas achieve independence from Britain.

BK Sachu, 86, recalled the kindness of a doctor who "could not watch children suffer, he would treat them. From him I understood how good the Japanese were," he said. But Japanese troops were low on supplies. It is said that it was hunger that cost them the battle of

In April 1944, 15,000 men from the 31st Division of Japan's Imperial Army commanded by Lt. Gen. Kotoku Sato arrived with the aim of taking over Kohima

Kohima. Local help was imperative in this rough mountainous terrain. Anger toward the Japanese grew as the starved soldiers forcibly took away what the villagers had.

"I was carrying a loaded basket with a chicken placed on top. Japanese soldiers just lifted the chicken and took it away without even saying anything," Vizo said.

British Field Marshal Sir William Slim acknowledged the tribespeople's role in his 1956 book "Defeat into Victory."

"There were the gallant Nagas whose loyalty even in the most depressing times of the invasion had never faltered. Many a British and Indian soldiers owe his life to the naked head hunting Naga," he wrote. The war and soldiers are long gone. But reminders of the devastation remain. A weedy plot bears the mangled bodies of eight children who were killed in 1976 when a war-era bomb exploded where they played.

For the locals, World War II was a conflict brought to their quiet lands by outsiders, and along with it, immeasurable loss.

"We really suffered during the war," 101-year-old Vichuzo Rutsa said softly from his bed.

Erratic monsoon in N-E

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati/Agartala, Sept 1: The four-month long monsoon has so far been erratic in the mountainous northeastern region. Four of the eight northeastern states, including Assam, have received excess rain while the remaining four reported a deficit.

According to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) scientists, the erratic monsoon is likely to affect both the kharif and rabi crops in the region.

According to the records of the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), till August 31, Sikkim recorded plus (excess) 65 per cent rain, Meghalaya plus 19 per cent, Arunachal Pradesh plus 6 per cent and Assam plus 5 per cent. Manipur recorded minus (deficit) 49 per cent rainfall, Mizoram minus 30 per cent, Nagaland minus 26 per cent and Tripura minus 18 per cent.

According to IMD officials and experts, the four-month long southwest monsoon (June-September) is in full swing in most parts of the hilly northeastern region which in most years recorded a good monsoon.

IMD scientist Ranjan Phukan said as the monsoon trough was active along the foothills of the Himalayas, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya experienced good and heavy monsoon rains. "Until the first half of the monsoon, it was good rainfall in four northeastern states. One after another low pressure in Bay of Bengal, the monsoon trough and related wind condition moved to eastern and central India region skipping the northeastern states causing less rainfall in various states," Phukan told IANS



Like the previous years, Assam this year too witnessed devastating floods that killed 113 people in 22 districts, while 26 others were killed in landslides since May 22. With respite from the monsoon rains, the situation improved significantly in the first week of August

one in Tripura.

The ICAR's Principal Scientist Shankar Prashad Das said that the erratic monsoon would affect the kharif crops in the northeastern region.

According to Das the reproduction phase of the crops would also be affected in the northeastern region due to the unreliable rainfall.

Like the previous years, Assam this year too witnessed devastating floods that killed 113 people in 22 districts, while 26 others were killed in landslides since May 22. With respite from the monsoon rains, the situation improved significantly in the first week of August even as 57 lakh people have been affected in 5,378 villages in 30 of the state's 33 districts.

The floods also badly hit domestic and wild animals in various sanctuaries and national parks including the world-famous Kaziranga National Park, where 18 rhinos and 135 wild animals died due to the deluge.

over the phone.

According to the disaster management officials, monsoon floods and landslides have claimed 140 lives in Assam, 10 in Arunachal Pradesh, seven in Meghalaya and

national



No party can form government in Bihar alone, alliance a reality
SUSHIL MODI | BIHAR DEPUTY CM

FOR THE THIRD GENDER

In a landmark decision, the Yogi Adityanath government is planning to set up a 'Kinnar Kalyan Board' for the welfare of transgenders in Uttar Pradesh



of the day quote

Modi Govt is jeopardising India's future. It should give jobs, not empty slogans
RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Like sportspersons, a law should be enacted for the dope test of film stars
VISHVAS SARANG | MP MEDICAL EDUCATION MINISTER

I urge Prime Minister Narendra Modi to consider more legally viable and sustainable options for providing GST dues to states to help them tide over the COVID-19 financial crisis
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

COVID-19 TALLY CLIMBS TO 36,91,166

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: With 69,921 people testing positive for coronavirus infection, India's COVID-19 tally mounted to 36,91,166, while recoveries surged to 28,39,882 Tuesday pushing the recovery rate to 76.94 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The death toll climbed to 65,288 with 819 new fatalities being reported in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate has further declined to 1.77 per cent. There are 7,85,996 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 21.29 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7 and went past 30 lakh on August 23.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 4,33,24,834 samples have been tested up to August



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- There are 7,85,996 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 21.29 per cent of the total caseload
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31 with 10,16,920 samples being tested Monday.

Of the 819 fresh deaths, 184 are from Maharashtra, 113 from Karnataka, 91 from Tamil Nadu, 85 from Andhra Pradesh, 63 from Uttar Pradesh, 52 from West Bengal, 49 from Punjab, 20 from Madhya Pradesh, 18 from Delhi, 14 from Gujarat, 13 from Rajasthan, 12 from Uttarakhand, 10 each from Assam, Odisha and Tripura.

Nine fatalities each have been reported from Goa, Telangana and Jammu and Kashmir; eight from

Chhattisgarh, seven each from Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala and Puducherry, four each from Bihar and Chandigarh, three from Himachal Pradesh while Andaman and Nicobar Islands has registered one fatality. Of the total 65,228 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 24,583 followed by 7,322 in Tamil Nadu, 5,702 in Karnataka, 4,444 in Delhi, 3,969 in Andhra Pradesh, 3,486 in Uttar Pradesh, 3,228 in West Bengal, 3,020 in Gujarat, and 1,453 in Punjab. So far, 1,394 people have died of

One in four adults don't want vaccination: Survey

New Delhi: One in four adults globally do not want to get vaccinated against COVID-19, largely due to their apprehensions about side-effects and effectiveness of the vaccine, but the proportion of such people is much less at about 13 per cent in India, a new survey showed Tuesday. The World Economic Forum-Ipsos survey of nearly 20,000 adults from 27 countries also put Indians as the third most optimistic population - after China and Saudi Arabia - about a COVID-19 vaccine being available in 2020 itself. Globally, 74 per cent respondents said they would get a vaccine for COVID-19 if it is available, but more than half (59 per cent) do not expect that one will be available before the end of this year. Arnaud Bernart, Head of Shaping the Future of Health and Healthcare at the WEF, said, "The 26 per cent shortfall in vaccine confidence is significant enough to compromise the effectiveness of rolling out a COVID-19 vaccine. It is therefore critical that governments and the private sector come together to build confidence and ensure that manufacturing capacity meets the global supply of a COVID-19 vaccination programme."

COVID-19 in Madhya Pradesh, 1,056 in Rajasthan, 836 in Telangana, 703 in Jammu and Kashmir, 689 in Haryana, 582 in Bihar, 492 in Odisha, 417 in Jharkhand, 306 in Assam, 294 in Kerala, 277 in Chhattisgarh and 269 in Uttarakhand.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

PARL PANEL TO DISCUSS FB ISSUE TODAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: Amid a political slugfest over the Facebook issue, a parliamentary panel will meet Wednesday to discuss alleged misuse of the social media platform.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology, headed by senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, has summoned representatives of Facebook and will hear their views "on the subject of safeguarding citizens' rights and prevention of misuse of social/online news media platforms including special emphasis on women security in the digital space," the agenda of the meeting read. It has also called representatives of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology on the same issue.

SHORT TAKES

Rajiv Kumar takes over as EC

New Delhi: Former bureaucrat Rajiv Kumar Tuesday assumed charge as the new election commissioner. He takes the place vacated by Ashok Lavasa who joins the Asian Development Bank as vice-president. Kumar, a retired 1984-batch IAS officer of the Jharkhand cadre, will have five-year tenure and retire in 2025. He will preside over the next Lok Sabha polls in 2024. According to rules, an election commissioner has six years on the post or till he turns 65, whichever is earlier.

