



## FASCINATING EXPERIENCE

Actor Shweta Tripathi says working in *Cargo* nudged her to discover more about space

LEISURE P2



## KISAN RAIL FLAGGED OFF

South India's first Kisan Rail from Ananthapur to New Delhi is flagged off by AP CM and Union Agriculture Min

TWO STATES P7

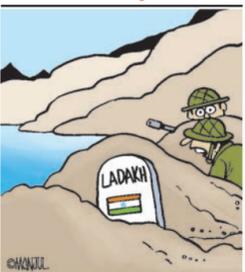


## CR7'S NIGHT OUT

Cristiano Ronaldo achieved a milestone as the Juventus talisman reached 100-goal mark for Portugal

SPORTS P12

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Just heard some of us might be sent to Mumbai to protect Kangana

## THE DRAGON HAS REINFORCED POSITION AT FINGER AREA NORTH OF PANGONG LAKE

# China starts fresh build up

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 9: As India dominates south of Pangong lake in Eastern Ladakh, China has started fresh build up at Finger area north of the Lake, sources said Wednesday.

It started soon after the skirmish on the southern bank took place September 7 where warning shots were fired by both sides.

The deployment of People's Liberation Army troops has increased since Tuesday evening. They are also bringing in more materials and logistics items, sources added.

The troops from both sides are at a short range from each other. "They are within clear visible range and Indian troops are keeping a close watch on the activities," said a government source. The Chinese continue to sit atop Finger 4 ridge line. The north bank of the lake is divided into eight fingers that are contested by both sides.

India claims that the Line of Actual Control at Finger 8 and had been holding on to area till Finger 4 but in a clear alteration of status quo the Chinese have been camping at Finger 4 and have set up fortifications between Finger 5 and 8.

The Indian Army has occupied crucial heights in areas around the south bank of Pangong Lake and the Chinese have made several attempts to take over Indian positions. It has become the new friction point where Indian Army seems to be in an advantageous position.

The Indian Army has occupied heights that allow it to dominate the Chinese Moldo garrison and the Spangur Gap under Chinese control.



ANTE UP

- The deployment of People's Liberation Army troops has increased since September 8 evening
- They are also bringing in more materials and logistics items
- The troops from both sides are at a short range from each other

Both India and China lay claim to some of these heights. One of the most critical heights the Indian Army is manning is the Rechin La, which the Chinese are protesting against.

From here, the Indian Army enjoys a vantage point not just over Chinese army military bases on the south bank of the Pangong Lake but can also be within range of the Finger 4 area on the north of the lake on the opposite side.

India and China have been engaged in a standoff since May at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh. Despite several levels of dialogue, there has not been any breakthrough and the deadlock continues.

## Chinese mouthpiece: China won't lose an inch of LAC territory

NEW DELHI: "China's policy towards India is backed by strength and if ordinary people are not afraid of Indian provocateurs, how could the PLA be intimidated by them? How can the country be weak in dealing with India? Everyone must believe that China has an upper hand over India. We have all kinds of initiatives in our hands and we will not allow India to take advantage of China, no matter it is negotiation or fighting a war," Global Times said in a report.

China state affiliated media Global Times said in a report "People familiar with the frontline situation along the China-India border told me that the People's Liberation Army (PLA) has a firm control over the overall situation, and that in the event of a war, no matter how it is fought, the PLA will have the absolute certainty of defeating the Indian army. China will not lose an inch of territory along the China-India border. Chinese people can be rest assured," it added.

The report by Hu Xijin, Editor in-chief of the Global Times said that recent events have shown that China's overall deterrence has not been big enough to deter Indian troops from taking risks.



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## 3 spl trains to ferry migrant returnees rejoining workplace

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: Three pairs of special trains will start running from September 12 to facilitate the migrant workers from Odisha to join their workplaces in Gujarat.

On his Twitter handle, Union Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Wednesday shared a copy of the letter from the Railway Board. "Three pairs of special train services starting September 12 on Puri-Ahmedabad, Puri-Gandhidham, Puri-Okha routes in addition to the Shramik specials and special trains already under operation will further ensure safe transport of people travelling to rejoin work in different states," said Pradhan.

According to the letter, 02843/04 Puri-Ahmedabad Express will run four days



in a week while 02073/74 Puri-Gandhidham Express and 08401/02 Puri-Okha Express will run once in a week.

The Minister thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Railway Minister Piyush Goyal for accepting his request for running additional trains from Odisha for the convenience of migrant Odias wanting to travel back to their workplaces.

Earlier, Pradhan wrote to Piyush Goyal requesting to restart Shramik special trains from Odisha to states like Gujarat, Karnataka and Maharashtra to facilitate the return of migrant workers to their workplaces.

## SHORT TAKES

### Nobel Peace Prize for Donald Trump

Copenhagen: A far-right Norwegian lawmaker said Wednesday that he has nominated US President Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in the Middle East. Christian Tybring-Gjedde, a member of the Norwegian Parliament for the far-right Progress Party, said Trump should be considered because of his work "for a peace agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Israel which opens up for possible peace in the Middle East." P10

### Role of men in parenting is up

Bhubaneswar: The state Women and Child Welfare department has said that role of men in parenting and community care increased multifold during the Covid-19 outbreak after the department's intervention. Women and Child Welfare secretary Anu Garg said, "What could be observed as a positive change is that more and more men are now taking a proactive role in ensuring effective healthcare, nutrition for the women and children of the family." P3

## 4 Red rebels gunned down in Kandhamal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Sept 9: Four Maoists were killed Wednesday in an encounter with security personnel in Kandhamal district, a senior police officer said. The encounter took place in a forest near Sirki under Belghar police limits. Personnel of the Special Operations Group (SOG) and District Voluntary Force (DVF) were conducting a combing operation in the area when they came across a group of Red rebels.

Police said that so far four bodies of Maoists have been recovered. The toll may rise as combing operation was still on within the forest.

Acting on a tip-off, the security forces had launched a combing operation on the border areas of Kalandahandi and Kandhamal districts, September 8. It was Wednesday they stumbled upon the Maoist camp following which the shootout began.

The Maoists fired at the SOG and DVF men after noticing them and the security personnel retaliated. In the exchange of fire four



- The exchange of fire lasted for around 30 minutes
- An SOG jawan suffered injuries and was shifted to a hospital

Maoists were gunned down, Odisha Police said in a statement.

"The exchange of fire lasted for around 30 minutes, during which four Maoists were neutralised and a SOG jawan suffered injuries. He has been shifted to a hospital. Some more teams of SOG, DVF and CRPF have been sent to the area for combing and search operations," the statement added.

It should be stated here that in another combing operation July 5 at Sirki reserve forest area under Tumudibandha police limits in the district, security personnel had killed five Maoists and busted a camp there.

## Fresh 3,748 nCoV cases rattle state

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: State's Covid-19 tally mounted to 1,35,130 Wednesday with 3,748 more people testing positive for the disease, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Eleven more fatalities, on the other hand, pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 580, said the official.

Of the fresh deaths, four were reported from Ganjam, three from Khurda and one each from

Bolangir, Kandhamal, Keonjhar and Puri districts. Odisha had reported its highest single-day spike of 14 Covid-19 deaths August 29.

Ganjam district has so far accounted for 213 of the 580 fatalities in the state, followed by Khurda (80), the official said, adding that as many as 53 coronavirus patients have so far died in the state due to other ailments. The fresh Covid-19 cases were reported from all the 30 districts of Odisha. Around 2,210 cases were reported from quarantine centres.

## SPLASH ALL OVER



Boys dive into a flooded lake following heavy rain, at Kuruvangi near Chikmagalur, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

## In 8 months, Gurgaon logs 240 suicides

As many as seven out of every 10 patients since March have said that they felt suicidal during the lockdown, says mental health expert

AGENCIES

Gurgaon, Sept 9: The Covid-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of people in Gurgaon. The monthly average of suicide cases has witnessed a spike with as many as 240 persons taking their own lives from January 1 to August 31 this year.

"The increase in the number of suicide cases is a matter of concern and the police have taken up this issue with the state's health and social justice and empowerment department to take remedial measures to prevent suicides. The department will soon organise a workshop on mental health with

a specialised doctor to deal with the issue," said Nitika Gahlaut, DCP (headquarter) of Gurugram police.

According to official data, 206 out of 240 cases have been registered under Section 174 of the CrPc at various police stations in the district in just eight months this year; while as many as 34 have been registered under Section 306 (abetment of suicide) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The figure was 37 in the previous year in which the police had filed cases under Section 306 of the IPC.

According to the police, the city's upscale locations witnessed the maximum number of suicides. Recently, a 94-year-old woman committed suicide by jumping off the balcony of her 15th floor condominium in Gurgaon.

In another case, a 25-year-old woman working with a private airline had also committed suicide in Gurgaon. Besides, a woman lawyer had committed



suicide by hanging herself in her rented accommodation.

Also, a 39-year-old doctor committed suicide after jumping off the balcony of the 8th

floor of his building.

"People have committed suicide due to multiple reasons including marital disorder, financial crisis, drug addiction, health issues or illness, unemployment, love affairs, or family disputes," Shweta Sharma, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Columbia Asia Hospital, Gurgaon said.

"As many as seven out of every 10 patients since the lockdown have said that they felt suicidal during the lockdown."

This is almost a 70 per cent rise since March. Some other reasons for this rise are working professionals complaining of irregular work hours and stress of work combined with lack of personal space as spouses are working from home.

"Most of them are living in the city away from their parents and families, and lack of physical meetings with friends and family has increased the stress and anxiety levels," Sharma concluded.

## Bombay HC's respite for Kangana's 'illegal' office

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 9: The Bombay High Court Wednesday stayed the demolition drive of actor Kangana Ranaut's 'illegal office' barely a couple of hours after the BrihanMumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) squad started bulldozing the premises.

Ranaut's lawyer had challenged the BMC notice earlier in the morning before the High Court, contending that there are no illegalities in the office works even as the civic demolition squad swooped on the premises in Bandra West.

The High Court has directed the BMC to file its reply to Ranaut's plea challenging the demolition order

by 3 pm Thursday.

As the High Court was hearing the matter, the BMC H-West Ward dozen-strong team, which was accompanied by a strong police posse, halted the demolition process awaiting the court orders.

The fast-paced developments came barely hours after the BMC pasted a notice outside the office rejecting a reply filed by Kangana's lawyer, Rizwan Siddique, to the Tuesday (September 8) notice in which the civic body had listed a series of violations in the ongoing works in her office.

Reacting to the BMC's procedure to demolish her Bandra property, the actor once again compared Mumbai to Pakistan.

# leisure

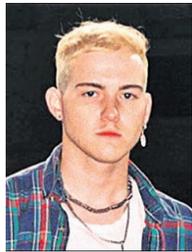


## KRISTEN BELL'S QUEENPINS ACQUIRED BY STX FILMS

STX Films has bought the worldwide rights for upcoming comedy *Queenpins*, to be headlined by actor Kristen Bell. The film, which will be directed by Aron Gaudet and Gita Pullapilly from their own script, is inspired by the true story of the largest coupon counterfeit scam in US history, reported *Variety*.

## TREVOR DANIEL LOOKS UP TO SELENA GOMEZ

Young American singer Trevor Daniel recently sang a duet with pop star Selena Gomez, with Grammy winner Finneas contributing as a songwriter. Trevor now hopes to join singer Camila Cabello on a tour. Trevor released *Past life* March 6, 2020, and followed it up with an official remix with Selena.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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#### ARIES

So, busy bee, you finally realise you've been ignoring your near and dear. And now, it's going to cost you a lot of effort to make it up to them. Dinner at the finest restaurant, a trip to the theatre, shopping at a posh boutique... be ready to splurge, says Ganesha!

#### TAURUS

In all probability, it is a favourable day to begin financial planning, says Ganesha. You will focus on your relations and leave no stone unturned to make them prosper. You may yearn for a quiet getaway and end up spending a small fortune to get what you want.

#### GEMINI

Today, you may resume your quest for spirituality which you had aborted some time back. However, that doesn't mean you are on your way to sainthood. You are just trying to get close to your inner self.

#### CANCER

You are likely to be a little over-zealous and over-analytical today, foretells Ganesha. You should not be too forceful or severe on others. This will help you save a few friendships and will make sure that your reputation remains intact.

#### LEO

When it comes to maintaining a balance in any relationship, you set an example for others to follow. It is like an inner light guides you towards joyful coexistence, though, at times, it may entail making certain acts of sacrifice, says Ganesha.

#### VIRGO

Take up the gauntlet that promises to test your business acumen, especially those related to capital and finances. You are most likely to come up with out-of-the-box ideas to resolve issues, and Ganesha assures that this will work wonders.

#### LIBRA

There is a very strong possibility of major improvements in your public standing and image today. But it all depends so much upon your personal character, and, therefore, you must guard it zealously, even with your own life.

#### SCORPIO

Today promises to be an exceptional day for those involved in business. With sheer brilliance, you will steer deals right to your door step, and will display great finesse in negotiations and bartering.

#### SAGITTARIUS

To do or not to do? That will be the question for most of today as you find yourself pulling out of one dilemma only to trip into the next one. Controversy will surround you and you may find yourself at the crossroads, where you are unsure of which direction to take.

#### CAPRICORN

Good news for students! If you have been trying your luck for studies abroad, today is an opportune day, says Ganesha. Also, get your priorities straight and see that you achieve them one by one, for only a well-planned move can take you a step closer to your ambition.

#### AQUARIUS

Bursting with new ideas, you want to make the world a better place! You will give your best in a team and will come up with great schemes and solutions. At gatherings and social dos, says Ganesha, you will remain your charming self, impressing people with an amazing social grace.

#### PISCES

Home is where the hearth is, in which the troubles you need to deal with today are smouldering. Running away from your problems will simply have you out of breath; it would be wiser to take a stand and find solutions to petty conflicts without losing your perspective.

## Srjan wins hearts, Raju Mishra conferred with GKCM Award

The 26th OMC Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award Festival, organised on virtual platforms, concluded on a high note



A presentation by Srjan ensemble

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar:** The 26th OMC Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra (GKCM) Award Festival concluded Wednesday on a high note with award presentation ceremony and the finale by the Srjan ensemble.

Odisha Governor Ganeshi Lal presented the Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award 2020 to veteran film director and cinematographer Raj Gopal Mishra, also known as Raju Mishra, for his contributions to Odia Cinema. The *Pua Mora Kala Thakura* director received the honour along with a cash prize of Rs 1,00,000/- and a citation. This was followed by the presentation of Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Yuva Pratibha Samman which carried a cash prize of Rs 25,000/- and a citation. The honour



Governor Ganeshi Lal presents GKCM award to ace film director Raju Mishra as Guru Ratikant Mohapatra looks on

was shared by Pravat Kumar Swain for Odissi dance and Himansu Sekhar Swain for his contribution to Odissi music.

The event also had two short video presentations featuring 60 Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Awardees of last 25 years, and the Yuva Pratibha Samman recipients over last couple of years. The much-awaited finale was a presentation by the Srjan ensemble, members of which, under the direction of Guru Ratikant

Mohapatra, have performed extensively in India and overseas, showcasing compositions with fast-paced movements, innovations in dance and music, and depicting popular themes within the Odissi idiom.

They began with an invocation to Lord Rama, *Antara Rama*, a devotional song by Sant Kabir exploring the transformation of Lord Rama's devotees from mere human to a state of divine grace. Set to *Raga Jogia*, and *Adi Tala*.

The ensemble, in its second presentation, created an amalgam of the classical and the contemporary. The music was composed by Vyazaru Balasubrahmanyam. In their third presentation, *Rase Harim Eha*, the dancers portrayed the various amorous episodes of Lord Krishna with the Gopis while Radha recollects the loving moments with her passionate lover, Krishna.

Srjan concluded with an *Abhinaya*, *Ramachandra Krupalu Bhajamana*, in *Raga Malika* and *Adi Tala*, set to the music composition of Pradip Kumar Das. In praise of Lord Rama, this song, composed by Sant Tulsidas, invoked the blessings of the Lord.

The performing artistes for the evening were Rajashri Praharaj, Ritu Sengupta, Aishwariya Singhdev, Sipra Swain, Riyanka Chakrabarty, Preetisha Mohapatra, and Reebhita Barua.

The festival was supported by the title sponsor Odisha Mining Corporation Limited, gold sponsor, State Tourism dept., and festival sponsors, Union Culture Ministry, State Culture dept. and the MGM Group, Bhubaneswar. The media partners were Dharitri and **Orissa POST**, and web partner was Narthaki.com.

