



UNWAVERING SUPPORT

Actor Kubbra Sait says Rhea's arrest by NCB doesn't prove that she is a murderer

LEISURE P2



MELTING GLACIERS

Glaciers in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh are melting at a 'significant' rate, according to a first-of-its-kind study

TWO STATES P7



BLAME GAME

The UK and the EU blamed each other in their post-Brexit trade discussions

INTERNATIONAL P10

FRESH SKIRMISH AT LAC LIKELY

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: Around 40 to 50 PLA soldiers, armed with spears and other sharp-edged weapons as well as guns, came just a few metres from the Indian position on the heights north of Rezang La in eastern Ladakh, and are likely to make a fresh attempt to dislodge the Indian soldiers, sources said Tuesday.

The fresh incident comes a day after Monday's skirmish where Chinese People's Liberation Army troops indulged in provocative military movements and also fired shots to intimidate Indian soldiers, as per the Indian Army. China, too, accused India of doing the same.

With tensions escalating again, the Indian security brass held several rounds of deliberations. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh met top security officials, and was also briefed by Army chief, General Manoj Mukund Naravane, about the emerging situation. Monday's incident took place near



BORDER ON THE BOIL AGAIN: China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers approach an Indian post near Mukpari peak at about 6 pm Monday

Shenpao mountain close to Rezang La on the south bank of Pangong Tso (lake). The Indian Army, in a statement, said that China continues to "undertake provocative activities to escalate" the situation at the border and it was the PLA troops who "fired a few rounds in the air" in an attempt to intimidate Indian troops.

"At no stage has the Indian Army transgressed across the LAC or resorted to use of any aggressive means,

including firing," Indian Army spokesperson, Col Aman Anand said.

The army stated that it is the Chinese side that has been "blatantly violating agreements and carrying out aggressive manoeuvres, while engagement at the military, diplomatic and political level is in progress". "In the instant case on September 7, 2020, it was the PLA troops who were attempting to close in with one of our forward positions along the LAC and when dissuaded by

own troops, the PLA troops fired a few rounds in the air in an attempt to intimidate own troops," Col Anand said. However, despite the grave provocation, Indian troops "exercised great restraint and behaved in a mature and responsible manner", he added. "The Indian Army is committed to maintaining peace and tranquillity, however, it is also determined to protect national integrity and sovereignty at all costs. The statement from the (PLA's) Western Theatre Command is a bid to mislead their domestic audience."

On Monday, the Chinese Army issued a statement that the Indian Army "blatantly fired threats" to the patrol of the Chinese border guards who had made a representation, and these border guards were forced to take "countermeasures to stabilise the situation on the ground". The Indian Army has occupied crucial heights in areas around the south bank of Pangong lake and the Chinese have made several attempts to dislodge the Indian troops from these positions.

PLA CONFIRMS FIVE MISSING YOUTHS FOUND

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: China's People's Liberation Army has confirmed that five youths missing from Arunachal Pradesh have been found by them and their handing over process to Indian authorities is being worked out, Union minister Kiren Rijiju said Tuesday.

The five youths had gone missing Friday from the Sino-Indian border in the Upper Subansiri district of Arunachal Pradesh. "China's PLA has responded to the hotline message sent by Indian Army. They have confirmed that the missing youths from Arunachal Pradesh have been found by their side. Further modalities to handover the persons to our authority is being worked out," Rijiju tweeted.

Rijiju, the Minister of State for Youth Affairs & Sports, hails from Arunachal Pradesh and is an MP from the state. The incident of five missing youths came to light when two members from their group, who had gone for hunting in the jungle together, returned home and informed the families of the five that they had been whisked away by the Chinese troops from Sera-7, an Army patrol zone located about 12 km further north of Nacho.

Nacho is the last administrative circle along the McMahon Line and is around 120 km from the district headquarters Daporijo. Those who were allegedly kidnapped by the Chinese army have been identified as Toch Singkam, Prasat Ringling, Dongtu Ebiya, Tanu Baker and Ngaru Diri.

On Monday, China brushed off questions over the whereabouts of the five youths and needed India, saying it has never recognised Arunachal Pradesh which it claims is part of south Tibet.

"China's position on the east sector of the China-India boundary, or Zangnan (the southern part of China's Xizang (Tibet)), is consistent and clear," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian told a media briefing in Beijing.

1800 266 266 1 (tollfree)

Security provided to Varsha as she claims risk to life

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 8: Based on actress Varsha Priyadarshini's FIR at Purighat police station in Cuttack, the police Tuesday summoned two youths who allegedly clicked photos from the bedroom of the actress when she was eating food Monday Police Tuesday provided security to Varsha after she complained of threat to her life.

The two youths have been identified as Sujit Dalei and Khagendra. Sujit is said to be a close friend and political associate of Varsha's estranged husband and Kendrapara BJD MP Anubhav Mohanty. Details of Khagendra are yet to be known.

Notably the two youths allegedly entered her bedroom and clicked photos and shot a video while she was having food. Following the incident, Varsha dialled police helpline number (100) and sought protection.

Varsha had Saturday filed a case under Section 12 of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act against the BJD MP for allegedly assaulting and harassing her.



Instead of lodging any complaint with the police, Varsha had approached the Sub Divisional Judicial Magistrate (SDJM) court here in a criminal miscellaneous case against Anubhav under section 12 of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act. On the other hand, it was revealed that Anubhav had filed a divorce petition at Delhi's Patiala Court back in July.

In his 47-page petition, the MP said that he wants to get a divorce on grounds that his wife has not allowed him to have physical relations with her during eight years of their marriage though she does not suffer from any physical disability.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You are humble & polite, talk sense, praise govt at every given opportunity... Why you need security then?

SOPs for partial school reopening

NEW DELHI: The Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry Tuesday issued standard operating procedures (SOPs) for partial resumption of teaching activities in schools for students of Classes 9 to 12, on a voluntary basis, from September 21. Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said: "Government of India is following a phase-wise unlocking of activities. This would also involve partial resumption of activities in schools for students of Classes 9th to 12th on a voluntary basis, for taking guidance from their teachers from September 21." P8

Russia issues nCoV vaccine in market

MOSCOW: The first batch of the Sputnik V vaccine against Covid-19, developed by Russia's Gamaleya National Research Center of Epidemiology and Microbiology and the Russian Direct Investment Fund has been released into civil circulation, regional deliveries are planned in the nearest future, the Russian Health Ministry said. "The first batch of the 'Gam-Covid-Vac' [Sputnik V] vaccine for the prevention of the new coronavirus infection has passed the necessary quality tests," the ministry said.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	38365.35 ↓ 51.88
NIFTY	11317.40 ↓ 37.60
DOLLAR	74.39 ↑ ₹0.33
EURO	86.80 ↓ ₹0.10
GOLD	₹50,989 ↓ ₹76
SILVER	₹77,224 ↓ ₹1047

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	36.8°C	36.8°C
MIN	26.4°C	25.0°C
Humidity	94%	95%
Rainfall	16.6mm	41mm
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

SEARCH MISSION



National Disaster Respond Force and SDRF personnel carry out a search operation after a 10-yr old boy drowned in the Brahmaputra river at Uzanbazar in Guwahati, Tuesday

Economy to contract 10.5 pc in FY21: Fitch

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: Fitch Ratings Tuesday slashed India's FY21 growth projection to (-) 10.5 per cent, from (-) 5 per cent estimated earlier, saying the continued spread of the virus and imposition of sporadic shutdowns across the country has disrupted economic activity.

In the first quarter of current fiscal India's gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by a massive 23.9 per cent. Fitch said India recorded one of the sharpest GDP contractions in the world in the April-June quarter, but noted that growth should rebound strongly in the July-September period amid re-opening of the economy. However, there are signs that the recovery has been sluggish and uneven, it said.

In its September update of Global Economic Outlook (GEO), Fitch said, the deepest recessions were

in India, the UK and Spain, countries that saw particularly large shocks in daily mobility data on visits to retail and recreation venues, and where lockdowns were stringent and long-lasting throughout 2Q20 (April-June).

It said multiple challenges are holding back recovery, both in the short and medium term. "New cases of the coronavirus continue to increase, forcing some states and union territories to re-tighten curbs... The continued spread of the virus and the imposition of shutdowns across the country depress sentiment and disrupt economic activity," Fitch said. It noted that the severe fall in activity has also damaged household and corporate incomes and balance sheets, amid limited fiscal support. Also a looming deterioration in asset quality in the financial sector will hold back credit provision.

NCB arrests Rhea Chakraborty

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 8: After days of intense speculation and three days of tough grilling, the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Tuesday arrested Bollywood actress Rhea Chakraborty in connection with its ongoing probe to unravel the drugs nexus in the film industry, officials said.

Rhea has been charged under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act for her alleged role in the drugs angle that has emerged during investigation into the June 14 death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Rhea, who has all along pleaded innocence, was quickly whisked away for a mandatory medical test at the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation's LTMG Sion Hospital.

She is likely to be presented by the NCB before a court for her remand, while her legal team prepares to get her bailed out. Reacting to the development, Rhea's lawyer



Satish Maneshinde termed the arrest a "travesty of justice" in a scathing statement targeting the family of Sushant.

"Three central agencies hounding a single woman - just because she was in love with a drug addict, suffering from mental health issues for several years under the care of five leading psychiatrists in Mumbai, who ended up committing suicide due to consumption of illegally administered medicines and used drugs," Maneshinde said.

Her much-anticipated arrest came a day after Rhea took time out - at the height of the NCB interrogation sessions - to hit back at the late actor's family by lodging a po-

lice complaint against Sushant's sister Priyanka Singh and Dr Tarun Kumar of RML Hospital in New Delhi and others, alleging forged medical prescriptions.

A Mumbai Police spokesperson said that the complaint has been lodged with Bandra Police under the Indian Penal Code and the NDPS Act, and in line with the Supreme Court orders, the case has been transferred to the CBI for investigation.

Rhea's arrest came three days after her brother Showik Chakraborty, Sushant's home manager Samuel Miranda, and his house helper Dipesh Sawant were arrested and sent in NCB custody till September 9 (Wednesday), besides two other drug peddlers Abdel Basit Parihar and Zaid Vilatra, who are also in NCB custody.

The NCB had earlier said that with these arrests, it hopes to "uproot the drugs citadel in Bollywood and Mumbai" amidst talk of several other Bollywood personalities coming on the agency's radar.

RPI(A) will protect Kangana in Mumbai: Athawale

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 8: RPI(A) workers will provide protection to actress Kangana Ranaut when she reaches Mumbai, Union Minister Ramdas Athawale said Tuesday. The actress is locked in a bitter war of words with the ruling Shiv Sena over her comments on the Mumbai Police after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

After Sena MP Sanjay Raut reportedly asked Ranaut not to return to Mumbai for comparing the city to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (Pok), the actress had dared anybody to stop her when she reaches here

September 9. "RPI (A) workers have geared up to protect Ranaut who is scheduled to reach Mumbai Wednesday. Our party workers will offer protection to her at the airport as well as at her residence," Athawale said in a statement.

Athawale's party is an ally of the BJP in the Centre and in Maharashtra. Earlier, Sena MLA Pratap Sarnaik had issued a slap threat after the actress dared anyone to stop her when she returns to Mumbai. The Centre Monday decided to provide Y-plus category security to the actress.

While lashing out at the Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) gov-



ernment, Athawale said, "Ranaut did not criticise the Mumbai city but the state government. It's against the democratic principles to oppose her right to live here on the grounds of her critical remarks against the government. She has all the rights



to live here in Mumbai". The Union minister also claimed that Ranaut had thanked him for offering her protection in Mumbai. "Shiv Sena spokesperson Sanjay Raut shouldn't have threatened the actress over her right to live in Mumbai," he added.

Heat mounts on 'QUEEN'

MUMBAI: Already under fire over her remarks on Mumbai, trouble mounted for actress Kangana Ranaut as the Maharashtra government Tuesday said the police will probe allegations that she took drugs, while alterations made at her bungalow here came under the civic scanner. Home Minister Anil Deshmukh said the Mumbai police will probe allegations by actor Adhyayan Suman that Ranaut took drugs. Talking to reporters here, Deshmukh said Adhyayan, the son of veteran actor Shekhar Suman, was once in a relationship with Ranaut and he had alleged that she used to take drugs.

EOW arrests realtor in ₹5.16 cr fraud

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the state crime branch arrested a realtor on charge of duping several flat aspirants to the tune of ₹5 crore. The accused, Akshay Kumar Choudhury, is a resident of Forest Park here. He is one of the directors of Keshari Estates Pvt Ltd at Kharavela Nagar.

The sleuths during the probe found that the directors of the company announced the launch of a project comprising 30 duplexes on a plot at Pokhariput in 2008. They reportedly collected amounts varying between ₹25 lakhs and ₹55 lakhs from each of the prospective buyers as advance booking or full payment for a duplex.

However, the accused did not undertake any construction at the said plot for more than three years after getting the money from the depositors. The company also later informed the buyers that the project was abandoned as the Bhubaneswar Development Authority refused to approve the project on the pretext of non-availability of an approach road to the plot and other allied problems. It was ascertained during the probe that the accused had not sought any approval from the BDA.

Subsequently, the directors again announced the launch of another project (Keshar Plaza) at Jadupur under Khandagiri police limits in 2013. The company promised to give 44 duplexes and triplexes to investors. The prospective buyers, who had invested in the earlier project, also deposited additional amounts for the fresh project at Jadupur.



ELIZABETH DEBICKI WANTS TO JOIN GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL. 3

Actor Elizabeth Debicki says she is ready to return to the role of Ayesha in *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*. The 30-year-old actor said she enjoyed playing the part and hopes to get an opportunity to star in the next installment.

CRUZ TO STAR IN ITALIAN MOVIE L'IMMENSITA

Actor Penelope Cruz is set to play the lead role in Italian movie *L'immensita* with critically-acclaimed filmmaker Emanuele Crialese attached to direct. According to Variety, Crialese has co-penned the script with Francesca Manieri and Vittorio Moroni.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
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ARIES
The stars urge you to focus on your finances and savings, and today, you might remain very busy doing just that. But take care, says Ganesh, you don't want a sulking spouse when you go home. Don't cancel any plans; go ahead and enjoy that new film.

TAURUS
Your vision today will have a hue of green as you will draw to money like a fly to sweets. Taste the power of money with fortune as the monkey on your back. You may buy a pendant or a necklace today and your haggling skills will save you from being swindled, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
You will spend the day safeguarding sentiments of others and it is in your own interest. For most part of the day, probably the entire day, you will be away from your family, mostly on a trip for business or leisure purposes. Today, having a successful career will be only thing on your mind.

CANCER
You are a master of deception, and your sugar-coated comments play a pivotal role in your methods. Today, you will be able to smell trouble from a distance, and will know when to take a U-turn. Your methods may not make you very popular with the so-called moral brigade working with you, but you may think that this is the easiest way to the top.

LEO
Chess is a good start, but it is nothing compared to the strategic intrigues of your day today. Arguments will lead to further arguments, and nowhere else, reminds Ganesh. So, it only makes sense to counter a disagreement with an agreement.

VIRGO
You will shine exceedingly well in all the activities that you undertake today. Your dream of starting business operations on foreign shores will fructify today, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Call it your generous side, but today is the perfect day to give back to all those from whom you have received so far. With roots set firmly in community service, it might do you well to extend that helping hand and return something back to them, preferably in the double.

SCORPIO
An upcoming project of a new joint venture will capsize your personal life and keep you on your toes today, says Ganesh. You may not find the results in proportion to the efforts that you put in, but be patient because everything will fall in place only in due time.

SAGITTARIUS
Be ready to receive advice - unasked and unwarranted. Don't overlook it either, as these suggestions can be worthy of consideration. But let the last word rest in your hands and look deep inside for the right verdict.

CAPRICORN
There are good days and bad days; your day today will oscillate between the two extremes, says Ganesh. While on the one hand, your mind will be flooded with negative feelings that will make you feel miserable, on the other, your efforts at work will yield good results in the future. The need of the hour is to stay calm and take criticisms in your stride.

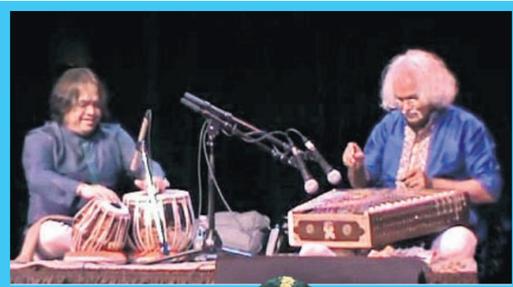
AQUARIUS
Work, work, work! That is what will pay rich dividends. Of course, a pat on the back does matter, and with your commitment record, you may be getting a lot of it! You may back off from taking risks, and yet want change. Ganesh wonders how you will fulfill your wish.

PISCES
Arguments lead nowhere, and why argue when, at the end of the day, you can step back and watch them end up with egg on their faces, break a leg, get crushed under a falling safe, or otherwise suffer the numerous disasters you wish them to, for disagreeing with you. You will end up having the last laugh, so you might as well use your time more effectively, says Ganesh.

Valasini Natyam, santoor strains wow virtual audience

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: The fourth evening of ongoing 26th OMC Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award Festival, organised by premier Odissi dance school Srjan, witnessed a couple of inspirational performances Tuesday with eminent danseuse Purvadhanashree opening the event with her Valasini Natyam, a classical dance form which was originated in Andhra Pradesh. Her breathtaking show was followed by scintillating strains from the santoor of Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya.



Pandit Tarun Bhattacharya (R) plays santoor at the event

Purvadhanashree began with a *Chornika* in *Raga Arabhi* followed by a *Jatiswaram* in *Raga Kalyani* and *Adi Talam*. In her second performance for the evening, she performed the *Kriti, Kreedati Vanamali*, eulogising the various names of Lord Krishna. Composed by 18th century poet Sadashiva Brahmendra, this presentation was set to *Surutti Raga* and *Adi Talam*. She then concluded with two *Astapadis* from poet Shri Jayadeva's *Geeta Govinda*. In the first *Astapadi, Radhika Tava Viraha*, the sakhhi describes to Lord Krishna the anguish of Radha, who is separated from him, and in *Pravasha Radhe*, the sakhhi cajoles a hesitant Radha to meet her beloved Lord at his house, where he awaits her.

The classical dancer was accompanied by K Venkateshwaran, Chander Rao, and Sudha Raghuraman on vocals, R Sriganesh and V Sreedharacharya on the Mridangam, V Sreedharacharya on the Kanjira, G. Raghuraman and Venkatesh on the flute, Shiva on the violin, Prafulla Mangaraj on the Pakhawaj, and Purvadhanashree, Raghunandan, and Sudha Raghuraman on the Nattuvangam. Purvadhanashree's technical prowess and depth of abhinaya shone forth in her mesmerising recital was a testament to his years of experience and professional excellence.

26TH OMC GURU KELUCHARAN MOHAPATRA AWARD FESTIVAL-DAY 4



Purvadhanashree during a presentation

Curated and designed by Ratikant Mohapatra, the festival is supported by the title sponsor Odisha Mining Corporation Limited, gold sponsor, Odisha Tourism, Government of Odisha, and festival sponsors, Union Culture Ministry, State Odia Literature Language and Culture Department, and the MGM Group, Bhubaneswar. The media partners are Dharitri and **Orissa Post**, and web partner is Narthaki.com.

Hrithik suspects his folks are 'growing up'

Mumbai: Actor Hrithik Roshan Tuesday shared glimpses of the 71st birthday celebration of his father, filmmaker Rakesh Roshan, which the family celebrated Sunday.

The celebration was strictly a family affair; the low-key celebration and Hrithik, posting a fam-jam picture, quipped that he suspects that the family is growing up.