Gujarat to enact 'Gunda Act'

Ahmedabad: The Vijay Rupani government will enact the 'Gujarat Gunda and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act' to rein in habitual criminals. Under this law, those indulging in anti-social activities or disturbing peace will be given jail terms ranging from seven to 10 years, and fined Rs 50,000, a state government release said Tuesday. Government officials found abetting such people will face prison terms of not less than three years which may go up to 10 years, the release further informed.

Three of a family found murdered

Hardoi (UP): A couple and their son were killed by unidentified persons in an ashram in the Tadiyawa area here, police said Tuesday. Hira Das (55), his wife Meera (48) and son Netram (20), who were living in the ashram built on their land, were brutally hit with stones, they said, adding the incident took place Monday night. Senior officials, including Superintendent of Police Amit Kumar, inspected the spot and formed teams to crack the case, police said.

Migrant worker kills self at home

Noida (UP): A 28-year-old migrant worker from Jharkhand was found dead at his residence in Uttar Pradesh's Noida Tuesday in a suspected case of suicide, police said. The man was found hanging through a noose from the skylight (ventilator) of his rented accommodation in Sector 63's Chotpur village in the morning, they said. "His wife and mother spotted the body and the police were informed subsequently. They were at home when the incident happened," an official from the local Phase 3 police station told PTI. The deceased hailed from Palamau district of Jharkhand and worked for a private firm in Sector 63 here, the official said.

Average 381 suicides daily in India in 2019



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: India reported an average 381 deaths by suicide daily in 2019, totalling 1,39,123 fatalities over the year, according to the latest National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) data.

A 3.4 per cent increase was observed in suicides during 2019 (1,39,123 suicides) as compared to 2018 (1,34,516) and 2017 (1,29,887), the data showed.

The rate of suicide (incidents per 1 lakh population) rose by 0.2 per cent in 2019 over 2018, as per the data.

According to the statistics by the NCRB, which functions under the Union Home Ministry, the suicide rate in cities (13.9 per cent) was higher as compared to all-India suicide rate (10.4 per cent) in 2019.

Suicide by 'hanging' (53.6 per cent), 'consuming poison' (25.8 per cent), 'drowning' (5.2 per cent) and 'self-immolation' (3.8 per cent) were the prominent means of committing suicides during the year, the data showed.

Family problems (other than marriage-related issues) were behind 32.4 per cent of suicides, marriage-related problems (5.5 per cent) and illness (17.1 per cent) together accounted for 55 per cent of the total suicides in

the country during 2019, it stated.

For every 100 suicide deaths, 70.2 were male and 29.8 females, the NCRB, which collects data from police recorded cases, stated.

Nearly 68.4 per cent of the male victims were married, whereas the ratio was 62.5 per cent for female victims, the data showed.

Majority of suicides were reported in Maharashtra (18,916), followed by 13,493 in Tamil Nadu, 12,665 in West Bengal, 12,457 in Madhya Pradesh and 11,288 in Karnataka, accounting for 13.6 per cent, 9.7 per cent, 9.1 per cent, 9 per cent and 8.1 per cent of total such deaths, respectively. These five states together accounted for 49.5 per cent of the total suicides reported in the country and the rest 50.5 per cent suicides were reported in the remaining 24 states and 7 UTs, the data showed.

Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state, reported comparatively lower percentage share of suicidal deaths, accounting for only 3.9 per cent of the total suicides in the country, it added.

Maximum cases of mass/family suicide were reported from Tamil Nadu (16) followed by Andhra Pradesh (14), Kerala (11), Punjab (9) and Rajasthan (7), the NCRB data showed.

Data released by NCRB showed a 3.4 per cent increase was observed in suicides during 2019 (1,39,123 suicides) as compared to 2018 (1,34,516) and 2017 (1,29,887)

New twist in Sushant death case

WhatsApp chat between the actor and one of his sisters reveal that he was taking anti-depressants

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 1: Even as several agencies continue to focus on Rhea Chakraborty in their investigations into Sushant Singh Rajput's death, WhatsApp texts between the actor and one of his sisters reveal that his family was aware of his mental health problems.

The chats with his sister Priyanka were from June 8, six days before the actor was found dead in his Mumbai apartment.

Priyanka Singh, it appears from the messages, asked Sushant to take Librium for a week, Nexito everyday and Lonazep for "when ever there is anxiety attack".

All three are prescribed for depression and anxiety. This flies in

the face of claims by the family that it was not aware of any mental health problems that Sushant may have been battling.

Priyanka Singh also appears to tell her brother that she can help him connect with the "best doctor in Mumbai, all confidential".

Searches show Librium is "a sedative and hypnotic medication of the benzodiazepine class". It is used to treat anxiety, insomnia and symptoms of withdrawal from alcohol and other drugs, according to pages.

Nexito 10 MG, according to online healthcare service practo.com, is used to treat depression and generalized anxiety disorders. "It should be started at lower doses and gradually increased. Do not stop tak-



ing this medicine suddenly as it may cause withdrawal symptoms like mood changes, irritability, dizziness, numbness in the hands or feet, and difficulty in falling asleep," according to the site.

The same site says Lonazep is used to treat certain types of seizures and to relieve panic disorders, like

unexpected extreme fear and tension due to stress. It warns: "Do not stop taking this medicine suddenly as it may cause withdrawal symptoms like aggressive behavior, blurred vision, etc."

In the First Information Report filed in Bihar, Sushant's father claimed he had no knowledge about his son's mental health issues. He has accused Rhea Chakraborty of giving him medication and taking him for treatment without the knowledge of his family. The WhatsApp chat shows the actor was being given medication by his family.

Rhea Chakraborty dated Sushant for a year and left his home June 8, the day of these chats with Priyanka Singh.

FINAL JOURNEY



The mortal remains of former President Pranab Mukherjee being taken to Lodhi Road crematorium from his residence for the final rites in New Delhi, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Pranab cremated with full state honours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: Former President Pranab Mukherjee was cremated with full state honours at the Lodhi road electric crematorium Tuesday afternoon.

His son Abhijit Mukherjee performed his last rites.

Mukherjee's family and relatives paid their last respects clad in PPE kits while conforming to COVID-19 safeguards.

An Army contingent gave a guard of honour and a gun salute to the former President. The mortal remains of Mukherjee were earlier brought to the crematorium in a

flower-bedecked vehicle. His body was clad in the Tricolour.

Mukherjee (84) died Monday evening at the Army's Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi cantonment following a 21-day battle with multiple ailments. Mukherjee was the 13th President of India from 2012 to 2017.

Masks, gloves, sanitisers & tea bags: Parl gets pandemic-ready

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: Thousands of masks and gloves, hundreds of sanitiser bottles and face shields, touch-free operation of doors, and COVID-19 tests for an estimated 4,000 people including MPs and staff members - several arrangements have been made for the 18-day Parliament session from September 14 that would be held under the shadow of a pandemic for the first time ever.

Frequent sanitisation of the entire parliament complex will also be carried out, while arrangements have been made to sanitise various parliamentary papers as well as footwear and cars of MPs, officials said. Frisking of people will also make

way for touch-less security scanning, while thermal scanning will also be totally touch-free.

The first-of-its-kind monsoon session will see Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha sitting in two different shifts, while special seating arrangements have been made for MPs in adherence to social distancing guidelines.

For making the entire Parliament complex a safe zone in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu have held extensive discussions with officials of the Home Ministry, Health Ministry, ICMR and the DRDO.

As per the standing operating procedures finalised for holding the session from September 14 till



October 1, MPs and staff of secretariats of both houses, as also the media personnel covering the proceedings, will be asked to undergo COVID-19 test at least 72 hours before the start of the session.

Officials said arrangements have been made for tests of close to 4,000

people, including the MPs, staff members and journalists. Only MPs and ministers will be allowed inside the main building, while necessary seating arrangements will be made for separate seating of their personal staff in the complex.

A new seating arrangement fol-

lowing social distancing guidelines has been prepared by both houses for their respective members. MPs will also be allowed to address the Chair while seated and wearing their masks so that the risk of infection might be minimised.

It has also been decided that air of air conditioners will be exchanged six times every day to avoid any possible infection. The DRDO will also provide multi-utility COVID-19 kits to all MPs.