## TV actress Sravani commits suicide

**Hyderabad:** Telugu television actress Kondapalli Sravani allegedly committed suicide at her house in Hyderabad, the police said Wednesday.

The 26-year-old artist was found hanging at her residence in Madhuranagar Tuesday. The family members said she went to her bed-

room and closed the door. They thought she was taking a bath but when she did not come out for a long, they broke the door open and found her hanging. They shifted her to a hospital where the doctors declared her brought dead.

The police shifted the body for autopsy and took up the investigation.

While the family alleged that she resorted to the extreme step due to harassment by her former boyfriend Devaraj Reddy, the police said the family had admonished her for moving around with him even after lodging a police case against him a few months ago.

IAN S

## Shweta rediscovers love for space during Cargo shoot

**Mumbai:** Actress Shweta Tripathi Sharma stars in the upcoming sci-fi film *Cargo*, and she says working in the film nudged her to discover more about space and astronomy.

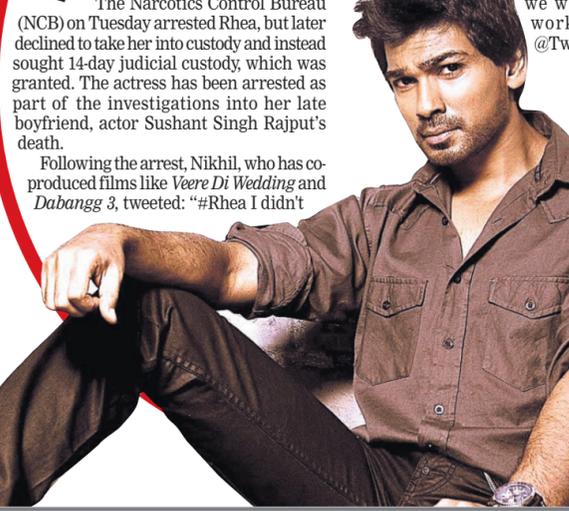
Helmed by Arati Kadav, the film tells the story about a spaceship that comes close to earth everyday to pick up cargoes that are essentially dead bodies. The craft also doubles up as an immigration office for the dead.

"Once I started working on the film, I was fascinated by some of the ideas. Arati is one of the few directors who discuss science with such passion and love. She has a unique vision of the world," said Shweta.

"Everything from costumes to the bulb, everything was planned in advance. Every department had immense clarity and it all trickles down from her unwavering faith in her vision. Be it a small or big, I want to be a part of her storytelling for many films to come. I was intrigued by a few concepts she had in mind."

IAN S

## Nikhil plans to work with Rhea



**Mumbai:** Actor-producer Nikhil Dwivedi believes a person is innocent until proven guilty. Hence, he has offered to work with actress Rhea Chakrabarty, who has been arrested by the Narcotics Central Bureau.

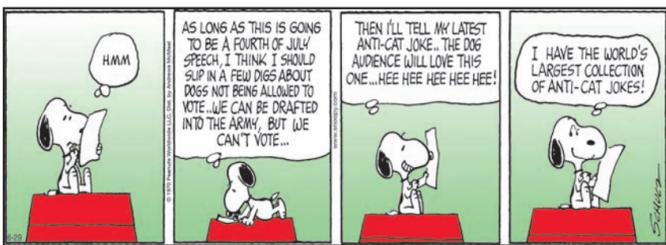
The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) on Tuesday arrested Rhea, but later declined to take her into custody and instead sought 14-day judicial custody, which was granted. The actress has been arrested as part of the investigations into her late boyfriend, actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

Following the arrest, Nikhil, who has co-produced films like *Veere Di Wedding* and *Dabangg 3*, tweeted: "#Rhea I didn't

kno u. I dn't kno wht kind of person u r. May b u r as bad as u r being made out to b. May b u r not. Wht I do kno is tht how its all played out for u is unfair, unlawful - how civilised countries behave. Whn all this is over we wud like to work wth u @Twee2Rhea."

IAN S

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

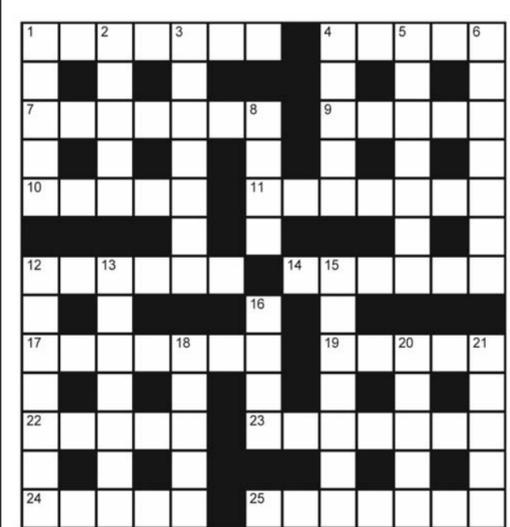


### BREVITY



### FUN post

### CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Recluses
  - 4 Fiesta fare
  - 7 Disallows
  - 9 Cougars
  - 10 Hot sauce
  - 11 Type of crisis
  - 12 Scotch biscuits
  - 14 Went for a run
  - 17 Wander aimlessly
  - 19 Theatre production
  - 22 Sticker
  - 23 Holiday spot
  - 24 Back street
  - 25 Cats
  - 6 Postpone
  - 8 Half (Prefix)
  - 12 Indonesian island
  - 13 Hot, in Vegas (2,1,4)
  - 15 Eccentric
  - 16 Rainbow goddess
  - 18 Hunky-dory
  - 20 Out of this world
  - 21 Swears
- Down**
- 1 Sword handles
  - 2 Out in the country
  - 3 Mirror
  - 4 Lukewarm
  - 5 Summer activity

### 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

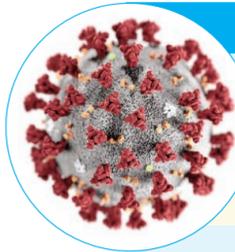
SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



## BUMPER CROP HOPE

Farmers busy in farmlands on the outskirts of Capital city Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,78,34,959	1,99,12,296	9,03,496
India	43,70,566	33,98,823	73,942
Odisha	1,35,130	1,05,295	580

# State gears up for by-elections

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** With the announcement of deadline for completion of Bihar Assembly polls and by-elections to 64 MLA seats, office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Odisha has geared up to ensure smooth conduct of the by-polls in the state.

Recently, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has announced that entire election process should be completed by November 29, 2020. Two Assembly constituencies – Balasore and Tirtol (SC) – will go to bye-elections before the time. The two Assembly seats have fallen vacant due to demise of sitting MLAs Madan Mohan Dutta and Bishnu Das.

CEO Sushil Kumar Lohani Wednesday chaired a review meeting with the district Collectors and SPs of Balasore and Jagatsinghpur through videoconferencing.

“Bye-election may be declared by the Election Commission of India at any time during October-November 2020 and we have to conduct bye-election to the 102-Tirtol AC in Jagatsinghpur district and 38-Balasore AC which are lying vacant,” said Lohani.

He directed both the district electoral officers (DEOs) and respective Collectors to strictly follow the instructions and guidelines on COVID-19 while making arrangements for by-elections till the completion of the polls.

Lohani said extensive awareness drives on wearing of masks, sanitizing hands, maintaining social distance and thermal screening of voters as well as polling personnel will be carried out before the elections.



## DISTANCING & MASKS MUST

By-elections to Balasore and Tirtol seats may be declared at any point of time during October-November 2020

Wearing of masks has been made mandatory for the voters who were also asked to follow the norms for hand sanitisation and social distancing at the polling stations

Number of electors per booth has been restricted to 1,000 maximum to ensure social distancing during by-poll

Similarly, nodal health officer at district and constituency levels will be appointed in view of COVID-19 pandemic during the by-polls, he stated.

The CEO also said that special arrangements will be made for COVID-19 infected voters. Isolation centres would be set up for them and COVID positive voters would be allowed to exercise their franchise at the last hour of poll, he added.

The number of electors per booth has been limited to 1,000 maximum to ensure social distancing during poll.

Accordingly polling stations where the number of voters is more than 1,000 have been bifurcated and auxiliary polling stations have

been created by both the DEOs in consultation with political party representatives, sources said.

All persons associated with the by-elections will abide by COVID-19 guidelines. Wearing of masks has been made mandatory for all the voters who were also asked to follow the norms for hand sanitisation and social distancing at the polling stations.

The CEO took a detailed review on the preparatory activities for deployment polling persons, vehicle arrangements, security arrangements, strong rooms, dispersal centres and counting halls among other things.

Additional CEO BP Ray, joint CEO Satrugna Kar and other senior officials attended the meeting.

# CM for more ICUs, ambulances in twin cities

CHIEF MINISTER HOPES THE SITUATION IN BHUBANESWAR & CUTTACK WOULD IMPROVE BY NEXT WEEK

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** With the continuous spike in novel coronavirus cases in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday directed the officials concerned to increase the number of ICU beds and ambulance footprint in the twin cities.

Holding a high-level meeting on COVID management through videoconferencing, Patnaik emphasised the need to strengthen health infrastructure in Khurda and Cuttack districts, as well as awareness programmes amid strict compliance with COVID-19 regulations. The Chief Minister hoped that the situation in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack would improve next week.

Social distancing, wearing of masks and ban on spitting in public are very important in controlling the spread of the virus, he said.

Expressing concern that small

## WAR AGAINST CORONA

Expressing concern that small vendors and shopkeepers were found violating the COVID guidelines, the Chief Minister directed the police, Health dept and municipal corporations to coordinate with each other for ensuring strict enforcement of the rules

Patnaik also expressed satisfaction over improvement in COVID-19 situation in Ganjam, Sundargarh, Gajapati and Koraput districts

Recovery rate in Odisha is 77.8%, which is slightly more than the national average while the death rate stands at 0.43% – the lowest in the country



vendors and shopkeepers were found violating the COVID guidelines, he directed the police, Health department and municipal corporations to coordinate with each other for ensuring strict enforcement of the rules. While many people

were following the rules properly, violation by a few would never be tolerated, he warned.

He congratulated the doctors and health workers as the number of patients recovering from COVID in the state has exceeded 1 lakh.

Patnaik also expressed satisfaction over improvement in COVID-19 situation in Ganjam, Sundargarh, Gajapati and Koraput districts and advised the Jajpur, Bargarh, Khurda and Cuttack Collectors and the Cuttack-Bhubaneswar municipal administrations to follow the Berhampur model. “The district magistrates can take a call on closure of temporary medical camps, Covid Care Centres and Covid Care Homes,” he said.

Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy said that more doctors and administrative officials would be sent to hotspot districts. H&FW department additional chief secretary PK Mohapatra said the recovery rate in state is 77.8 per cent, which is slightly more than the national average while the death rate stands at 0.43 per cent – the lowest in the country. He said that ‘step-down ICU policy’ will be adopted for treatment of critically ill patients.

# 12 babus, including 4 Collectors, shunted

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** The state government, Wednesday, transferred Districts Collectors of Jajpur, Bolangir, Nuapada and Angul along with eight other officers.

As per a notification issued by the General Administration & Public Grievances department, Berhampur Municipal Corporation commissioner Chakravarti Singh Rathore has been appointed as the Collector of Jajpur district. Incumbent Collector of the district Ranjan

Kumar Das has been posted as additional secretary to the Culture department.

The Project Director DRDA of Mayurbhanj, Chanchal Rana, has been posted as the new Collector of Bolangir while IAS officer Arindam Dakua was appointed as director (special project) in Panchayati Raj department. Similarly, young IAS officers—Siddharth Shankar Swain and Swadha Dev Singh—have been appointed as Collectors of Angul and Nuapada districts respectively.

Moreover, Manoj Kumar Mohanty

has been transferred and posted as additional secretary to Revenue department and Madhusmita Sahoo as deputy secretary to Water Resources department. IAS officer Dattatraya Bhausaheb Shinde is the new PD, DRDA of Ganjam while Siddheshwar Baliram Bondar is posted as Berhampur Commissioner.

Besides, Keerthi Vasav V and J Sonal, who were appointed as OSD in Ganjam and Gajapati districts for COVID management, have been posted as sub-collector of Berhampur and Gunpur (Rayagada).

# CONTACTORS' PLEA TO CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** All Odisha Contractors' Association Wednesday wrote to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik demanding cancellation of multi-crore large tenders of Rural Drinking Water Supply & Sanitation (RWSS) department, Odisha, split them into smaller packages and award all works to Odisha contractors only.

Association president Pravat Dash said that the engineer in chief of RWSS department recently decided to carry out a bidding process for selection of the eligible contractors for execution, operation and maintenance of water supply projects in different areas of the state for a period of five years.

In the advertisement, the works are to be executed in large areas covering different blocks of a district and in all tenders number of projects has been clubbed, resulting in very high value tenders running up to several hundred crores of rupees.

“Such clubbing is made with a wrong intention to offload the works to a certain contractors from other states mostly in Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana and depriving local contractors from taking up these works,” he said.

# Aided jr college governing bodies dissolved

**Bhubaneswar:** The state government has dissolved governing bodies or managing committees of all non-government aided higher secondary schools (junior colleges) with immediate effect. “The government after careful consideration has been pleased to dissolve the governing bodies or managing committees of all non-government aided higher secondary schools (erstwhile junior colleges) of Odisha under the purview of School and Mass Education department with immediate effect except the higher secondary schools where sub-collectors/ additional district magistrates have already been nominated as the president of governing bodies,” School and Mass Education department said Tuesday.

# COVID-19 tests cross 1.5 lakh in Capital

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Wednesday, claimed that the testing for COVID-19 in city crossed 1.5-lakh mark as on September 8.

As per BMC sources, altogether 1,52,674 citizens of the Temple city have undergone three types of tests – RT-PCR, Rapid Antigen and True-NAT for novel coronavirus. Out of these, 1.05 lakh tests were done at various government-run test facilities across the city, while 46,684 tests were conducted at various private facilities.

Meanwhile, 66,891 tests were conducted through Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR), 38,478 through Rapid Antigen Test and 621 by True-NAT process.

“We are currently doing COVID testing for 3,000 to 3,500 people daily. Given the population size and area of the corporation, we are doing a good number of testing in Bhubaneswar,” said BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary.

# IT'S AUTUMN



Kids play with Kans grass flowers at Balikuda, on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

# Boy succumbs to attack injuries in City; 4 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** Local police arrested four persons Wednesday in connection with the murder of a schoolboy.

The 16-year-old was allegedly hacked to death by four youths at Bharatpur area under Khandagiri police limits in the state capital.

The victim, identified as Badal Padhi, was attacked by the accused with a knife September 2 evening. He had sustained grievous injuries in the assault and was admitted to a hospital before succumbing to his injuries while undergoing treatment late September 8 night.

Tension ran high after the death of the boy as over 50 locals agi-

tated at Khandagiri police station demanding the arrest of all the accused. Irked locals also set a shop at Bharatpur on fire.

Mother of the deceased has alleged that her son was attacked by a group of drug addicts when he refused to part with his money while he had gone to purchase some daily essentials from the local market.

On the other hand, police personnel have been deployed in the locality to avoid any untoward incident. It is being

suspected that the murderous attack was the fallout of previous enmity.

The arrested are being interrogated and more arrests are likely to take place in the days ahead, Khandagiri police sources maintained.



Mother of the deceased has alleged that her son was attacked by a group of drug addicts

# OPPN WANTS QUESTION HOUR DURING MONSOON SESSION

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** Opposition BJP and Congress Wednesday demanded conduct of Question Hour during upcoming monsoon session of Assembly as the proceeding is unlikely to be taken in view of COVID-19 pandemic.

The Parliament has scrapped the Question Hour for this monsoon session scheduled to take place between September 14 and October 1. It is likely that Odisha Assembly may also follow the suit.

Terminating the plan for complete removal of Question Hour unconstitutional, BJP deputy leader in House Bishnu Sethi said, “If the state government does away with the Question Hour, then what business has left for the House?”

The state government should rethink on it and if needed, they can reduce the time period, he sug-

gested.

Similarly, Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati said his party will protest if Question Hour is scrapped. “Only BJD members and Speaker will sit in the House, we will seat outside with public,” he said. The Congress leader urged Speaker to call an all-party meeting in this regard.

BJD legislator Amar Satpathy said, “It is the prerogative of the Speaker to take a decision on this. However, we and other states are also following the Parliament in conduct of business of House.” Considering the prevailing situation, Speaker will take the final call, he stated.