"This Sunday was dad's 71st birthday. We, his family with all our idiosyncrasies ended up having a GREAT time. I think that sentence says a lot. I suspect we are all growing up," he wrote on Instagram. In the image, we can see Hrithik, his former wife Sussanne Khan, sons Hridhaan and Hrehaan, his mother Pinkie Roshan, sister Sunaina Roshan, and uncle Rajesh Roshan among others, posing with Rakesh Roshan.



Big B returns to KBC set

Mumbai: Amitabh Bachchan is back shooting for *Kaun Banega Crorepati Season 12* amid the pandemic, after recovering from Covid-19. He took to Instagram and Twitter to share photos from the *KBC 12* set.

Sporting formals, Big B is seen clapping in one of the photos. In the other, he sits on his chair as host of the popular TV quiz show. "T 3652 - 20 years; 12th season; *KBC: Kaun Banega Crorepati*, Begins," he posted Monday night.

Actor Maniesh Paul commented: "Sir, Zabardast." Actress Mouni Roy left heart and clapping hands emojis in the comments section.

Actress Aahana Kumra wrote: "All the best Sir! It will be glorious!"

Fans are also thrilled about his return to the show. "Happy news and Best Wishes to You and the entire team of #KBC12. Setback ka Jawaab Comeback Se...!!! Waiting eagerly for you to come visit us every week night once again," one wrote.

IANS



Kubbra opens up on Rhea's arrest

Mumbai: After Rhea Chakraborty's arrest by the sleuths of Narcotics Control Bureau Tuesday, actress Kubbra Sait slammed the 'media circus' that has taken over the case, saying it has still not been proved that Rhea is a murderer.

"May the universe give the parents of Rhea the strength through this devastating time. Arrested by NCB. Still not a murderer. #MediaCircus I wonder your conversations over your shaam ki chai," Kubbra tweeted.

The NCB arrested Rhea after three days of grilling to unravel the drug nexus in the film industry, officials said.

She has been charged under various sections of the NDPS Act for her alleged role in the drug angle that has emerged in the investigations into the death of her late boyfriend, actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

Rhea's legal team headed by senior advocate Satish Maneshinde slammed central agencies for 'hounding' a lone woman 'just because she was in love with a drug addict'.

IANS

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

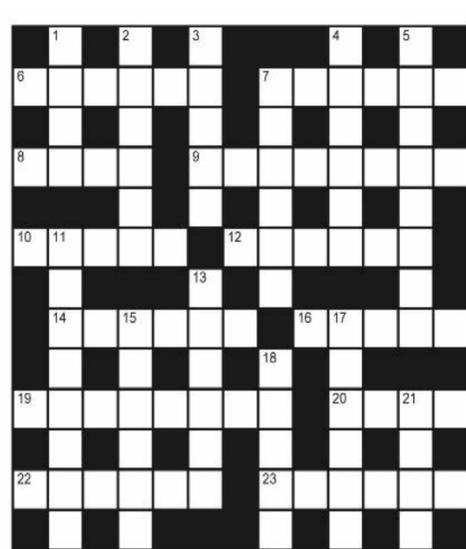


BREVITY



FUN post

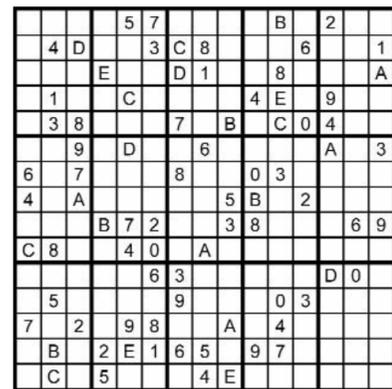
CROSSWORD



- Across
- 6 Master hand
 - 7 Clipped slip
 - 8 Discharge
 - 9 Alberta native
 - 10 Secret agents
 - 12 Sushi condiment
 - 14 Loathsome
 - 16 Little green man
 - 19 Word to a winner
 - 20 Canaanite deity
 - 22 Hound dog
 - 23 Peers
 - 4 Vast treeless Arctic plain
 - 5 Genuine (4,4)
 - 7 Artist's workplace
 - 11 Marriage offer
 - 13 Arab kingdom
 - 15 Swallow
 - 17 Drudgery
 - 18 Pale with fright
 - 21 Competent
- Down
- 1 Checkup or medical
 - 2 After shopping
 - 3 Pile up

SUDOKU

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

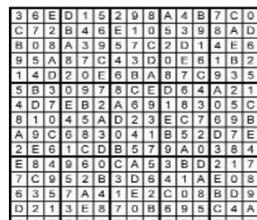


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



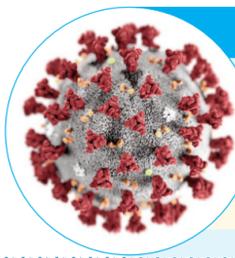
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



AWARENESS DRIVE

Graffiti on the boundary wall of Vigilance Directorate in Cuttack depict the COVID warriors' efforts in tackling the pandemic



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,75,18,469	1,96,11,037	8,97,489
India	42,80,422	33,23,950	72,775
Odisha	1,31,382	1,02,185	569

ROBBERS ON THE PROWL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: There seems to be no let-up in robbery and loot incidents in Capital city and its adjoining areas as unidentified miscreants Tuesday decamped with a bag containing ₹5 lakh from a woman in Phulnakhara area just a day after robbers struck a bank in Infocity area here. In yet another incident, armed miscreants attacked and looted a man on Bhubaneswar-Puri National Highway.

The incidents have not only left the citizens scared but also left the police red-faced.

According to sources, the victim lady, Sunita Jena, Tuesday withdrew ₹5 lakh from the Indian Bank's branch at Trinath Bazar under Phulnakhara police station to invest in opening a mobile shop at the market. While she was busy speak-



The victim withdrew ₹5 lakh from the Indian Bank's branch at Trinath Bazar under Phulnakhara police station to invest in opening a mobile shop at the market

While she was busy speaking to a person over phone at the market keeping the bag containing money on her scooter, a bike-borne miscreant grabbed the bag and fled the spot

ing to a person over phone at the market keeping the bag containing money on her scooter, a bike-borne miscreant grabbed the bag and fled the spot.

Sources revealed that the woman and her brother chased the looter on the woman's scooter but in vain. The entire incident was captured in a CCTV installed at a nearby shop.

Jena lodged a complaint with the police at Pahal outpost in this

regard. Police have started investigations into the matter after registering a case (203/20) based on the complaint. Eyewitnesses said the miscreant was riding a black-colour Pulsar motorcycle.

Worth mentioning here that a miscreant with a black-colour Bajaj Pulsar bike had robbed ₹2.80 lakh at gun point from a nationalised bank in Infocity area here Monday afternoon.

In yet another incident, four armed men decamped with the gold chain and ₹40,000 from a trader near Teishpur on Bhubaneswar-Puri National Highway at around 11:45pm Monday. The victim has been identified as Niranjan Nayak (45).

Niranjan has lodged a complaint with Pipli police. According to his FIR, he was returning home from Bhubaneswar. On the National Highway, some miscreants waylaid him and started demanding money. When he denied, the miscreants attacked him with a sword and snatched away the cash bag and gold chain from him.

Locals rescued Niranjan in a critical condition and rushed him to the Mangalpur Community Health Centre for treatment. Police have started an investigation into the matter and detained a person for questioning in this connection.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



State sees 13% growth in Kharif registration

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: As many as 14, 02, 205 farmers have registered their names online for upcoming Kharif paddy procurement – a 13 per cent rise as compared to the previous year's registration.

According to sources at Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare (FS&CW) department, 14, 02, 205 farmers have registered themselves through online for the Kharif procurement season whereas 12, 35,908 farmers had registered their names for sale of Kharif paddy in 2019-20. In the COVID-19 situation, adhering to all guidelines issued by the government and maintaining social distancing, the online farmers registration works have been executed smoothly by the department and 1, 66,297 more farmers have registered their names for the Kharif paddy procurement.

Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain has thanked farmers as well as officials for achieving the feat.

A total of 2,852 designated primary agriculture cooperative societies (PACS) and LAMPS partic-

14, 02, 205 farmers have registered through online for the current Kharif procurement season as against 12, 35,908 farmers in 2019-20

ipated in the farmers' registration in the 30 districts. In Kharif Marketing Season 2020-21, almost all districts have witnessed higher farmers' registration in comparison with last year.

In Nuapada district, the registration has recorded a 35 per cent growth while Bolangir and Jajpur have recorded growth of 29 per cent, Mayurbhanj 28 per cent, Jharsuguda 23 per cent, Deogarh 22 per cent, Bhadrak 20 per cent and Dhenkanal 19 per cent.

Similarly, the registration has increased by 18 per cent each in Angul, Jagatsinghpur and Koraput districts. Cuttack has recorded 17 per cent growth in the registration, Sambalpur 16 per cent, Balasore 15 per cent, Bargarh 15 per cent and Sundargarh 13 per cent.

New norms for allotment of land in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The state government Tuesday notified rules for settlement of government lands available in Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) area.

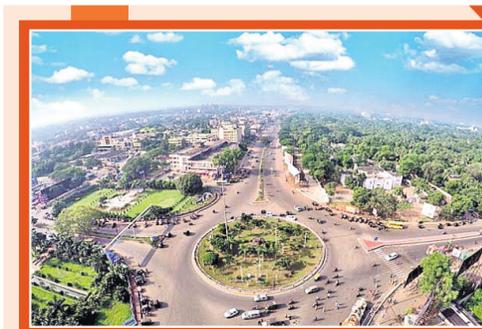
As per the government Rules of Business, general control over government land lying within the BMC area and leasing and transferring of sites in new capital is the subject matter of General Administration department.

Accordingly, GA & PG Department was allotting government land within BMC area for different purposes under the provisions of the Government Grants Act, 1895. However, the Centre has repealed the Government Grants Act, 1895.

Therefore, the state government has brought the rules making amendment to the Odisha Government Land Settlement Rules (OGLS), Rules 1983 by inserting a separate schedule for allotment of lands within the BMC limits.

The new rules will be applicable for leasing or transfer of government land in the Capital city for various purposes in public interests.

As per the new rules, land can be allotted to state departments, Union



REFORM MEASURES

Panel led by CS will be constituted to consider and recommend allotment of land to the state govt

The new rules will be applicable for leasing or transfer of government land in the Capital city for various purposes in public interests

Earlier, settlement of govt land in the city was being done as per Government Grants Act, 1895, which has been repealed

government agencies, PSUs, Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) and cooperative societies.

A committee led by Chief Secretary will be constituted to consider and recommend allotment of land to the state government. The director of estates has been authorised to scrutinise the applications, eligibility criteria and verify the land use plan. Any allotment of land will subject to payment of premium provided that government may exempt or reduce the fee. In addition to the premium, the lessee will

have to pay annual ground rent for the land as decided by the government from time to time.

In case the land is allotted to any department, the government will not charge any price for that.

The land allotted in favour of a department or in favour of a department of the Union government will be recorded in the departmental khata.

After conversion of leasehold residential plots to freehold status, the Record-of Rights (RoR) will be corrected in Sthitiban or Raiyati status while the land allotted for res-

idential purposes shall be recorded as Gharabari.

The director of Estates, after obtaining government approval, can impose penalty and also resume the land if the lessee has used it for any purpose other than the one for which it was given for.

If the land has been kept unutilised for a period exceeding three years from the date of allotment, the government can also revoke the settlement. In case the lessee violates the terms and conditions of the lease, the government will cancel the allotment.

Include milk products in MDM, ICDS: Farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Odisha Milk Farmers' Association (OMFA) Tuesday wrote a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik urging him to include milk & milk products in mid-day meal (MDM) and ICDS programmes in Odisha.

OMFA chairman Rabi Behera said that the country is observing nutrition month and the Centre has promised to provide balanced diet to every child as envisioned by Prime Minister of India in his 'Man Ki Baat' programme August 30, 2020.

Behera said that recently Vice-President of India Venkaiah Naidu held a discussion with Women and Child Development Minister Smruti Irani and suggested her to issue an advisory to all the state governments and Union Territories for providing milk and paneer/milk powder in MDM and ICDS programmes to fight malnutrition.

The OMFA is fighting for the cause for the last few years.

Behera said, "We have discussed the matter with the then Chief Secretary Aditya Prasad Padhi in 2017. He had agreed to recommend it to the Cabinet for the approval of providing milk & milk products in MDM and ICDS programmes. On 10th September 2019, we submitted a memorandum to the Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo on this issue."

If milk and paneer are included in MDM & ICDS, it will create additional employment opportunities for rural population more particularly for the women and youths, said Behera.

"It will also fight malnutrition among children and pregnant women," he added.

The letter to the Chief Minister said, "You have always taken pioneering steps on many issues which India has followed later on. For the economic empowerment of rural women and rural youths, dairy farming will be a major step."

Doorstep learning a success during pandemic: Report

81% TEACHERS ARE CONFIDENT THAT THE STUDENTS CAN BE PROMOTED TO NEXT CLASS ONCE SCHOOLS REOPEN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: An assessment by SC and ST Development department has claimed that alternate learning proved vital to the vulnerable population during the COVID-19 pandemic.

and 250 parents across four districts – Raygada, Khurda, Mayurbhanj and Angul.

According to the study report, a majority of teachers (79%) reported spending three hours in a village per day, in line with the guidelines. "Irrespective of training, a

Jagannath Saraka and department secretary Ranjana Chopra presented the report. The secretary said that the department has also come forward with communication materials in Odia, Santhali and Ho languages while the prime mode of education in the

Resume train services for migrants: Pradhan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has written to Railway Minister Piyush Goyal, seeking his intervention to resume the now-suspended services of Shramik Special trains from Odisha to other states to facilitate return of migrant workers to their places of work.

In a letter to Goyal, the Union Petroleum and Steel Minister said he has received many representations from migrant labourers in the state, seeking resumption of such special train serv-

ices to Gujarat, Maharashtra and other states.

"As you would be aware, there was a mass exodus of migrant workers from states like Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra to Odisha in the wake of nationwide COVID-19 lockdown. With the efforts of the Railway Ministry, thousands of workers across the country could reach their home towns by Shramik Special trains and the same was appreciated widely," Pradhan said.

There is a need to resume train services for migrant workers so that they can go back to their workplaces, he said, adding that these labourers have ex-

pressed their plight due to unavailability of jobs.

"I am informed that even though some employers are willing to offer bus transport service from Odisha, due to the prevailing monsoon conditions, a long and arduous journey via road is neither feasible nor safe," Pradhan said in his letter.

"I request your intervention for restarting of Shramik Express Trains from Odisha to states like Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra at the earliest," he added.

Pradhan's letter came after eight migrant workers, who were on their way from Odisha's Ganjam to Surat in Gujarat, were killed and several injured when the bus carrying them met with an accident in Chhattisgarh last week.

There is a need to resume train services for migrant workers so that they can go back to their workplaces

DHARMENDRA PRADHAN
UNION MINISTER

ALTERNATE LEARNIGN & MENTORSHIP



THE SC/ST DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT IN ASSOCIATION WITH UNICEF CONDUCTED AN ASSESSMENT AND SAID THAT THE PROCESS HAS PROVED TO BE A MAJOR TOOL OF LEARNING AND THAT IT BOOSTED THE CONFIDENCE OF TEACHERS, PARENTS AS WELL AS THE STUDENTS

THE STUDY ANALYSED RESPONSE FROM 190 TEACHERS, 274 STUDENTS AND 250 PARENTS ACROSS FOUR DISTRICTS – RAYGADA, KHURDA, MAYURBHANJ AND ANGUL

A MAJORITY OF TEACHERS (79%) REPORTED SPENDING THREE HOURS IN A VILLAGE PER DAY

The department, through Alternate Learning and Mentorship (ALM) also referred as 'doorstep learning', has planned to reach out to the students in rural areas through teachers who tried to teach students during the pandemic and tried to organise open classes to ensure uninterrupted studies.

The department in association with UNICEF conducted an assessment and said that the process has proved to be a major tool of learning and that it boosted the confidence of teachers, parents as well as the students.

The study analysed response from 190 teachers, 274 students

majority of teachers (82%) reported clarity of tasks assigned. Almost three-fourth of all teachers acknowledged receiving learning materials and additional support on time," the report said.

The report said that two out of three teachers (63%) have faced some difficulties in the implementation of the programme. "A majority of teachers (81%) were confident that the students can be promoted to next class once school reopens," the report said.

The department Tuesday held a press conference to announce the results of the assessment report. SC/ST Development Minister

schoools remained in Odia. She said, "The programme reached out to ST and SC children not only with curriculum-based teaching but also important lessons on health, hygiene, online safety and child protection issues."

"The assessment of the programme has given us a greater understanding of the existing challenges and the need to do more to ensure every child can learn and grow to their full potential. We look forward to working with the Government of Odisha to ensure quality education for all children," Monika Nielson, Chief of Field Office, UNICEF, Odisha said.

nCoV recoveries cross 1-L mark

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The state's COVID-19 tally mounted to 1, 31, 382 Tuesday with 3,490 people testing positive for the disease, a Health and Family Welfare department official said.

Thirteen more fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 569, he said.

Of the fresh fatalities, three were reported from Puri, two each from Ganjam, Mayurbhanj and Rayagada and one each from Cuttack, Kandhamal, Khurda and Subarnapur districts.

Odisha had reported its highest single-day spike of 14 COVID-19 deaths August 29.

Ganjam district has so far accounted for 209 of the 569 fatalities in the state, followed by Khurda (77), he said. Fifty-three coronavirus patients have so far died in the state due to other ailments, the official said.

The fresh COVID-19 cases were reported from all the 30 districts of Odisha. Of the new cases, 2,094 were reported from quarantine centres, and 1,396 people tested positive during contact-tracing, he said.



NO RESPIRE

3,490 FRESH COVID-19 CASES HAS PUSHED TALLY TO 1,31,382

THIRTEEN MORE FATALITIES HAVE TAKEN THE STATE'S CORONAVIRUS DEATH TOLL TO 569

OF THE NEW CASES, 2,094 WERE REPORTED FROM QUARANTINE CENTRES, AND 1,396 PEOPLE TESTED POSITIVE DURING CONTACT-TRACING

68 from Jajpur, 68 from Koraput, 64 from Jagatsinghpur, 62 from Sambalpur, 54 from Bhadrak, 50 from Jharsuguda, 45 from Nabarangpur, 41 from Malkangiri, 36 from Sonepur, 35 from Dhenkanal, 28 from Bolangir, 28 from Kandhamal, 25 from Nuapada, 23 from Sundargarh, 18 from Kalahandi, 18 from Rayagada, 17 from Gajapati, 15 from Kendrapara, 12 from Nayagarh, nine from Angul and seven from Boudh.

Khurda district topped the list of fresh cases with 535 infections, followed by Cuttack (376), Mayurbhanj (207) and Rayagada (206).

The Health Department Tuesday said that 2,787 persons who earlier tested positive for COVID-19 have recovered and are being discharged. With this, total recoveries in the state has touched 1,02,185.

Out of the 2,787 persons, 1145 are from Khordha, 230 from Cuttack, 192 from Puri, 153 from Mayurbhanj, 115 from Ganjam, 78 from Balasore, 76 from Keonjhar, 75 from Bargarh,

As many as 376 new COVID-19 cases were detected under Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) limits in last 24 hours, BMC said Tuesday. While 145 of them are quarantine cases, remaining 231 are local contact ones. Meanwhile, 420 persons who earlier tested positive for the disease have recovered.

According to a notification issued by the civic body as of Tuesday, 14,065 persons have tested positive for COVID-19 in Bhubaneswar out of which 8,949 have recovered. While there are 5,053 active cases, 50 persons succumbed to the disease.