Each kit will contain 40 disposable masks, five N-95 masks, 20 bottles of sanitisers of 50 ml each, face shields, 40 pairs of gloves, a touch-free hook to open and close doors without touching them, herbal sanitation wipes and tea bags to en-

hance immunity.

The two Houses together have more than 780 members at present. The Health Ministry has also suggested that the movement of Members of Parliament in chambers of both the houses can be made unidirectional to avoid face-to-face interactions.

The Ministry will make available short video clips to all MPs on awareness about COVID-19 infections and the benefits of wearing masks, etc. All guidelines related to COVID-19 prevention will be strictly followed, presiding officers of both Houses said.

The provision of ultraviolet boxes has also been made to sanitise various parliamentary papers.



The final judgment has been delivered, by the grace of Lord Shiva
JUSTICE ARUN MISHRA | SUPREME COURT JUDGE

BRAINWAVES STUDY CAN TELL IF A WORKER CAN HANDLE CRISIS SITUATION

Researchers at IIT Madras have found a method to determine whether a worker has the mental capacity to handle a crisis in a factory or other high-stress jobs by measuring their brainwaves using an EEG



of the day quote

The NDA government is not showing enough concern to address the job losses and other adverse effects brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic in the country

ASADUDDIN OWAISSI | AIMIM PRESIDENT

The ED doesn't come first. If anyone knows the law, ED comes when discrepancies, if there is any, found by any other agency. It has to be identified and proved by any other agency and then only ED comes

AJAY MAKEN | CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY

Though people of all communities are suffering all kinds of atrocities under the BJP government in UP, regular incidents of injustice and atrocities on Dalits are a matter of extreme concern

MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY CHIEF

HC quashes Kafeel Khan's detention under NSA

THE ALLAHABAD HIGH COURT HAS ORDERED THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF DR KAFEEL KHAN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Allahabad, Sept 1: The Allahabad High Court Tuesday quashed the detention of Dr Kafeel Khan under the National Security Act and ordered his immediate release, saying the Aligarh district magistrate did a "selective reading" of his speech at the AMU.

The bench comprising Chief Justice Govind Marhur and Justice Saumitra Dayal Singh allowed the writ petition filed by Khan's mother Nuzhat Parveen and said the order for his detention passed by the district magistrate is illegal.

The petition argued that Khan was granted bail in February by a competent court and he was supposed to be released on bail. However, he was not released for four days and the National Security Act (NSA) was subsequently invoked against him. Hence, his detention was illegal.



Khan has been in jail since January after he delivered the allegedly provocative speech at the Aligarh Muslim University during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act protests in December last year

Under the NSA, a person can be detained without a charge for up to 12 months if authorities are satisfied that he or she is a threat to national security or law and order

Khan has been in jail since January after he delivered the allegedly provocative speech at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) during the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA) protests in December last year. He is lodged in Mathura jail.

Under the NSA, a person can be detained without a charge for up to 12 months if authorities are satisfied that he or she is a threat to national security or law and order.

Quashing Khan's detention order, the court said, "A complete reading of the speech prima facie does not disclose any effort to promote hatred or violence. It also nowhere threatens peace and tranquility of the city of Aligarh. The address gives a call for national integrity and unity among the citizens. The speech also deprecates any kind of violence."

"It appears that the District Magistrate had selective reading and selective mention for few phrases

from the speech ignoring its true intent." The court further said in the instant case, the "causal link is found to be missing or completely broken".

"In absence of any material indicating that the detainee continued to act in a manner prejudicial to public order from December 12, 2019 up to February 13, 2020 or that he committed any such other or further act as may have had that effect, the preventive detention order cannot be sustained," it said.

"In fact, the grounds of detention are silent as to public order at Aligarh being at risk of any prejudice in February 2020 on account of the offending act attributed to the detainee on the date December 12, 2019," the court said in its order.

"What remains is a mere apprehension expressed by the detaining authority without supporting material on which such apprehension may be founded," it said.

4th highest rainfall in 120 years in Aug



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: The country received 27 per cent more rainfall than normal in August, the fourth highest amount in the last 120 years, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

The overall rainfall recorded in India from June 1 to August 31 was 10 per cent more than normal, the IMD said Monday. The official rainfall season in the country is from June 1 to September 30.

"August has recorded 27 per cent more rainfall than normal," RK Jenamani, scientist with IMD's national weather forecasting centre, said.

In its forecast for August last month, the IMD had predicted rainfall of 97 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA) with an error margin of plus or minus 9 per cent. Monsoon in the range of 96-104 per cent of the LPA is considered normal.

"Rainfall recorded in August 2020 is the fourth highest in the last 120 years and highest in 44 years," Jenamani added.

This is also one of the rainiest months of August recorded. The

August of 1926 saw 33 per cent more rainfall than normal, the highest precipitation recorded so far in the month; 1976 recorded 28.4 per cent more rainfall than normal, while the August of 1973 recorded 27.8 per cent than normal. This year saw 27 per cent rainfall. Mahesh Palwat, vice president, Skymet Weather, said due to formation of five low pressure areas in Bay of Bengal in August, the month recorded excess rainfall.

A low pressure area is a cyclonic circulation. It is also the first stage of a cyclone. However, it is not necessary that every low pressure develops into a cyclonic storm.

Jenamani said five low pressure areas formed over Bay of Bengal brought heavy rains over central and north India. Of the five, four developed into a well-marked low pressure area.

Several parts of the country witnessed floods last month due to incessant rainfall last month.

The IMD had predicted that July will get rainfall that is 103 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA), which falls in the "normal" category. The LPA rainfall over the country for the 1961-2010 period is 88 centimetres.

In a first, woman IPS officer to head Srinagar sector

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 1: For the first time, a female IPS officer has been appointed as Inspector General (IG) of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Srinagar sector, one of the terrorist-affected areas in Jammu and Kashmir.

Charu Sinha, IPS officer of the 1996-batch Telangana cadre, will now be heading the Srinagar sector for CRPF as the Inspector General. This is not the first time when she has been assigned such a tough task, earlier also; she had worked as IG, the Bihar sector in CRPF and has dealt with Naxals.



Under her leadership, various anti-Naxals operations were carried out. Later, she was transferred to IG Jammu in CRPF where she spent a long and successful tenure. On Monday, a fresh order came appointing her as the IG Srinagar sector.

Current Director-General CRPF AP Maheshwari headed the Srinagar Sector as IG in 2005.

The sector, which started functioning in 2005, never had a female officer at the IG level. This sector is involved in anti-terror operations and closely works with the Indian Army along with Jammu and Kashmir police. PS Ranpise will replace Charu Sinha as head of the Jammu sector.

SOCIAL DISTANCING



Teachers and children, who do not have access to the Internet, sit on marked areas to maintain social distancing during their open-air classes after schools were closed following the coronavirus outbreak at the scenic Doodhpathri in central Kashmir's Budgam district

REUTERS PHOTO

SHORT TAKES

2 militant hideouts busted in J&K

Srinagar: Two militant hideouts were busted along the Line of Control (LoC) in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir and a huge cache of arms and ammunition recovered after Army launched a search operation, a Defence spokesperson said Tuesday. It seems, the modus operandi was to drop arms and ammunition in caches near the LoC so that the overground workers or militants pick the same for carrying out their activities in the hinterland, the spokesperson said.

Farmer dies after inhaling pesticide

Muzaffarnagar: A 45-year-old farmer died after inhaling a pesticide he was spraying in his fields in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar district, police said Tuesday. The incident took place in the district's Wazirabad village under Bhopa police station on Monday evening, they said. The farmer, Upender Kumar, inhaled the pesticide he was spraying in his fields. He was rushed to a hospital where he was declared dead, the police said. Village head Anuj Kumar sought compensation for the family of the deceased from district authorities.

12 cops 'involved' in power theft

Ahmedabad: Twelve police personnel, including two assistant sub-inspectors, in Gujarat's Amreli district have been asked to vacate their official quarters after they were found to be allegedly involved in power theft, officials said. In an order issued on Monday night, Amreli District Superintendent of Police Nirlipt Rai said despite being part of a disciplined force, these police personnel "indulged in a criminal and illegal act", and asked them to vacate their quarters in two days.