However, Speaker SN Patro said, “The House will run as per COVID-19 guidelines. No decision has been taken regarding Assembly session. Detailed programme of House will be out after the date is finalised.”

# Fresh Lopar to bring rain in south Odisha Sept 12 & 13

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** India Meteorological Department (IMD) Wednesday said a low pressure area (Lopar) is likely to form over west central Bay of Bengal off Andhra Pradesh coast around September 13. Under its impact, heavy rainfall may occur in south Odisha, it said.

“As the low pressure area is likely to form over west central Bay of Bengal off Andhra Pradesh coast, it may not have much impact on Odisha. However, some south Odisha districts are likely to witness heavy rain September 12 & 13,” said Bhubaneswar Met Centre director HR Biswas.

After two to three days, the po-



sition of the system could be ascertained and the exact impact on Odisha predicted, he said.

Predicting heavy rainfall September 12, the Met Centre issued yellow warning for Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur districts.

Similarly, heavy rainfall warning has been issued for Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Rayagada, Gajapati, Kandhamal and Ganjam district, September 13.

# Role of men in parenting up during pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 9:** The state Women and Child Development department has said that role of men in parenting and community care increased manifold during the COVID-19 outbreak after the department's intervention.

The department said that increased participation of men in pre-natal, anti-natal and maternal cares was seen in COVID times.

Women and Child Development secretary Anu Garg said, “Both father and mother have significant roles to play in the upbringing of children. What could be observed

as a positive change is that more and more men are now taking a proactive role in ensuring effective health care, nutrition for the women and children of the family.”

She also added, “Due to increased contribution of men, the burden of household chores on women has reduced, resulting in enhanced family bonding.”

The department said that it started its campaign of bringing men into mainstream of parenting during the last few months and it also reportedly bore fruits too.

“This positive change can be established by numerous positive stories that have been pouring in from



Picture for representation

communities across the state. Active involvement and participation of men has been immensely visible

throughout. ‘Ghare Ghare Arunima’ or Odisha’s preschool education at home is one classical area which has

seen the greatest engagement of fathers in supporting their children learn and play,” the department said in a statement.

It also added, “Anganwadi workers too have endorsed the fact that men have been taking keen interest in participating during counselling sessions and have shown their eagerness to learn about health, nutrition, sanitation and care of women & children. Their support for developing ‘Mo Upakari Bagicha’ or nutri-gardens too is undeniable.”

The department said that during the recent floods the department also saw increased role of men in carrying out important works like distribution of ration, contacting Anganwadi workers and others for the kids as well.

Health dept to recognize medical education courses

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: The state government has transferred the power for grant of permission and recognition to public health and other medical education related courses to the health & family welfare department.

"Since this subject matter comes under the domain of the health and family welfare (H&FW) department, it is hereby decided that permission and recognition to such courses shall henceforth be granted by H&FW Department," the higher education department said in an order Wednesday.

However, the course curriculum, affiliation and conduct of examination will be dealt by the universities concerned.

Seeking permission and recognition under the Orissa Education Act-1969, many institutions have submitted applications/proposals for establishment of educational institution to impart courses in public health and some other medical education related subjects to the higher education department.

All applications/proposals relating to these courses, currently pending in higher education department, will be transferred to H&FW department for further necessary action at their level.

Bison calf cheer at Nandankanan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, Sept 9: A bison Wednesday delivered a calf at enclosure no 42 of Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here, zoo deputy director Bimal Prasanna Acharya said.



With this, the number of bison at NZP has gone up to five. Now, the zoo has two male bison, two female bison and a calf. "The mother bison and its calf are doing well," Acharya added.

Bison are the largest animal of the cow family and they are mainly found in Southeast Asia. Bison can live up to 30 years and they have been included in the list of endangered species, NZP sources said.

Two bison were brought to NZP from a zoo in Chandigarh through an animal exchange programme May 25, 2015. NZP authorities had exchanged a few water monitor lizards, deer and birds for the bison, NZP sources added.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

By an affidavit before the Notary Public, Jharsuguda I Prashant Kumar Ojha declare that Prashant Ojha, S/o.- Sansari Ojha, C/o.- Nanda Kishore Sahu, Dalki, near Jagannath Mandir, Dalki, Jharsuguda - 768201, Odisha, Prashant Kumar Ojha, S/o.- Sansari Ojha, Dalki, Jharsuguda - 768202 and Prasanta Kumar Ojha, S/o.- Sansari Ojha, Dalki, Jharsuguda - 768201. All the above names relates to one and same person.

PURI SEES RECORD 300+ COVID CASES IN A DAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 9: The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is fast spreading its evil tentacles to every nook and corner of the Pilgrim City with the Holy City witnessing its highest single-day spike of more than 300 COVID-19 cases, Wednesday.

Out of 3,748 fresh cases detected within 24 hours from across the state, Puri accounted for 387 cases. The city had been recording less than 220 cases for last two days. Moreover, Puri lost a 46-year-old man to the infection, according to data of the health and family welfare department.

With this, COVID-19 cases in the Pilgrim City crossed the 5,000-mark while the death toll stood at 20. The upward trend of the infection is



PURI DISTRICT RECORDED ITS FIRST CASE OF COVID-19 APRIL 3

COVID-19 CASES IN THE PILGRIM CITY CROSSED THE 5,000-MARK WHILE THE DEATH TOLL STOOD AT 20

THE UPWARD TREND OF THE INFECTION IS ATTRIBUTED TO EASING OF COVID-19 NORMS BY WAY OF UNLOCK 4.0

attributed to easing of COVID-19 norms by way of Unlock 4.0.

"The district recorded its first case of COVID-19 April 3. After a gap of 36-odd days, it reported two more cases May 10. Almost every day thereafter, the city saw detection of fresh cases. Puri has so far witnessed 5,227 cases. While 3,891 persons have recovered from the disease, around 1,313 were under treatment for the viral infection. On

the other hand, the district has lost 20 of its residents to the viral infection in these months," said an official of the district administration, adding that the administration has so far tested 67,846 blood/swab samples for the infection.

"Puri's COVID-19 recovery rate is somewhere around 74.44. The district has 45 active containment zones including the highest of 20 in Kanas block," the official added.

141 infants test +ve until now: BMC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: As COVID cases in the state capital continue to show an upward trend, sources at Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) have revealed that the city has seen 141 children between age groups of 0-5 years infected with the disease.

While the city until now has reported 14,492 cases with 9350 having recovered and 5077 active cases, the positivity among infants is said to constitute only 1% of all cases. Based on the information it was also found out that out of 141 children, 85 have recovered and while the rest 56 are active cases.

"Looking at the number of recovered infants we can say that it is a motivating indicator. Special attention towards pregnant and lactating mothers has been given through the regular tracing and visits by the teams

Looking at the number of recovered infants we can say that it is a motivating indicator. Special attention towards pregnant and lactating mothers has been given through the regular tracing and visits by the teams



through the regular tracing and visits by the teams. Furthermore, we have been in regular touch with families and intense testing and regular contact tracing is being done," said BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary.

It can be mentioned that COVID cases in terms of reproductive and

child health are considered differently by the authorities as opposed to other COVID positives. Thus, pregnant, lactating, neonates, infants and 0-5 children are placed in different indicators of status of health. While COVID positive cases in infants have been observed relatively low, the city's rising cases in

Faculty prog at UU History dept

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: The History department of Utkal University is organising an online faculty development programme (FDP) on leadership and excellence to mark its diamond jubilee session.

The programme was started September 7 and it would continue till September 11. The All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy are sponsoring the faculty development programme.

The primary objective of the programme is to maintain and enhance faculty effectiveness by inculcating dynamism along with leadership qualities. It will also develop commitment, ethical approach towards work and instill a sense of responsibility towards the institution, department sources said.



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Utkal University Vice-Chancellor Soumendhra Mohan Patnaik is acting as the director of the programme while History department faculty member Jayanti Dora is the coordinator of the programme.

The online FDP was inaugurated September 7. AICTE chairman Anil D Sahasrabudhe was the chief guest of the occasion. AICTE vice-chairman M.P.Pooina and member secretary Rajive Kumar also graced the occasion.

History department head and postgraduate council chairman Basanta Kumar Mallik presided

over the FDP meeting while director research and development of the university, Nigamananda Das, was the guest of honour. Senior faculty member of Art and Living Trust Ranjan Kumar Sahoo was the chief speaker.

Dora delivered the welcome address and introduced the theme. Kausik Sahoo and Adyasha Mishra of Art of Living, Bhubaneswar, were also present in the panel of speakers. Around a 100 faculties and research scholars from different universities and technical institutions participated in the inaugural meeting.

ROW OVER BAGALA LAND



BJP workers stage a sit-in in front of the office of Puri Collector, Wednesday, to protest the alleged sale of Bagala Dharmashala land in the Holy City

2 ODISIA TEACHERS FETED WITH CBSE AWARDS

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 9: A principal and a teacher from Odisha were felicitated and conferred CBSE Teachers Award for 2018-19 by Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank along with 36 other teachers and principals during an online ceremony in New Delhi Wednesday.

Dhananjay Pan, Principal of Delhi Public School Paradip Refinery Township, Jagatsinghpur and Swapna Rani Panigrahi, TGT Social Science of DAV Public School Sadanand Vihar, Berhampur were awarded for their contributions towards improving school education, innovation and dedication.

Speaking on the occasion,

Pokhriyal said teachers lay the basic foundation of education. He said that teaching is a most respected profession and the purpose of these awards is to celebrate the unique contribution of some of the finest teachers in the country and to honor those teachers, who through their commitment have not only improved the quality of school education but also enriched the lives of their students.

The minister highlighted that in the New Education Policy 2020, teachers have been placed right at the centre of the education system. According to the ministry, each award consists of a merit certificate, a shawl and Rs 50,000. Since 2018, CBSE follows an online selection process.

Govt grapples with lack of data on number of transgenders in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: The state government is still grappling with the non-availability of concrete data on the population of transgenders in the state.

At a recent meeting of the transgenders and their leaders and the State Food Commission, concerns were raised on the lack of authentic information on the population of the third gender in the state and their food security. The official minutes of the meeting cited the issue and talked about finding a solution to the problem.

"During the discussions, it was pointed out that there was no authentic data on transgenders in Odisha. The Census 2011 puts their

number at around 20,000 but another estimate puts their number at approximately 40,000," minutes of the commission said.

In the meeting it was decided to go by the the gender mentioned in Aadhaar cards (male/female/transgender) maintained by the department. It was also decided that the department might be asked to determine the number of transgender population in Odisha.

It came to the fore that many transgenders do not live with their families or are driven out, there is a lot of confusion on their names in ration cards and Aadhar.

"They can't apply for a fresh ration card because their names seeded with Aadhaar are already

there in their family's ration cards. A request was made to provide them independent Antyodaya ration cards and delete their names from the family ration card," the minutes said.

Members of the third gender reportedly told the commission that COVID 19 has hit the community hard and their earnings have suffered a major setback during the pandemic. They claimed that their inclusion only under the Targeted Public Distribution Centre (TPDS) won't suffice and they are entitled for Antyodaya Ann Yojana (AAY). Close to 1,000 transgenders have got Antodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) ration cards in the state while most others have received TPDS cards.

FISHING TIME



Locals undertake fishing activities in the Daya river near Bhubaneswar after the floodwater receded, Wednesday

Plaudits for state for aiding organic farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 9: A report of the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) on organic farming has praised Odisha for aiding in organic farming.

The report titled 'State of Organic and Natural Farming in India' prepared by the New Delhi-based environment think tank claims that despite lower assistance from the Union government, some states like Odisha worked towards linking farmers with market.

"There is no provision for procurement of organic produce by the central government. A few states such as Karnataka, Odisha and Uttarakhand, however, are providing market support to organic farmers in the form of procurement, connecting organic produce with government schemes such as the Public Distribution System (PDS) and Integrated Child



Development Services (ICDS) and linking with buyers," it said.

The report said Odisha has around 1,18,000 hectares of land till 2019 as organic areas which accounts for 2.6 per cent of the net down areas of the state. The organic farming is also governed by the 2018 Organic Farming Policy.

The CSE report said Odisha and some other states have higher number

of clusters under the Parampara Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY). The report cited the example of the inclusion of millet growth in the state with organic farming.

"Odisha started a programme to promote millets in tribal areas in 2017, which has so far covered an area of about 23,000 ha. Under this programme, farmers are encouraged to adopt organic farming practices.

Millets are procured by the state government and linked with the Public Distribution System (PDS) system which aims to link it with state nutrition programmes."

The report also added, "Malkangiri has become Odisha's first district to form a 'committee on agro-ecology and agro-biodiversity' in May 2020."

According to Odisha Organic Farming Policy, 2018, the state aims to cover 0.2 million ha of land under organic farming through a combination of activities in agriculture, horticulture, forest and pasturelands within a period of five years. Funding has been planned through convergence of PKVY, RKVY, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) and state budgets.

The report also appreciated the state for being among 12 states which have their own accredited organic certification agencies.

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# Drug peddling hurdle-free courtesy excise staff crunch

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jaleswar, Sept 9:** The block in Balasore district is said to be a hub of drug peddling. Despite raids, drug peddling has not been stopped till date, even as the Jaleswar and Bhograi excise police stations are not equipped with staff and facilities.

It is said that for shortage of staff, excise police have been unable to have a grip on the drug mafia operating in the area.

Jaleswar excise police station is split into two jurisdictional areas. But only one IIC is handling the two police stations along with an ASI and four constables.

Raibania, Kamarda, Bhograi and Marine police station areas are under Jaleswar excise police station.

In 1991, Bhograi excise police station was set up.

Reports said, excise police are handicapped due to staff shortage to monitor drug peddling in coastal areas. About 80- km of coast sharing borders of Odisha and West Bengal, from Udaypur beach up to Raibania Sardar Bandh has remained unguarded.

As a result, bootleggers and drug peddlers push about 8000 litres of illegal liquor and huge amounts of brown sugar through porous water routes into Jaleswar.

Moreover, reports also said banned narcotics like brown sugar are smuggled directly from Bangladesh, Murshidabad, Karagpur and Kolkota through various conduits into Jaleswar area.

In such a situation, an ill-staffed



UNGUARDED COASTLINE

About 80- km of coast sharing borders of Odisha and West Bengal, from Udaypur beach up to Raibania Sardar Bandh has remained unguarded

Reports also said banned narcotics like brown sugar are smuggled directly from Bangladesh, Murshidabad, Karagpur and Kolkota through various conduits into Jaleswar area

In such a situation, an ill-staffed excise police station will not be able to keep tabs on drug peddlers on long porous coastal borders

excise police station will not be able to keep tabs on drug peddlers on long porous coastal borders.

Posts of two ASIs and seven constables are lying vacant. On the other hand, Bhograi excise police station is run from a rented house. This police station requires an ASI and five constables. However, the excise police station has only two constables.

It is said that at least two inspectors, 8 ASIs and 15 constables are needed for running of both the excise police stations in this vulnerable coastal pocket.

A few years ago, STF had ar-

rested Sk Raj, a dug mafia with international links.

Till recently, hooch and liquor had been flowing from West Bengal into Phuladi, Chasakhand, Haladipada, Rupsa, Basta, Kadraiyam and Jaleswar areas. After raids, the volume of illegal transaction has come down.

However, drug peddling is still on in this coastal pocket. It is evident from the fact that in a major haul, the Special Task Force (STF) had seized over 4 kg of brown sugar at Jamalpur along the NH-16 under Jaleswar block in the night of August 26, 2020. Two peddlers were arrested in the area.

# Suspended Bolangir sub-collector, victim appear before LCC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, Sept 9:** Bolangir sub-collector Sanjay Kumar Mishra, who has been suspended following a complaint by a lady of sexual harassment, appeared Wednesday before a six-member Local Complaints Committee (LCC) here. Complainant Jayashree Khuntia also appeared in front of the panel.

The panel comprising LCC chief Shantilata Bohidar, sub-collector Suchita Puspa, DSWO Binodini Padhan, Bidyutalita Khamari, Bhakta Nayak and Bhagwati Guru questioned both Mishra and Khuntia.

Khuntia working as a junior revenue assistant had accused Mishra of sexually harassing her in his office chamber August 14. She alleged that he had forcibly tried to hug her.

Collector Arindam Dakua had formed a fact-finding committee to probe the alleged 'sexual harassment charge' brought against Mishra.