PLAYFUL MOOD



A group of tourists enjoying a bath in Puri sea, Tuesday, even though the coastal district witnessed a rise in Covid-19 cases

CS takes stock of COVID in Rourkela

GOVT TO SEND 20 MORE DOCTORS TO ROURKELA CITY SOON

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Following instructions of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, a team of senior officers led by Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy Tuesday visited Rourkela and reviewed COVID management by the district administration there.

Tripathy also visited Hi-Tech hospital, Jaiprakash hospital and Shanti Memorial hospital in Rourkela and took stock of the treatment facilities there. After visit and review, the chief secretary said, "As of now, the district administration of Sundargarh has managed Covid-19 situation in a very disciplined and organised manner. Two ICUs are presently operating in Rourkela. Another will be set up soon."

He said that 20 more doctors would be sent to Rourkela soon. They would join in a day or two. Tripathy directed Rourkela Municipal Corporation (RMC) to



Chief Secy asks RMC to start Jan Sampark campaign involving people's representatives and community organisations for intensive awareness and preventive measures

start Jan Sampark campaign involving people's representatives and community organisations for house to house intensive awareness and preventive activities. Tripathy also directed the officials to carry on other immunisation programmes uninterrupted.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health & Family Welfare PK Mohapatra said, "Presently plasma bank is functioning properly at Rourkela. The sero survey undertaken by RMRC—Bhubaneswar shows that around 25 per cent people in Rourkela have developed

anti-body against Covid-19, which is a good sign."

Mohapatra directed the officials concerned to redeploy the health staffers engaged in 297 COVID care centres set up at panchayat-level since the people admitted there had already been discharged after getting well and there were no person in many of the centres.

Among others, Sundargarh Collector Nikhil Pawan Kalyan, director medical education and training (DMET) CBK Mohanty and RMC commissioner Dibya Jyoti Parida were present.

Vehicles from other states fork out ₹2.12-cr fine

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The state government has challaned 1,480 buses, goods carriages and taxis of other states under Odisha Motor Vehicle Taxation (OMVT) Act and Motor Vehicle Act from June 2 to June 6.

The Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) carried out a special drive against the vehicles plying within Odisha without obtaining the required permit and evading taxes to Odisha government.

During the five-day special drive by RTOs, the government earned ₹2.12 crore penalties from 1,480 vehicles.

The RTOs started the drive following the direction of State Transport Authority (STA).

The STA had directed the RTOs to undertake a special drive against vehicles plying within Odisha without obtaining the required permit and not paying the tax to the government.

Around 658 vehicles were found plying without permits whereas 70 vehicles were seized for failing to pay the tax and penalty as per the challan.

Odisha has made the online system for issuance of permit and payment of tax in respect of commercial vehicles of other states visiting the state.

Experts thrust on remedial classes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Remedial classes will help the children who are lagging behind in their learning when the schools continue to remain shut due to COVID-19 outbreak.

This was revealed by experts while participating in a state-level webinar on "Quality Elementary Education for All during COVID 19: Challenges and Opportunities" which was jointly organised by local civil society organisations (CSOs) Tuesday.

Former Principal Secretary and Board of Revenue member Arabinda Behera said, "Remedial classes are necessary to bridge the learning gap among children, for those who are slow learners. Also, our policy must embrace a common school system which could offer equitable education to all. In addition to that, there is a need to recognise the critical role the teachers play in imparting quality education in classrooms," he said.

Achyuta Das, an education expert, said, "To impart quality education in classrooms, we must have quality teachers in our schools. Secondly, there is a need for collaborative and concerted efforts on issues affecting education as the digital divide is emerging as a big challenge," Das said.

Bamboo cluster launched in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 8: Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Narendra Singh Tomar Tuesday inaugurated 22 bamboo clusters in Odisha and eight other states through virtual mode.

The minister also released a logo for National Bamboo Mission and lauded the success of the mission saying that the country is now gearing up to increase the export of bamboo products.

The minister inaugurated bamboo clusters in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand and Karnataka apart from Odisha.



Addressing the videoconference, the Union Agriculture Minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always maintained that local industries should be protected to ensure their progress so that local artisans get sources of livelihood.

"The government's goal in the bamboo sector is being achieved with the concerted efforts of all stakeholders of the Bamboo

Bamboo clusters were opened in MP, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Assam, Nagaland, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Karnataka and Odisha

Mission. Import policy has also been modified to ensure progress of the bamboo industry in the country," the minister said.

Tomar said that the use of bamboo has been an ancient tradition in India and it is now being supported with modern technology. Youths are also being given training for bamboo industry, he added.

STIR OVER VARSITY ACT



Activists of AIDS O hold a demonstration at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to protest the amendment to the Odisha Universities Act-1989 and repeal of the Ravenshaw University Act, 2005

Ex-army man held for shooting at neighbour

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Khandagiri police arrested an ex-army officer for firing at his neighbour at Bharatpur under Khandagiri police limits here late Monday night.

The arrested army officer has been identified as Ashwini Rout and the injured man as Kunjabihari Behera. With the bullet stuck in his hand, Behera was rushed to a private hospital. His condition is stated to be stable now.

According to a source, Rout is a liquor addict. Every night, under the influence of alcohol, he would start hurling epithets at his neighbours. Monday night, he picked up a quarrel with Behera. The quarrel soon escalated and took an ugly turn when Rout came out of his house with a double-barrel

The arrested army officer has been identified as Ashwini Rout and the injured man as Kunjabihari Behera

rifle and opened five rounds at Behera.

On being informed, police reached the spot and arrested Rout. The cops also seized the rifle from his possession.

The police are investigating the incident and are on to find out if Rout has the required licence to keep the firearm.

"If it is found out that he does not have the licence, another case will be registered against him under Arms Act," police informed.

DRI seizes ganja worth ₹80L

Bhubaneswar: The sleuths of Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) Tuesday seized ganja worth around ₹80 lakh from a truck near Khandagiri here. Following a tip-off, the DRI's Odisha unit Tuesday intercepted the truck laden with different types of vegetables. DRI sources revealed that the seized cannabis weighing 5.5 quintal was packed in around 100 packets. The contraband sourced from Andhra Pradesh was being transported to Bihar. However, the driver and helper of the truck managed to give the DRI officials a slip.

Garg visits 1929 Call Centre

Bhubaneswar: COVID-19 observer for Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and Principal Secretary Water Resources Anu Garg Tuesday visited the 1929 Bhubaneswar city Call Centre at Bhubaneswar Operations Centre (BOC) of the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL).

Mancheswar Rly workshop joins war against COVID

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Even though passenger train services, except for Shramik Special trains, were suspended during the lockdowns, operation of freight and parcel trains continued in order to ensure supply of essential goods. In addition to this, East Coast Railway's (ECoR) Carriage Repair Workshop at Mancheswar has manufactured several articles to fight off COVID-19.

ECoR's workshop at Mancheswar, Bhubaneswar has come forward to prepare many COVID-19 related precautionary items for the benefit of both Railway personnel and passengers.

When the whole world was in a state of turmoil, the railwaymen at Mancheswar Carriage Repair Workshop have shown their prowess for which ECoR retains its dignified

position. The employees of workshop with their relentless courage and craftsmanship played a key role for the welfare of the society, even though they are less in number as compared to other workshops in the country.

During the lockdown period from April to July, Carriage Repair Workshop (CRW) at Mancheswar had given emphasis on preparation of in-house equipment related to COVID-19. CRW, Mancheswar has prepared 51 isolation coaches for COVID-19 patients so that the killer virus does not infect others.

CRW at Mancheswar has prepared 3,743 litres of sanitisers and 7,732 units of face masks for Railway employees. The workshop has manufactured 104 beds with foam for COVID patients.

The workshop has added a success story to ECoR's journey by executing auxiliary role in the fight

LOCKDOWN AS ADVANTAGE



against COVID-19 by manufacturing two stretchers, 61 oxygen cylinders, 61 oxygen cylinders,

The employees of workshop with their relentless courage and craftsmanship played a key role for the welfare of the society, even though they are less in number as compared to other workshops in the country

CRW, Mancheswar has prepared 51 isolation coaches for COVID-19 patients so that the killer virus does not infect others

CRW at Mancheswar has prepared 3,743 litres of sanitisers and 7,732 units of face masks for Railway employees

The workshop has added a success story to ECoR's journey by executing auxiliary role in the fight against COVID-19 by manufacturing two stretchers, 61 oxygen cylinder stands, four bio-medical waste transport trolleys, four medicine trolleys, 10 medical equipment trolleys among others.

der stands, four bio-medical waste transport trolleys, four medicine

trolleys, 10 medical equipment trolleys among others.

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2 barrages to come up across Baitarani

APPROVAL FOR THE PROJECTS COMES AFTER EIGHT YEARS OF BUREAUCRATIC DILLY-DALLYING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, Sept 8: In a major boost to the agriculture sector here, the state government has decided to set up two barrages across Baitarani here which would result in expanding irrigational coverage to 1,500 hectares of land in the district and the neighbouring Bhadrak.

The two projects estimated at around Rs 236.63 crore has got administrative approval of the state government, a report said.

The two projects will also play instrumental in ensuring drinking water to Jajpur town and compensate for water shortage during major religious rituals like Baruni Snana in Baitarani.

Significantly, the two barrages are expected to ensure flood control in the downstream areas of the river in the two districts.

Reports added that the two barrages will come up on the left and right side of Saptamatruka temple across Baitarani.

After approval of the cost estimate of the project, the Water Resources department has awarded the contract of the construction to OCCL.

Engineer in-charge Jyotirmay Rath has intimated to the principal secretary of the Water Resources department about it and issued an order for construction of the projects.

After commissioning of the two



Saptamatruka Temple during the recent flood in Baitarani
WITH ₹236.63 CR
JAJPUR RESIDENTS EXPECT THE BARRAGES TO ENSURE FLOOD CONTROL IN DOWNSTREAM AREAS OF BAITARANI | WHILE THE RIGHT SIDE BARRAGE WILL BE 84.50 METRE-HIGH, THE LEFT SIDE BARRAGE WILL BE OF 90 METRES

Apart from irrigation, the barrages will dam up water for 'Baruni Snana' in Baitarani. OCCL will start its work soon

DHANESWAR SAMAL | EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, JAJPUR

projects, Jajpur town will get drinking water while irrigation will be provided through lift irrigation points to 700 hectares in Bhadrak and 800 hectares in Jajpur.

Moreover, the barrages will dam up enough water for devotees for holy 'Baruni Snana'.

Various quarters and particularly the farming community were enthused over the project.

The approval of the projects has come after eight years of official process.

In the monsoon, Brahmani and Baitarani wreak flood havoc in most parts of Jajpur and Bhadrak. Even their distributaries create

massive flood situation in various pockets, damaging lives and properties.

The two districts saw unprecedented floods between July 26 and 29 due to low pressure-induced heavy rains.

This flood is said to be the worst ever one in the district in the last two decades. Over 10 lakh people and three lakh domestic animals were affected by the flood.

Around 12 people have died while 38,000 livestock perished in the flood. With the execution of the two barrages, people of Jajpur expect that the barrages will ensure flood control in the downstream areas of the river.

The right side barrage will be of 84.50 metres. Initially, it was thought that one barrage will not

be enough to conserve water. Later, it was decided that another barrage will be set up.

The left side barrage will be of 90 metres. The right barrage work will be started in the current fiscal while that of the left barrage will be started in 2021-22.

Initially, Rs 83.42 crore was sanctioned for the right barrages.

Dhaneswar Samal, the executive engineer of the Jajpur Water Resources Division, said that apart from irrigation, the barrages will dam up water for 'Baruni Snana' in Baitarani.

OCCL will start its work soon, he added. However, he did not say about flood control by the two projects. Given this, the flood control hope of the people in downstream areas is in question.



A breach on an embankment of Kelua river in Dharmashala area of Jajpur is being repaired

OP PHOTO

Will Odisha Prison Training School in Silk City shut down?

Over 50 batches of students have completed their training under this institute and were engaged in different jails across the state



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhampur, Sept 8: Odisha Prison Training School was set up in Bhampur in 1984 with an aim to train recruits to run prisons in the state. Now, there is a plan to shut this training institute and merge it with another bigger one at Bhubaneswar, elsewhere, a report said.

The 36-year-old training school is located on the way to Shilpanchal Road. Over

50 batches of students have successfully completed their training under this institute and were engaged in different jails in the state.

Locals feel sad to know that the government is planning to shift the institute. The state government has set up Mahatma Gandhi Prison Academy in Bhubaneswar.

According to the official announcement, this prison training school will be

merged with the academy. Some staff and assets have already been shifted to the academy. As a result, this old training school is going to be shut forever.

Locals have been opposing this plan. In March, members of Ganjam Zilla Bikash Manch submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister, opposing the merger of this old institute with the Bhubaneswar-based academy.

It was alleged that the government has not taken any step in this regard. Earlier, people were told that the second campus of the prison academy will function at this institute. Sadly, there is no formal announcement in this regard till date, locals lamented.

The institute is almost dysfunctional with some staff guarding the training school. All kinds of facilities are still here for training of the

prison personnel. The institute has been equipped with well-trained instructors and trainers with good classrooms, a library, a parade ground and, separate hostels for male and female trainees.

When asked about the fate of this old prison training institute, superintendent of the circle jail Kulamani Behera said that a plan is afoot to merge this institute with the academy in Bhubaneswar, but there is no report about how far this plan has been worked upon.

Masks are 'must' to travel in public transport in Ganjam district: Admin

'Oxygen Checking Campaign' has been started in all blocks, NACs and municipality areas of the district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Sept 8: In its fight against coronavirus, the Ganjam district administration Tuesday made wearing of face masks mandatory for passengers while traveling in auto rickshaws and buses.

"Passengers must wear face mask while travelling in auto rickshaws and buses. Also passengers limit must be followed. Drivers of vehicles have to ensure it. Otherwise, action will be initiated against owners of vehicle," Ganjam district Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange



Representative pic

tweeted. In another tweet, Collector Kulange informed that door-to-door 'Oxygen Checking Campaign' has been started in all blocks, NACs and municipality areas of the district.

"Our frontline COVID workers are ensuring early detection and timely referral of suspected cases from the field," he informed.

The campaign will continue till September 14, it was learnt. The campaign is necessary to

monitor SpO2 levels of all residents. SpO2 is known as oxygen saturation. It is a measurement of amount of oxygen carrying hemoglobin in the blood compared to amount of hemoglobin not carrying oxygen. The SpO2 of a healthy person should be between 94 and 100 per cent.

Chhatrapur sub-collector Priyaranjan Prusty, BDO Ambika Prasad Das and tehsildar Nilamadhab Bhoi were present at such a campaign at the block Tuesday.

On the other hand, the district had high mortality rate compared to others. It is observed that people having diabetes and high blood pressure are falling victim to the virus.

It is worth mentioning that the district is no longer a Covid-19 hotspot and is already on the path towards recovery.

MOTORIST KILLED AS POLICE VEHICLE HITS HIM IN MALKANGIRI



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 8: Tension flared up at Pangam village under Mathili police limits in Malkangiri district after a police van hit a pedestrian leading to his death on the spot Tuesday.

The deceased has been identified as Balaraj Sahu, who worked as a Gram Rozgar Sevak (GRS) at Nayakguda village. Three policemen also sustained injuries in the mishap. The injured policemen—an SI and two constables—were rushed to Saheed Laxman Nayak Medical College and Hospital in Koraput. According to a source, some policemen of Mathili police station were on their way towards Malkangiri in a vehicle. As they were nearing Pangam, the van hit Balaraj, who was coming from the other direction on a two-wheeler.

Since a police vehicle was involved in the accident, people got enraged and staged a roadblock demanding action against the driver and compensation for the victim, eyewitnesses said. Vehicles were seen stranded on both sides of the road owing to the roadblock. According to the latest information, top police officials were on the spot and trying to pacify the agitators.

Viral video shows HM celebrating Teachers' Day with schoolchildren

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kuanrmanda, Sept 8: A headmaster of a government high school is in soup for celebrating Teachers' Day with the schoolchildren in Kuanrmanda in Sundargarh district.

The incident came to the fore after a video of the event went viral Monday. Covid-19 cases are increasing in the state exponentially and keeping this in view, the department of School and Mass Education has closed down all schools across the state. Keeping Teachers' Day in mind, the government had Saturday urged all the schools to not celebrate the day among students on school premises.

But a government high school in Raiboga area under Kuanrmanda block education office had celebrated the day in the face of the direction. A video showing how the day was

The incident came to the fore after a video of the event went viral Monday

being celebrated flouting all COVID norms went viral on social media Monday. The video clearly shows that the teachers and students were celebrating the day in a classroom. What local people objected to is that the teachers including the headmaster celebrated the event throwing COVID-19 norms like social distancing into wind.

When asked, Kuanrmanda block education officer (BEO) Sadananda Pradhan said, "It is shocking that a government school celebrated Teachers' Day despite strict orders against it. The headmaster will be served a show-cause notice and then stringent action will be taken against the guilty."

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, GANJAM
e-Procurement Notice No. 2273 Dtd.08.09.2020
Tender Reference No. GJM-NAC-02/2020-21

The Ganjam N.A.C. invites tender for Two bid system through e-tender portal.

Total Number of Work	: 01 No.
Value of Works	: Rs. 1,90,000.00
Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal	: From Dt. 09.09.2020 at 10.00 A.M. to 21.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
Last date of receipt of bids in the portal	: Dt. 21.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
Last date of submission of original documents in the Office of NAC, Ganjam is	: Dt. 22.09.2020 upto 11.30 A.M.
Date of document verification and date of opening of tender	: Dt. 22.09.2020 at 3.00 P.M. in NAC Office, Ganjam

Further details can be seen from the website: <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>

Sd./- Executive Officer, N.A.C., Ganjam

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPALITY, BASUDEVPUR
No. 4178 Date: 08.09.2020

"e" Procurement Notice
BID Identification No. BN-NO-E031-2020-21

Executive Officer, Municipality Basudevpur on behalf of Municipality Basudevpur invites percentage rate bids in Single Cover System conforming to the Detailed Tender Call Notice (DTCN) from Civil Contractors having valid Licence registered under Government of Odisha, having PAN and GST Certificate for the item of work as per DTCN and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in Govt. website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

1. Name of the Work	: Civil Construction Works as mentioned in DTCN
2. No. of Works	: 5 Nos.
3. Estimated Cost	: Rs. 24,80,364.00 to Rs. 78,14,796.00
4. Period of Completion	: 6 Months to 9 Months
5. Date and Time of Bidding	: Dt. 14.09.20 to Dt. 25.09.20 upto 5 P.M.
6. Last date and time for receipt of Bids in the portal	: Dt. 25.09.2020 upto 5 P.M.
7. Bids received online shall be opened on	: Dt. 28.09.2020 at 11.30 A.M.
8. Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Officer, Municipality, Basudevpur

Further details can be seen from the procurement portal i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

Sd./- Executive Officer Municipality, Basudevpur

EAST COAST RAILWAY
SCRAP SALE E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR OCTOBER-2020 FOR DEPOT & DIVISIONS

SCHEDULE OF E-AUCTION

Month	Headquarter/Divisions	Date
Oct. 2020	Depot Macheswar	05.10.2020 (Monday), 12.10.2020 (Monday), 19.10.2020 (Monday) & 29.10.2020 (Thursday)
	WSD/Waltair	06.10.2020 (Tuesday), 13.10.2020 (Tuesday), 20.10.2020 (Tuesday) & 30.10.2020 (Friday)
	Khurda Road Division	07.10.2020 (Wednesday), 15.10.2020 (Thursday), 21.10.2020 (Wednesday) & 28.10.2020 (Wednesday)
	Waltair Division	08.10.2020 (Thursday), 16.10.2020 (Friday), 22.10.2020 (Thursday) & 30.10.2020 (Friday)
	Sambalpur Division	05.10.2020 (Monday), 13.10.2020 (Tuesday), 21.10.2020 (Wednesday) & 29.10.2020 (Thursday)

The complete details of materials and terms and conditions will be as per Auction Catalogue, which shall be available with the respective auction conducting authority of East Coast Railway or from our website: www.ireps.gov.in within 07 (seven) days prior to the date of auction.