Mild quake hits Koyna region

Satara: An earthquake of 2.6 magnitude hit the Koyna dam region in Maharashtra's Satara district Tuesday morning, an official said. There was no report of any casualty or damage to property, the official from the district administration said. "The 2.6 magnitude quake occurred at 7.16 am and its epicentre was eight km from the Koyna dam," he said.

Shinchan's name appears in Bengal college merit list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 1: After Hindi film actor Sunny Leone and singer Neha Kakkar, Japanese cartoon character Shinchan Nohara's name "mischievously" made it to the merit list of a college in West Bengal.

Nohara's name appeared at the top of the BSc (Honours) merit list of Siliguri College in north Bengal, an official of the institution said Monday.

"The name was immediately removed and a fresh list put up on the college website. We have lodged a police complaint as it was an act of mischief," he said.

The college had outsourced to an agency the process

of compiling the merit list based on details given by the candidates during online applications, but the students' details will be scrutinised by the authorities of the institution before the classes begin, the official said.

The incident comes close on the heels of Kakkar's name appearing in the BA English (Honours) merit list of Malda's Manikchak College and Leone's name figuring in the lists of three other colleges.

The four colleges have lodged complaints with cyber cells of the police. The West Bengal government had earlier announced that admissions to undergraduate courses will be completely online this year and no processing fee will be charged due to the hardship caused by the COVID-19 outbreak.



UNLOCK 4 Rlys mulls running more trains

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 1: Days after the Centre announced the guidelines for Unlock 4, the Indian Railways said that it is planning to run more special trains and the state governments are being consulted on this.

A senior Railway Ministry official said, "The Indian Railways is in consultation with the state governments."

According to railway ministry sources, the national transporter is planning to operate 100 more trains in the coming days.

The Indian Railways had suspended the passenger, mail and express train services from March 25 in the wake of the nationwide lockdown amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Railways started to operate the Shramik Special trains from May 1 to transport the stranded



migrant workers, students, pilgrims and tourists. It also began 15 pairs of Special Air Conditioned trains from May 12 and 100 pairs of timetabled trains from June 1.

Last week, the Centre gave approval for the eventual resumption of metro services from September 7, and the return of up to 50 per cent

of teaching and non-teaching staff in schools outside the containment zones from September 21.

The government in its new guidelines has said that the states will no longer be permitted to impose lockdowns outside the containment zones without the Ministry of Home Affairs permission.

COVID-19 FINDINGS

Indian scientists find higher viral load in asymptomatic patients

THE RESEARCHERS ADVISE TESTING ASYMPTOMATIC PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONTACTS FOLLOWED BY SURVEILLANCE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: Indian scientists have observed a higher association between asymptomatic COVID-19 cases and viral load, or the amount of virus in an infected person's bodily fluid, in a study of over 200 patients with SARS-CoV-2 virus in Telangana, a "surprise" finding that may better inform the policymakers about the spread of the novel coronavirus infection.

The researchers, including those from the Centre for DNA Fingerprinting and Diagnostics (CDFD) in Hyderabad, advise testing asymptomatic primary and secondary contacts followed by surveillance.

"It is important to consider the

possibility of infection from asymptomatic patients - presumably harbouring good immunity - spreading into individuals possessing not so robust immunity leading to increased morbidity and mortality," Murali Dharan Bashyam, from CDFD's Laboratory of Molecular Oncology, told this news agency.

Reacting to the findings of the study, immunologist Satyajit Rath said he is quite surprised by the finding of higher viral loads in asymptomatic individuals.

"Other studies, as the authors note, report an association the other way round, if at all," Rath, from the National Institute of Immunology (NII) in New Delhi, said. The main goal of the yet-to-be peer reviewed study, published



in the medRxiv preprint repository, was to identify dominant viral lineages circulating among the

population of Telangana, especially in Hyderabad. The researchers noted that

Telangana has seen an unusually high rate of infection with a sharp spike observed in the number of cases beginning from the second half of April, with 2,734 new cases and nine fatalities reported just on Tuesday, taking the caseload in the state to 1.27 lakh.

The study analysed whole genome sequence data of virus samples from 210 patients in and around Hyderabad, and determined the highly frequent mutations in the viral genome.

"We observed that a majority of the population under study (over 95 per cent) was infected with the 20B clade (or strain), while a few samples belonged to other clades and subclades," Bashyam said. "More importantly, 100 per cent

of the virus from period May to July belongs to the 20B clade," he said. The scientist noted that while initial entry of the virus in the state came from 2-3 different viral clades, 20B was able to establish itself as the majority strain starting from May.

"We also observed a very high predominance of D614G spike protein mutation, which now has been shown to be associated with higher infection rates of the virus," Bashyam noted.

The researchers were also able to identify a few unique mutations not identified from other studies in India, in a functionally critical region of the non-structural protein 3 (nsp3) of the virus, which is responsible for replication of the viral genome.

international



Shri Pranab Mukherjee was a devout public servant who believed deeply in the importance of our two nations (US, India) tackling global challenges together

NEW ZEALAND MOSQUE SHOOTER DESIGNATED AS 'TERRORIST ENTITY' New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced that the gunman, who killed 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch last year and was sentenced to life in prison without parole, has been designated as a terrorist entity



of the day quote

No country can just pretend that the global Covid-19 pandemic is over



The economic situation is delicate with many uncertainties caused by the pandemic, but the resilience our workers are showing fuels a moderate optimism about the recovery of the country



The United Arab Emirates committed treachery against either the Islamic world or Arab nations and regional countries, as well as Palestine



'China can make India suffer severe military losses'

Indian forces foiled an attempt by Chinese troops to occupy a hill on the Asian giants' disputed border in the western Himalayas



AGENCIES

Shanghai, Sept 1: China is able to make India suffer more severe military losses than in the past if it wants to engage in competition, state-backed newspaper Global Times said Tuesday, after a fresh border flare-up between the two nuclear-armed countries.

Indian forces foiled an attempt by Chinese troops to occupy a hill on the Asian giants' disputed border in the western Himalayas, officials in New Delhi said Monday.

Afghan flood death toll rises

Kabul: The death toll from a week of heavy flooding in northern and eastern Afghanistan rose to at least 190 Tuesday, an official said, with scores more injured as rescue crews search for those missing under the mud and rubble of collapsed houses.

More trouble for Ron Jeremy

Los Angeles: Porn star Ron Jeremy was charged Monday with 20 additional counts of rape and sexual assault, including one involving a 15-year-old girl, the Los Angeles District Attorney's office said.

Protests break out in Belarus

Kyiv: Authorities in Belarus detained scores of protesters Tuesday as university students took to the streets of the capital of Minsk on the first day of classes to demand that authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko resign after an election the opposition has denounced as rigged.

Pak court gives last chance to Sharif to surrender

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Sept 1: A Pakistani court Tuesday gave a "last chance" to former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to surrender and appear before it September 10 for hearing in a corruption case against him, according to media reports.

Sharif, 70, has been in London since November last year after the Lahore High Court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treating a heart disease and an immune system disorder. The three-time premier was sentenced to seven years in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills case.

It's class time again across Europe

AGENCIES

Paris, Sept 1: Tugging on their masks or dashing to hug long-unseen friends, millions of children returned to school across Europe and beyond Tuesday in a mass experiment aimed at bridging inequalities and resuscitating economies — despite the persistent pandemic.

The virus threat lurked in the shadows as children kissed their parents goodbye in France, shyly greeted their teachers in Israel, settled into spaced-out desks in England, and raised their hands in Russia.

France's Prime Minister sat with elementary school children at a school Tuesday, and the President wished kids well in an Instagram video. In Britain, Education Secretary Gavin Williamson sent an open letter to parents saying school "really is the best place for them to be."

Suga seen as top contender

REUTERS

Tokyo, Sept 1: Japan's chief government spokesman, Yoshihide Suga, moved a step closer to becoming the next premier when the ruling party decided Tuesday on a slimmed-down leadership vote that favours the long-time lieutenant of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Suga has also won the backing of the largest faction of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), media reported, making him a strong front-runner to replace Abe, who announced Friday he was stepping down for health reasons.