# Fert crunch riles Sonepur farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sonepur, Sept 9:** At a time when farm activities are peaking up, shortage of urea has played spoilsport for farming in Sonepur, a leading paddy producing district in western Odisha.

It was alleged that fertilizer wholesalers have resorted to hoarding while retailers are taking Rs 200 more than the regular price of the fertilizer packet in Sonepur, Tarabha, Rampur, Dunguripalli and Birmaharajpur areas.

Upset over the severe shortage of fertilizers and black marketing, farmers under the banner of Subarnapur Zilla Krushak Sangathan staged protests outside the Collectorate Wednesday.

Agitating farmers said, "Black marketing of urea has picked up amid a delay in government supply. We are buying urea from black marketeers by paying exorbitant prices."

They demanded a Vigilance probe into the alleged black-marketing of urea.

Farmers have been trying for several days to get fertilizers, but



Farmers stage protests at Sonepur collectorate, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

there's no stock either in societies or in private shops.

Urea is used for better growth of crops a month after sowing and is usually supplied to farmers through cooperative societies and private dealers. In the district, farmers are now in urgent need of the fertiliser to ensure proper growth of crops at this time.

"Some dealers are forcing farmers to buy urea at higher price.

This is how we are being looted. Why should I pay for something which I don't want," farmers lamented.

A delegation of farmers submitted a memorandum addressed to the Governor to the Collector.

ADM Delamani Patel and DAO Prashant Kumar Satapathy received the memorandum as the Collector was absent. The DAO said by September 20, farmers will get urea as per their requirement.

# HYVA FALLS INTO IB RIVER, TWO MISSING

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jharsuguda, Sept 9:** Two youths went missing in Ib River as a Hyva truck carrying them aboard fell off Rampela bridge into the river Tuesday afternoon.

The missing youths were identified as Jitendra Pradhan and Aurobindo Sahu from Barakani village under Banaharpali police lim-



its in Jharsuguda district. According to reports, Jitendra

and Aurobindo along with driver Aditya Sahu were going in the Hyva truck towards Ib Thermal area in Jharsuguda from Rengali in Sambalpur district. However, the driver lost control over the vehicle while on the bridge. The Hyva truck skidded off the bridge and fell into Ib river after breaking the barriers.

Eyewitnesses said the Hyva truck was completely submerged in the

swelling Ib river after falling into it.

On being informed, local police and fire service personnel reached the spot and launched a rescue operation. While driver Aditya was rescued, the youths were missing till the filing of this report.

Hyva driver Aditya was shifted to a private hospital after being referred from Jharsuguda hospital, police sources said.

# Students oppose offline BEd exams at FM University



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasore, Sept 9:** The authorities of Fakir Mohan University in Balasore have decided to conduct a final examination of BEd course offline.

Opposing this decision, hundreds of students staged protests in the university and demanded online examination during the Covid times Wednesday.

They pointed out that while all universities in the country are holding online examination of the course, the FM University decided to hold it offline when the pandemic is raging. As per the notification of the university, the examination will be held from September 21 to September 30.

They also said that students from other districts like Bhadrak, Angul, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar are studying in the university.

What is alarming is that two staff of the university were affected with Covid out of whom one has died. The university and its

## WHAT THEY SAY

While all universities in the country are holding online examination of the course, the FM University decided to hold it offline when the pandemic is raging. As per the notification of the university, the examination will be held from September 21 to September 30.

The students from other districts like Bhadrak, Angul, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar studying in the university will face a lot of problems in finding accommodation and food as the university and its hostels are shut down now

Students coming from other districts will face a lot of problems in finding accommodation and food. In view of this, online examination of BEd is safe for all, they said. The students submitted a memorandum to Vice Chancellor Madhumita Das.

# Outsiders sans masks denied entry into Ganjam district

SAFETY GUIDELINES MADE STRICTER FOR BUSES, AUTOS FOR SIX MONTHS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chhatrapur, Sept 9:** Even though the rate of Covid infection in Ganjam has slowed down, the threat of coronavirus in the district has not been completely blunted. It is seen that people are found fearlessly moving in hordes. Safety guidelines have been thrown to winds, posing threat to their lives.

In a major decision, the district administration has denied entry of outside passengers to the district without wearing masks.

"Precaution is very vital in Ganjam district," Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange urged the people. Through a video conferencing

Wednesday, the Collector congratulated all officials for successful Covid management.

"The Covid management is to be maintained in the same manner so as to ward off infections. The management will be made stricter for six months in rural pockets. Passengers in auto rickshaws and buses are not wearing masks. This will create critical situation through cross-matching of infection.

Buses and auto rickshaws will be denied entry into the districts if passengers do not wear masks. Raids will be conducted. Action will be taken against the owners of buses and auto rickshaws, if they are

found allowing passengers without carrying masks. Awareness will be created through posters," he said.

"Passengers must wear face masks while travelling in auto rickshaws and buses. Also a limit on the number of passengers must be followed. Drivers of vehicles have to ensure it. Otherwise action will be initiated against the owners of vehicles," Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange tweeted.

In another tweet, Kulange said that door-to-door "Oxygen Checking Campaign" has been started in all blocks, NACs and municipality areas of the district. "Our frontline COVID warriors 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 level. It is a measurement of the amount of oxygen carrying hemoglobin in the blood compared to the amount of hemoglobin not carrying oxygen. The SpO2 of a healthy person should be between 94 per cent and 100 per cent.



The Collector and other officials at a video conference on Covid management

# Nabarangpur MLA, wife test +ve

**NABARANGPUR:** Nabarangpur MLA Sadasiba Pradhani and his wife tested positive for COVID-19, Wednesday. The MLA took to social media to reveal their diagnosis. He also requested their friends, who came in contact with them last week, to go for home quarantine and get tests done, if needed.

Sources said, Pradhani gave his swab samples at the COVID testing centre in the district after developing mild symptoms of the virus. As his wife is also staying with him, she gave her swab sam-

ple for testing.

Unfortunately, the duo tested positive for the virus. Notably, other MLAs who tested positive for COVID-19 are Bhubaneswar

(North) legislator Susant Rout, Bhubaneswar (Central) MLA Ananta Narayan Jena, Berhampur MLA Bikram Panda, Chandbali MLA Byomakesh Ray,

Baramba MLA Debi Prasad Mishra, Pottangi MLA Pritam Padhi, Bhadrak MLA Sanjib Mallick and Khandapada MLA Soumya Ranjan Patnaik.

# Jharsuguda cop dies of Covid-19

**JHARSUGUDA:** A Covid-19 warrior and sub-inspector (SI) of Badamal police station Raj Kishore Samad succumbed to the deadly coronavirus infection Tuesday. He died despite being given treatment at a local Covid hospital, police sources said. Jharsuguda SP Rahul PR said "Samad was honoured as a Covid-19 warrior by Jharsuguda district as well as the police administration. His funeral rites were performed in keeping with the Covid-19 guidelines". Samad was a diabetic. The deceased officer contracted the virus August 17, while performing his duties for people here.

# Elephants trample youth to death

**Dhenkanal:** A youth succumbed to injuries after he was attacked by a herd of elephants at Baliikiari village under Hindol forest range in Dhenkanal district late Tuesday night. The deceased, Sanjay Rout, along with some co-villagers had gone to their farm to guard the crop when a herd of 22 elephants arrived there. While others managed to escape from the spot, Rout was trapped and attacked by the elephants. Villagers rescued Rout and rushed him to Hindol hospital. After preliminary treatment, he was shifted to Dhenkanal district headquarters hospital where he died.

# LOCALS PROTEST MGNREGS SCAM

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Nuapada, Sept 9:** Residents of Amanara panchayat in Nuapada district staged protests Wednesday, alleging, rampant irregularities were committed in the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

Some beneficiaries started hunger strike at the collectorate, alleging apathy of the block administration towards the

guilty and in starting an investigation into the scam.

₹10 lakh was sanctioned for a tank at Pawartala village under MGNREGS in 2018-19.

However, the work had been botched up, the villagers alleged.

As the block administration did not pay much heed to the scam, an RTI activist got information that the contractor has managed to get the bill for the tank with a guard wall of 1.5 metre height.

**NOTICE**  
**SBI INFRA MANAGEMENT SOLUTIONS PVT. LTD.**  
 (A wholly owned subsidiary of SBI)  
 A.O: Brahma Nagar, 2<sup>nd</sup> lane, Berhampur- 760 001

**TENDER FOR PREMISES ON LEASE BASIS FOR SHIFTING OF SBI-GANDHICHOWK**

SBIIMS Pvt. Ltd., Administrative Office, Berhampur for and on behalf of Regional Business Office (SME Region, Berhampur), invites offers from the PSUs / Govt. Deptt / Promoters / Private Parties having ownership of R.C.C Building, ready for immediate occupation at prime location of **Jeypore Municipality** preferably at Ground floor on Main road, with good communication & parking facility for Shifting of **Gandhichowk Branch**. The intending parties may download the Tender document from [www.sbi.co.in](http://www.sbi.co.in) under the link "procurement, Empanelled, Service Providers & Others" from 10/09/2020 to 22/09/2020. The offers must be submitted to the aforesaid address on or before 5.00 PM on 23/09/2020 in two cover system. Cover-I should contain technical bid with supportive document & tender fee receipt, cover-II shall contain price bid only. Cover-III shall contain both cover-I & Cover-II

Name of the location	JEYPORE MUNICIPALITY
Carpet Area in SQM/SQFT	325.27 Sqm / 3500 Sqft

Place : Berhampur  
 Date : 10.09.2020

Sd/-  
 Deputy Manager (Civil)  
 Mobile : 9437570450

**OFFICE OF THE SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER, PURI PROJECT DIVISION NO.-III**  
**ODISHA BRIDGE & CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED**  
 (A GOVT. OF ODISHA UNDERTAKING)  
 SETU BHAVAN, NAYAPALLY, BHUBANESWAR-751012, E-mail : obccpurdivniii@gmail.com  
 Lr. No. 873 Bid Identification No. 03/2020-21 Date:03.09.2020

**TENDER CALL NOTICE**

No. CAD-458: The Sr. Project Manager, Puri Division-III, Odisha Bridge & Construction Corporation Limited (O.B. & C.C. Ltd.), Setu Bhavan, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites **Percentage bids in Double Cover system** for the work "Developing the land scaping at Niladri Beach with different plants from Mayfair to Banki Muan, Puri" from experienced and eligible bidders to be eventually drawn up in P-1 form / other available forms for execution of works.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Approx. Value of Work (Rs. in Lakhs)	Concerned Tender Inviting Authority	EMD (To be remitted Online)	Cost of Bid Documents including GST (To be remitted Online)	Period of Completion
1	Developing the land scaping at Niladri Beach with different plants from Mayfair to Banki Muan, Puri	11.50	Sr. Project Manager, Puri Project Division-III	Rs.11,500/-	Rs.6,720/-	Execution period of 2 (Two) calendar months and maintenance period of 7 (Seven) calendar months

2. The Bid document shall be available in the website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> from 11.00 A.M. of Dt.21.09.2020 to 5.00 P.M. of Dt.21.09.2020 for online bidding.

3. The bidder must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class II or Class III. The online bidding procedure is indicated in the document.

4. The bid shall be received only through "online" on or before 5.00 P.M. of Dt.21.09.2020

5. Bids received online shall be opened at 11.00 A.M. on Dt.22.09.2020 in the office of the Sr. Project Manager, Puri Division-III, Odisha Bridge & Construction Corporation Ltd. Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

6. The authority reserves the right to cancel any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.

7. Further details with any addendum, corrigendum, cancellation can be seen from the website <https://tendersodisha.gov.in> Sd./- Dtd.03.09.2020

Sr. Project Manager, O.B. & C.C. Ltd., Puri Divn.-III  
 OIPR-34106/11/0011/2021

FOCUS WORLD

# MAKEOVER FOR EDUCATION



**Although governments are facing the deepest economic recession in recent memory, they should remember that an educated population will most likely be their most valuable resource as their countries recover from the pandemic and confront future challenges**

gling parents. Because pandemic-related school closures could be long-lasting or recurrent, policymakers must radically rethink how to deliver education so that all children are learning. Without major steps to put the most marginalised children at the centre of our education systems, the world risks losing an entire generation to illiteracy, ignorance, and dependence.

Today, Sierra Leone is using the lessons learned during the Ebola crisis to provide inclusive remote learning. Because only 13 per cent of the country's households are connected to the Internet, radio and television stations are broadcasting lessons. Children living in off-grid households have received printed learning materials, and the government has been sending food to the homes of more than 6,000 children who normally eat their main meal at school. In addition, over 143,000 primary-school students who returned to school in preparation for their national examination on August 3 received rice to take home.

As members of the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), Sierra Leone and other Ebola-affected countries have been shar-

penses to enable the lowest-income families to keep their children in school. Children in rural areas, especially girls, need transport to get to their classrooms safely. Pregnant girls and young mothers need options that will allow them to return to school and continue their education. And teachers need training and support to enable all their students to learn.

Although governments are facing the deepest economic recession in recent memory, they should remember that an educated population will most likely be their most valuable resource as their countries recover from the pandemic and confront future challenges. In July, a coalition of international and local organisations launched the #SaveOurFuture campaign to highlight how damage to education systems will hinder progress toward all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Governments must protect education budgets to mitigate the pandemic's long-term effects on children. The international community must support them by sustaining aid to education and providing debt relief, so that poorer countries can invest in their children's future instead of cutting education spending when it is needed most. Unless we act now, the overall education financing gap for low- and lower-income countries, currently \$148 billion per year, could increase by 30 per cent as a result of the crisis.

Radical inclusion is not easy, but it is possible. As the world emerges from the pandemic, we must focus on transforming school systems and tearing down the barriers that prevent us from providing a quality education for every child.

*Alice Albright is CEO of the Global Partnership for Education. David Moinina Sengeh, Minister of Basic and Senior Secondary Education and Chief Innovation Officer of Sierra Leone, is a member of the Global Partnership for Education's board of directors.*

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Alice Albright & David Moinina Sengeh

**BECAUSE PANDEMIC-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES COULD BE LONG-LASTING OR RECURRENT, POLICYMAKERS MUST RADICALLY RETHINK HOW TO DELIVER EDUCATION SO THAT ALL CHILDREN ARE LEARNING**

## Compassion isn't weakness

My mother, who is remembered by friends and family alike as the world's most buoyant and caring person, spent the last few months of her life ill in bed with cancer. But no matter how sick she was, the first thing she did every morning was to spread bajra on her balcony for the birds. She said the happiest part of her day was to lie back in bed and watch the daily drama. First would come the fat feisty pigeons which would jostle each other off the ledge and spend more time fighting than feeding. Then the rose-ringed parakeets that ate quickly and quietly. And then came the timid little sparrows pecking at the seeds furtively and vanishing as magically as they appeared.

My own mornings begin with a shower. My bathroom adjoins the garden and invariably there will be ants that have made their way in to seek refuge from the sun or rain. So bathing is always preceded by scouring the walls and floor, rescuing and relocating ants before I turn on the shower. Similarly, my five-year-old granddaughter Anasuyaa always carefully picks up and moves slugs, snails and earthworms to the grassy kerb, when they make the occasional foray into the driveway, so that they don't get stepped on or run over.

Then I make Prasad for my Guru - sujika halva - and this is distributed to people and animals. The utensil that it is cooked in is washed with water, and the water put on a secluded pavement so that the ants can pick up the crumbs. When I made a house in Maharani Bagh, I put a tap outside, attached to the wall. Anyone passing by could drink clean water and there was always a bowlful for animals. Some years ago, I was going out for dinner when I saw a man with all his possessions draped on his wheelchair. I stopped to offer him some money. He took it and then said - I don't really need much money but is it possible for you to give me water every day? He comes every morning to pick up the water and I am grateful to him for allowing me to do this small thing.

During this lockdown, thousands of people have risked Covid, risked going hungry themselves, risked going out at night and being herded by the police, to feed street animals who are bewildered because their sources of food - the dhabas, the marriage halls, the garbage, the hotels, the people in the street have all vanished. I salute those who help these, a million times. They are the backbone of India - an India known for its compassion. Do you think this would have happened in any other country? Never. We should celebrate this quality in ourselves.