PR-245/L/20-21 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Bhubaneswar

ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LIMITED
(A GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA UNDERTAKING)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
LIFT IRRIGATION DIVISION, KENDRAPARA

No.CAD-451/- E-MAIL: eeolickdp@yahoo.in Tel. No. 06727 220393

e-Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.: 1120/LID.KDP/2020-21, Date: 31.8.2020

- Name of the O.I.T. : Executive Engineer, Lift Irrigation Division, Kendrapara
- Name of the Work : Installation and Energisation of 39 Nos CLIPs on "Turnkey" and percentage rate basis.
- No. of Packages : 39 Nos
- Tender Amount : Varies from 16.73 lakh to 32.34 lakh
- Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal for online bidding : From 1100 hours dt.16.09.2020 to dt.25.09.2020, 1700 hours.
- Date of seeking clarification: 21.09.2020 upto 1700 hours
- Last date and time of receipt of bids in the portal: Up to 1700 hours dt.25.09.2020.
- Date of submission of documents: From dt. 28.09.2020 11.00 hours to 29.09.2020, 1400 hours.
- Date of opening of Technical & Financial Bids: 1100 hours dt.30.09.2020
- Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal of Govt. Odisha i.e. www.tendersodisha.gov.in.
- Corrigendum/addendum, if required shall be available in the above portal.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Kendrapara
OIPR-32147/11/0001/2021

30 GM BROWN SUGAR SEIZED; TWO ARRESTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Sept 8: Police seized 30 gm of brown sugar on Jagdalpur Canal road in Ranitala area of Bhadrak Tuesday. Two peddlers were arrested. The accused were identified as Banamali Mallick and Bharat Mallick

of Charampa Baulpokhari. Police also seized a bike and two cell phones from them. They were produced in court. Further investigation to the drug peddling was on.

For the last several days, raids are being carried out in north Odisha to curb such illegal activities.

August 18, the Special Task Force of Crime Branch seized brown sugar worth 1.325 kg in Balasore. A special team of the STF acting on specific intelligence inputs seized the narcotics from near the bus stand. The value of the brown sugar was worth Rs 1.30 crore.

GOVT. OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NAYAGARH
At/Po-Nabaghapur, Dist-Nayagarh, Ph-06753-252049, E-mail-nayagarhrw2006@yahoo.in
No. O-329-
No.-: Tender-Online-NayagarhDivn.-02/2020-21
e-Procurement Notice

- Name of the work : Construction of Road Works
- Total No. of Projects : 20 (Twenty) Nos. of projects
- Class of contractor : "B" & "A" Class (of Orissa PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
"C" & "B" Class (of Orissa PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
"D" & "C" Class (of Orissa PWD) or relevant class of other licensing authorities
- Estimated cost : Rs.5.36 lakhs to Rs.17.86 lakh
- Time for completion : 02 (Two) calendar months
- Other details

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender on-line for bidding		Date & Time of opening of tender
		From	To	
1	2	3	4	5
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nayagarh	No.: Tender-Online-Divn. NAYAGARH-02/2020-21	18.09.2020 at 10.00 A.M.	30.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.	01.10.2020 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Divn., Nayagarh
OIPR-25106/11/0004/2021

Let us keep aflame in our heart the fire of progress.

THE MOTHER



Media going global

Another great exhortation from Prime Minister Narendra Damodardas Modi is that the Indian media should go “global” at a time when the nation enjoys a “very strong presence” at different international fora. True, the Indian media has failed to spread out beyond the nation’s boundaries, both print and visual, other than to areas abroad where there is an Indian presence.

While many of us have an exalted notion of the greatness of India and there are those who boast of India aiming to achieve a Super Power status in the near future, the reality on the ground is different. In the Asian region itself, India yielded ground not only to China but in the vision of most other countries such as Thailand, Myanmar, Malaysia or even Cambodia, it has no relevance. It is pointless to mention neighboring countries Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan or Bangladesh where a near total mistrust and dislike for India is all pervading.

In the Indian media field, a particular national newspaper boasts of being the largest-circulated English daily in the world and this has more to do with the large spread of the English-educated population within a nation of 1.50 billion people than its popularity as a dependable media. None other than Indians take fancy to it outside this country.

The history of Indian media has been murky. Mostly owned by industry, mining or political interests, the shadow of slanted news has been ever persistent. It has come to such a pass in the present times that a single major business house virtually owns the bulk of the national level television channels. The Emergency in the mid seventies was a blot on free India because the government interfered with the media, thereby damaging its reputation. However, the media overcame that and saw a huge spurt of growth because citizens wanted unbiased reporting. Over time, media owners preferred to take stands that would help them and their friends in their business interests. After the Emergency, the next big jolt to the Indian media has come now. The present Union as well as most state governments are demonstrating extreme intolerance towards free and fair reporting which affects the credibility of the national media. This intolerance has noticeably increased after Modi’s coming to power. For example, the whole world would be interested to know what is happening in Kashmir. The near complete blockage of verifiable news from that region demonstrates that the Indian media is not free.

Both national and regional media are yet to work out economic models of survival which would be independent of state or national government ads or doles. The financial distress faced by Indian media in recent times has helped an extremely small set of business interests buy up all the ailing media houses. The economic threat meted out to Press Trust of India by the Union government recently over carrying an interview of the Chinese Ambassador to India was a clear indication of state censorship. When such acts get publicised, the world does not trust media reports emanating from a country that does not have genuine freedom.

Quality is what makes a product popular, which can only be measured by editorial neutrality, accuracy and corroboration. When these are absent, media loses its shine. The print medium was overtaken by the visual media, TV channels, by the turn of this century. Now, even these TV channels are under threat from digital media available on handheld phones. India has a lot of print, television and digital channels but none qualify at a global sphere. While there might be many reasons for the different media failing to attain global recognition, a major reason would be the non-acceptance of Indian social mores throughout the world. We are not more considered as harbingers of change. Because of negative coverage by Indian media, even the Nepalese citizens stopped watching Indian TV after their earthquake of 25 April 2015. This showed how our reporters need to mature to global levels. Contrast this with the Al Jazeera English and Arabic channels beamed from Qatar, the tiny Gulf state, which reach large viewership across continents; and they are not necessarily Moslem viewers alone. Quality stands out. Question could arise as to how India with its huge size could not come up with a global TV network. The answer may not be too difficult to fathom. Almost all Indian TV channels have business or political interests driving them. Thus excellence in journalism has never been a matter of priority for the Indian owners.

India’s Doordarshan seemed a poverty stricken channel. In the year 1990, Satellite Television Asia Region (STAR) and later CNN came in and started beaming news and other programmes, some related to American propaganda about the Gulf War, in a high-voltage manner and changed the way Indians were treated to visual programmes and news. The BBC maintains its old aura, and reaches Indian homes too. Sky TV, Fox TV and a host of other television channels revolutionized the way the world watched TV in later years. The wars in the Middle East, like the overthrow of Saddam Hussein and the play of Patriot and Iraqi Scud missiles over the skies, reached homes around the world live, adding to the popularity and reach of Western TV channels.

By contrast, what the Indian TV News channels specialize in is panel discussions in which the host makes a hero out of himself, with a bunch of mostly sad faceless meek participants making a laughing stock out of themselves. Otherwise, it is Rhea Chakraborty dominating the screen in what is being termed a ‘media trial’. Reaching out to the wider world for the Indian media is easier said than done.

The Prime Minister, it seems, needs very many such activities to throw up regularly to entice people and make them discuss something new each day. That, probably he thinks, will keep the citizens’ focus away from real life problems facing every Indian today. All due to massive governance mismanagement. The last one, as far as one can remember, was about the possibility of making India the toy manufacturing hub of the world. These are just pointless exhortations that do not sound true anymore.

WISDOM CORNER

It is unwise to be too sure of one’s own wisdom. It is healthy to be reminded that the strongest might weaken and the wisest might err. MAHATMA GANDHI

I can calculate the motion of heavenly bodies but not the madness of people. ISAAC NEWTON

Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal. HENRY FORD

WORDSWORTH

Tinny

Tinny was once common in both Australia and New Zealand, though it has fallen somewhat out of use. That’s very probably because other slang senses have superseded it, such as those for a can or tin of beer and for a lightweight aluminium boat. As it happens, the first example recorded in print is from New Zealand, in the Chronicle of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force of 1918: “Remarks are heard on the ‘tinny’ luck or otherwise of the [poker] players while the ‘stiffs’ bemoan their luck.” A comment in a book by Eric Partridge two decades later asserts that it was First World War soldiers’ slang. Both the Oxford Australian Dictionary and the Oxford New Zealand Dictionary say the origin is the earlier slang tin for money. This is known from 1836. The Oxford English Dictionary notes, “Said to have been first applied to the small silver coins of the 18th century, which before their recall in 1817 were often worn quite smooth without trace of any device, so as to resemble pieces of tin.” Part of the stimulus for inventing it may have been the even older brass for money, which is known from the sixteenth century. Various compounds of tin appear in the record earlier than tinny. The Bulletin of Sydney noted in 1898 that a tin back is “a party who’s remarkable for luck”. Much later, tin-arsed appears as a term for a person who is remarkably lucky.



Ashok Mahapatra

WHILE THE CIVIL SERVICE HAS SERVED THE COUNTRY REASONABLY WELL, THERE IS A NEED FOR AN OVERHAUL TO MEET THE CHALLENGES OF TODAY

Following the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857 that came close to toppling the British rule in India and pursuant to the Government of India Act 1858, the administrative responsibilities were taken over by the Viceroy of India. The Viceroy was a direct representative of the Queen of England and assisted by the Imperial Civil Service (ICS). The ICS was headed by the Secretary of State for India, a member of the British cabinet.

Initially, almost all ICS officers were British and had been educated in elite British schools. Thereafter, a few Indians were inducted into the ICS. At the time of Independence, there were 322 Indians and 688 British ICS officers. In their heyday, those of the ICS were the most powerful officials in the Empire. A tiny cadre, a little over a thousand-strong, ruled more than 30 crore Indians. The ICS directed all the activities of British India, and every ICS officer had an average of three lakh subjects under him, and lorded over every corner of his subjects’ lives. The ICS, as belied by its name, was beholden to the British Empire and its principal role was to control colonial India on behalf of the Crown. Accordingly, all administrative and legal infrastructure were built to further this cause. This ethos of controlling every part of the subjects’ lives was carried forward by the successor service, the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), after Independence.

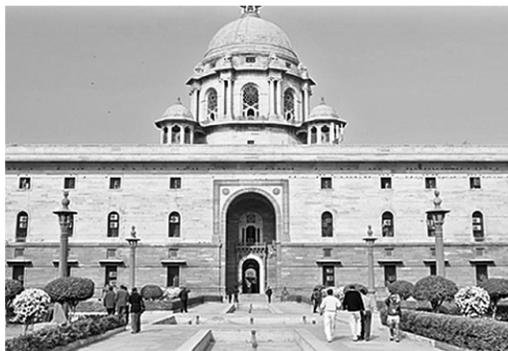
Jawaharlal Nehru noted that someone had once defined the Indian Civil Service “as neither Indian, nor civil, nor a service, but with which we are unfortunately still afflicted in this country.” At the time of Independence, the ranks and posts of the erstwhile ICS along with its top people were retained for continuity. The only thing that changed was the nomenclature as “IAS”. Other than that, nothing else changed.

Their main role was still to control almost every aspect of lives of the people under their jurisdiction and distribute largesse to those whom they fancied. There was no doubt at the time of Independence that the civil service was the frame of the country and that, without them, the country would collapse.

After Independence, India

FOCUS BUREAUCRACY

REFORM OR PERISH



Jawaharlal Nehru noted that someone had once defined the Indian Civil Service “as neither Indian, nor civil, nor a service, but with which we are unfortunately still afflicted in this country”

adopted a controlled economy to manage its finances. Hence, the ethos of the ICS continued with the IAS. As result, while the political class was coming to terms as how to govern the nation, the philosophy of control set forth by our colonial bureaucrats was continued and strengthened by the IAS.

In 1979, Margaret Thatcher, elected on the promise of change and reform, stated, “We have to move this country in a new direction, to change the way we look at things, to create a wholly new attitude of mind.” She appointed Sir Derek Rayner, who was not connected with the Civil Service, to recommend reforms and make the government administration more efficient and accountable. This resulted in core policy being made by a core team of competent civil servants while the operation and execution of the approved policies were entrusted to a number of independent agencies headed by professionals.

Furthermore, Margaret Thatcher was a visionary who recognised the onset of globalisation and that there was the need for professionals rather than generalists in positions of decision-making to ensure that Britain continued to retain its place in the world order. She faced strong resistance from the well-entrenched

British Civil Service. Nonetheless, she stood firm in her conviction and reformed the service anyway.

The role and competence of the policy makers have evolved since the 1950s. Today, no policy can or should be made purely from a national perspective. It needs to be made after taking the geopolitical situation and the state of the world economy into account. Therefore, the policy makers need not only be competent, but also specialised in the subject matter that they are handling to define the nation’s policy.

I have no doubt that, at the time of being inducted, the officers of the Civil Service were the brightest. However, once put in a policy making position, without specialisation, they are not fit for the job. It is impossible to make a considered judgement without having a complete understanding of the subject matter to ensure that it is acceptable both at international and national levels.

Additionally, without in-depth knowledge of the subject matter, it would be impossible to defend the country’s interests socially and economically when negotiating with investors and trade partners; particularly so when every country is competing for the same piece of the pie and protecting their own interests.

The initial training prepares

our civil servants for fieldwork. After they have done their mandatory fieldwork, they move to policy making positions (at the level of joint secretary at the Centre). At this stage, they are not specialised in any particular area from where they can dictate policy for the benefit of the national economy and the welfare of the Indian people after taking into account the geopolitical situations of the world. You cannot, and should not, have someone making policy on one subject one day and on another the next day. As a result, that person often gets either overwhelmed or over-dependent on the un-experienced junior cadre who do not have enough of exposure to fathom the larger picture. This often leads to decisions which have undesirable results.

The recent cabinet decision encouraging civil servants to reskill voluntarily is not the answer. When have the civil servants accepted any change to their service conditions voluntarily? They have responded only when the political masters ordered them to do this or that. Hence, mandatory specialisation is a must for policy makers.

While the civil service has served the country reasonably well, there is a need for an overhaul to meet the challenges of today. The Modi government came to power on the promise of change. Hence, it is incumbent on the Prime Minister to lead the charge for change for a new direction, to change the way we look at things, to create a new mindset for an India of the 21st Century. This is his ‘once in a century’ moment. No doubt there will be pushback from bureaucracy as they would not like to be disturbed from their comfort zones. Furthermore, the process cannot be led by the existing bureaucracy. It needs to be led by someone from outside the system and not having any existing baggage and definitely not a retired bureaucrat. Every bureaucrat will always protect his own brethren. Nonetheless, I believe the PM can do it. This is India’s chance of the century – reform we must or we miss the opportunity of the century and perish.

The writer is Director (retired), Maritime Safety Division, International Maritime Organisation, UN.

IN JEST THIS

Buying in bulk can sometimes be risky



Melvin Durai

IF YOU RECEIVE RICE IN BULK, THE BEST THING TO DO IS FEED PEOPLE IN BULK

When I’m grocery shopping, I’m not always happy to see different sizes of the same food item. This means that I need to make a decision: should I buy the larger quantity or the smaller quantity – or perhaps even the medium quantity? There are several factors that go into this decision, but two of the most important ones are the rate of consumption within the household and the rate of decay of the food item; whether or not it is perishable.

Rice, for example, is consumed in great quantities in many Indian households, but might otherwise last forever. You can buy a 100-kg bag of rice and leave it in your will for your great-grandchildren. It shouldn’t be surprising, then, that my wife and I usually buy the biggest bag of rice we can find in the grocery store.

The bigger the bag, the more we save. Not only is the unit price lower, I can also do a little weight-lifting and save money on a gym membership. This weight-lifting doesn’t just happen on the way home from the store; it also happens within our house, whenever my



wife says, “Can you get the rice for me?” She makes this request several times a week, perhaps eager to have a muscular husband.

My wife loves rice so much that if she won 100 bags of rice in a contest, she would be ecstatic, elated and what not! It would not matter if the amount of rice exceeded the amount of space in our kitchen. “Just fill our bedroom with rice,” she would say. “We’ll never have to buy rice again. We can sleep on the rice if we need to.”

While she undoubtedly has sweet dreams of this scenario, I have nightmares. It’s not that I don’t enjoy rice – it’s just that I prefer not to eat rice at every meal. One of my strongest culinary desires involves the occasional appearance at our dining table of a chapatti or naan.

Thankfully, I don’t have to worry too much about my wife winning 100 bags of rice, but there’s another scenario that I should probably be concerned about, thanks to the Twitter account of a writer named Shiv Ramdas.

Shiv recently live-tweeted an incident that happened at his sister’s home, somewhere in India. His brother-in-law got tired of making frequent trips to the store to buy rice. So, he decided to order some rice in bulk from a warehouse. But there was some kind of misunderstanding, resulting in a lorry filled with rice showing up at his home. Needless to say, his wife (Shiv’s sister) was soon berating him like he had accidentally set her saris on fire.

“If you have never heard a woman destroy a man with one

sentence 25 times in a row, you should meet my sister,” Shiv tweeted. “She’s terrifying. I’m on the phone and I’m scared and she isn’t even angry at me.”

So how did Shiv’s brother-in-law solve this problem? He ended up negotiating with the lorry driver, using a mediator, and instead of buying the entire load on the lorry, agreed to buy ‘only’ 23 sacks of rice. The driver also received two bottles of liquor for his trouble.

I can’t help wondering what my wife would do if a lorry-load of rice arrived at our house. She would be upset that we needed to pay for so much rice at once, but after the initial shock, she would be a little excited. The first thing she would do is go shopping — for the biggest rice pot we can afford.

“We can’t eat that much rice,” I would say.

“Don’t worry,” she would say. “You don’t have to eat it. I’m going to feed all the homeless and hungry people — the ones who will truly appreciate my rice dishes.”

If you receive rice in bulk, the best thing to do is feed people in bulk.

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

Whose Mumbai?

Sir, Whose Mumbai is it, after all? Does the country’s financial capital belong to only those who glorify the Maratha or Marathi culture? Certainly not. Had it been so, people hailing from a diverse spectrum of the Indian society wouldn’t have flocked to the mega city to be a part of its overall growth and development. The city of dreams has in fact produced great talents in the film industry, many of them from outside of the state. Political leaders having a parochial mindset assert it is the city of their own and threaten others from entering the city. The people of India love and admire the city for its high-voltage, round-the-clock activities. Good sense must prevail on those who have engaged themselves in the sinister design of dividing people into compartments.

Sanjib Das, CUTTACK

Flight tickets refund

Sir, The Director-General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has directed airlines that all flight tickets booked by passengers on domestic and international routes for travel between March 25 and May 3 this year will have to be fully refunded. DGCA mentions that if carriers are unable to reimburse the ticket fares, flyers will get a credit shell up to March 31, 2021. The decision is good, but it creates trouble for infrequent flyers. Most airlines are not concerned about offering cash refunds and they have converted tickets on credit shell. The impact of the Covid-19 will remain for a long time. In such circumstances, people will not like to travel by air. Hence, the credit shell is not beneficial to infrequent flyers. The DGCA must ensure a full refund to passengers who do not want to claim the credit shell.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA

Take back honour

Sir, This refers to the arrest of Deepak Kochhar, husband of banking sector’s top figure Chanda Kochhar, by the Enforcement Directorate, as part of the on-going probe against the two in money laundering and other cases. It is advisable that the Union Government now set procedure whereby prestigious national honours including Padma awards and Bharat Ratna are taken back from those who get involved in controversial actions. Chanda must give back the honour bestowed on her. The government is urged to do a periodic review of all such awards given in the past by seeking affidavits from the awardees to affirm that they are not involved in court-cases and controversies. Dignity demands as much.