While Suga has not announced his candidacy for party head, he has indicated privately that he intends to run, a source told Reuters. Media reported he would formally announce his intention to run Wednesday.

JAPAN PM RACE



Abe, including the "Abenomics" strategy aimed at reviving the economy and keeping it afloat amid the novel coronavirus pandemic.

A self-made politician, Suga was chosen by Abe in 2012 for the pivotal role of chief cabinet secretary, acting as top government spokesman, coordinating policies and riding herd on bureaucrats.

announced their candidacies on Tuesday. But Defence Minister Taro Kono, who had been expected to run, had decided not to, Kyodo news reported.

Announcing his candidacy, Ishiba said it was "very regrettable" that all LDP members would not be able to vote for their leader.

Kishida, who was long seen as Abe's preferred successor but has been scoring low in voter polls, said the slimmed-down leadership race was in line with party rules and Japan must continue with fiscal stimulus.

French leader warns Lebanese politicians of 'last chance'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beirut, Sept 1: French President Emmanuel Macron issued a stern warning to Lebanon's political class Tuesday, urging them to commit to serious reforms within a few months or risk punitive action, including sanctions, if they fail to deliver.

Macron is on a two-day visit to Lebanon, marking the country's centenary and holding talks with officials on ways to help extract it from an unprecedented economic crisis and the aftermath of last month's massive blast that ripped through the capital Beirut.

The visit was Macron's second since the devastating Aug. 4 explosion — the most destructive single incident in Lebanon's history — that killed at least 190 people and injured more than 6,000.

This time Macron's visit, packed with events and political talks aimed at charting a way out of the crisis, also comes as Lebanon marks its 100th anniversary.

NATURE'S LIGHT SHOW



Lightning bolts illuminate the sky during a morning storm over Salgotarjan, Hungary

PTI PHOTO

FACE SHIELD OR MASK?

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Sept 1: Can I use a face shield instead of a mask? No. Health officials don't recommend the clear plastic barriers as a substitute for masks because of the lack of research on whether they keep an infected person from spreading viral droplets to others.

However, those who want extra protection may want to wear a face shield in addition to a mask. Face shields have the added benefit of protecting your eyes and discouraging you from touching your face by acting as a physical barrier, says Christopher Sulmonte, project administrator of the biocontainment unit at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Meanwhile, the available research so far indicates that the



best face shields for preventing viral spread are hooded or wrap around the sides and bottom of the face, according to the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

That's because those shields leave less space for droplets from sneezing, coughing and talking

to escape. If you do wear a reusable face shield in addition to a mask, the CDC notes the importance of cleaning it after each use.

The agency also says you should wash your hands before and after taking it off, and avoid touching your face while removing it.

Pandemic brings hard times for farmers, worsening hunger

The UN Food and Agricultural Organisation forecasts that the number of undernourished people will increase by up to 132 million in this year

ASSOCIATED PRESS

United Nations, Sept 1: The coronavirus pandemic has brought hard times for many farmers and has imperiled food security for many millions both in the cities and the countryside.

United Nations experts are holding an online conference beginning Tuesday to brainstorm ways to help alleviate hunger and prevent the problems from worsening in the Asia-Pacific region — a challenge made doubly difficult by the loss of many millions of jobs due to the crisis.

toll is crushing livelihoods, and hunger, a scourge the international community pledged to eradicate by the end of this decade," Qu Dongyu, the FAO's director-general said in a commentary ahead of the virtual meeting.

Disruptions due to outbreaks of the illness and restrictions on businesses and travel to control them run the gamut, from crops going unharvested by migrant workers unable to reach their jobs to transport problems to farm families selling livestock and equipment to survive.



COVID-19, natural disasters such as typhoons and drought, diseases and pests such as locusts have highlighted the need to build stronger capacity to "manage multiple risks to food systems," the report said.

The FAO is urging faster deployment of high-tech tools such as drones and smartphone apps to monitor crops, pests and other farming conditions as part of a transformation of food systems to make them more resilient and reduce risks, especially for the most vulnerable small farmers in poor countries.

where the UN says more than a quarter of a million children are suffering from severe malnutrition and will die without treatment, and parts of Africa where nearly 5 million people are threatened with starvation due to locust outbreaks.

In countries like Thailand, where tourism helps to keep the economy afloat, closed borders and cancelled commercial flights have a ripple effect across many industries.

of the day quote

CIL will pump in over ₹1.22 lakh crore on projects related to coal evacuation, exploration and clean coal technologies by 2023-24



PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION COAL MINISTER

As an iconic brand with a longstanding legacy, Vespa continuously rediscovers itself by setting new trends that reflects its versatility



Diego Graffi | Chairman & MD, Piaggio India

The tractor industry growth continues to remain strong in August. This is primarily on account of continued positive sentiment



Hemant Sikka | President, M&M

SHORT TAKES

Three entities to disgorge ₹2.33cr

New Delhi: Capital markets regulator Sebi has directed three entities to disgorge over ₹2.33 crore of 'wrongful gains' made by them by indulging in manipulative trading in the shares of Urja Global Ltd and Sampada Chemicals Ltd. Chetan Dogra and Chetan Dogra HUF will jointly and severally disgorge about ₹2.15 crore of wrongful gains and Shraddha Entertainment Pvt Ltd will disgorge ₹18.05 lakh of wrongful gains, according to Sebi's order passed Monday. The regulator ordered entities to disgorge the amount.

New office space supply down 93%

New Delhi: Fresh supply of office space in Delhi-NCR plunged 93 per cent during January-June at 3 lakh sq ft as construction activities were impacted because of lockdown to control COVID-19 pandemic, according to property consultant Savills India. The supply stood at 43 lakh sq ft in the same period last year. Office space leasing, too, fell by 73 per cent to 18 lakh sq ft in the first six months of this calendar year from 67 lakh sq ft in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Volvo Car India to localise plans

Mumbai: The Indian arm of Swedish luxury carmaker Volvo is optimistic about returning to growth next year on the back of its plans to locally assemble its entire product range and entry in the fast growing EV space, a top company official said. Volvo Car India said its sales volume improved in August as against July, and it expects a good festive season. The company currently sells sport utility vehicles (SUVs) XC40, XC60 and XC90, cross country V90, S90 sedan and plug-in hybrid XC 90 in India.

I-T authorities can 'share info'

New Delhi: The CBDT has said the income tax authorities can share information with scheduled commercial banks, a move that would ease the lenders' hassle of deciding TDS deductibility on various payments to their customers. In a notification dated August 31, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) included 'scheduled commercial banks', listed in the second schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. CBDT is the apex tax body on personal income tax and corporate tax.



The remaining three labour codes on industrial relations, social security and occupational safety and health will be tabled in the ensuing Monsoon session

SANTOSH GANGWAR | UNION LABOUR MINISTER

REAL GDP LIKELY TO CONTRACT BY 10.9%

After the country's economy contracted by a record 23.9 per cent in April-June quarter, real GDP for FY21 is expected to shrink by 10.9 per cent, according to State Bank of India's research report.



India's factory activity grows



REUTERS

Bangalore, Sept 1: India's factory activity grew in August for the first time in five months as the easing of lockdown restrictions spurred a rebound in domestic demand, a private business survey showed Tuesday, though firms continued to cut jobs.

But the bounce is unlikely to signal a quick turnaround in the Indian economy, which contracted at its steepest pace on record of 23.9% annually last quarter. It was expected to remain in recession this year, a Reuters poll showed on Friday. The Nikkei Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index, compiled by IHS Markit, rose to 52.0 in August from 46.0 in July, above the 50-level separating growth from contraction for the first time since March.

"August data highlighted positive developments in the health of the Indian manufacturing sector, signalling moves towards a recovery from the second quarter downturn," noted Shreeya Patel, an economist at IHS Markit.

"However, not all was positive in August, delivery times lengthened to another marked rate amid ongoing COVID-19 disruptions."

While sub-indexes tracking overall demand and output rose to their highest levels since February and expanded for the first time in five

QUICK TURNAROUND UNLIKELY

- ▶ The bounce is unlikely to signal a quick turnaround in the Indian economy, which contracted at its steepest pace on record of 23.9%
- ▶ While sub-indexes tracking overall demand and output rose, foreign demand contracted for the sixth month in a row

months, foreign demand contracted for the sixth month in a row, its longest downturn since March 2009. Also, firms cut their workforces for the fifth straight month, adding to the millions who have already lost their jobs due to coronavirus-related disruptions.