What is compassion? Compassion is that extraordinary quality that can sense and experience another's pain - as miraculous as the ability to see light. But it's more than just noticing and feeling sad for someone else's pain. That's empathy. Compassion means taking that sadness and turning it into an action that eases the hurt. The reason that animals have it so hard is because we don't even notice them or their plight - like puppies that are routinely separated from their mums, thirsty birds that fall from the scorching summer sky, or the millions and billions of insects, birds, monkeys, and squirrels, and god knows what other native animals that lose their homes when we decide on yet another 'scenic' resort.

Why animals get overlooked is that it's hardest to have compassion for those you may not love or those who are most dissimilar to you. You may not love ants, so you would hardly notice stepping on them. It explains why our hearts break when we hear of dogs tied up and sold in meat markets, yet we pass by scores of stalls with gutted fish without shedding a tear.

Just as we learn maths, history or French, compassion is something that has to be taught and developed. Buddhist monk and author Matthieu Ricard says our minds are like gardens. Left uncultivated, they are influenced by the weather and whatever seeds are in the wind. Some things will grow, and others will perish - and in the end we may not like the results. We have to deliberately cultivate compassion by learning compassionate attention, compassionate thinking, compassionate feeling, and compassionate behaviour.

Compassion is often confused with weakness. It is the most extreme form of courage. It is only courage that allows us to move into areas of deep suffering and pain. It is so easy to turn away from 'graphic' or 'disturbing' images and situations. For example, people don't like to volunteer at old age homes, hospitals, animal shelters or orphanages because it's upsetting to see distress at close quarters. Compassion is just about seeing things. Here are some simple everyday ways to practice compassion: If you feel hot and thirsty during the summer, notice that others might not have access to water as easily as you do. Put out clean cool water in your balcony garden or terrace for birds and a bowl of water near your gate for dogs and cats. Biscuits are an easy pick-me-up. Keep them in your car for the hungry and homeless, and anyone in need of a treat. Clothes and bedding you no longer need, or use could mean warmth in the winter for the homeless, both humans and animals.

Avoid buying anything that causes cruelty - shampoos that test on animals, leather which kills cows, brushes made from animal hair, pillows stuffed with bird feathers, and of course the obvious no-nos like meat, dairy and fur. You enjoy fruit, but monkeys and birds need it to survive. Plant fruit trees in your garden specially for them.

Pest control is a tidy term but simply means poisoning millions of tiny creatures. It's much easier to keep your kitchen clean than to use cockroach killers. Instead of emptying leftovers into the trash, put out that food for hungry street animals. Celebrating occasions is such fun. Extend the party to an animal shelter or old age home that seldom experiences such joy.

To join the animal welfare movement contact [gandhim@nic.in](mailto:gandhim@nic.in), [www.peopleforanimalsindia.org](http://www.peopleforanimalsindia.org)



SRI AUROBINDO



Maneka Gandhi

Why animals get overlooked is that it's hardest to have compassion for those you may not love or those who are most dissimilar to you

SPECTRUM REVOLUTION

## Bagha Jatin, the unsung hero



Rup Narayan Das

**THE SUPREME SACRIFICES MADE BY BAGHA JATIN AND HIS ASSOCIATES ARE LITTLE KNOWN OUTSIDE BENGAL AND ODISHA**

Success has many fathers and failure is an orphan. This aphorism can be linked to the name of Jyotindranath Mukherjee popularly known as Bagha Jatin, who attained martyrdom while fighting the British in Chasakhand in Balasore district of Odisha. He died on 10 September, 1915. It is unfortunate that the supreme sacrifices made by Bagha Jatin and his associates are little known outside Bengal and Odisha.

A reference here is to an attempt in 1915 under the leadership of Bagha Jatin, Narendranath Bhattacharya who is better known as MN Roy and others, during the First World War, to attain independence through armed insurrection in cooperation with Germany. The incident was a precursor of the later attempt by Subhas Chandra Bose in 1945 and the Indian National Army (INA), during the Second World War, with the support of Japan.

Born in 1879 in a village called Koya in Kushtia district of undivided Bengal (presently Bangladesh), Bagha Jatin joined the Khudiram Bose College in Calcutta in 1895. In 1904, he killed a tiger in a forest as it attacked one of his friends. He did so with the help of a dagger in an engagement lasting three hours. The incident earned him the epithet, Bagha (Tiger) Jatin.

Bagha Jatin was greatly influ-

enced by the Bhagvad Gita and the writings of Bankim Chandra. The clarion call of militant nationalism mesmerised the youths but they were disillusioned by the slow pace of progress for Independence. The organisation that galvanised the spirit of nationalism was Jugantar and its icon was Bagha Jatin. Around 1905, he formed an association called Chhatra Bhandar. Although it was established as a student's co-operative store entity, it was an outfit for revolutionaries.

MN Roy, the Communist of international fame, came to know of him in the later part of 1906 and accepted him as his leader. By early 1914, the country was agog with discontentment over the British rule and what added fuel to the fire was the promise of moral and material support to the revolutionaries in India from revolutionaries fighting for the cause of independence such as the Ghadar movement in Canada and the USA. It was against this backdrop that the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 ignited a militant nationalism here. The Indian revolutionaries in exile looked towards Germany as the land of hope.

Lala Hardyal of the Hindustan Ghadar Party in America was also carrying on similar activities. The legendary Rashbehari Bose went to Japan. By the end of the year, the news reached that the Indian



Revolutionary Committee in Berlin under the leadership of Birendranath Chatterjee had obtained from the German government a promise of arms and funds required to declare the war of independence. Clandestine conferences led to the formation of a revolutionary outfit, with Bagha Jatin as the commander-in-chief.

In this backdrop, MN Roy left India in April, 1915 for Batavia (Djakarta) in Indonesia where he adopted the name CA Martin. Bagha Jatin, meanwhile, anticipating the arrival of the arms and ammunition and in order to avoid being caught by the police, especially after the Garden Reach dacoity, had left for Balasore in April 1915. There he and his loyal followers camped in Kaptipada area.

Unfortunately, however, the entire strategy for the armed rebellion got leaked. The British cor-

doned off the hideout of Bagha Jatin. There was exchange of firearms on 9 September at Chasakhand. A revolutionary by name Chittapriya Roy Choudhury died. Bagha Jatin was seriously wounded and was taken to the government hospital at Balasore, where he died the next day.

Although the armed uprising could not take off, it was a brilliant move. Rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam described it as the 'Haldighat of New India', and composed a beautiful poem in Bengali portraying the indomitable spirit of Bagha Jatin and his comrades. True, in the battle of Haldighat Rana Pratap was militarily defeated but it ignited the flame of patriotism and nationalism.

The French philosopher Raymond Aron who supervised the thesis of Prithwindra Mukherjee, the grandson of Bagha Jatin on Sri Aurobindo at the Sorbonne University, observed that this story (of Bagha Jatin) is the missing link in our official history. He also saw in the person of Bagha Jatin the 'thinker in action'.

*The writer, a former joint secretary with the Union government, is currently a senior fellow of Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICCR) at Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi.*

WISDOM CORNER

- One day, in retrospect, the years of struggle will strike you as the most beautiful. **SIGMUND FREUD**
- Wise men speak because they have something to say; fools because they have to say something. **PLATO**
- Learn from the mistakes of others, you can't live long enough to make them all yourselves. **ARTHASASHTRA**

WORDSWORTH

Titch

This is a mainly British and Australian colloquial term for somebody small. The original was Little Tich, a famous music hall performer whose real name was Harry Relph. He was born in 1867 with slightly webbed hands that had an extra finger on each. He stopped growing at age 10 and as an adult was only 4 ft 6 ins tall (about 1.4 m). As a child, he was nicknamed Tichborne because he was short and stoutly built, like Arthur Orton, the famous fraudulent claimant to the Tichborne inheritance. Little Tich became known as an eccentric dancer and a character comedian. At some point his name began to be given to other small people or to youngsters. The Oxford English Dictionary's first example is from 1934, but I've turned up examples in books published in 1916 and 1917, plus a Punch cartoon caption of 1920, that suggest it was originally a First World War British army term (though there is some anecdotal evidence that it was in school use in the previous decade).

## 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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)

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

Universities sans audit

Sir, Those who run several higher education institutions, colleges and universities are known to indulge in financial irregularities and embezzlement of funds given to them by UGC and state governments. In the past two decades, neither has any audit been done, nor has any such institution provided on its own any such report to the government. The higher education department is simply blinking. Such a situation is tailor-made for huge funds embezzlements. A degree college principal has been charged with Rs 50 lakh UGC fund embezzlement, while North Orissa University is in the news for maladministration, appointment of fake degree holders in its faculty and misuse of funds for purchases. Similarly, Fakir Mohan University has been charged with draining away government funds for motivated reasons. Fact is we have no regulations despite all the government control mechanisms being in place. Info on funds utilisation is hardly given even to those who seek it via the RTI route. Our universities are domains of high corruption. The higher education department must release information periodically on the total sanctioned posts, vacant posts in each college, university, so that the public would know what's what. Regular auditing is a must.

Janaki Ballav Dash, MAYURBHANJ

SOP for schools

Sir, A phase-wise unlock this time has included reopening of schools later this month, with a fresh Standard Operating Procedure (SOP). Students from standard IX to standard XII can now approach school voluntarily to take guidance and clarify their doubts. However a set of principles such as use of face mask, social distancing, hand-washing is laid down and these need to be observed strictly. The SOP also emphasised on a written permission from the parents or guardians which empowers the students to go to school. However parents must not be lenient and must first assess the requirement. The school managements are urged to ensure proper sanitation and clean the surfaces that are very often touched by students, and this be done with at least one per cent sodium hypochlorite solvent. The schools in the containment zones will have to remain closed. School managements need exercise full care to implement the fresh SOP.

Santosh Kumar Satapathy, PARALAKHEMUNDI



# Audit govt spending in fighting pandemic: Kerala Congress



**Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 9:** Even as Kerala's Covid-19 tally is nearing the 1 lakh-mark, the Congress Wednesday demanded a thorough audit of the spending of the government to fight the coronavirus pandemic, alleging huge corruption in the entire process.

State Congress chief Mullapally Ramachandran alleged that this act is being carried out by the offices of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and State Industries Minister E.P. Jayarajan, with state Health Minister K.K. Shailaja having no clue as to what's happening in this front.

"Crores are being spent to fight Covid-19 and allegations have already surfaced that the quality of the PPE kits given to the health workers is inferior and yet they are billed at an exorbitant rate. Same is the case with masks and ambulances, which are being purchased/hired at high rates," said Ramachandran.

Kerala is witnessing a sudden spurt in Covid numbers with the

**Kerala is witnessing a sudden spurt in Covid numbers with the daily tally already breaching 3000-mark twice in Sept**

daily tally already breaching the 3,000-mark twice this month.

"It has now come out that a PPE kit, which should cost ₹350, is being purchased for ₹1,550; likewise, one N95 mask is being sourced for a price of ₹160, which is unheard of. The infra red thermometer, which costs maximum ₹2,500, is billed to the government at ₹6,000. Despite several requests made to the Vijayan government to come out with the spending pattern, till now there has been no word on it. We demand a thorough audit of the government's Covid-19 spending," said Ramachandran.

Ramachandran also asked Shailaja to break her silence, as she either has no clue as to what's happening in her department, or is simply feigning ignorance.

# Record samples drawn, Kerala sees new high of 3,402 cases

AGENCIES

**Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 9:** In the highest single day spike so far in Kerala, 3,402 COVID-19 cases were reported Wednesday, taking the infection count to 95,916 while the toll climbed to 384 with 12 fatalities.

The previous one day high was September 6 when 3,062 fresh cases were detected in the state.

Among those who tested positive, 46 had come from abroad, 133 from other states and 3,120 were infected through contact while the source of infection of 235 people was not known, Health Minister KK Shailaja said in a press release here.

Eighty eight health workers were among those infected.

While 70,921 have recovered from the infection so far, including 2,058 whose samples turned negative today, presently 24,549 people are undergoing treatment for the disease.

As many as 2,02,801 people are under observation in various districts - 1,83,921 in home/institutional quarantine and 18,880 in various hospitals, including 2,751 admitted Tuesday.



The state has increased testing of samples and in the last 24 hours, 45,949 samples were tested, the release said.

So far 19,78,316 samples have been sent for testing.

Thiruvananthapuram continued to be ahead of other districts in the daily cases with 531 being reported Wednesday, followed by Kollam 362, Kozhikode 330, Thrissur 323, Ernakulam 276, Kasaragod 270, Kannur 251, Alappuzha 240 and Malappuram 201.

Meanwhile, driving schools in Kerala will start functioning from Monday and the permission in this regard has been received from the centre, Transport Minister AK Saseendran said.

The schools will become functional adhering to Covid protocols and only two people would be allowed in a vehicle.

# South India's first Kisan Rail flagged off

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati, Sept 9:** Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar have virtually flagged off South India's first Kisan Rail from Anantapur to New Delhi Wednesday.

Though AP is the fruit production heavyweight of South India, Reddy said the Telugu farmers found it difficult to tap lucrative markets in the country, which further worsened amid the Covid pandemic.

"Nearly 312 lakh tonnes of horticulture produce is being harvested across the state in 17 lakh hectares, with 16 per cent share of fruit production in the country," he said.

The Chief Minister said he made a special request to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, explaining the crisis state farmers are confronting, which eventually led to the creation of South India's first Kisan Rail originating from AP.

"The train not only carries 322 tonnes of fruits but also carries happiness and smiles of the farmers," he observed.

However, Reddy appealed to the railway officials to slash the freight



fares for the farmers to ship their produce as he found them to be slightly on the higher side.

He also asked for a remunerative price for the farmers.

The second Kisan Rail is shipping 214 tonnes of tomatoes, 138 tonnes of bananas, 32 tonnes of sweet oranges, 11 tonnes of papaya, 8 tonnes

of melons and 3 tonnes of mangoes to Delhi, roughly 2,000 km north of the Rayalaseema town.

According to Reddy, the state government had taken up several initiatives in the agriculture sector for the benefit of farmers, such as providing minimum support price (MSP) by introducing market in-

tervention fund.

"During Covid crisis, tonnes of fruits and vegetables were exported from Anantapur to Mumbai port through 11 special trains. Nearly 45,000 tonnes of bananas, 1,185 tonnes of vegetables, 1,471 tonnes of fresh mangoes and 8,000 tonnes of mango pulp were exported to

## FRUIT HUB

**T**HOUGH AP IS THE FRUIT PRODUCTION HEAVYWEIGHT OF SOUTH INDIA, THE CHIEF MINISTER SAID THE TELUGU FARMERS FOUND IT DIFFICULT TO TAP LUCRATIVE MARKETS IN THE COUNTRY, WHICH FURTHER WORSEMED AMID THE COVID PANDEMIC

**T**HE CHIEF MINISTER SAID HE MADE A SPECIAL REQUEST TO PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI, EXPLAINING THE CRISIS STATE FARMERS ARE CONFRONTING, WHICH EVENTUALLY LED TO THE CREATION OF SOUTH INDIA'S FIRST KISAN RAIL ORIGINATING FROM AP

other countries," he added.

Minister of State (MoS) for Railways Suresh C. Angadi, Agriculture and Farmers Welfare MoS Parshottam Rupala, AP Municipal Administration and Urban Development Minister Botscha Satyanarayana and other senior officials participated in the virtual flagging off event.

# Jagan calls for redefining Andhra's education system

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati, Sept 9:** A day after the National Statistical Office (NSO) adjudged Andhra Pradesh with the lowest literacy rate billing - 64 per cent in the country, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy Tuesday said his government schemes will redefine the education system to reach 100 per cent literacy rate.

"Schemes like Amma Vodi, Nadu-Nedu, Vidya Deevanaawe are redefining the education system in Andhra Pradesh, paving the way for 100 per cent literacy," said Reddy.

On World Literacy Day, the Chief Minister said education is an important tool which can combat poverty and inequality. He said education can empower, transform and uplift lives.

For 2017-18, the NSO rated the southern state lower than Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh in literacy rate for individuals above seven years of age.

Tuesday, Reddy instructed officials to speed up the work on Nadu-Nedu (before and after) project in schools across the state.

Nadu-Nedu is an ambitious school infrastructure upgrading project, aimed at reducing the student dropout rate.

"The government desires to improve the learning outcomes and decrease the dropout rate in all schools by taking up various measures including upgrading the school infrastructure through the implementation of Mana Badi (our school) - Nadu Nedu programme," said an official.