Madhu Agarwal, DELHI

J&K glaciers melting at 'significant' rate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

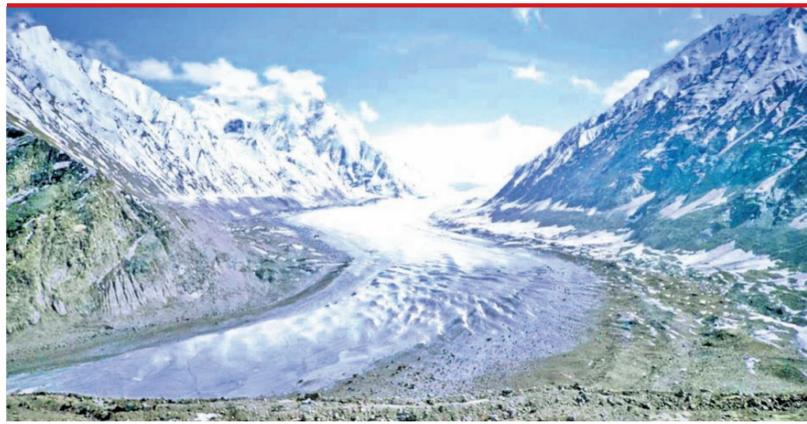
Srinagar, Sept 8: Glaciers in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh are melting at a 'significant' rate, according to a first-of-its-kind study which used satellite data to find that over 1,200 glaciers in the Himalayan region saw an annual reduction in mass of 35 centimetres (cm) on average between 2000 and 2012.

The study, published in the journal Scientific Reports, was carried over the Jammu, Kashmir, and Ladakh region, including areas across the Line of Control (LoC) and Line of Actual Control (LAC), and in all 12,243 glaciers were studied for thickness and mass changes.

"In general, it was observed that the glaciers in the Pir Panjal range are melting at the higher rate -- more than one metre per year -- while as the glaciers in the Karakoram range are melting relatively at slower rate, around 10 cms per year," noted Professor Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, corresponding author of the study.

"Some glaciers are even advancing or stable in the Karakoram range. In other mountain ranges like the Greater Himalayan range, Zaskar range, Shamabari range, Leh ranges, the glaciers are undoubtedly melting but the rate of melting is variable," Romshoo, Dean of Research at the University of Kashmir in Srinagar, told PTL.

The research team, including



Tariq Abdullah and Irfan Rashid, both from Geoinformatics Department, University of Kashmir, used two satellite observations made in 2000 by NASA and in 2012 by German space agency DLR. They employed this data to determine the glacier thickness changes over the entire Upper Indus Basin, comprising of over 12,000 glaciers.

"There is no such data (satellite observations) available in the world after 2012. This is a first of its kind study in the region and provides a very good idea about what is happening to the glaciers in the region," Romshoo explained.

Till date, he said, only six to seven

glaciers have been studied in the region for thickness and glacial mass changes using field observations.

The researchers noted that while glacier melting is a continuous process and the shrinkage in area of the glaciers is being estimated routinely, thickness and mass changes are not possible always because of the lack of satellite data.

There are also limitations and challenges associated with field based studies in the mountainous Himalaya, they said.

The team noted that during one decade of observation in this study, the region has lost about 70.32 gigatonne of glacier mass, which is "quite significant."

Romshoo noted that the continued melting of glaciers will have significant adverse impacts on every sector of economy in the region and beyond, particularly in the downstream areas which are already water scarce.

"It is pertinent to mention here that the waters emanating from this region are shared between the neighbouring countries in the south Asia," the professor at the Department of Earth Sciences, University of Kashmir, added.

The knowledge generated about the glacier thickness changes across different mountain ranges in the data-scarce Himalayan region is vital for determining the sustain-

ALARMING TREND

Melting of the glaciers in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh is going to impact the water, food and energy security with the consequent adverse effect on the dependent livelihoods, they noted

The researchers explained that the main drivers of the glacial melt in the Himalayan region are increasing temperatures and decreasing snow precipitation, resulting from greenhouse gas emissions from industrialisation and increasing use of fossil fuels the world over

A study, published in the journal Climatic Change July 29, found that Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh may witness a temperature increase of up to 6.9 degrees Celsius by the end of the century due to climate change, warning that the glaciers in this Himalayan region could shrink by 85 per cent if the projections come true

ability of water resources in the south Asian region, according to the researchers.

Romshoo noted that though there is "almost no industrialisation" in Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh Himalaya, the mountainous region is facing the brunt of climate change happening globally.

The latest study was conducted as part of the Department of Science and Technology research project "Centre of Excellence for glacial research in the western Himalaya."

'Economic distress causes rise in cases of smuggling in NE'

Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh share a 1,640-km unfenced border with Myanmar and the India-Myanmar border has turned into a vital corridor for smuggling of drugs, arms and ammunition



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati/Kohima, Sept 8: Industry body FICCI has said that the recent rise in smuggling in the northeastern region can be attributed to economic distress induced by the Covid-19 pandemic. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) said loss of jobs and lack of income due to recurrent lockdowns have left citizens without a means of livelihood.

"Reports suggest that smugglers and insurgents are using people from the local tribal areas to transport smuggled goods by taking advantage of their financial vulnerability caused due to Covid-19," a FICCI report said.

The FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE) highly appreciated the efforts of central para-military force Assam Rifles and praised its Director General along with other officers for their anti-smuggling operations.

The FICCI report said: "The Assam Rifles during its recent successful interception, seized illicit cigarettes, smuggled from neighbouring country, worth Rs 14 crore. Enforcement agencies impounded illicit cartons of cigarettes in 26 operations along the Indo-Myanmar border during months of July and August alone." "Various battalions of the forces intercepted smugglers transporting the illicit consignments using bikes, cars and trucks while hiding them inside rice sacks, jungle tracks, vegetation and others."

FICCI CASCADE Chairman Anil Rajput said that illicit cigarette smuggling is a formidable challenge before our nation that has been draining our government exchequer by creating

opportunities from tax arbitrage. It also threatens local industries and their capacity to create livelihoods. Assam Rifles' proactive vigilance in intercepting the movement of smuggled goods is a definitive step towards putting fear in the hearts of those who deal in such trading. Their commendable effort sets forth an example to be keenly studied and followed by other enforcement agencies of the country," Rajput said in his report.

FICCI has also requested Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla to intervene into the vital issue and to sensitise other paramilitary forces on the gravity of the issue and amplify the need for a greater focus on combating smuggling and smuggling-related crimes at the borders. In order to create large-scale awareness of this menace, FICCI CASCADE has been conducting interactions with government and enforcement agencies across several states in India on the ways to mitigate this challenge.

FICCI also appealed to the central government to declare smuggling as a national threat and that should be addressed with stricter vigilance and reforms.

Four Indian northeastern states --Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh share a 1,640-km unfenced border with Myanmar and the India-Myanmar border turned into the vital corridor for smuggling of drugs, arms and ammunition and other contraband.

Meanwhile, drugs and foreign origin cigarettes, valued at Rs 3.78 crore, were seized in three different cases in Meghalaya and Mizoram and five people, including a woman, apprehended, officials said Monday. Security officials suspect that the drugs and the cigarettes were smuggled from Myanmar.

No Covid death yet in this northeastern state



AGENCIES

An official said that 45,153 samples have been tested for COVID-19 till Monday.

The state recorded its first case of COVID-19 March 24, after a 50-year-old pastor who had returned from a trip to the Netherlands, tested positive. After spending over a month in the hospital, he was found negative April 27.

The state managed to contain the spread of COVID-19 for over two months until July when it recorded twelve new cases after the inter-state movement was lifted May 4.

The state of Mizoram has a Christian population of around 87 per cent and many church organisations have been sincerely and actively joining hands with the government in ensuring compliance of COVID-19-related guidelines and helping in tackling the disease.

Over 1,000 J&K candidates appear for NDA exams

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC), in collaboration with the Government of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), Sunday conducted the annual entrance examinations in off-line mode for admission in different streams in the National Defence Academy (NDA), at eight centers in J&K. Over a thousand candidates participated in the exam.

These were the first off-line examinations held in J&K since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020. Official sources said of the 1,000 candidates, 485 were from Kashmir alone. While 379 candidates appeared at the center set up at Amar Singh College in Srinagar, 199 more attended at the centre at S.P. Higher Secondary School. Over 500 candidates have reportedly appeared at six centres in Jammu.

Official sources said that due to the coronavirus pandemic, the observers from the UPSC did not oversee these exams in J&K and other stations this year.

Consequently, concerned Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners were engaged to discharge this duty. For the first time since March this year, special trains were operated to ferry the candidates from Baramulla and Banihal in the morning and back to home stations in the evening under strict Covid-19 standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Prescribed distance of two sq metre was maintained between the candidates even as the examination halls were fumigated and sanitized. Hand sanitizers were available and each candidate wore a face mask. Authorities had made elaborate security and surveillance arrangements at the centers as well as for smooth passage of the candidates through train and other modes of transportation.

Deputy Commissioner Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, who visited both the centers in the summer capital, said the candidates as well as the staff on exam and security duty observed all Covid-19 SOPs.

He said it was for the first time that an examination was held in Kashmir under Covid-19 SOP.



ON ALERT



Apache helicopter of the Indian Air Force lands amid border tensions with China, in Kishtwar district of Jammu, Tuesday.

Sikhs seek inclusion of Punjabi as official language in J&K

THE UNION CABINET HAS APPROVED A BILL UNDER WHICH KASHMIRI, DOGRI AND HINDI, APART FROM THE EXISTING URDU AND ENGLISH, WILL BE THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGES IN THE UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

Members of the Sikh community staged a demonstration here Tuesday, demanding inclusion of Punjabi in the list of official languages in Jammu and Kashmir.

Led by Supreme Sikh Organisation (SSO) chairperson S Gurmeet Singh, the demonstrators said they would intensify their struggle if their demand is not met.

The protest in Gandhi Nagar locality of Jammu came days after the Union Cabinet September 2 approved a bill under which Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi, apart from the existing Urdu and English, will be

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

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The protest in Gandhi Nagar locality of Jammu came days after the Union Cabinet September 2 approved a bill under which Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi, apart from the existing Urdu and English, will be



the official languages in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Singh said, "We held this rally to express our anger over the step-

motherly treatment being meted out to Punjabi-speaking people and injustice with the Sikh community at large. We want the Centre to include Punjabi and other regional languages in the official list."

"Punjabi belongs to all and not only to Sikhs. We want all the native languages to grow in the Union Territory as people speaking in Gojri, Pahari and Punjabi comprise one-third of its population," he said, adding the Sikh community stands for Punjabi and the spirit of inclusiveness.

Gojri- and Pahari-speaking people have also expressed their resentment over the exclusion of their languages.

Factory workers to get free sanitary napkins in Meghalaya

THE AMENDMENT TO THE 40-YEAR-OLD SERVICE RULES ALSO MAKES IT MANDATORY FOR FACTORIES TO PROVIDE PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPEs) TO ALL WORKERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shillong, Sept 8: Women factory workers in Meghalaya are set to get free sanitary napkins at their workplace as the state cabinet has approved an amendment to the four-decades-old Factories Rules, a government spokesperson said Tuesday.

The amendment to the 40-year-old service rules also makes it mandatory for factories to provide personal protective equipment (PPEs) to all workers, he said.

"After discussion, the proposal to amend rules 25 and 78 (C) of the Meghalaya Factories Rules, 1980 was approved at the cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Conrad Sangma Monday," James PK Sangma told PTL.

The amendment was made after the Union Ministry of Labour and Employment had written to the

state government to incorporate the Model Factories Rules regarding the provisions of sanitary napkins for the women workers under the Factories Act, 1948 and also to incorporate rules regarding the PPEs for all workers, he said.

According to the government spokesperson, the proposed amendment also incorporated clauses to ensure that the sanitary napkins of adequate quantity and conforming to Indian standards shall be provided and maintained in the women's toilets for their use and the same be replenished on a daily basis. He said disposal bins with a lid shall also be provided within the women's toilets for the collection of the used napkins and they shall be disposed of as per procedures approved by the inspector.

The same clauses are also applicable to the PPEs provided in terms of quality and disposal, he



said. Meanwhile, the Cabinet has also approved the appointment of former chief secretary PS Thangkiew as chairman of the Meghalaya State Food Commission (MSFC) and Lamonlang M Syiem

as chairperson of the Meghalaya State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (MSCPCR).

Thangkiew succeeded BK Deb Verma, whose tenure ended in February and Syiem replaced

Meena Kharkongor as her term ended in March this year and both were recommended by the respective search committees, he said.

The search committee had also recommended the appointment of Dr Grenalin Marak, retired superintendent of Tura civil hospital, as member of the MSFC while renewing the tenure of Ravi Gurng as legal member. The cabinet also cleared the appointment of -- SD Massar, E Shylla, FP Marak, MK Marak, Tiana TD Areng and Dr Ibamon Laloo as members of MSPCR.

The spokesperson also said that the cabinet also cleared the appointment of PSR Kharkongor, as the new chief technical adviser (CTA) to the state power department for a period of one year besides clearing the appointment of 18 engineers in the Water Resources department.



The world is now listening to India with more attention. The Indian media needs to go global too
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

TAJ MAHAL TO REOPEN EVEN AS VIRUS RAGES IN INDIA

India's top tourist attraction the Taj Mahal is set to reopen more than six months after it was shut, officials said Tuesday, even as the vast nation battles soaring coronavirus infections



of the day quote

Why are Bollywood twitterati getting Y+ security when India has a police to population ratio of 138 per lakh & ranks 5th lowest globally among 71 countries?
MOHUA MOITRA | TMC MP

The law is same for everyone. There is no political vendetta. Security is given to people who are looked upon as idols. If there are allegations of drug consumption against her and if they are false, the people leveling them should be thrown into jail
ANIL DESHMUKH | MAHARASHTRA HOME MINISTER

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray reviews only the COVID-19 situation in Mumbai, while Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar is interested in Pune. Don't Aurangabad and Nagpur come under Maharashtra?
DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | BJP LEADER

Centre issues SOP for partial reopening of Classes 9 to 12

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: The Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry Tuesday issued standard operating procedures (SOPs) for partial resumption of teaching activities in schools for students of Classes 9 to 12, on a voluntary basis, from September 21.

In a statement, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said: "Government of India is following a phase-wise unlocking of activities. In days to come, this would also involve partial resumption of activities in schools for students of Classes 9th to 12th on a voluntary basis, for taking guidance from their teachers. This would be allowed from 21st September 2020."

The precautionary measures include teachers, employees and students ensuring physical distancing of at least six feet, use of face covers, frequent hand-washing, following respiratory etiquette, self-monitoring of health, and not spitting.

Schools have been asked to specifically ensure that online or distance learning should continue to be permitted and encouraged and that students of Classes 9 to 12 should be permitted to visit their school on a voluntary basis for taking guidance from their teachers. "This will be subject to written consent of their parents or guardians. Such visits and teacher-student interaction must be organised in a staggered manner," the ministry added.



THE PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES INCLUDE TEACHERS, EMPLOYEES AND STUDENTS ENSURING PHYSICAL DISTANCING OF AT LEAST SIX FEET, USE OF FACE COVERS, FREQUENT HAND-WASHING, ETC
SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN ASKED TO SPECIFICALLY ENSURE THAT ONLINE OR DISTANCE LEARNING SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE PERMITTED AND ENCOURAGED
STUDENTS OF CLASSES 9 TO 12 SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO VISIT THEIR SCHOOL ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS FOR TAKING GUIDANCE FROM THEIR TEACHERS

Only the schools outside the containment zones will be allowed to open. Further, students, teachers and employees living in containment zones will not be allowed to attend. Students, teachers and employees will also be advised not

HONOUR KILLING

Newly-wed couple shot dead by woman's family

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, Sept 8: A woman and her husband were shot dead in Udhampur district of Uttarakhand allegedly by her father and her brother, who were against the marriage, police said Tuesday.

The incident took place in Kashipur area of the district Monday night, they added.

The victims, Nazia and Rashid, had eloped in June and got married against the wishes of the woman's family. Additional Superintendent of Police, Kashipur, Rajesh Bhatt said.

Nazia's father had created a ruckus at Rashid's house after the marriage and even threatened to shoot the newly-weds if he spotted them in the Alli Khan mohalla, where the two families live, Bhatt said.

However, he later invited the couple to spend a few days at his home and told them that he longer had anything against the alliance, the ASP said.

Believing that her father had accepted the relationship, Nazia had come at her home with Rashid a few days back, he added.

On Monday night, when they were returning from a market on a motorcycle, Nazia's father and her brother stopped them and shot them, the official said, adding that the accused are on the run.

SC to hear transgender woman's plea against job denial in Air India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: The Supreme Court Tuesday said it would hear after three weeks a transgender woman's plea challenging Air India's decision to deny her a job as a cabin crew member.

A bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheshwari and Sanjiv Khanna said that the matter has been already notified for hearing and would be taken up after three weeks.

Senior advocate Anand Grover, appearing for the petitioner, said that she had filed an application for early hearing of her main petition as the matter is pending since 2017.

On July 23, the top court had allowed the transgender woman, who had undergone sex change in 2014, to amend her plea challenging Air India's decision to deny her the job of a cabin crew member by assailing the grounds of conducting personality test for third gender candidates by the national carrier.

The top court had issued notice in 2017 and sought responses from Air India and the Civil Aviation Ministry on the plea. They justified the decision of not selecting her saying she had failed to secure minimum marks to qualify for the per-

sonality test and group discussion (PT and GD) and there no discrimination done against her.

The petitioner had claimed that to pursue her dreams, she had worked for 13 months in Sutherland Global Services in the airline sector and even at Air India's customer support, both domestic and international, at Chennai. Born in Tamil Nadu in 1989, she said she graduated in engineering in 2010.

She underwent the gender surgery to turn into a woman in April 2014 and this information was published in the state government gazette.

The petitioner said she learnt about an advertisement July 10, 2017 by Air India

for the post of a female cabin crew for its Northern Region office in Delhi on a fixed term engagement basis for an initial period of five years. She applied in the female category as she had undergone a successful sexual reassignment surgery in Bangkok.

She said she got the call letter, appeared for PT and GD tests and undertook four attempts, "but unfortunately she has not been short-listed for the post in question even though she fared well in the tests conducted".

SHORT TAKES

5 die due to toxic gas in well

Gonda (UP): Five people died here Tuesday after being exposed to toxic gas in a well where locals used to dump garbage, police said. The incident took place at Raja Mohalla in the Kotwali police station area while they were rescuing a calf that had fallen into it. According to Additional Superintendent of Police Mahendra Kumar said it was an old and unused well in which people used to dump garbage. "On Tuesday afternoon, a calf fell into the well. A man went into it using a ladder to pull out the calf," he said.

Sadhvi gangraped in Jharkhand

Ranchi: In a shocking incident, a 'sadhvi' was allegedly gang-raped by four men at an ashram in Jharkhand's Godda district, police said Tuesday. Three of the accused have been arrested. Police said the four accused forcibly entered the ashram late on Monday night in Pathwara village, locked its 'sadhvi' in a room and gang-raped the 38-year-old woman. One sadhu was brutally beaten up when he protested.

Three associates of LeT arrested

Srinagar: Three "overground workers" of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) have been arrested in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district and incriminating materials found in their possession, police said Tuesday. A police official said information was received on Sunday about miscreants hoisting Pakistani flags at the behest of active LeT militants at the main market of the Hajin area of the district in north Kashmir. "The flags were hoisted with a view to create a fear psychosis among the common people of Hajin town," he said.