Although input prices rose at the sharpest pace in nearly two years, firms have cut prices of their goods for four months to boost demand.

Quickening inflation led the central bank to unexpectedly keep interest rates on hold last month, but according to a Reuters survey it will cut its key rate by 25 basis points next quarter to 3.75% and then pause until at least early 2022.

Still, the factory survey showed optimism about the coming 12 months hit its highest in a year.

Govt eliminates LPG subsidy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 1: The government has completely eliminated the need to provide subsidy on domestic cooking gas as the global fall in oil prices and frequent rise in LPG gas cylinder price has brought the price of the common man's fuel closer to market rates.

As of September 1, the price of non-subsidised and subsidised 14.2 kg cooking gas is identical at ₹594 a cylinder. What this means is that government would no longer need to pay subsidy under the direct benefit transfer scheme (DBT) into the account of beneficiaries.

In fact, with the price gap between the subsidised and non-subsidised cooking gas narrowing since early this fiscal, the government has not made any cash transfers into the accounts of beneficiaries for the last four



With the development, the government could easily make a saving of over ₹20,000 cr in FY21

months. With the development, the government could easily make a saving of over ₹20,000 crore in FY21 towards LPG subsidy. This would be huge

period, the government had to draw just about ₹1,900 crore from the subsidy provisions.

While global oil markets are largely responsible for the fall in the prices of all petroleum products, but oil companies also raised the price of subsidised cooking gas consistently from a level of ₹494.35 a cylinder in July last year to ₹594 now. Had this increase not taken place, the 14.2 kg domestic LPG cylinder price would have been more than ₹100 cheaper.

According to an analysis done by Emkay Global, oil companies' under recovery in case of kerosene has come to a naught since March while that for LPG has become zero from May. India has about 27.76 crore LPG consumers. Of these, around 1.5 crore are not eligible to get LPG subsidy since December 2016 because they have an annual taxable income above ₹10 lakh.

AGR DUES

Airtel expected to manage payment, Voda may struggle

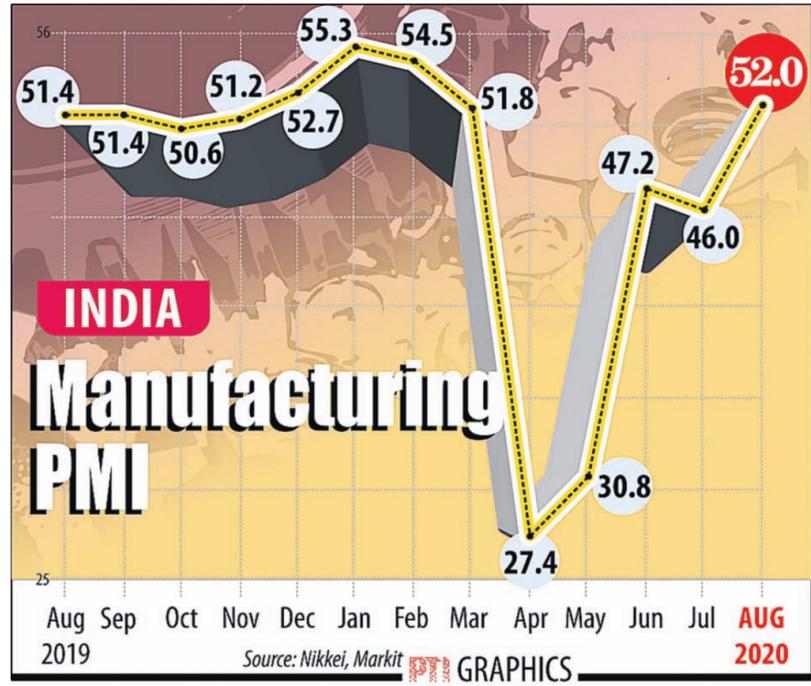
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: Vodafone Idea Ltd may struggle to pay its dues in the 10 years that the Supreme Court granted to telecom companies to clear past statutory dues, analysts said Tuesday.

While Vodafone struggles to clear its dues, Bharti Airtel may be able to meet the payment schedule, brokerage Motilal Oswal Financial Services said.

The Supreme Court in its verdict Tuesday rejected the demand for a 20-year time for telecom companies to clear an estimated ₹1.6 lakh crore in past dues but allowed the liability to be cleared in 10 years.

Vodafone Idea Ltd and Bharti Airtel were the only firms in the private sector that survived a brutal price war sparked by the entry of billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio in 2016.



TAPARIA TOOLS

ENSURING QUALITY SINCE INCEPTION



POST NEWS NETWORK

Nashik, Sept 1: TAPARIA TOOLS Ltd, an ISO-9001 accredited company, started manufacturing hand tools in 1969 in India in technical collaboration with a reputed company by the name of A. B. Bahco of Sweden.

Taparia Tools has been since then consistently producing the hand tools in India with the technology of its collaborators and has since then been constantly improving the same. The company has a well laid out fully equipped factory located at Nashik, which is about four hours drive from the city of Mumbai in western India

and has another expanded unit at Goa, approx. 600 kilometers from Mumbai.

All the manufacturing facilities required for production of hand tools are under one roof - one location. Hand Tools manufacturing is complicated involving high technology and labour intensive production process.

The company's research and development department is manned by Mechanical Engineers and Metallurgists equipped with latest CAD design facilities etc.

From its inception, the company has laid high emphasis on the quality of its products. It has well established quality control department to monitor the quality of the product at every stage of production starting from the quality of raw material to every stage. In fact, Taparia Tools meet and in some cases even exceed the U. S Federal Specification of hardness and torque value besides meeting Indian, British and German standards. Taparia tools are guaranteed against manufacturing and raw material defects and are replaced free with no question asked.

BEML bags order from MoD



BANGALORE: BEML Ltd said on Tuesday it has received an order from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for supply of 330 high mobility vehicles, for 'Pinaka Project' at an approximate cost of ₹842 crore. Pinaka is a multi-barrel rocket launcher developed indigenously for the Indian Army and produced in the country by involving public sector and private sector defence industries, said the defence equipment manufacturer and a Schedule A company under the MoD. The multi-barrel launcher system is mounted on 'highly rugged' BEML truck, known for its off-road mobility, and would provide the Indian Army with 'vital manoeuvrability' on the battlefield, the Bengaluru-headquartered company said in a statement.

BIZ BUZZ

Vodafone Idea cracks nearly 13%

NEW DELHI: Shares of Vodafone Idea Tuesday tumbled nearly 13 per cent, while those of Bharti Airtel rose more than 6 per cent after the Supreme Court granted 10 years to telecom firms for paying the AGR-related dues to the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) with certain conditions. Vodafone Idea shares tanked 12.76 per cent to close at ₹8.89 apiece on BSE. During the day, it plummeted 24.53 per cent to ₹7.69. The stock went into a tailspin after the order, erasing all its early gains. Shares of Bharti Airtel, however, jumped 6.38 per cent to settle at ₹546.75. During the day, it rose by 7.99 per cent to ₹555.05. Bharti Airtel was the top gainer in the Sensex pack.



Govt approves 27 cold chain projects



NEW DELHI: The government Tuesday said it has approved 27 cold chain projects in 11 states with a grant-in-aid of ₹208 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan SAMPADNA Yojana (PMKSY). The Food Processing Industries Ministry in a statement said these projects were "approved" in Inter-Ministerial Approval Committee (IMAC) meetings under the 'Scheme for Integrated Cold Chain and Value Addition Infrastructure' of PMKSY. The meetings, held during second fortnight of August, were chaired by Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badaal through video conferencing, it said. According to the ministry, the 27 new integrated cold chain projects will leverage a total investment of ₹743 crore for creation of modern, innovative infrastructure and effective cold chain facilities for food processing sector across the nation.

The second consecutive month of a fall in GST collections after the number crossed over ₹90,000 crore in June. The August collection, which is 88 per cent of last year's number, is however, a recovery from the

GST collection drops 12 pc to ₹86,449 crore

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 1: The Covid-19 induced shrinking of economic activity for the past few months has continued to have an impact on the government's tax collections with revenue under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) falling far below the psychological level of ₹1 lakh crore to ₹86,449 crore in August.