Andhra Pradesh Education and Welfare Infrastructure Development Corporation (APEWIDC), Municipal and Health Departments, Panchayat Raj, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, and Samagra Shiksha are the implementing agencies of



## BOOST TO EDU

**S**CHMES LIKE AMMA VODI, NADU-NEDU, VIDYA DEEVANAWE ARE REDEFINING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ANDHRA PRADESH, PAVING THE WAY FOR 100 PER CENT LITERACY, SAID CHIEF MINISTER YS JAGAN MOHAN REDDY

**F**OR 2017-18, THE NSO RATED THE SOUTHERN STATE LOWER THAN BIHAR, RAJASTHAN, JHARKHAND, ODISHA, CHHATTISGARH AND MADHYA PRADESH IN LITERACY RATE FOR INDIVIDUALS ABOVE SEVEN YEARS OF AGE

**N**ADU-NEDU IS AN AMBITIOUS SCHOOL INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADING PROJECT, AIMED AT REDUCING STUDENT DROPOUT RATE

Nadu-Nedu. In the 'Spandana' video conference, Reddy instructed the district

collectors and joint collectors to monitor the quality of Nadu-Nedu works.

To the initial set of nine tasks assigned under the project, the construction of kitchen sheds in schools has also been included.

Reddy said the work on Nadu-Nedu programme should be completed by the end of September and before October 5, when the schools are scheduled to open after the months-long coronavirus-induced hiatus.

The official apprised the Chief Minister of the work completed under the scheme.

Reddy is taking a special interest in improving education levels and outcomes in the state. He is personally examining the school-bags and shoes meant for distributing them to eligible children.

Reddy came to power in May 2019 and has completed 15 months in office.

# NIA court grants bail to 2 students held under UAPA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kochi, Sept 9:** A special court here Wednesday granted bail to two students, arrested in November last year under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) for their alleged Maoist links.

Granting bail with stringent conditions to Thaha Fazal and Allan Shuhaib, the NIA court directed them to appear before their respective police stations on the first Saturday of every month, surrender their passports and not to get in touch with Maoist outfits.

"The petitioners shall not indulge in any criminal activities while on bail or shall in any manner associate with or support the banned CPI(Maoist) and all its formations," the court said.

The court also directed to offer close relatives as sureties besides executing bail bonds for ₹one lakh each.

"One of the sureties of each petitioner shall be parent of the respective petitioner and other surety shall be a near relative of the respective petitioner," the court said in its order. The two accused have been in judicial remand since November last year.

The court, while granting bail, observed that the petitioners do not have any influential background and they belong to middle class families.

"I don't find any danger of justice being thwarted by granting bail to the petitioners," it said.

Noting that the petitioners are budding youngsters, the court said it appears that they used to be proactive on each and every contentious social and political issues.

"Such persons will be more prone to extremist ideologies and prob-



ably that may be the reason for the petitioners to come in contact with the banned organisation. Petitioners are young men with a possibility of reforming themselves. Therefore, to some extent the court has to be lenient to them on the question of granting bail but with a clear message that the chance given for reformation shall not be mistaken as an opportunity to fasten their bond with the banned terrorist organisation and to be part of it," the court said.

The court said one cannot have recourse to violent methods to overthrow a democratically elected government or legally formed governmental machinery, even though people are tempted to have recourse to such things.

The court expressed hope that the parents of the petitioners would play a constructive role in the betterment of their mental and psychological qualities.

Fazal and Shuhaib, who are students of Journalism and Law respectively and CPI(M)'s branch committee members, were arrested on November 2 last year from Kozhikode, causing widespread criticism in the Left-ruled state. The CPI(M) in Kerala had expelled them from the party following their alleged link with Maoists.

# People in AP surprised at lowest literacy rate

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Amaravati, Sept 9:** People in Andhra Pradesh are surprised at the lowest literacy rate of 64 per cent attributed to the state by the National Statistical Office (NSO) for the year 2017-18.

"I highly doubt that Andhra Pradesh could fare so badly in terms of literacy rate," Sai Deepak, a native of Guntur who lives in Hyderabad, told IANS.

According to the NSO survey, the southern state is rated lowest in the country, below Bihar, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

T. Suguna Rao, a retired teacher from an aided school in West Godavari district in coastal AP neither agreed nor disagreed with NSO's estimation.

"It seems AP's literacy rate is 64 per cent," said Rao without commenting much but did not look convinced.

Echoing Rao, Bhimavaram resident Pradeep, an MSc fisheries graduate said he also cannot say much about this development. "I am



**Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both the Telugu states, send a sizeable number of students every year to the prestigious IITs**

not sure," said Pradeep. But Rao's wife, T.D. Vakayamani, also a retired teacher from a gov-

ernment school said NSO's estimation could be correct.

AP's literacy rate for males is estimated to be 73.4 per cent and for females 59.5 per cent, a disparity of 13.9 percentage points between the genders.

Though rated lowest in overall literacy rate, the gap between men and women is not the worst and better than Rajasthan (23.2 per cent), Uttar Pradesh (18.4 per cent), Jharkhand (18.3 per cent) and others.

Sagnik Choudhary, a retail professional who studied in Hyderabad when Andhra Pradesh was united, is not convinced with literacy rate variance between men and women.

Irrespective of NSO adjudicating AP as the lowest literate state, several towns and a few cities in the state are major educational hubs, drawing thousands of students for studies.

Vijayawada, Guntur, Nellore, Bhimavaram, Kakinada, Visakhapatnam, Rajamundry, Kurnool and others are known for famous schools, intermediate junior colleges and several engineering colleges.

Some of the private schools such as Sri Chaitany and Naraya have expanded their branches all over the country, originating from the state.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both the Telugu states, send a sizeable number of students every year to the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), premier technical schools in India.

AP is also known for a high number of students who migrate to the US for higher studies.

# Another wild elephant dies of mouth injuries in Kerala

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Palakkad, Sept 9:** A wild elephant, found with injuries in its mouth, died at Attapadi in Palakkad Wednesday morning, forest officials said.

The tuskless male elephant (Makna), believed to be between 25-30 years, had been treated by forest officials last month after tranquillising it on finding it weak, unable to eat or drink due to the injuries.

Efforts had been made to put a tracking collar on the jumbo, but it left the area before that, the officials said.

The elephant had injuries in its mouth, its tongue was split. But there were no injuries on its jaw, they told PTI.

Forest officials said it was not clear how the animal, nicknamed 'bulldozer' by local people as it had destroyed 17 houses in the state and eight in Coimbatore division of



Tamil Nadu, suffered the wounds. "It used to destroy houses and break windows to get rice and other food articles. We got information that the animal was getting weak and had crossed to Kerala two days ago," they said.

The animal was found dead in the Attapadi forests this morning.

It was in May this year that a pregnant wild elephant had died after she consumed a cracker filled fruit in Silent valley forests.

The incident had sparked widespread outrage. In Agali forests, a five-year-old elephant had died in July following injuries due to fractured jaw.



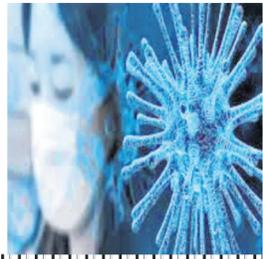
We have to think about living with Covid and masks.

For some months, we have to keep the children at home. We have to think about their education through e-learning

VISHWAJIT RANE | GOA HEALTH AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

COVID SCORE

Despite a sharp surge in COVID-19 cases in the national capital, which reported the highest single-day spike till date with 4,039 fresh cases on Wednesday, the Delhi government has ruled out possibility of another lockdown, with Health Minister Satyendar Jain asserting that the economy "cannot be kept shut for eternity" as livelihoods of millions depend on it



of the day quote

Father of Rhea Chakraborty is also entitled to demand justice for his kids, trial by media is an ominous portent for our judicial system. Justice for all is one of the basic tenets of our constitution

ADHIR NANJAN CHOWDHURY | CONGRESS LEADER IN LOK SABHA

Targeting 35 per cent emission reduction, we have reached 21 per cent already and in 10 years, we will achieve the target

PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

I have directed all MS and authorities to take all possible steps to prevent the spread of Corona and assured the hospitals of full support in this regard

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Unnao rape case: CBI cites lapses

New Delhi: The CBI has recommended "appropriate action" against four officials, including an IAS officer, citing lapses in handling the case of rape of a minor girl by former BJP MLA Kuldeep Singh Sengar, officials said Wednesday. The central agency, in its letter to the UP Government in August, has named the then DM Unnao and IAS officer Aditi Singh, the then Superintendent of Police and IPS officers Pushpanjali Devi and Neha Pandey posted in Unnao between 2017 and 2018 besides ASP Ashtbhuj Singh who was promoted to IPS in 2019, they said.

CBI books Delhi Additional DCP

New Delhi: The CBI has booked Delhi Police Additional DCP Sanjay Kumar Sehrawat for allegedly submitting forged credentials and documents for selection in the Delhi, Andaman and Nicobar Islands Police Service (DANIPS), officials said Wednesday. The agency's teams carried out searches at Sehrawat's room in DCP East office and residential premises in Pitampura on Wednesday after registering the case, they said.

Pak violates ceasefire

Jammu: Pakistan army violated ceasefire on Wednesday by resorting to heavy firing and mortar shelling in forward areas in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said. "At about 1730 hours today, Pakistan army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms & intense shelling with mortars along LoC in Degwar and Malti sector," a Defence spokesman said. Indian Army retaliated befittingly, he said.

Jawan hangs self

New Delhi: A 40-year-old Army jawan ended his life on Wednesday morning by hanging himself from a ceiling fan in the barracks of Gorkha Rifles in Rashtapati Bhawan, police said. The deceased was identified as Tek Bahadur Thapa, a resident of Tikhayan in Nepal, they said. The incident was reported around 4 am at the South Avenue police station. Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police (New Delhi), Deepak Yadav, said the jawan was found hanging from a ceiling fan in the barrack of Gorkha Rifles.

BJP DUBS DEMOLITION AT KANGANA'S HOME AS VENDETTA POLITICS



AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 9: The BJP Wednesday lashed out at the Shiv Sena-led MVA dispensation over razing of "illegal alterations" at the bungalow of actress Kangana Ranaut by the Mumbai civic body, terming the development "vendetta politics" and a kind of "government-sponsored terror" in the state. Leader of the Opposition in the Maharashtra Assembly Devendra Fadnis said the state of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj has not seen such a "timid and anti-democracy" government till now. He accused the state government of stifling voices of those holding a different view. The Shiv Sena and the actress have been locked in a bitter war of words since the latter likened Mumbai to Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK), and said she feared the Mumbai Police more than the movie mafia after the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Earlier in the day, a Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) team demolished "illegal alterations" at the actress' bungalow at Pali Hill in Bandra with a bulldozer and excavators. "The way a remark (Pakistan occupied Kashmir) which insults Maharashtra or Mumbai Police cannot be defended, similarly the government's such action (demolition) too cannot be defended. Maharashtra is being defamed due

Rhea moves court again

Actress Rhea Chakraborty, arrested by the NCB in a drugs case linked to her boyfriend and actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death, Wednesday moved a bail plea before a sessions court in Mumbai. This is her second attempt to seek release after a magistrate court Tuesday refused to grant her bail. In the fresh plea, filed by her lawyer Satish Maneshinde, the 28-year-old actress claimed to be "innocent". "She has not committed any crime whatsoever and has been falsely implicated in the case," said the plea. The court will hear the bail application on Thursday.

to such actions in the country," Fadnis said in a video message. He said the razed structure stood at the spot for quite some time, but no action was taken earlier. "The action was taken only after the actress made the remarks," the former chief minister said. Why the Sena-controlled BMC is not taking action against other illegal structure in the city, he questioned. "Such action taken out of the sentiment of revenge does not suit Maharashtra and its rulers. In a way, there is a government-sponsored terror in Maharashtra," Fadnis charged.

Eye on China: India, France, Oz hold talks

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 9: India, Australia and France Wednesday held talks for the first time under a trilateral framework with focus on enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, a region that has been witnessing increasing Chinese military assertiveness.

The virtual meeting was co-chaired by foreign secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla, secretary-general in French ministry for Europe and foreign affairs Francois Delattre and secretary in Australian department of foreign affairs Frances Adamson.

"The focus of the dialogue was on enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific Region," the External Affairs Ministry said in a statement. It said



the "outcome-oriented" meeting was held with the objective of building on the strong bilateral ties that the three countries share with each other and synergise their respective strengths to ensure a peaceful, secure, prosperous and rules-based Indo-Pacific Region.

The MEA said the three sides agreed to hold the dialogue on an annual basis. It said the three sides discussed economic and geo-strategic

challenges and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and domestic responses to the crisis.

"The three countries also had an exchange on the priorities, challenges and trends in regional and global multilateral institutions, including the best ways to strengthen and reform multilateralism," the MEA said. The MEA said cooperation on marine global commons

and potential areas for practical partnership at the trilateral and regional level were also discussed, including through regional organisations such as ASEAN, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Indian Ocean Commission.

The 10-nation ASEAN is considered one of the most influential groupings in the region. India and several other countries including the US, China, Japan and Australia are its dialogue partners. The IORA is a regional forum with a focus on enhancing maritime and economic cooperation. The members of the bloc include India, Australia, Bangladesh, Iran, Kenya, Comoros, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia and South Africa.

TOGETHER IN JOY



A folk of domestic swans in bee line crossing a road in outskirts of Srinagar

UNI PHOTO

'INVEST MORE IN HEALTHCARE'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 9: The 73rd Regional Committee Session of WHO South-East Asia Region began on Wednesday, with health leaders emphasising on greater investments for strengthening health systems and continued efforts and collaboration for combating the Covid-19 pandemic.

"The Covid-19 pandemic underscores that the world is a global village where all lives are intertwined. To win, we must collaborate and fight as one. In order to protect our health gains, we must continuously invest in health. Our region needs to invest more and more in public healthcare and build a robust health delivery system," said India's Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, while opening the proceedings as Chair of the previous year's Session.

Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister and Public Health Minister, Anutin Charnvirakul, said the pandemic demonstrates interconnectedness of all Sustainable Development Goals.

SC grants bail to anti-CAA protesters



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 9: The Supreme Court on Wednesday granted bail to 21 anti CAA-NPR-NRC protesters of Karnataka's Mangaluru with a condition that they will not participate in any violent activities or meetings.

The protest in December 2019 saw violence, leading to police firing, which left two people dead. A bench comprising Chief Justice S.A. Bobde and Justices A.S. Bopanna and V.Ramasubramanian allowed the application filed by Mohammad Asik and others. The bench also said that the observation of the Karnataka High Court that it was not possible to prima facie determine the presence of the accused persons at the spot, not be treated as a final finding of the fact by the trial court. In February, the petitioners were granted bail by the Karnataka High Court, but, in March, the apex court stayed this order. On Wednesday, the apex court lifted its stay.

Granting bail, the top court said: "We consider it appropriate to direct that the applicants be released on bail on furnishing bail bonds in the sum of Rs 25,000 each to the satisfaction of the trial court pending trial on the following conditions: (a) That the applicants shall report to the nearest police station on every alternative Monday; (b) That they shall ensure that they do not participate in any violent activities/meetings." Senior advocate R. Basant and advocate Haris Beeran argued the case for the petitioners, where they contended they were involved in peaceful protests, but police resorted to firing. The petitioners argued that police have already filed a charge sheet in the matter and they have been in custody since December 2019, close to seven months.

Education Min felicitates winners

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 9: Training students to become national-level players, honing their linguistic potential, uplifting differently-abled children and making students aware about cyber safety are among the initiatives launched by school teachers and principals that have been awarded by the CBSE this year.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Wednesday awarded 38 teachers and principals from its affiliated schools for their valuable contribution towards improving school education, innovation and dedication.

Venketson Karthikeyan, who is a physical education teacher in Indian School, Muscat has shaped his students into national level players of extraordinary calibre. "His numerous students have represented Oman, Qatar national cricket teams. He is a passionate teacher who keeps motivating his students to raise the bar," the award citation read. Dhannajoy Pan, Principal, DPS

CBSE TEACHERS' AWARD 2020



Odisha, has been awarded for his teaching philosophy based on inclusive environment that is based on four aspects of growth-physical, mental, emotional and social. Poonam Bhatt, a biology teacher at Amity International School, Ghaziabad, has been awarded for "leading her students in a number of real world projects where students have been able to study various concepts in a much more

meaningful way". Amit Garg, a counsellor at Sarvodaya Vidyalaya in Delhi, has bagged the award for his "work towards uplifting the differently-abled children through teaching, enabling them to handle daily chores to foster independence".