K'taka govt docs threaten strike

Bangalore: Government doctors in Karnataka have threatened to go on strike from September 15 if their demand for salaries on par with the Central Government Health Scheme scale were not met. "There is disparity in our pay scale compared to the doctors in the Medical Education Department. We want that we should get pay equal to the doctors in the MED or on par with the Central Government Health Scheme scale," Karnataka Government Medical Officers Association president Dr GA Srinivas told PTI.

BODIES OF COVID VICTIMS SWAPPED IN UP DISTRICT



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Meerut (UP), Sept 8: Swapping of bodies of patients who die due to Covid is becoming a norm, rather than an exception in Uttar Pradesh.

In yet another incident Monday, a family, whose 84-year-old member had died due to Covid, stopped the cremation when one of the members lifted the shroud for a last glimpse of the deceased, after the body was placed on the pyre.

According to reports, the family was about to cremate the body of another man, who was in his 50s, when they realised that they had got the wrong body.

By the time the Meerut family contacted the family whose body they had, it was too late. They were returning home after doing the cremation and were carrying the ashes in an urn and had no inkling that their kin's body was still lying with another family. When the elderly man's family contacted the LLRM Medical

College on the issue, they were 'scolded' by the authorities for unpacking the body of a Covid-19 patient.

The nephew of the octogenarian told reporters, "We removed the shroud because some family members insisted on seeing him one last time. To our shock, the body was not of our uncle. It was someone else. When we contacted the LLRM Medical College, instead of accepting their fault, the officials started shouting at us for unpacking the body."

Meanwhile, the other family was also in a state of shock.

The son of the 50-year-old man said, "I got a call Sunday morning that my father's body is yet to be cremated. And we have performed the last rites of someone else."

Later, on Sunday, the body of the middle-aged man was handed over to the Modinagar family. And, in return, the Meerut family was given the urn of ashes.

A probe in the matter has been set up by the District Magistrate Anil Dhingra.

"A team of additional District Magistrate (city) and Chief Medical Officer will probe the incident," the Dhingra said.

Lala Lajpat Rai Memorial Medical College (LLRM) principal Gyanendra Kumar said, "The doctor, nurse and ward boy on duty have been asked to give an explanation on the matter. Action will be taken against whoever is found at fault."



DOLL HOUSE

Kolu dolls from across Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry displayed at a stall at an exhibition at Khadi Kraft in Chennai, Tuesday
PTI PHOTO

Southwest monsoon withdrawal 'slower'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: The Southwest monsoon in India is forecast to begin its withdrawal through South Asia at a slower than average pace this season, a weather report said Tuesday. This may delay the onset of the Northeast monsoon in southern India. "We do not expect the withdrawal to begin in northwestern India until the week of September 6 or 13," AccuWeather Lead International Meteorologist Jason Nicholls said.

On average, the monsoon begins its retreat in northwestern India at the very start of September.

With the later withdrawal of the Southwest monsoon, the Northeast monsoon onset in southern India may be delayed until late October.

"Onset of the Northeast monsoon in Chennai can be delayed a week or perhaps more from its average October 20 start date," Nicholls added. AccuWeather's team of international meteorologists expects a normal to above-normal monsoon season across much of southern India from October through December. This Northeast monsoon brings a surge of rainfall to parts of eastern and southern India as dry air invades the main Asia continent. Far southern Tamil Nadu and

Kerala and Sri Lanka could be drier than average due partially to the late onset of the monsoon.

"Sri Lanka may make up for rainfall deficits from October to December as the Northeast monsoon and associated wet weather may last into January," Nicholls said.

Tropical depressions or cyclonic storms are forecast for both basins of the northern part of the Indian Ocean this autumn.

"The wild card for rainfall in South Asia will be the threat from tropical systems," Nicholls said.

Long-term weather and sea surface conditions are predicted to favour more storms over the Bay of

Bengal, but the Arabian Sea will be quite active this season, too.

"Steering winds may favour most storms in the Bay of Bengal to impact northeastern India and Bangladesh, but tracks into southern India cannot be ruled out," Nicholls said. "Systems in the Arabian Sea could impact western India, but the favoured areas for impacts look to be toward the southern Arabian Peninsula."

Drier weather is forecast to return to the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula during November.

Much of the rest of the Middle East will be drier and warmer than average for the autumn as a whole.

Cyber frauds exploiting security forces' goodwill to dupe people

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: Fraudsters are now cashing on the trust and goodwill of the Indian Army and paramilitary forces to cheat people online. A web is weaved around potential buyers or sellers on sites such as OLX and Quikr and people are lured by either the promise of a second-hand car in good condition or any other expensive item being sold at a throwaway price just because the army or paramilitary personnel have been transferred and could not carry the goods with them.

Sometimes the fraudsters pose as buyers and show urgency in transferring the amount. Most times the victims fall prey and end up losing money. To win the trust of innocent buyers, they also send them fake Army and Paramilitary ID cards and ask for a small advance booking

amount as token money which can range from Rs 2,000 to Rs 5,000, to seal the deal.

Once the buyer deposits the amount in the said bank account or the wallet of the seller; they stop picking up their calls and stop responding. Many buyers refrain from complaining to the police as the amount is small and they do not want to lodge an FIR.

So widespread is the magnitude of the fraud that even the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) had to tweet from its official handle to caution buyers against falling in the trap. On a complaint of similar nature, in which a person tagged the CISF about the possible fraud in the name of the force, the CISF responded on Twitter.

"Fraudulent persons are cheating and duping others in pretext of selling or buying through OLX. Be aware of such fraudulent persons



& bring it to notice of others also. Kindly visit your nearest Police Station and lodge a complaint about the fraud," the CISF tweeted September 4.

The Delhi Police in May this

year arrested a person for duping an Air Force officer with a similar modus operandi where a man claiming to be a CISF constable wanted to purchase his old furniture. Since, the complainant's app

wasn't functional, he requested using his relative's phone number for the money transfer. But, instead of the money being credited to the account, Rs 75,000 was debited from their account. The UPI link generated by them was not meant for crediting money but for debiting money for their potential victims' bank accounts.

A similar case came up in Shahdara district of Delhi earlier this month.

"The complainant stated that he posted the advertisement to sell his house products on an online Shopping Portal. The fraudster called him and stated that he is interested to buy the articles and claiming himself as an army man. After negotiations, the fraudster stated that he is sending the promised amount to him by QR code and stated that he has to scan the QR code after scanning QR code Rs. 1,76,500

were deducted from his account," said DCP Shahdara, Amit Sharma.

Social media is flooded with complaints of a similar nature where the people are lured into such deals which appear lucrative to people. A seller falls into the trap thinking that he is dealing with a bonafide Army or paramilitary officer. Also, the alleged buyer doesn't even negotiate for the asked amount. Perceiving it to be a profitable deal, they scan the QR code sent through WhatsApp to receive money. However, they end up losing the same amount from their own account.

"Don't buy or sell the article on online shopping portals (for buying or selling used items) from anyone who is showing merely some unauthenticated official ID to buy or sell the articles. Your awareness can save your hard earned money," was the officer's advice.

national

of the day quote

The NEP 2020 has proposed to conduct entrance examination by the National Testing Agency. This move would discourage rural students and the Government of Tamil Nadu is not for such a proposal

KP ANBALAGAN | TAMIL NADU MINISTER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Kiran Bedi has been remaining in Raj Bhavan without meeting the public to know of the ground realities in the context of current pandemic situation

V NARAYANASAMY | PONDICHERY CHIEF MINISTER

The Hemant Soren government is steeped in corruption. No development is taking place under its watch

JP NADDA | BJP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Kannada actor held in drug case

Bangalore: As the city police widened its probe into alleged drug abuse in Kannada film industry with the arrest of another actress, the Karnataka government Tuesday said it would strengthen the legal system to ensure procedural lapses don't allow those apprehended to escape the law. The Central Crime Branch (CCB), probing the drug abuse in 'Sandalwood,' as the Kannada film industry is popularly known, arrested Sanjanana Galrani after raiding her Indira Nagar residence early Tuesday.

2 builders shot dead in car in UP

Noida (UP): Two builders have been shot dead by unidentified persons outside a residential society in Uttar Pradesh's Greater Noida, police said Tuesday. The incident took place around 9 pm on Monday when the builder duo was sitting in a car outside the Ajnara Le Garden society in Greater Noida (West), they said. Dalchand Sharma and Arun Tyagi were attacked by unidentified persons, who opened fire on them and fled. The two were severely injured and taken to a hospital but did not survive.

Maharashtra cop ends life

Aurangabad: An assistant sub-inspector of police allegedly committed suicide Tuesday morning by shooting himself with his service revolver in Jalna district, some 60 kilometres from here, an official said. ASI Subhash Gaikwad (54) ended his life in the office complex of the superintendent of police and probe was on to find out why he took the extreme step, Dy SP Sudhir Khiradkar said.

Six die of snakebite in UP

Banda/Chitrakoot: Six people have died in separate incidents of snakebite in Banda and Chitrakoot districts of Uttar Pradesh, officials said here Tuesday. In Banda's Girwan town, a 27-year-old man and his wife were hospitalised for treatment of snakebite and died Monday, Dr Vineet Sachan, the Medical Officer of the District Hospital, said. He also said, "A farmer in Samgara village and a woman in Singhpur village were bitten by snakes while working in the fields. They too died in the hospital Monday.



Today, the country is facing many Modi government-manufactured disasters. The youth need jobs but the Modi government is destroying employment and capital by privatising PSUs

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

NOTED SCIENTIST GOVIND SWARUP DEAD

Renowned radio astronomer and scientist Govind Swarup died Monday night in a private hospital here in Maharashtra following illness, the National Centre for Radio Astrophysics said in a statement



With 1,133 deaths, India witnesses highest single-day toll

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Recording over 90,000 new cases for two days in a row, India's COVID-19 tally rose by 75,809 in the last 24 hours to reach 42,80,422 Tuesday, while a record 1,133 fatalities took the death toll to 72,775, the Union Health Ministry data showed.

During the same period, the number of recoveries surged to 33,23,950 pushing the recovery rate to 77.65 per cent, according to the data updated at 8 am Tuesday.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate stands at 1.7 per cent.

According to the data, there are 8,83,697 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprise 20.65 per cent of the total caseload. India's tally of coronavirus infection crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, reached 30 lakh on August 23 and went past 40 lakh on September 5.



According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the number of tests conducted for detection of COVID-19 in India has reached 5,06,50,128 with 10,98,621 samples being tested Monday.

Of the fresh deaths, 423 were reported from Maharashtra, 141 from Karnataka, 89 from Tamil Nadu, 70 from Andhra Pradesh, 61 from Punjab, 58 from West Bengal, 56 from Uttar Pradesh, 32

from Delhi, 23 from Haryana, 17 each from Madhya Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, 15 each from Chhattisgarh and Gujarat, 14 from Rajasthan and 13 from Jharkhand.

Twelve fatalities were reported from Kerala, 11 each from Bihar, Puducherry and Telangana, 10 each from Assam and Odisha, nine from Goa, seven from Uttarakhand, three each from Chandigarh and Tripura, while Himachal Pradesh

RISING GRAPH

INDIA'S COVID-19 TALLY ROSE BY 75,809 IN THE LAST 24 HOURS TO REACH 42,80,422 TUESDAY

THERE ARE 8,83,697 ACTIVE CASES OF CORONAVIRUS INFECTION IN THE COUNTRY WHICH COMPRISE 20.65 PER CENT OF THE TOTAL CASELOAD

THE NUMBER OF RECOVERIES SURGED TO 33,23,950 PUSHING THE RECOVERY RATE TO 77.65 PER CENT

1,151 in Rajasthan, 906 in Telangana, 829 in Haryana, 801 in Jammu and Kashmir, 761 in Bihar, 556 in Odisha, 482 in Jharkhand, 395 in Chhattisgarh, 370 in Assam, 359 in Kerala and 348 in Uttarakhand.

Pondicherry has registered 325 fatalities, Goa 245, Tripura 152, Chandigarh 74, Himachal Pradesh 56, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands 50, Manipur 38, Ladakh 35, Meghalaya 17, Nagaland 10, Arunachal Pradesh eight, Sikkim five and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu two.

The Health Ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities. "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.

UNNAO RAPE

CBI seeks action against IAS, 2 IPS officers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 8: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) team probing the Unnao rape case in which former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar is an accused, has written to the Uttar Pradesh chief secretary, seeking action against one IAS and two IPS officers.

The IAS officer was posted in Unnao as district magistrate at the time of the incident and the two IPS officers were also posted in Unnao. All three have been found guilty of dereliction of duty.



The CBI has sent a letter to the government after the officers came under suspicion during the investigation. The then Makhi Kotwali station house officer has already been convicted in the case. He is also in jail.

The CBI has already convicted other accused, including Kuldeep Singh Sengar, former MLA of Unnao and his brother in the same case. Sengar has been sentenced to life imprisonment based on the CBI charge sheet. His membership of the state assembly also ended after he was convicted.

Sengar and his associates reportedly gang raped a minor girl in 2017. The case grabbed headlines when the victim attempted to immolate herself in front of the chief minister's residence in Lucknow in April 2018 to protest against police inaction in the case.

Two days later, the victim's father died in police custody, allegedly due to beating by Atul Sengar, the former MLA's brother. The case was handed over to the CBI and Sengar was arrested.

On the direction of the Supreme Court, the matter was transferred from Uttar Pradesh to Tis Hazari Court in Delhi and the entire hearing was also held there.

Rafale jets to be formally inducted into IAF tomorrow

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, his French counterpart Florence Parly and India's top military brass will attend a ceremony in Ambala airbase Thursday to formally induct five Rafale fighter jets into the Indian Air Force, officials said.



Parly and Singh will hold talks in Ambala on ways to further deepen bilateral defence and security cooperation after the ceremony, they said.

The French Defence Minister is scheduled to arrive Thursday morning and will depart late afternoon, the officials said.

The first batch of five Rafale jets arrived in India July 29, nearly four years after India signed an

inter-governmental agreement with France to procure 36 of the aircraft at a cost of ₹59,000 crore.

The jets, produced by French aerospace major Dassault Aviation, are yet to be formally inducted into the IAF.

Ten Rafale jets have been delivered to India so far and five of them stayed back in France for imparting training to IAF pilots. The delivery of all 36 aircraft is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2021. A second batch of four to five Rafale jets is likely to arrive in India by November.

Sources said a preliminary discussion on a possible procurement of another batch of 36 Rafale jets by India from France may figure in the talks between Singh and Parly.

The Rafale jets, known for air-superiority and precision strikes, are India's first major acquisition of fighter planes in 23 year after the Sukhoi jets were imported from Russia. The Rafale jet is capable of carrying a range of potent weapons.

Team Rhea slanders Sushant, minutes after actor's arrest

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: Minutes after Rhea Chakraborty was arrested by the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Tuesday, her legal team headed by senior advocate Satish Manshinde slammed central agencies for "hounding" a lone woman "just because she was in love with a drug addict".

The Hindi film actor was arrested after a tough three days of grilling to unravel the drugs nexus in the film industry, officials said. Unlike on previous days when she was hounded by media and the actress looked flustered, trying to hop, skip and run away from media attention.

Rhea in an unexpected gesture waved at the media before boarding the van that took her for medical checkup. Social media called the gesture "almost a challenge" thrown at her detractors.

"Central Agencies hounding a



single Woman just because she was in love with a drug addict and was suffering for several years under the care of 5 Leading Psychiatrists in Mumbai, who ended up committing suicide due to consumption of Illegally Administered Medicines and used drugs," said Manshinde who is representing Rhea Chakraborty.

In his statement to the media, Manshinde also talked about the fresh complaint filed by his client with the Mumbai Police and said that the Bandra FIR has been transferred to CBI as per the order

of the Supreme Court.

"CBI will investigate if the doctor is criminally culpable or otherwise. There's no negligence alleged but Criminal culpability of forging a prescription. The drugs administered are prohibited psychotropic substances as contained in the NDPS Act, which are not the subject matter of the CBI case already pending investigations," he said.

Rhea has been charged under various sections of the NDPS Act for her alleged role in the drugs angle which has emerged in the investigations into the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

Rhea has been taken for a medical test and is likely to be produced before a magistrate through video-conferencing for remand in the evening.

The NCB had interrogated Rhea for six hours Sunday, later Monday for eight hours and again for around five hours Tuesday before placing her under arrest.

Deepak Kochhar in ED custody till Sept 19

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: A Mumbai court Tuesday remanded Deepak Kochhar, husband of former IICI Bank CEO Chanda, in the custody of the Enforcement Directorate till September 19 in a money laundering case.

Deepak Kochhar was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here on Monday under sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act in connection with the IICI Bank-Videocon money laundering case probe.

Officials had said he was placed under arrest as the agency wants to put him under custodial interrogation to obtain more details about some fresh evidence gathered in this case, that was filed under the criminal sections of the anti-money laundering law in January last year. The probing agency produced Deepak Kochhar before the court of special PMLA judge Milind V Kurtadikar, who remanded him in the custody of ED.

POD-EQUIPPED AMBULANCE



An isolation pod-equipped air ambulance (a helicopter fitted with medical equipments) during its inauguration in Bangalore, Tuesday

Teen pays ₹2.3L for PUBG from grandfather's account

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: A teenager allegedly transferred ₹2.3 lakh from the pension account of his grandfather for his PUBG game, Delhi Police said.

The cyber cell of the Delhi Police said the 15-year-old boy transferred money from the pension account of his grandfather and used the money to fund his PUBG game for months.

The matter came to light after the complainant received a message on his mobile phone that ₹2,500 had been debited with the account balance at ₹275. He immediately approached his bank where he was informed that ₹2.34 lakh had been transferred from his pension account.

The complainant approached police and alleged that he had not carried out any transaction and did not receive the one-time password (OTP) too.



The cyber cell found that ₹2,34,497 had been transferred from the complainant's account in a period of two months.

The police discovered that the payments were being made to a Paytm Account registered in the name of one Pankaj Kumar, 23.

The cyber cell apprehended Pankaj Kumar and after his interrogation found that one of his friends had asked him for his ID and password of Paytm account. The police found that this person had used Pankaj's account to make payments on Google Play for PUBG. This person was later identified as the grandson of the complainant and apprehended.

Experts warn China-India standoff risks unintentional war

The two Asian giants have held several rounds of talks, mainly involving military commanders, without success

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Srinagar, Sept 8: As a month-long military standoff between India and China along their disputed mountain border protracts, experts warn that the nuclear-armed countries - which already have engaged in their bloodiest clash in decades - could unintentionally slide into war.

For 45 years, a series of agreements, written and unwritten, maintained an uneasy truce along the border on the eastern edge of the Himalayan region of Kashmir. But moves and clashes over the past few months have made the situation unpredictable, raising the risk that a miscalculation from either side could have serious consequences that res-

onate beyond the cold-desert region.

"The situation is very dangerous on the ground and can spiral out of control," said Lt. Gen. DS Hooda, who was head of the Indian military's Northern Command from 2014 to 2016. "A lot will depend on whether the two sides are able to control the volatile situation and make sure it doesn't spread to other areas."

The two Asian giants have held several rounds of talks, mainly involving military commanders, without success. In a sign that the talks are now shifting to the political level, their defense ministers met in the Russian capital Friday to try end the impasse. It was the first high-level direct contact between the sides since the standoff erupted in the Ladakh region four months ago.

Last week, the world's two most populous nations, which share thousands of kilometers of disputed border, accused each another of fresh provocations, including allegations of soldiers crossing into each other's territory.