This is second consecutive month of a fall in GST collections after the number crossed over ₹90,000 crore in June.

The August collection, which is 88 per cent of last year's number, is however, a recovery from the



GST BHAVAN

months of April and May when the Covid-induced lockdowns and severe disruptions in economic activities, resulting in GST collections nose-diving to all time low levels.

The GST collection for the month of April was ₹32,294 crore which was a mere 28 per cent of the revenue collected during the same month last year and for May was ₹62,009 crore, which was 62 per cent of the revenue collected during the same month last year.

Only in June, GST collections recovered to touch ₹90,917 crore. However, they again fell to ₹87,422 crore in July. The revenues from import of goods were 77 per cent and the revenues from domestic transaction were 92 per cent of the revenues from these sources during the same month last year.

Small the new big for hotels post-pandemic

THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY HAS BEEN ONE OF THE MOST ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY THE CORONAVIRUS HEALTH CRISIS

REUTERS

London/New York, Sept 1: The COVID-19 pandemic will mean holiday-goers will shy away from larger hotels for the foreseeable future in favor of boutiques and home rentals, the CEO of India-based hospitality startup Oyo Hotels and Homes told Reuters.

The comments by Ritesh Agarwal underscore the anticipation within the hospitality industry that the coronavirus outbreak will fundamentally change the nature of travel. "The hospitality industry will never be the same again, that is absolutely clear," Agarwal said in a video interview.



"Small hotels are going to be in vogue. In my view, small is going to be the new big, wherein people will rethink a lot about going back to that 1,000-room hotel versus going to a 40-room niche hotel."

Oyo, founded by Agarwal in 2013

when he was 18, allows guests to book hotels through its mobile app and also franchises its brand and offers standardized amenities at hotels on its network.

Loss-making Oyo, which is backed by Japan's SoftBank Group Corp,

says its network comprises more than 43,000 hotels with over 1 million rooms across more than 800 cities in 80 countries.

The hospitality industry has been one of the most adversely affected by the coronavirus health crisis and Oyo cut thousands of jobs at the height of the pandemic earlier this year. Gurugram, India-based Oyo has seen some green shoots of recovery, according to Agarwal.

"The last four, five months the company has seen some incremental recovery, especially in geographies such as Europe and the United States," he said.

In the United States, where Oyo customers are primarily truckers,

pharmaceutical reps and so-called essential workers, the company's revenue per available room is around 92% of pre-coronavirus levels and OYO has seen record sales, Agarwal said.

The company has upwards of \$1 billion in cash in the bank and Agarwal said COVID-19 had not had an impact on any potential plans for an initial public offering (IPO). "We did not have a timeline for going public earlier and don't have one now," said Agarwal. "We of course continue to keep a close eye on the market and get potential interest of potential capital raise, both private and non-private."

DJOKOVIC ROLLS ON



SERB QUESTIONS OPEN CLOCK ON WAY TO 24-0 AS THE WORLD NO.1 EASES PAST DZUMHUR AT FLUSHING MEADOWS

better, I think, bring the right intensity every match." During a pre-match TV interview, Dzumhur said about Djokovic: "Hopefully, he is not 100 percent."

That was probably a reference to the way Djokovic dealt with neck and stomach issues during last week's run to the Western & Southern Open title on the same hard courts being used for the US Open.

Djokovic played a three-set semifinal Friday, then a three-set final Saturday. But the 48 hours before facing Dzumhur, who has been ranked as high as 23rd and now is 109th, apparently were enough for a full physical recovery.

"I felt good on the court today," said Djokovic, who trails only Roger Federer, with 20, and Rafael Nadal, with 19, in the men's Grand Slam trophy standings.

Neither of those rivals has entered in the US Open, only part of the reason Djokovic is an overwhelming favorite to win what would be his sixth title in a span of eight major tournaments.

One minor hiccup during his opening match had to do with the way the serve clock is being implemented at the US Open: Chair umpires are starting that 25-second countdown much sooner now than they were during the Western & Southern Open.

Djokovic was not the only player to

wonder aloud about that system during a match Monday. "Why did you start it?" he asked chair umpire Damien Dumusois, noting that during the previous event players got more time to go collect their towels between points.

Dumusois said the pace is intentionally supposed to be quicker at the US Open, to which Djokovic replied: "You do it here different? Why? There is no explanation? ... Thanks for letting us know."

After the match, Djokovic said: "No one really brought it to my attention. The lack of communication is something that worries me once again. I mean, that's something that really upset me."

"We've played in the certain tempo, so to say; got used to it during the Western & Southern tournament, which just ended two days ago. Two days later, we have a different rule that was just not communicated to us. That's something that I found just not acceptable, not fair."



GAUFF SUFFERS EARLY EXIT

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 1: Coco Gauff won over New York and became an instant fan favorite during her run of inspired tennis a year ago at the US Open. A year later, no fans, no energy, and no singles victory for Gauff — the teen sensation is out of the US Open on Day 1.

Anastasija Sevastova knocked off the 16-year-old Gauff in three sets, 6-3, 5-7, 6-4. The 31st-seeded Sevastova sent Gauff to her earliest exit from a Grand Slam tournament in four appearances. She had never lost in the first two rounds.

"Just the beginning," Gauff said Monday. "I just got on tour a little over a year ago, so I still have a lot to learn and a long ways to go."

She's good enough at 16 to impress a veteran like Sevastova. "I wish I would play like this when I was 16 years old," Sevastova said with a laugh.

"Great player. Nothing more to say. I think she maybe started a bit slower than me, but she was getting better as the match went on."

Gauff lost in Louis Armstrong Stadium, where she won two matches last year and made it to the third round before losing to 2018 champion Naomi Osaka in a match that ended in tears for the teen and a hug from the winner.

After collecting a singles trophy at Linz, Austria, in October — be-



MAINTAINING COVID-19 DECORUM: Coco Gauff and Anastasija Sevastova touch their racquets after their match of US Open, Monday

coming the youngest WTA title winner since 2004 — Gauff began the 2020 Grand Slam season by defeating Venus Williams and winning a rematch against Osaka at the Australian Open en route to the fourth round there.

Gauff was largely off her game against Sevastova and had 13 double-faults, an unsettling result after she also lost in the first round in the Western & Southern Open, the tournament that preceded the US Open at the same site.

She was also beaten at Lexington, Kentucky, this month in the semifinals of her first tournament after tennis was suspended because of the coronavirus pandemic.

"The main part that hurt was just getting matches under my belt, getting experience," Gauff said. "That's what I need on tour. I'm playing against people older than me who have been in more situations, difficult situations, than I have. I think the biggest thing is I just need experience."

Sevastova had been 1-8 in singles in 2020 and got the breakthrough win she needed again in New York. Sevastova was a semifinalist at the US Open two years ago.

"I think it's tough for everybody coming here," she said. "But, yeah, this first hurdle, I won a match again. I think it's going to give me a bit of confidence."

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 1: Novak Djokovic admittedly got a bit distracted. He was unaware of the US Open rule about time allowed between points. He barked in the direction of his entourage — among the only people in the Arthur Ashe Stadium seats. In the end, though, he did what he always does in 2020: win.

"I lost my focus," Djokovic said afterward. "Kind of got stressed out a couple times. Screamed."

The No.1-ranked Djokovic began his bid for Grand Slam title No.18 Monday night by extending his season start to 24-0 with a 6-1, 6-4, 6-1 victory over Damir Dzumhur at Flushing Meadows.

"Do I want to keep the streak going? Of course, I do. Am I thinking about it as a priority No.1 every single day? No," said Djokovic, who opened 2011 with a 41-0 mark.

"It's there, and of course it's an additional motivation for me. It actually fuels me to play even stronger, play even



In memory of Breonna Taylor

NEW YORK: Before and after her first-round victory at the US Open, Naomi Osaka wore a mask bearing the name of Breonna Taylor, a black woman who was fatally shot by police. It's just one of seven face coverings, each in honor of a different person, that Osaka brought to Flushing Meadows — the same number of wins it takes to claim a Grand Slam trophy. The world's highest-earning female athlete hopes she can get the chance to raise awareness about racial injustice by using each mask during her stay in New York. "It's quite sad that seven masks isn't enough for the amount of names, so hopefully I'll get to the finals so you can see all of them," said Osaka, the champion at the 2018 US Open and 2019 Australian Open. She overcame some uneven play late Monday night to beat 81st-ranked Misaki Doi 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 in an all-Japanese matchup in an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium.