Shreejith, an IT teacher at Kendriya Vidyalaya in Moscow has "initiated many online activity-based projects in his school like Unbox-21, virtual training and online competitions, online ethics and cyber safety".

The other awardees include Alka Sharma and Yogesh Gambhir from Punjab, Ram Kumar Sharma and Anuja Sharma from Chandigarh, Anita Mishra from Rajasthan, Puneeta Malhotra, Rashmi Malik and Arti Chopra from Gurgaon, Dimple Puri from Noida and Sapna Iyer from Gujarat. Each awardee received a merit certificate, a shawl and a cash prize of Rs 50,000.

The awards were presented by Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' in a virtual ceremony.

Oil tanker fire doused

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, Sept 9: The Indian Coast Guard Wednesday said no more flames or smoke was observed since Tuesday evening on very large crude carrier (VLCC) 'New Diamond' that caught fire on September 3.

The salvage team, which boarded the vessel on Wednesday, has intimated that there are no hotspots, flames/smoke onboard and there is no breach of its storage tanks, and the oil slick seen was from its own fuel tanks. A naval architect in the salvage team has confirmed that the ship's stability is within the safe zone, the Coast Guard said. The oil tanker, carrying about 300,000 tonnes of crude, caught fire on September 3 after an explosion in its engine room, 37 nautical miles off Sri Lankan coast.

According to Coast Guard the sustained fire fighting by its and Sri Lankan ships and tugs resulted in dousing of fire on Tuesday. No significant list is observed on the vessel while it continues to be trimmed by aft (rear side of the ship dipping down into water) by about one metre.

"Efforts are on to get the ship on an even keel with the assistance of the salvors," the Coast Guard said. As regards the oil sheen that was seen on the tanker's rear side, the Coast Guard said it was part of the unburnt oil/oil mixed with water; in the ship's engine room, which escaped during the explosion onboard September 7.

The Coast Guard's Dornier aircraft was pressed into service in pollution response configuration to spray oil spill dispersant (OSD) to disintegrate the sheen on Tuesday and Wednesday.

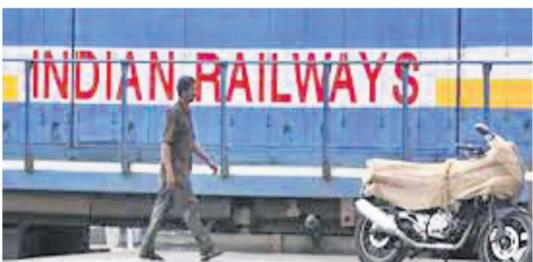
The Indian coastal security agency also said owing to the continued fire, the accommodation superstructure has weakened while no significant list of the vessel was observed.

The 20-year-old VLCC New Diamond, sailing under the Panama flag, departed from Kuwait's Mina Al Ahmadi on August 23 and was headed to India's Paradip port, which it was expected to reach on September 5. According to the Coast Guard, the vessel reported a major explosion in its engine room while it was on its way to the port in Odisha.

Rlys freight revenue may revive in 5 months: Study

Railways' freight revenue is expected to recover within next four to five months, but passenger revenue may take over nine months to revive completely from the effects of the Covid, a study has found

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Alliance, a leading management consulting and advisory firm, and Zetwerk, an Indian B2B marketplace for manufacturing products and services, highlighting the impact of COVID-19 on the transport sector and shows that the expected annual growth rate for railways will be 10-12 per cent between FY19-24. It also stated that because of the pandemic some new projects might

get delayed due to budgetary constraints and existing projects will also be pushed back owing to labour unavailability. "Freight revenue is expected to recover within 4-5 months, but passenger revenue may take more than 9 months to recover completely. COVID-19 will impact raw material, equipment, labour availability, and working capital in the short term," the report stated.

The report states that supply chain linkages and consistent supply of raw material at sites are expected to be achieved by March 2021, when things are likely to normalise.

It also envisages the impact of the capital expenditures of railways leading to delays in its modernisation - like station modernisation and procuring new rolling stock to be delayed. It also raised concerns of cost escalation due to project delays which would affect margins.

Aryaman Tandon, Director, Praxis Global Alliance commenting on the report findings said, "We have analyzed that the Government is focussing more on EPC (engineering, procurement, construction) projects witnessing a healthy working capital trend in railways. We have also reckoned that the expected annual growth rate for railways will be 10-12% between FY19-24". "To ensure smooth recovery of the

sector, the Government should ensure continuity of CapEx plans and availability of working capital with contractors," he added. Railways freight loading has already started showing signs of recovery, with both loading and revenue surpassing corresponding figures from the same period last year, this month till September 6, the report said. It said the loading for the current month is 10.41% higher than that from the same period last year.

The earnings, meanwhile, are Rs 129.68 crore higher than those from last September, the Railways said. Currently the Railways is running 230 special trains after all passenger services were suspended due to the pandemic. Eighty more trains are to be operational from September 12. According to internal estimates, the pandemic is expected to lead to a loss of around Rs 40,000 crore in the passenger segment.

# national



**Data suggests that COVID-19 has already derailed a lot of our efforts and is taking us back to where we were 20 years ago**  
HARSH VARDHAN | UNION MINISTER

## ISKCON'S CHANDRADAYA TEMPLE REOPENS

The gates of Iskcon's Chandradaya temple at Mayapur, global headquarters of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, opened from Wednesday, 30 days after closure, with all COVID-19 restrictions in place



### of the day quote

Development of India is incumbent upon the development of every citizen and PM Modi is committed to empower all sections of society. The PM SVANidhi scheme, which aims to empower the street vendors, is a result of his farsightedness and sensitivity towards the welfare of the poor  
AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

We will talk to Bharat Biotech. Definitely, it's a home state and if vaccines are made here, we will get first priority. There should be no doubt. We are ensuring this  
K. CHANDRASHEKHAR RAO | TELANGANA CHIEF MINISTER

One of the main reasons why we are seeing such a rise in the number of fresh cases is because we are going aggressive as far as testing is concerned. We have been conducting tests in markets, crowded places, mohalla clinics, hospitals, and many other places  
SATYENDAR JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

# OXFORD VACCINE TRIALS TO CONTINUE IN INDIA: SII

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 9:** The clinical trials of Oxford vaccine will continue in India as usual as it has faced no issue at all, the Serum Institute of India (SII) said Wednesday over the recent report of phase-three study of the Covid-19 vaccine being put on hold in the United Kingdom, as one of the participants reported a suspected severe adverse reaction.

In a statement to IANS, the SII cleared the air on the impending trials of the vaccine in India. Commenting on the recent reports over AstraZeneca halting the trials in the UK, Serum Institute of India (SII) said, "We can't comment much on the UK trials but they have been paused for further review and they hope to restart soon. As far as Indian trials are concerned, it is continuing and we have faced no issues at all." The SII issued statements after reports started flourishing about a temporary halt in phase-three study of the Covid-19 vaccine candidate jointly developed by Oxford University and AstraZeneca in the UK after one of the volunteers developed an "unexplained" illness there. The SII ensured that the incident in the UK would have no

## FIGHT AGAINST COVID



**Serum Institute of India has signed an agreement to mass produce the Oxford vaccine**  
The SII issued statements after reports started flourishing about a temporary halt in phase-three study of the Covid-19 vaccine in the UK  
The SII ensured that the incident in the UK would have no impact on the Indian vaccine

impact on the Indian vaccine trial carried out at 17 trial sites across India. The development comes a day after AstraZeneca and eight other drugmakers vowed to uphold the highest ethical and scientific standards in developing their vaccines. Earlier, a spokesperson for AstraZeneca said the company's "standard review process triggered a pause to vaccination to allow review of safety data". In a follow-up statement it initiated the study hold, AstraZeneca added. The nature of the adverse reaction and when it happened was not immediately known, though the participant is expected to recover, Stat News reported.

## Plasma therapy not beneficial: ICMR study

**Use of convalescent plasma therapy in coronavirus-infected patients does not help in reducing mortality or progression to severe COVID-19, a multi-centric study funded by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has found.** The 'open-label parallel-arm phase II multicentre randomized controlled trial' (PLACID Trial) was conducted across 39 public and private hospitals across India between April 22 and July 14 to find effectiveness of convalescent plasma (CP) for the treatment of COVID-19, it said.

### SHORT TAKES

#### 2 Jaish workers held in Kulgam

**Srinagar:** Security forces arrested two overground workers of Jaish-e-Mohammad militant outfit in Kulgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said Wednesday. "In a major success in curbing terrorist activities and to safeguard the public from these miscreants, police alongwith other security agencies arrested two terrorist associates of banned organisation JeM and recovered live arms and ammunition from their possession during the intervening night of September 8 and 9," a police spokesman said.

#### BSF foils drug smuggling attempt

**New Delhi:** The Border Security Force (BSF) Wednesday said that it foiled an attempt to smuggle narcotics from Pakistan as it shot down two smugglers and recovered an ache of arms and ammunitions and eight kg of drugs. The incident took place in Rajasthan's Sriganganagar on the intervening night of September 8-9. According to a statement from the BSF, the operation was carried out after receiving specific intelligence inputs about narcotics smuggling from Pakistan side to the Indian side in AOR of BOP Khayaliwala, Sriganganagar border outpost.

#### Yogi suspends another IPS officer

**Lucknow:** A day after the suspension of the Prayagraj SSP, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Wednesday suspended the SP of Mahoba district, Mani Lal Patidar on charges of corruption. According to an official release, the officer's behaviour was sully the image of the UP Police. Patidar was found guilty of extorting money from trucks ferrying construction material and victimising the owner of the vehicle if money was not paid.

#### 14 kids rescued

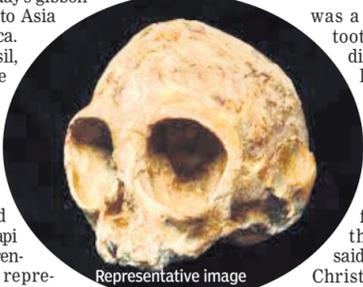
**New Delhi:** Fourteen children allegedly trafficked from different districts of Bihar to Delhi were rescued and 10 people were arrested by the Railway unit of Delhi Police, officials said Wednesday. As per protocol, the rescued children who are in the age group of 12-14 years have been taken to a quarantine centre in south Delhi's Lajpat Nagar, they said.

# 13-mn-yr-old fossil ape discovered in U'khand

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dehradun, Sept 9:** A 13-million-year-old fossil of a newly discovered ape species has been unearthed by an international team of researchers in Uttarakhand. This is the earliest known ancestor of the modern-day gibbon, say researchers. The finding, published in the journal 'Proceedings of the Royal Society B', fills a major void in the ape fossil record and provides important new evidence about when the ancestors of today's gibbon migrated to Asia from Africa.

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Representative image

was a primate tooth, but it did not look like the tooth of any of the primates previously found in the area," said Christopher C. Gilbert, from City University of New York in the US.

The fossil, a complete lower molar, belongs to a previously unknown genus and species (Kapi ramnagarensis), and represents the first new fossil ape species discovered at the famous fossil site of Ramnagar in nearly a century. The researchers, including those from Arizona State University in the US and Punjab University in Chandigarh, were climbing a small hill in an area where a fossil of a primate jaw had been found a year ago. While pausing for a short rest, the team spotted something shiny in a small pile of dirt on the ground. "We knew immediately it

"From the shape and size of the molar, our initial guess was that it might be from a gibbon ancestor, but that seemed too good to be true, given that the fossil record of lesser apes is virtually nonexistent," Mr Gilbert noted. He explained that there are other primate species known during that time, and no gibbon fossils have previously been found anywhere near Ramnagar.

### SC STAYS QUOTA LAW

# 'Black day' for Marathas: Maha BJP

The Supreme Court Wednesday stayed the implementation of the law, but made it clear that the status of those who have availed of the benefits will not be disturbed

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Sept 9:** It is a "black day" for Marathas, the Maharashtra BJP said Wednesday as it attacked the MVA government in the state after the Supreme Court stayed implementation of 2018 law granting quota to the community in education and jobs. State BJP president Chandrakant Patil claimed that the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress, was "not serious" in ensuring that the quota held its ground before the apex court. A three-judge bench of the Supreme Court Wednesday stayed the implementation of the Maharashtra State Reservation for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes (SEBC) Act 2018, and referred the issue to a bench of five judges or more for the final adjudication. The Act provides reservation in education and employment to the Maratha community. Justices L. Nageswara Rao,

Hemant Gupta and S. Ravindra Bhat held that no appointments and admissions based on the Maratha quota will be made for 2020-21, however, the postgraduate admissions taken place already will not be altered. The issue of Maratha reservation will be placed before Chief Justice SA Bobde, who will constitute a larger bench to hear and decide the matter. The parties involved in the matter had contended before the bench to refer it to an 11-judge bench, to see whether there could be a breach in the the 50 per cent cap on reservation. The petitioners challenged the Bombay High Court judgement passed in June 2019. They contended that the Act, which provides for 12 per cent and 13 per cent quota to Maratha community in education and jobs, violates the principle laid in the 9-judge bench judgement of the apex court in 1992, which capped the reservation at 50 per cent.

### NDA vs Oppn

# DMK's Siva likely nominee for RS Dy Chair's post

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Sept 9:** After the Congress mooted the idea that the opposition jointly contest the Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman's post, DMK leader Tiruchi Siva's name has been almost finalised as the opposition candidate, sources said Wednesday.

The sources said that the Congress leadership had spoken to DMK chief MK Stalin, and that he had consented to the candidature of Siva, a senior party leader and fourth-time Rajya Sabha member. He has also been a Lok Sabha member in the past. When contacted, Siva neither denied nor confirm his candidature, saying "I am in my party's meeting and will come to Delhi tomorrow". The Congress sources said that party leader Ghulam Nabi Azad has also spoken to like-minded parties, including the Samajwadi Party.

The sources said that the Congress wants the election to be 'opposition versus government' and not 'Congress vs BJP' contest so as to unite the opposition and corner the government in the Upper House, where it now has the upper hand. However, last minute deliberations are on with other opposition parties so that a tough contest is ensured. In the last election to the post, the Congress had fielded BK Hariprasad, who lost to NDA candidate Harivansh Narayan Singh. The Congress strategists think that a candidate from the south may force the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, YSR Congress and AIADMK to rethink their support to the BJP and may skip the poll. It would then be easy for the Opposition candidate to defeat the NDA nominee. In the numbers game in the upper house, the NDA candidate can sail through with the support of many like-minded parties like AIADMK, Janata Dal-United, and Shiromani Akali Dal.

### MONSOON WOES



Girl rides a bicycle during heavy rain in Lucknow

UNI PHOTO

# Rawat favours reform of defence PSUs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 9:** Chief of Defence Staff Gen Bipin Rawat Wednesday called for revamping India's defence public sector undertakings and ordnance factories with a focus on improving their work culture and enhancing quality control. Gen Rawat also said that some of India's vintage military platforms, with retrofits, can be exported to countries that lack the desired firepower to defend themselves. Addressing a seminar on defence exports, the Chief of Defence Staff also pitched for having a "hard look" at the distribution of India's defence expenditure, saying a realistic analysis of the spending



billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, notwithstanding a warning from the Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may invite US sanctions. The US had imposed sanctions on Russia under the stringent Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). The law also provides for punitive action against countries purchasing defence hardware from Russia. Gen Rawat said the stage is set for the domestic industry to embark on a trajectory of exponential growth, riding on path-breaking reforms rolled out by the government to promote indigenous production of military assets.

### CLIMATE CHANGE THREAT

# Iconic fish species in Himalayan rivers could be in danger

LOWER ALTITUDE STREAMS ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS WOULD BE RENDERED UNSUITABLE FOR THE EXISTENCE OF SNOW TROUT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Dharamshala, Sept 9:** Snow trout, the iconic cold water fish species found in Himalayan rivers, would lose their habitat by 16 per cent in the next 30 years and by over 26 per cent by 2070, a new climate change study by the government's Wildlife Institute of India has found. The study - "Is There Always Space at The Top" - was published in the 'Ecological Indicators', a journal of high international repute based at the Netherlands, on September 6. The study indicates that most of the lower altitude streams across the Himalayas would be rendered unsuitable for the existence of snow trout with the rise in temperatures. An ensemble of 72 statistical models across the Himalayas, the

study - authored by Wildlife Institute of India (WII) scientists Aashna Sharma, Vineet Kumar Dubey, Jeyaraj Antony Johnson, Yogesh Kumar Rawal and Kuppusamy Sivakumar - reveals the vulnerable snow trout would be squeezed into the high-altitude rivers in the Himalayas. The study says mountain systems across the globe are conspicuously sensitive to on-going climate alterations and the condition is much more detrimental in the Himalaya, where the rate of warming, and thus the glacier meltdown, is much higher than elsewhere. Funded by the Department of Science & Technology (DST), the study is a part of the government's National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE), which was launched to research



the impact of climate change on the Himalayan ecosystem.