India said its soldiers thwarted "provocative" movements by China's military twice last week. In turn, China's Defense Ministry accused Indian troops of crossing established lines of control and creating provocations along the border.

Tensions first erupted in early May with a brawl between soldiers from the two sides. The situation escalated dramatically in June when they fought with clubs, stones and fists, leaving 20 Indian soldiers dead and dozens wounded.



The standoff is over disputed portions of a pristine landscape in a region that boasts the world's highest landing strip and a glacier that feeds one of the largest irrigation systems in the world.

Hooda said that while he doesn't

think either side is looking for full-scale war, the "real calamity" is the breakdown of existing agreements and protocols.

Wang Lian, a professor of international relations at Peking University in Beijing, said the pos-

sibility of open warfare is unlikely because both sides have shown restraint in recent encounters. But he also said that New Delhi is under pressure from domestic anti-China sentiment and has been emboldened by tougher US measures against Beijing.

"I don't think (India) would go so far as to escalate military conflict of a larger scale, but I believe both sides are making some preparations," Wang said.

The two nations fought a border war in 1962 that also spilled into Ladakh and ended in a fragile truce. Since then, troops from both sides have patrolled and guarded the undefined border area, according to protocols worked out by the two countries that included not using firearms.

international



Moscow is ready to help ease rising tensions over Turkey's search for energy reserves in the eastern Mediterranean
SERGEY LAVROV | MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

SHARK KILLS SURFER

A shark fatally mauled a surfer Tuesday. The man, aged in his 50s, was brought to shore by fellow surfers and lifeguards at popular Greenmount Beach with leg injuries, Queensland state Ambulance Service supervisor William Houghton said



of the day quote

I think the Victorian government has done a lot of work over the last four weeks, of necessity, clearly as well, to ensure that those systems have been significantly improved
SCOTT MORRISON | AUSTRALIAN PM

The Senate Republican majority is introducing a new targeted proposal, focused on some of the very most urgent healthcare, education, and economic issues
MITCH MCCONNELL | US SENATOR

The Great Hall of the People in Beijing that China's battle against COVID-19 demonstrated the strengths of its socialist system and traditional Chinese culture in stirring motivation, building consensus and pooling resources
XI JINPING | CHINESE PRESIDENT

VISUAL TREAT



A fountain show at Al Shaheed Park, one of the largest urban parks in Kuwait City

UNI PHOTO

EU, UK blame each other

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 8: The UK and the European Union blamed each other Tuesday in their increasingly acrimonious post-Brexit trade discussions that could just be weeks from collapse.

While the UK urged the EU to show "more realism" in the discussions, the 27-nation bloc noted that it was a "world power."

The latest round of discussions kicked off in London Tuesday amid an air of pessimism because of concerns that the British government is set to violate international law by reneging on commitments made before the country's departure from the bloc January 31.

The news that the head of the British government's legal department has quit — reportedly over plans to bypass commitments



made with regard to the Irish border — and an intervention from Prime Minister Boris Johnson's predecessor only added to the sense the talks are going nowhere.

Though the UK left the bloc January 31, it is in a transition period that effectively sees it abide by EU rules until the end of this year.

David Frost, the British gov-

ernment's chief negotiator, said the two sides "can no longer afford to go over well-trodden ground" in the deadlocked talks and that the EU needs to show "more realism" about the U.K.'s status as an independent country. European Council President Charles Michel retorted that the bloc is in no mood to budge on its demands. The trade discussions have made very little progress over the summer, with the two sides seemingly wide apart on several issues, notably on business regulations, the extent to which the UK can support certain industries and over the EU fishing fleet's access to British waters. The EU has been particularly insistent on level playing field issues in order to ensure that British-based businesses don't have an unfair advantage as a result of laxer social, environmental or subsidy rules in the UK.

Oz JOURNOS LEAVE CHINA AMID 'STANDOFF'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, Sept 8: Two journalists from Australia working in China have been evacuated after they were questioned by Chinese police and were forced to seek refuge in Australian diplomatic missions in the communist nation amidst a diplomatic standoff between Canberra and Beijing.

The development came days after Beijing publicly confirmed the arrest of an Australian journalist, Cheng Lei, who was working for China's state-run China Global Television Network (CGTN), the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) News reported.

Bill Birtles, the ABC's correspondent based in Beijing, and Mike Smith, the Australian Financial Review's (AFR) correspondent based in Shanghai, boarded a flight to Sydney Monday night after they were questioned separately by China's Ministry of State Security, the report said. They landed in Sydney Tuesday.

With the two journalists moving out of China, Australia now has no accredited reporter left in the country for the first time since the mid-1970s.

Australian Foreign Minister Marise Payne in a statement on Tuesday said consular officials had provided support to the journalists. Seven uniformed officers simultaneously visited the homes of Smith in Shanghai and Birtles in Beijing on Thursday morning. Both journalists were told they were persons of interest in an investigation into Cheng who was detained last month, the AFR reported. In July, Australia changed its travel advice for China, warning that its citizens faced "arbitrary detention" on the mainland.

SHORT TAKES

Nirav faces suicide risk

London: Nirav Modi's legal team Tuesday alleged that he is unlikely to get a fair trial in India due to the politicisation of his case and the diamond merchant faces a "high risk of suicide" due to the lack of adequate medical facilities in Indian prisons. The 49-year-old fugitive diamond merchant is fighting extradition charges related to the estimated USD 2-billion Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud and money laundering case brought by the Indian government at Westminster Magistrates' Court in London.

Belarus Oppn leader detained

Minsk: Belarusian opposition leader Maria Kolesnikova has reportedly been detained at the country's border with Ukraine a day after she was reported missing, a state-media report on Tuesday. According to the report, Kolesnikova, one of three women who joined forces to challenge President Alexander Lukashenko in the August 9 election, was held at the border early Tuesday morning, the BBC reported.

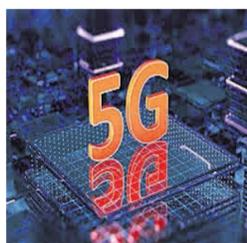
New headache for TikTok

London: TikTok says it's working to remove videos of a man apparently taking his own life and banning users that keep trying to spread the clips on the popular social media platform. It's the latest example of the ongoing struggle by big tech companies to police their platforms for harmful content amid increasing pressure from regulators. The video was originally livestreamed on Facebook before being circulated on other platforms including TikTok, the company said.

Campaign to succeed PM Abe

Tokyo: The official campaigning to lead Japan's ruling party began Tuesday with the longtime right-hand man of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe now seen as a top candidate and his likely successor to lead the government. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, 71, had formally submitted his candidacy for the Liberal Democratic Party leadership last week. The chief government spokesman faces two younger contenders, former Defence Minister Shigeru Ishiba and former Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida, both 63. The winner of the in-party vote September 14 will eventually become Japan's next prime minister because of the ruling bloc's majority in the parliament. Abe is stepping down for health reasons.

India, US, Israel collaborating in 5G tech: Report



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 8: India, Israel and the US have earnestly begun trilateral cooperation on digital leadership and innovation, a top American official has said, asserting that it is right that the three countries play a key role in delivering the next generation 5G technology in a way that is "open, interoperable, reliable and secure."

The 5G collaboration is the first step and just the tip of the iceberg, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Deputy Administrator, Bonnie Glick, told PTI after the US-India-Israel forum on strategic, tech and development/water cooperation discussion last week.

"We'll collaborate in science, research and development in coming up with the next generations of technologies... But by partnering by officially affirming the importance of this relationship, we'll advance it," she said.

The US enjoys a strong relationship with both the countries, based on shared democratic and free-market principles, the official said. Organised by the Asia-Pacific Institute of the American Jewish Committee in partnership with Indiaspora, the Sunday Guardian Foundation and the Global Indian-Jewish Relations Institute, the summit among others was addressed by Israel's Ambassador to India Dr Ron Malka and India's Ambassador to Israel Sanjeev Singla.

Kamala will never be President: Trump

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 8: US President Donald Trump has slammed the "rhetoric" against the coronavirus vaccine by Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and running mate Senator Kamala Harris, who he said would "never" be the President.

Trump was apparently responding to a CNN interview by Harris, in which the vice-presidential nominee said she would not trust the President unless there was a credible source of information that talks about the vaccine's efficacy and reliability. "She (Harris) is talking about disparaging a vaccine so that people don't think the achievement was a great achievement," Trump said at a Labor Day

press conference at the White House Monday. "I don't want the achievement for myself. I want something (that's) going to make people better; that people aren't going to get sick with," he said. The President asserted that a coronavirus vaccine would be available in a record time, maybe by the end of the year and even before the November 3 Presidential election. This, he said, had unnerved his political opponents. "Trump asserted that the vaccine — which could have normally taken two-three years — would be in the market before the end of the year. "(We) could even have it during the month of October. Contrary to all of the lies, the vaccine will be very safe and very effective, and it will be delivered very soon," he said in a statement.

RAGING INFERNO

Calif. fire sparked by device to reveal baby's gender

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles, Sept 8: A couple's plan to reveal their baby's gender went up not in blue or pink smoke but in flames when the device they used sparked a wildfire that burned thousands of acres and forced people to flee from a city east of Los Angeles.

The fire prompted evacuations in parts of Yucaipa, a city of 54,000, and the surrounding area. Water-dropping helicopters were brought in but the fire has proven stubborn — it grew to 11.5 square miles (30 square kilometres) by Monday morning and more than 500 firefighters on the scene only had minimal containment. No homes have burned and no injuries reported.

It's the latest in what has become a lengthy list of tragedies at events where typically smoke, confetti, balloons or other coloured objects



are used to reveal the soon-to-be-born child's biological sex — pink for girls and blue for boys. Sometimes the made-for-social-media gatherings are spectacles and include explosives and even guns, and at least one had deadly consequences.

The fire started Saturday morning at El Ranch Dorado Park, a rugged natural area popular with

hikers and dog owners. In summer the park's tall natural grasses dry out and turn golden, and when combined with the San Bernardino Mountains in the distance, provide a popular backdrop for family photos and videos. The unidentified couple chose the location to reveal their baby's gender. They were accompanied by their young children

and had a friend or relative videoing on a cell phone, said Capt. Bennet Milloy of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The family went into a field and fired off the device, which quickly ignited 4-foot (1.2 meter) grasses, Milloy said. Conditions were perfect for a fire to spread quickly — triple-digit temperatures, low humidity, dry vegetation and a stiff breeze.

Surveillance video showed the couple frantically race to their vehicle to retrieve water bottles to try to extinguish the flames. It was futile and they called 911. "You can't fight a fire like this with a water bottle," Milloy said. "They had no chance after it started." Firefighters arrived within minutes and the distraught couple told them what happened and provided their own photos and video to aid the investigation, Milloy said. "It's a pretty tragic situation," he said. "Obviously this was supposed to be a happy event." The couple could be liable for the cost of fighting the fire and criminally charged with misdemeanour or felony counts. In 2017, a massive Arizona wildfire was accidentally started by an off-duty Border Patrol agent who shot a target filled with an explosive blue powder. The fire burned 47,000 acres (73 square miles) and caused \$8 million in damages, Agent Dennis Dickey was charged with a misdemeanour and sentenced to probation. Last year, a homemade explosive used to reveal a baby's gender killed 56-year-old Pamela Kreimeyer in Knoxville, Iowa. The device was meant to spray powder but instead blew up like a pipe bomb. Kreimeyer, who was standing 45 feet (13 metres) away, died instantly when debris struck her head.

Is your hand-sanitiser safe?

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Sept 8: What should I look for in a hand sanitiser? Pick one that contains mostly alcohol, and has few other ingredients.

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention says hand sanitisers should be at least 60 per cent ethyl alcohol or 70 per cent isopropyl alcohol.

Other approved ingredients may include sterile distilled water, hydrogen peroxide and glycerin, according to the US Food and Drug Administration. You should avoid anything with methanol or 1-propanol, both of which can be highly toxic. The FDA also warns people to watch out for hand sanitisers packaged in food and drink containers, since accidentally ingesting them could be dangerous. Health officials also say to avoid hand sanitisers



that replace alcohol with benzalkonium chloride, which is less effective at killing certain bacteria and viruses.

Making your own sanitisers isn't encouraged either; the wrong mix of chemicals can be ineffective or cause skin burns. And you should only use hand sanitiser when you can't wash your hands with soap and water, says Barun Mathema, an infectious disease researcher at Columbia University. Hand washing is better at removing more germs.

business



We want to go beyond this so-called retail segment and reach out to farmers. We are about to launch a product called 'Safe and Fast Agriculture Loan'
C S SETTY | MANAGING DIRECTOR, SBI

WIPRO PLANS TO SET UP DIGITAL INNOVATION HUB IN GERMANY

Wipro Tuesday said it plans to set up a Digital Innovation Hub at Düsseldorf in Germany that will serve as the IT services major's flagship centre in Europe.



of the day quote

We are fortunate to be in a sector of positive relevance during this crisis. This has brought online learning to the forefront and is helping parents, teachers and students



Domestic stainless steel industry was no exception to the slowdown caused by COVID-19. For JSL too, it was an unprecedented quarter



As the COVID-19 pandemic throws unprecedented challenges, consumer behaviour and patterns are changing dramatically



SHORT TAKES

Min for policy on PPP model

New Delhi: Union minister Nitin Gadkari Tuesday said there is a need for a policy on public private partnership (PPP) model for an intelligent traffic system to reduce road accidents. A reputed private consultant will be appointed to come out with the model, the Road Transport, Highways and MSME Minister said while asserting that post implementation of the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, road accidents and related deaths have come down. India, on an average, witnesses about 5 lakh road accidents per annum.

Next ecosystem ranking Sept 11

New Delhi: Ministry of Commerce and Industry will release the next edition of ranking of states and union territories (UTs) based on their startup ecosystem on September 11, an official said. The rankings are based on the initiatives taken to develop the startup ecosystem for promoting budding entrepreneurs. The ranking framework covers seven pillars and 30 action points, including policy support, incubation centres, seed funding, angel and venture funding and easier regulations. "The ranking is ready," the official added.

Bleakest hiring outlook in 15 yrs

New Delhi: India is witnessing the weakest hiring sentiment in 15 years with just 3 per cent companies planning to add staff in the next three months, a survey of over 800 employers said Tuesday. According to the ManpowerGroup Employment Outlook Survey, that covered 813 firms across India, Indian employers report cautious hiring plans for the final quarter of 2020. As per the survey, 7 per cent of employers anticipate an increase in payrolls, 3 per cent forecast a decrease.

CPCL's refinery to come up in TN

Hyderabad: A committee under the Ministry of Environment has accorded "green signal" for Chennai Petroleum Corporation Ltd to set up a nine million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) Cauvery Basin Refinery in Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu at an outlay of nearly Rs 33,000 crore. The CPCL is in the process of setting up a refinery and a public hearing on the project was conducted by the District Collector of Nagapattinam on September 20, 2019.

RATING AGENCIES CUT GDP FORECAST

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: Global rating and research houses, such as Fitch and Goldman Sachs, have cut their estimates for growth in India's gross domestic product (GDP) for the current fiscal 2020-21 (FY21).

While Fitch now expects the country's GDP to contract 10.5 per cent in FY21 versus its earlier estimate of 5 per cent contraction in this period, Goldman Sachs forecasts a sharper contraction at 14.8 per cent (-11.8 per cent forecasted earlier) in FY21 and 11.1 per cent (-9.6 per cent earlier) in calendar year (CY20).

The downward revision in India's forecast for FY21 comes on the heels of a sharp contraction in Indian economy in the April-June 2020 period, when the GDP came in at a negative 23.9 per cent year-on-year (YoY), the worst performance in nearly four decades.

"The severe fall in activity has damaged household and corporate incomes and balance sheets, amid limited fiscal support. A looming deterioration in asset quality in the financial sector will hold back credit provision amid weak bank capital buffers. Furthermore, high inflation has added strains to the household income," Fitch said.

A common thread that runs



through the commentary of both is the hope of a faster recovery going ahead. Fitch expects the GDP to rebound strongly in the third quarter of calendar year 2020 (Q3-20) as the economy re-opens. However, does it caution that the recovery has been sluggish and uneven.

"The PMI balances have bounced back but they imply that the level of activity is still well below its pre-pandemic level in Q3-20. Still-depressed levels of imports, two-wheeler sales and capital goods production indicate a muted recovery in domestic spending," Fitch said.

Assuming around 70 per cent of the lost output in June 2020 is recovered in June 2021, those at Goldman Sachs peg real GDP in Q2-2021 at +27.1 per cent YoY and average annual GDP growth in CY21 and FY22 at 9.9 per cent and 15.7 per cent, respectively.

ON A SLIPPERY SLOPE		
	FY21 forecasts	
	Now	Earlier
Goldman Sachs	-14.8	-11.1
Fitch	-10.5	-5
Nomura	-10.8	-6.1
HSBC	-7.2	NA
Morgan Stanley *	-5	NA
India Ratings	-11.8	-5.3

THE DOWNWARD REVISION IN INDIA'S FORECAST FOR FY21 COMES ON THE HEELS OF A SHARP CONTRACTION IN INDIAN ECONOMY

FITCH EXPECTS GLOBAL GDP TO FALL BY 4.4 PER CENT IN 2020, A MODEST UPWARD REVISION FROM THE 4.6 PER CENT DECLINE EXPECTED EARLIER

"While the economy must now climb out of a deeper trough in 2020, we have upgraded our expectations of a rebound next year. In Q2-2021, we expect real GDP growth to bounce back sharply on a year-over-year basis due to favorable base effects. Our forecasts assume that in level terms, real output in March 2022 would still be around 2 per cent below its level in March 2020," wrote Prachi Mishra and Andrew Tilton of Goldman Sachs in a September 7 note.

On its part, India Ratings - a Fitch Group company - has also lowered its expectations for India's economic growth in FY21 to -11.8 per cent from -5.3 per cent forecasted earlier. "The economic loss in FY21 is estimated to be Rs 18.44 trillion. However, GDP is expected to rebound and grow at 9.9 per cent YoY in FY22 mainly due to the weak base of FY21," said Devendra Pant, chief economist and senior director for Public Finance, India Ratings & Research.

Govt to sell 20% IRCTC stake

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: The government plans to sell about 15-20 per cent stake in IRCTC via offer for sale (OFS) and would like to complete the transaction in minimum number of tranches.

Last month, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) had invited bids from merchant bankers by September 10 for managing the sale in Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corp (IRCTC).

However, it did not disclose the

quantum of stake on offer in the Request for Proposal (RFP). Following this, a pre-bid meeting was held on September 4 with potential bidders.

DIPAM has now posted its response to the queries raised by potential bidders on its website. The government currently holds 87.40 per cent stake in IRCTC. To meet Sebi's public holding norm, it has to lower its stake in the company to 75 per cent.

Shares of IRCTC Tuesday closed 2.57 per cent lower at Rs 1,378.05 on the BSE. Asked if payment would

be made by the government to merchant banker after completion of every single tranche or cumulatively after the completion of entire transaction, DIPAM said, "GOI would not like to have an OFS overhang and hence would like to complete the transaction in minimum number of tranches as advised by merchant bankers based on market conditions.

"In case more than one tranche is used, pro-rata payment would be made to the merchant bankers". The company had raised Rs 645 crore through the IPO.

Auto sales set to decline by 30 pc

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: India's auto sector is expected to face challenges this year, with the country's economy predicted to contract in 2020 amid the pandemic, Moody's Investors Service said Tuesday.

According to it, auto unit sales will decline at least 30 per cent in 2020, following a decline of over 40 per cent in the seven months through July.

"The lower annual decline reflects our expectation of a pickup in economic activity during the remainder of 2020, which also includes the festive period - October through December," the Moody's Investors Service said in a report.

"A second wave of infections and extension of lockdowns cast a shadow of risk on these forecasts. Also, tighter lending criteria could limit liquidity available for consumers and auto dealers."