TOWEL SERVICE OFF LIMITS AT US OPEN

NEW YORK: Towel service is on a break at the US Open. The days of grabbing a towel from a ballperson between points have gone the way of fans and post-match handshakes in this pandemic-altered tournament. Like a toddler with a security blanket, some players need that constant towel break in the heat of action as part of the routine. Some players want a towel after every point — but because of the pandemic, players now need to fetch their own towels. There were boxes behind the baselines for players to lay the towels on at some courts; at others, players draped them over a fence or an advertising placard.

Pliskova, Kerber advance in straight sets

NEW YORK: Top-seeded Karolina Pliskova and 17th seed Angelique Kerber have advanced in straight sets at the US Open. Pliskova surged ahead of Anhelina Kalinina 4-1 in the opening set, lost three games in a row, then took the last eight for a 6-4, 6-0 victory. She had a 26-7 edge in winners. Pliskova is ranked third in the world but has the top seed here. Three-time Grand Slam champion Kerber is sticking around longer



at Flushing Meadows than she did a year ago. The former World No.1 Kerber eliminated Ajla Tomljanovic 6-4, 6-4 in a nearly empty Louis Armstrong Stadium. Kerber won the 2016 US Open but lost in the first round a year ago.



Attack on family: Raina demands thorough probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 1: Former India cricketer Suresh Raina, who pulled out of the IPL citing personal reasons, Tuesday demanded a thorough probe into the violent attack on his aunt's family in Punjab, revealing that after his uncle, his cousin has also died.

The 33-year-old returned to the country last week from the UAE, where the league will begin September 19. In his first statement since landing in the country, Raina, however, did not say that the attack, allegedly a case of robbery, was the reason why he came back.

"What happened to my family in (sic) Punjab was beyond horrible. My uncle was slaughtered to death, my bua & both my cousins had sever (sic) injuries. Unfortunately my cousin also passed away last night after battling for life for days. My bua (aunt) is still very very critical & is on life support," he said.

Raina's relatives were attacked on the night intervening August 19 and 20 in Thariyal village in Punjab's Pathankot district.

"Till date we don't know what exactly had happened that night & who did this. I request @PunjabPoliceInd to look into this matter. We at least deserve to know who did this heinous act to them. Those criminals should not be spared to commit more crimes. @capt_amarinder @CMOPb," he added, tagging Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh.

Raina retired from international cricket August 15, alongside MS Dhoni. His departure from the IPL triggered intense speculation on the possible reasons behind it.

NEWS IN BRIEF

CFI TO HOST FIRST-EVER CYCLING SUMMIT NEXT YEAR

New Delhi: The Cycling Federation of India (CFI) Tuesday said that it will host the first-ever 'Cycling Summit' in 2021 across Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore. The CFI has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with a new-age marketing exploration firm, Contarctica for the summit. The Cycling Summit 2021 will open with a cycle ride from the heart of the city to the event venue followed by a series of 'especially curated workshops, masterclasses and open interactions with eminent athletes'. "We have witnessed an unprecedented growth in cycle sales amongst first-time riders. We wish to encourage this trend and cultivate the love for cycling in people from all age groups. The Cycling Summit is a step in that direction," said CFI chairman Onkar Singh.

TWO PSG PLAYERS SUSPECTED OF BEING INFECTED WITH VIRUS

Paris: Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) said two of their players are suspected of being infected with COVID-19. The French champion cited a 'reassuring' state of health for the players, who were not identified. They are said to be following the required health protocols. Eight days after losing the Champions League final to Bayern Munich, PSG are not due to start the French season until September 10. The French league granted PSG's request for extra days of rest, and the team's scheduled opening game at Lens was postponed until next week.

All 13 CSK members test negative for COVID-19

New Delhi: All 13 members of the Chennai Super Kings contingent, who tested positive for COVID-19 last week, have come out negative in the latest tests, the IPL team's CEO KS Viswanathan told PTI Tuesday. India seamer Deepak Chahar and India A batsman Ruturaj Gaikwad were among the 13 who tested positive and are in a 14-day quarantine. "Yes, all 13 members have tested negative for COVID-19. They will have to undergo another test Thursday, September 3. We are likely to start training Friday, September 4," Viswanathan said from Dubai where the team is based right now.

Spanish league announces its calendar Barca face Villarreal in campaign opener

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, Sept 1: With or without Lionel Messi, Barcelona already know they will start their season at home against Villarreal at the end of September.

The Spanish league announced its calendar Monday, and the first round is scheduled for the second weekend of September. But Barcelona and other teams who played later into this past season will have some of their games postponed so they have time to prepare.

All matches will continue to be played in empty stadiums. The league hoped at least some fans would be allowed into matches, but Spain has been struggling to contain a new surge of coronavirus cases.

Messi, who last week told Barcelona he wants to leave, skipped the team's first day of training Monday. He had already been a no-show Sunday as the squad underwent coronavirus testing at the club's training center.

He wants to leave on a clause that allows him to leave for free at the end of the season, but Barcelona said that clause has expired. It wants the Argentine great to stay at least until the end of his contract in June 2021.

There is no sign of how long the dispute is going to last, as neither the club nor the player appear to be willing to make concessions.

Barcelona's first match would have been against promoted Elche at Camp Nou Stadium, with the second against Athletic Bilbao.



Ronald Koeman set for a challenging start to his tenure as Barcelona manager as they face Villarreal

The first El Clasico against Real Madrid will be in late October, also at Camp Nou. The return leg will be played April 11 in Madrid.

Real Madrid, who also returned to training Monday, will debut in the second round at Real Sociedad. Only Madrid's first-round game was postponed as they didn't reach the Champions League quarterfinals.

Atletico Madrid have been given the first two rounds off, and will start against Granada at home. The league is scheduled to finish in May 2021.

Backing your natural skills as important as variations: Bhuvi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 1: Seasoned India pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar says a bowler's capability to deliver what he is good at is equally important as introducing new variations to his game.

Bhuvi, who will be seen in the Sunrisers Hyderabad jersey in the IPL, said the years of experience in the Indian team has changed him as a bowler.

"I have definitely changed as a bowler in the last few years. Most importantly I have gained experience from playing, have learnt variations," Bhuvi told the IPL website.

"I don't think it is always about keep adding to your arsenal, it is also about being good at what you do," he added.

The senior India pacer endured an injury-hit 2019 when he struggled with a hamstring injury during the World Cup also. He walked mid-



way during the high-profile encounter against Pakistan in Manchester. After missing the home series

against South Africa and Bangladesh, Bhuvneshwar returned to the T20Is against West Indies. In January, he underwent sports hernia surgery.

"It's great to be back, personally I have been away from this game for a while, first I was injured and then this pandemic and lockdown. I am pretty excited about IPL. I cannot wait to get back in action."

Talking about the SRH set up, Bhuvneshwar said since the bowling unit has been together for the past two-three years, the players understand each other well.

"Being a senior bowler my approach will be similar as it has been for past couple of years. I'll try to help and share my experience."

"The good thing about this bowling group is that we are playing together for the last 2-3 years so we understand each other pretty well. It makes things easier for a captain or senior bowler like me."

Rakitic moves back to Sevilla from Barcelona

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seville, Sept 1: Spanish club Sevilla reached a deal for the return of midfielder Ivan Rakitic Tuesday. The club said Rakitic arrives from Barcelona on a contract until 2024.

The 32-year-old Croatian was one of the players that incoming Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said was not in his plans for the future.

Rakitic had played three years with Sevilla before joining Barcelona in 2014, where he had played in nearly 200 matches. He left for Barcelona shortly after helping Sevilla win the 2014 Europa League title. Rakitic has 149 appearances with Sevilla, with 32 goals and 41 assists.

Sevilla won their sixth Europa League title this season. They finished fourth in the Spanish league, securing a Champions League spot for next season.