As per the report, looking ahead, unit sales will likely grow around 20 per cent in 2021, though clearly on a lower base.

"Moreover it will take at least another four years for India's unit sales to recover to pre-pandemic levels," the report said.

On the other hand, the global automotive industry's outlook has been changed to stable from negative. "The stable outlook for

the global automotive industry reflects rising sales through 2021, with continued, but slow, increases through 2023," said Bruce Clark, Moody's Senior Vice President.

"Nevertheless, auto shipments won't recover to pre-pandemic levels until the middle of the decade."

The coronavirus-driven downturn in unit sales is significantly worse than the 2009 decline, Clark said.

BIZ BUZZ

NSDC, LinkedIn partner to impart skills training

New Delhi: National Skill Development Corporation and professional network LinkedIn on Tuesday said they have joined hands to provide access to free LinkedIn Learning resources for imparting digital skills to youth for enhancing employability. Under the partnership, 10 free LinkedIn Learning paths, consisting of 140 courses for a range of in-demand tech jobs, will be made available for free on eSkill India digital platform until March 31, 2021. LinkedIn will also provide periodic labour market insights based on its economic graph of more than 69 million. This will include in-demand skills, emerging jobs, and global hiring rates to NSDC to better understand the skilling ecosystem. Indian professionals with digital skills were 20 per cent more in demand than professionals without digital skills in 2020.

Amazon India to add 5 sort centres

New Delhi: E-commerce giant Amazon India Tuesday said it is adding five sort centres and expanding eight such existing facilities in the country to strengthen its capacity ahead of the festive season. The five new sort centres will be launched in Visakhapatnam, Farukh Nagar, Bengaluru, Mumbai and Ahmedabad, a statement said. Apart from these new buildings, Amazon India will also expand eight existing sort centres to increase its overall sortation area to more than 2.2 million square feet, across 19 states, it added. "With this expansion, Amazon India will strengthen its delivery speed and connectivity for customers and sellers, ahead of the festive season," the statement said. Amazon India had also announced expansion plans for its warehousing network.

Reliance unveils details of O2C business spinoff

New Delhi: Reliance Industries Ltd's new oil-to-chemical business unit will hold its oil refinery and petrochemical assets and retail fuel business but not upstream oil and gas producing fields such as KG-D6 and textiles business, the firm said detailing hiving-off plans. RIL has started work on hiving off the oil-to-chemical (O2C) business into a separate unit for a possible stake sale to companies such as Saudi Aramco. Reliance O2C Ltd will house oil refining and petrochemical plants and manufacturing assets, bulk and wholesale fuel marketing, and RIL's 51 per cent interest in retail fuel joint venture with BP of the UK, according to the Scheme of Arrangement. The O2C unit would also house RIL's Singapore and the UK-based oil trading subsidiaries.

Move aside robots, Tesla bets on aluminium casting

THE ELECTRIC CARMAKER HAS STRUGGLED TO RAISE PRODUCTION VOLUMES THROUGH HI-TECH AUTOMATION

REUTERS

Frankfurt, Sept 8: Robots are not efficient enough for Tesla's new car factory in Germany, which plans to replace hundreds of them with giant aluminium casting machines to build simpler chassis parts, a person familiar with the matter said.

The electric carmaker has struggled to raise production volumes through hi-tech automation and was forced to fly in a new production line from Germany to Nevada in 2018 after robots failed to coordinate seamlessly at the U.S. factory.

For the new Model Y, Tesla chief executive Elon Musk has said he will

replace 70 components glued and riveted into the car's rear underbody with a single module made using an aluminium casting machine. That's just the start of a new automation drive, with the vehicle's front module and other parts to come, the source said.

"Will be amazing to see it in operation! Biggest casting machine ever made. Will make rear body in a single piece, including crash rails," Musk said on Twitter Aug. 13. He did not say where or when the new machine would be rolled out. Tesla did not respond to requests for comment.

Tesmanian, a blog specialising in Tesla news, said Monday the company's new plant in Brandenburg,



near Berlin, would be supplied with eight "Gigapress" machines. Car bodies have traditionally been made by assembling multiple stamped metal panels, which has helped carmakers to design crumple zones to absorb energy during a crash, but

Musk is charting a new course at the Brandenburg plant.

"He wants the car's body to be made from modules, as few of them as possible," the source explained. "He sees casting as the new way forward. Like casting a

toy car out of metal." The Gigapress, which is the size of a small house, will be supplied by Italy's IDRA Srl, and forms a key part of Musk's drive to reinvent "the machine that builds the machine," the source added.

Musk's push to reduce manufacturing complexity comes as German carmakers BMW, Mercedes and Audi face pressure from their workers to preserve domestic assembly jobs which are under threat as regulators push electric cars that have fewer components than combustion-engined ones.

Aluminium has proven cumbersome to use in large components because it is difficult to stamp into complex shapes.

State-run banks to step up loans for MP vendors

REUTERS

Mumbai, Sept 8: Banks in Madhya Pradesh are scrambling to boost lending to street vendors in a bid to bolster numbers ahead of a visit this week by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, according to sources and letters sent by Reuters.

A scheme that is part of a coronavirus relief package launched this year offers collateral-free loans of 10,000 rupees (\$136.13) to help an estimated 5 million street vendors, but state-run banks mired in bad debt have been hesitant to lend.



"All bank branches in the state need to immediately accept all applications submitted under the street vendor scheme and disburse loans without delay," the Bank of India told some senior employees in a letter, in light of Modi's visit. Reuters reviewed similar memorandums and emails sent by Central Bank of India and Punjab & Sind Bank to employees in Madhya Pradesh, ordering them to sanction and disburse loans by Tuesday.

The prime minister's office, the finance ministry, the Bank of India, the Central Bank of India and the Punjab & Sind Bank did not immediately respond to requests for comment. Several branches of state-run banks were open on Sunday to distribute loans, according to one banker and an email sent by Reuters.

SERENA REACHES QUARTERS



American continues her run for record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title after seeing off Sakkari in the round of 16 match

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 8: Her breathing loud enough to hear in an empty Arthur Ashe Stadium, her third-set deficit a point from growing to 3-1 against someone who beat her less than two weeks earlier, Serena Williams scrambled to extend a 13-stroke exchange until her opponent netted a forehand.

"Keep fighting!" Williams exhorted herself. Locked in a tough fourth-round match Monday, and without the benefit of a pro-American audience, Williams provided her own encouragement along the way to coming back and beating 15th-seeded Maria Sakkari of Greece 6-3, 6-7(6-8), 6-3, reaching the quarterfinals in a 12th consecutive appearance at Flushing Meadows.

"I feel like I'm pretty vocal with or without a crowd. ... I'm super passionate. This is my job. This is what I wake up to do. This is what I train to do, 365 days of the year," said Williams, who moved a step closer to a record-tying 24th Grand Slam title.

"Yeah, I'm always going to bring that fire and that passion," she continued, "and that 'Serena' to the court."

When the match ended, after Williams collected six of the last seven games, she turned and yelled toward her husband, who stood at his front-row seat and yelled right back.

How tight was this contest? Sakkari produced more aces than Williams, 13-12, and more total winners, 35-30. Williams was two points from victory at 6-all in the second-set tie-breaker, but faltered there, sending a backhand return long to give Sakkari her fifth set point, then pushing a forehand out.

But as is so often the case, when the outcome was hanging in the balance in the third set, which Sakkari led 2-0 but couldn't quite get to 3-1, Williams was better down the stretch, when it mattered the most.

"I have to be deadly honest: I wasn't brave enough in the third set. I kind of like, not choked, but didn't (convert) my chances," Sakkari said. "And if you don't get your chances

with a good Serena against you, it's done."

This was a rematch from August 25, when Williams faded after building a lead and lost in three sets to Sakkari at the Western & Southern Open, a hard-court tournament usually held in Ohio but moved to the US Open site as part of a two-tournament 'controlled environment' without spectators amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"Of course I thought about (the loss), but ever so little, because it's a completely different match, completely different scenario, completely different moment," Williams said.

In the earlier one, Williams' legs were cramping by the end, and she blamed herself for that situation, memorably declaring: "I put myself in a bad situation. It's like dating a guy that you know sucks."

Asked about that line Monday, Williams joked: "Thank God, I got rid of that guy. Never want to see him again. He was the worst." That setback made the American 3-2 since tennis returned from its COVID-19 hiatus, all three-setters. And since, she is 4-0 at the US Open.

Williams, who turns 39 in less than three weeks, will face unseeded Tsvetana Pironkova for a semifinal berth. Playing in her first tournament in more than three years after taking time off to have a child, the 32-year-old Pironkova advanced with a 6-4, 7-6(7-5), 6-3 victory over Alize Cornet.

No.16 seed Elise Mertens knocked off second-seeded Sofia Kenin 6-3, 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals of the tournament for the second year in a row and deny the American a chance for back-to-back Grand Slam titles.

Kenin won the Australian Open and was trying to become the first with two straight Grand Slam titles since Naomi Osaka won the 2018 US Open and the 2019 Australian Open.

Mertens will face Victoria Azarenka, who beat No.20 Karolina Muchova 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 for her ninth straight win. Azarenka won the Western & Southern Open that was played in New York as an in-the-bubble warm-up for the US Open.

THIEM OKAY WITH BIG THREE ABSENCE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 8: Don't tell Dominic Thiem the US Open is diminished in any way just because it's the first Grand Slam tournament since the 2004 French Open without at least one of Roger Federer, Rafa Nadal or Novak Djokovic in the quarterfinals.

"It doesn't matter at all if the Big Three are here or not," the No.2-seeded Thiem said Monday after beating No.15 Felix Auger-Aliassime 7-6(7-4), 6-1, 6-1 in the fourth round at Flushing Meadows.

"Everybody wants their hands on the trophy," said Thiem, who won almost half of Auger-Aliassime's service points, 46 of 88. "It doesn't really matter who they're going to beat."

Djokovic — seeded No.1, unbeaten this season and the overwhelming favorite — was disqualified Sunday after unintentionally hitting a line judge in the throat with a ball after dropping a game in the first set against Pablo Carreno Busta.

Nadal (pandemic concerns) and Federer (two knee operations) did not enter the tournament at all.

DJOKOVIC FINED

NEW YORK: Novak Djokovic's US Open default is costing him USD 267,500. That's all of his \$250,000 prize money for reaching the fourth round, plus USD 10,000 for unsportsmanlike conduct and an additional USD 7,500 for skipping his post-match news conference. The fines were announced Monday, a day after the Djokovic was disqualified for accidentally hitting a line judge in the throat with a ball after dropping a game. Both of those fall below the maximum USD 20,000 the Grand Slam rule book says he could have been docked for each infraction.

This ends a run of 13 consecutive major championships won by a member of the Big Three.

"It's been getting pretty boring," said Denis Shapovalov, the first Canadian man to reach the US Open quarterfinals, "with these three guys winning every tournament."

None of the men left has ever earned so much as one Slam trophy yet. The quarterfinals on the bottom half of the draw will be Thiem

against No.21 Alex de Minaur; and No.10 Andrey Rublev against No.3 Daniil Medvedev.

On the top half, where Djokovic used to loom: No.12 Shapovalov vs. No.20 Carreno Busta; No.5 Alexander Zverev vs. No.27 Borna Coric.

Medvedev was runner-up to Nadal last year, losing in five sets. He hasn't dropped a set while advancing to the quarterfinals and he's dropped serve only three times.

Thiem is the only remaining man who has contested multiple major finals. He is 0-3, losing twice to Nadal at the French Open and to Djokovic at the Australian Open this February.

"I am probably one of the oldest players left in the field," said the 27-year-old Thiem. "Which is surreal to me." Second oldest, actually: Carreno Busta is 29.

It's the first US Open since 2010 without at least one male quarterfinalist who is 30 or older.

Next up for Thiem is the 21-year-old de Minaur, who reached his first major quarterfinal by saving four set points in the opening tiebreaker and going on to a 7-6(8-6), 6-3, 6-2 victory over Vasek Pospisil.

Indore to get its astroturf in 18 months

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Indore, Sept 8: Stuck in procedural delays for nearly two years, Indore's first astroturf hockey ground is finally set to witness the light of the day in 18 months time, Madhya Pradesh's Sports and Welfare department said.

District Sports Officer Joseph Baxla informed that the state government has finally accepted the proposal to build an astroturf hockey pitch in five acres of land in suburban Bijalpur area of the city.

"The astroturf hockey pitch in Indore with a cost of ₹5 crore is expected to come up in 18 months," Baxla said. He also said that there was a proposal to build an astroturf in the city-based Prakash Hockey Club's ground in the Residency area but it was scrapped as the developer found the space inadequate.

The Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) had later turned that space into a waste disposal centre. "That's why the turf for hockey could not come up and the IMC took possession of the land," Baxla said.

Since then former Indian hockey team goalkeeper Mir Ranjan Negi, who was inspiration behind the Bollywood blockbuster 'Chak De India', had been advocating the need for an astroturf in Indore.

Devoid of basic infrastructure, Negi had been forced to impart hockey skills to poor children of the city on a footpath.

"I am training 125 children mostly poor, on a footpath attached to the district jail's boundary wall in Residency area," the 62-year-old Negi told this agency Tuesday. He said most of his trainees were members of city based Prakash Hockey Club, which established in 1940. Negi also said that he had written to Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, requesting him to set up an astroturf for hockey inside the city's Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya campus.

"I request hockey lover Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to build an astroturf for hockey in Indore as soon as possible," he said. "The city needs a ground desperately for the revival of hockey."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Bopanna-Shapovalov ousted from US Open

New York: The Indian challenge came to an end at the US Open with the quarterfinal loss of Rohan Bopanna and his Canadian partner Denis Shapovalov in the men's doubles event here. Bopanna and Shapovalov lost 5-7, 5-7 to Dutch Jean-Julien Rojer and Romania's Horea Tecau in the last eight match which lasted one hour and 26 minutes Monday. Bopanna and Shapovalov lost their serve once in each set and could not convert the only break chance that came their way in the second set. It was Bopanna's best performance at a Slam since he made the quarterfinals at both the US Open and the French Open in 2018.

Mbappe tests COVID-19 positive

Paris: France and Paris Saint-Germain striker Kylian Mbappe tested positive for COVID-19 and will miss Tuesday's Nations League match against Croatia, the French federation said. Mbappe was isolated once he found out about his positive test and left France's training camp to return home Monday evening. The French federation said the test was carried out by UEFA in the morning. Mbappe scored for France to beat Sweden 1-0 in the Nations League Saturday, his 14th international goal. The federation said Mbappe passed a test before joining his teammates at the national training camp. He also tested negative Wednesday ahead of the game against Sweden.

Barty opts out of French Open

Brisbane: Top-ranked Ash Barty will not defend her French Open title because of concerns over traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic. After skipping the US Open, which is being contested in New York without crowds, Barty has also decided against traveling to Europe for an event in Rome starting September 14 and the September 27-October 10 French Open. Barty announced her withdrawal hours after French Open organizers said spectators would be allowed at the tournament despite a growing number of coronavirus cases in the country.

Lynn joins Mumbai Indians in Abu Dhabi

Abu Dhabi: Swashbuckling Australian batsman Chris Lynn arrived here Tuesday to join his Mumbai Indians teammates for the upcoming Indian Premier League, starting September 19. The T20 league will be played across the three venues of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah from September 19 to November 10. Mumbai Indians also informed that Kiwi pacer Trent Boult and Australian speedster, James Pattinson, who was signed as a replacement for veteran Sri Lankan fast bowler Lasith Malinga, had joined the team last week. The defending champions will take on Chennai Super Kings in the tournament opener.

Workload management key for pacers in hot UAE: Shami

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Sept 8: Keeping in mind the hot and humid conditions in the UAE, it will be vital for fast bowlers to manage their workload properly as the task at hand wouldn't be easy when the IPL gets underway September 19, feels Kings XI Punjab pacer Mohammad Shami.

The IPL was moved to the UAE due to rising COVID-19 cases in India. The cities of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah — which will host the league — are expected to experience temperatures of around 35-40 degree celsius during the tournament.

"Temperature is much higher compared to India. There are chances of getting dehydrated. There will be chances of cramps. So we will have to keep those things in mind," Shami told this agency in an interview from Dubai Tuesday.

"It will be difficult as the wickets here are also different. So workload management is important. But it is not that difficult that it can't be managed. It depends on us how we manage our workload," added the 30-year-old, rated as one of the best pacers in the World at the moment.



"It felt great getting out of home and coming to Dubai. We are all grateful to play the game which we all love. So the feeling cannot be compared. The best part is that everyone is on the field and training. In India, IPL should bring smiles to the faces of all," he said.

Shami will lead the pace attack for the KL Rahul-led side, which is yet to win the IPL trophy. Asked

if there will be added pressure on his shoulders, Shami said, "I don't take pressure of being a senior in the side. You should believe in your skill and back yourself."

"I always try to share my knowledge with all my teammates at any level. It can be IPL, while playing for India or even at the club level. I like to talk about the team rather than myself."

Warne wants Boxing Day Test at MCG

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Melbourne, Sept 8: Former Australia leg-spinner Shane Warne has requested the Cricket Australia (CA) to keep the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) as the venue for the Boxing Day Test against India scheduled to be played towards the end of the year despite an increase in coronavirus cases in the state of Victoria.

CA is likely to announce the schedule for India's tour of Australia, which includes the four-Test Border-Gavaskar Trophy, this week and there are fears that the iconic MCG may lose the Boxing Day Test.

"Cricket is the 2nd biggest sport in the world behind soccer (fact) & the biggest day on the Aust sporting calendar is the Boxing Day Test. We must try & do everything possible to keep it at the MCG this year. FYI: The Melb Cup & the AFL GF are the next biggest events in Aust! (sic)," Warne said in a tweet.

According to a report in ESPNcricinfo, the Adelaide Oval is prepared to host back-to-back Tests, including a day-night match as well as the Boxing Day against India in case the MCG is not available.

Italy edge past The Netherlands



KEEPING HEADS HIGH: Nicolo Barella wheels away in celebration after heading in the winner against the Netherlands, Monday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amsterdam, Sept 8: A dominant Italy performance propelled them past the Netherlands 1-0 and to the top of their Nations League group. Nicolo Barella headed in the only goal shortly before halftime as Italy wasted chances. But the display will go a long way to helping the Azzurri put the disappointment of drawing against Bosnia-Herzegovina 1-1 last Friday behind them.

It was Italy's 11th win in 12 matches although some critics tempered that feat by pointing out that none of those victories were against the so-called 'big teams' of international football.

The only disappointing moment for Italy came when forward Nicolo Zaniolo, playing his first international since returning from a serious knee injury, limped off in the 42nd minute after a challenge by Donny van de Beek.

The win sent Italy to the top of League A Group 1 as Poland beat Bosnia 2-1 in the group's other match. Italy have a point more than the Netherlands and Poland, and three more than Bosnia.

With international football returning for the first time since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, all 54 games that are taking place across Europe over six days are subject to strict hygiene measures, including the exclusion of fans. Players had to pass mandatory pregame tests for COVID-19.

The Czech Republic had to name a new squad as regular members and coach Jaroslav Silhavy were quarantined after Friday's 3-1 win in Slovakia following a coronavirus outbreak in the team camp.

Led by David Holoubek, coach of the U-18 national team, and with only two of the 23 having played for the national team before, the Czechs lost at home to Scotland 1-2 in League B. Israel drew at home to Slovakia 1-1 in the same group.

Also in League B, Alexander Sorloth netted two goals as Norway beat Northern Ireland 5-1 and took his tally to six goals in his past five internationals. Sorloth scored just twice in his previous 19 appearances. Romania beat Austria 3-2. In League C, Kazakhstan lost at home to Belarus 2-0, and Lithuania won in Albania 1-0.