The study iterates that if the countries across the globe continue their

greenhouse emissions as usual (mentioning it as the 'business-as-usual scenario'), "the species (snow trout) would lose a net habitat of 16.29% till the year 2050 which would further increase to 26.56% in the year 2070." "As it stands, the snow trout faces serious threats due to river valley modifications, destructive fishing practices and exotic salmonid introductions," it says. "Due to ongoing threats, its population size has been reduced drastically in Himalayan waters, hence listed as vulnerable in the IUCN Red List," it adds. The fish species has great commercial and recreational value and its sole presence in the high-altitude cold waters makes it a flagship species to conserve the Himalayan rivers, the study underlines. The study recommends some so-

lutions such as persuasive "conservation efforts beyond political boundaries by combined decisions of the policymakers of Himalayan countries". It also includes reducing "unsustainable harnessing of rivers for hydropower development projects and energy efficiency by improving green energy potential". They also underscore a need to focus more on climate change science in India, more so in the Himalayas, which, the team says is "predicted to be warming at a rate much higher than the global average rate of about 0.4 °C". The team detailed that never has such an extensive and rigorous ensemble methodology been used to understand the climate change impacts on any freshwater species in India.

# international

## of the day quote

From the start of the crisis and even before the first case was confirmed, the government and local biotechnological companies started working together on developing test kits



CHOI JONG-MOON | SOUTH KOREA'S AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE

We weren't preparing a coup, we were trying to prevent a split in our country (Belarus)



SVETLANA ALEXIEVICH | NOBEL LAUREATE

Health, in addition to being an individual good, is also a public good. A healthy society is one that takes care of everyone's health



POPE FRANCIS

## SHORT TAKES

### Extremists join virus protest

Berlin: German security officials say thousands of extremists took part in a demonstration against the country's coronavirus restrictions last month that culminated in attempts to storm parliament. The head of Berlin state's intelligence service, Michael Fischer, told lawmakers Wednesday that a preliminary review of images from the Aug. 29 protest indicated that "at least 2,500 to 3,000 right-wing extremists and Reich Citizens took part in the protests."

### Sharif files review petition

Islamabad: Embattled former Pakistan PM Nawaz Sharif Wednesday filed a petition in the Islamabad High Court (IHC), stating that his health condition would not allow him to return home from London and surrender in a corruption case by September 10, according to a media report. Last week, the IHC gave a "last chance" to the former premier to surrender and appear before it on September 10 for hearing in the AL-Azizia corruption case. The court had warned of legal action for absconding.

### Earthquake strikes NJ

New York: A magnitude 3.1 earthquake struck in East Freehold, New Jersey, early Wednesday morning, the US Geological Survey reported. Residents took to social media to express their shock at the rare occurrence. Hundreds of people as far away as Philadelphia and Long Island, New York, contributed to the USGS' "Did You Feel It?" map, reporting only weak or light shaking and no damage.

### Mining ban in Zimbabwe

Harare: Zimbabwe's government says it has banned mining in its national parks, but an environmental group that had taken court action to stop the development of a coal mine in an elephant-rich park said on Wednesday that it will insist on "more than just words." Reports say that a Chinese firm had started exploratory work to mine coal within Hwange National Park alarmed environmental and wildlife groups, who took legal action to stop it.



Certainly through Covid-19, which has cost many people their jobs, infrastructure is going to be one of the saviours, along with the agriculture, resources and mining industries

MICHAEL MCCORMACK | BY PM, AUSTRALIA

## DISNEY CRITICISED

Disney is under fire for filming part of its live-action reboot "Mulan" in Xinjiang, the region in China where the government has been accused of human rights abuses against Uighurs and other predominantly Muslim minorities



# US formally announces troop reduction in Iraq

REUTERS

Washington, Sept 9: The United States (US) military Wednesday announced that it would be reducing its presence in Iraq from 5,200 to 3,000 troops this month, formalizing a move that had been long expected. Last month, Reuters reported that the United States was expected to reduce its troops presence in Iraq by about a third.

The United States has around 5,200 troops that were deployed in Iraq to fight the Islamic State militant group. Officials in the US-led coalition say Iraqi forces are now mostly able to handle the remnants of Islamic State on their own.

"We are continuing to expand on our partner capacity programs that enable Iraqi forces and allow us to reduce our footprint in Iraq," Marine General Frank McKenzie, the head of U.S. Central Command, said during a visit to Iraq.

A senior administration official had said on Tuesday that President Donald Trump would be announcing a reduction of US troops from Iraq.

The United States and Iraq in June affirmed their commitment to the reduction of US troops in the country in coming months, with no plans by Washington to maintain permanent bases or a permanent military presence.



tain permanent bases or a permanent military presence.

In 2016 Trump campaigned on ending America's "endless wars," but US troops remain in countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, albeit in smaller numbers. Last month during a meeting with the Iraqi prime minister, Trump redoubled his promise to withdraw the U.S. troops still in Iraq.

Trump's meeting with the Iraqi leader came amid a new spike in tensions between Washington and Tehran after Washington said it would seek to reinstate all previously suspended U.S. sanctions on Iran at the United Nations.

Iraq's parliament had voted earlier this year for the departure of foreign troops from Iraq, and United States and other coalition troops have been leaving as part of a drawdown.

## THE DEMILITARISATION ACT

- As many as 5,200 troops are expected to be reduced this month
- Officials in the US-led coalition say Iraqi forces are now mostly able to handle the remnants of IS on their own
- In 2016 Trump campaigned on ending America's "endless wars," but US troops remain in countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria

# Trump nominated for Nobel Peace Prize

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Copenhagen, Sept 9: A far-right Norwegian lawmaker said Wednesday that he has nominated US President Donald Trump for the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts in the Middle East.

Christian Tybring-Gjedde, a member of the Norwegian Parliament for the far-right Progress Party said Trump should be considered because of his work "for a peace agreement between the United Arab Emirates and Israel which opens up for possible peace in the Middle East."

"No matter how Trump acts at home and what he says at press conferences, he has absolutely a chance at getting the Nobel Peace Prize," Tybring-Gjedde, told The Associated Press. He said he nominated Trump Wednesday, adding that "Donald Trump meets the criteria" for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Tybring-Gjedde was also one of two Norwegian lawmakers who nominated Trump for the peace prize in 2018 for his efforts to bring reconciliation between North and South Korea.



Any national lawmaker can nominate someone for the Nobel Peace Prize.

The process of considering candidates and awarding the prize is done in Norway, in contrast to the other Nobel Prizes, which are awarded in neighbouring Sweden. Nominations must be sent to the Norwegian Nobel Committee by February 1.

The Norwegian Nobel Committee doesn't publicly comment on nominees. Under its rules, the information is required to be kept secret for 50 years. "It is now to hope that the Nobel Committee is able to consider what Trump has achieved internationally and that it does not stumble in established prejudice against the US President," Tybring-Gjedde said in a Facebook post.

# Kabul bomb targets VP, kills 10 civilians

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, Sept 9: A bombing in the Afghan capital Wednesday targeted the convoy of the country's first vice president, killing 10 people and wounding at least 31, including several of the vice president's bodyguards, the Interior Ministry said.

No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack and the Taliban quickly denied they were behind the bombing.

First Vice President Amrullah Saleh suffered minor burns in the blast. The bomb was hidden in a cart by the roadside and detonated as his convoy passed by.

Saleh, who is also Afghanistan's former intelligence chief, said in his first television appearance immediately after the attack that he was fine and had sustained only slight

burns. He appeared in the TV footage with bandages on one hand.

"Me and my younger son who was also with me are fine," Saleh said. "I have slight burns on my face and hand from the wave of the blast. I don't have exact details right now, but I apologize to those who suffered casualties and those who lost their property in the attack."

His spokesman, Razwan Murad, called the attack a "vicious terrorist attempt" on Saleh's life. The roads in the vicinity of the bombing were closed off.

The Interior Ministry says the bomb went off as Saleh's convoy was passing through a section of Kabul with shops that sell gas cylinders for use in heating homes and cooking. The blast ignited a fire that set ablaze a number of the shops.

## FOR A CAUSE



A police officer talks to the member of the Animal Rebellion group dressed in a costume as they march during an Extinction Rebellion protest in London

# Dog's bark saves Alabama family

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, Sept 9: A dog has been credited with saving an Alabama family's lives after his bark awakened them to a fire that was sweeping through their rental home early Tuesday morning.

The dog, Ralph, "doesn't usually make a sound at night," said Derek Walker, who lived in the Birmingham home with his wife and two children, according to AL.com. So when Walker heard a "different kind of bark" coming from Ralph, a 4-year-old Great Dane, he got up to investigate. That's when he saw the fire outside the family's kitchen window.

The blaze had started on a grill and spread to the home, according to Robert Lawson, a battalion chief with the North Shelby Fire Department. "I just started screaming 'fire' to get everybody up," Walker said. "My wife got up and she got our daughter and got her out."



After getting their daughter out of the house, his wife went into the home again to get their son. He had been fast asleep while his bedroom was full of smoke.

"The fire was right outside his wall," Walker said. "He wasn't awake because he sleeps covered with his blanket." Walker stepped inside the house to get Ralph, who was in his kennel, and the family's two miniature pigs.

# Gusty winds may drive flames into extremity

FIREFIGHTERS, TUESDAY, WERE FORCED TO DEPLOY EMERGENCY SHELTERS AS FLAMES OVERTOOK THEM AND DESTROYED THE NACIMIENTO FIRE STATION

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

Sacramento, Sept 9: Uncontrolled wildfires roared unchecked through California on Wednesday, while gusty winds could drive flames into extremity, authorities warned.

Diablo winds in the north and Santa Ana winds in the south were forecast into Wednesday at a time when existing wildfires have already grown explosively, CTV News re-

ported. 14 firefighters, Tuesday, were forced to deploy emergency shelters as flames overtook them and destroyed the Nacimiento fire station in the

Los Padres National Forest on the state's central coast, the US Forest Service said. They suffered from burns and smoke inhalation, and three were flown to a hospital in Fresno, where one was in critical condition. In a statement, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) said the SCU Lightning Complex fires that have burned 396,624 acres across five Northern California counties, were

93% contained by Monday morning, Xinhua reported. Firefighters reached 76% containment on the CZU Lightning Complex and the LNU Lightning Complex fires that have burned 375,209 acres were at least 91% contained as of Monday morning, according to the Cal Fire updates. Cal Fire said 14,800 firefighters were battling 23 major fires in the state presently California has seen

900 wildfires since August 15, many of them started by an intense series of lightning strikes. There have been eight deaths and more than 3,300 structures destroyed, according to a report by the San Francisco Chronicle Monday. The National Weather Service (NWS) also issued a wind advisory for the mountains outside of Northern California's Santa Rosa, Calistoga and San Rafael from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. Tuesday.

## UN REPORT

# Increased warming closing in on agreed upon limit

AGENCIES

New York, Sept 9: The world is getting closer to passing a temperature limit set by global leaders five years ago and may exceed it in the next decade or so, according to a new United Nations report.

In the next five years, the world has nearly a 1-in-4 chance of experiencing a year that's hot enough to put the global temperature at 2.7 degrees (1.5 degrees Celsius) above pre-industrial times, according to a new science update released Wednesday by the UN, World Meteorological Organisation and other global science groups.

That 1.5 degrees Celsius is the more stringent of two limits set in 2015 by world leaders in the Paris climate change agreement. A 2018 UN science report said a world hot-

ter than that still survives, but chances of dangerous problems increase tremendously.

The report comes on the heels of a weekend of weather gone wild around the US: Scorching heat, record California wildfires and two more Atlantic storms that set records for earliest 16th and 17th named storms. Earlier this year, Death Valley hit 130 degrees (54.4 degrees Celsius) and Siberia hit 100 degrees (38 degrees Celsius).

The warming that has already occurred has "increased the odds of extreme events that are unprecedented in our historical experience," Stanford University climate scientist Noah Diffenbaugh said.

For example, historical global warming has increased the odds of record-setting hot extremes at more than 80 per cent of the globe,



and has "doubled or even tripled the odds over the region of California and the western US that has experienced record-setting heat in recent weeks," Diffenbaugh added.

The world already has warmed nearly 2 degrees (1.1 degrees Celsius) since the late 1800s, and the last

five years are hotter than the previous five years, the report said. The speed-up could be temporary, or it might not be.

There's both man-made warming and natural warming from a strong El Nino weather pat-

tern in the past five years, said World Meteorological Organization Secretary-General Petteri Taalas.

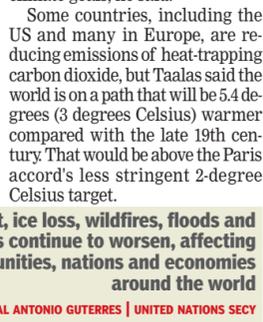
"The probability of 1.5 degrees (Celsius) is growing year by year," Taalas told The Associated Press. "It's very likely to happen in the next decade if we don't change our behavior." That's potentially faster than what a 2018 UN report found: that the world was likely to hit 1.5 degrees sometime between 2030 and 2052.

Breakthrough Institute climate scientist Zeke Hausfather, who wasn't part of the new report,

said the document was a good update of what scientists already know. It is "abundantly clear that rapid climate change is continuing and the world is far from on track" toward meeting the Paris climate goals, he said.

Some countries, including the US and many in Europe, are reducing emissions of heat-trapping carbon dioxide, but Taalas said the world is on a path that will be 5.4 degrees (3 degrees Celsius) warmer compared with the late 19th century. That would be above the Paris accord's less stringent 2-degree Celsius target.

Record heat, ice loss, wildfires, floods and droughts continue to worsen, affecting communities, nations and economies around the world



GENERAL ANTONIO GUTERRES | UNITED NATIONS SECY



**The support for MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) and startups in product development would make India innovative, resilient, tech-driven and R&D-oriented**  
AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

## CHINA'S PPI DECLINE EASES

China's producer price deflation continued to ease in August amid a recovery in industrial activities and market demand, official data showed Wednesday. The producer price index (PPI), fell 2% y-o-y in August, according to the NBS



## of the day quote

The government is aiming to create 5 crore additional jobs in the MSME sector in five years. We aim to enhance MSMEs' contribution to the GDP from about 30% to 50%, and in exports from 49% to 60%

NITIN GADKARI | UNION MINISTER

As markets gradually unlock with the onset of the festive season, this is also the time when customers want to celebrate and we are optimistic this in-turn will drive market sentiments

MARTIN SCHWENK | MD AND CEO, MERCEDES-BENZ INDIA

We call on geothermal energy contractors to make programmes on public welfare and CSR besides encouraging provincial and district administrations to use regional incomes from production bonuses

ARIFIN TASRIF | MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES, INDONESIA

## SHORT TAKES

### Louis Vuitton drops deal

**Paris:** Luxury goods giant Louis Vuitton (LVMH) is ending its takeover deal of luxury jewellery retailer Tiffany & Co., citing in part the threat of proposed US tariffs on French goods. The Paris-based conglomerate said that it needs more time to assess the impact of the possible US tariffs on French goods and cannot close the deal before year-end. The \$14.5 billion deal was scheduled to close November 24.

### Sebi bars GSL

**New Delhi:** Regulator Sebi has barred Global Securities Ltd (GSL) and 12 individuals from securities market for up to one year for indulging in fraudulent trading activities. The restraint has been imposed for a period ranging from three months to one year, according to a Sebi order. Sebi had initiated investigation into trading of shares of GSL after receiving reference from the Income Tax Department.

### Indiabulls Housing launches QIP

**New Delhi:** Indiabulls Housing Finance launched its QIP (qualified institutional placement) on Wednesday and set the floor price at Rs 206.70 per equity share for the issue. The Securities Issuance Committee of the company's board at a meeting held September 9, 2020 approved the floor price, it said in a regulatory filing. "The company may offer a discount of not more than 5 per cent on the floor price so calculated for the issue (which opens on Wednesday)," it said.

### EVs reduce air pollution

**New Delhi:** Energy Efficiency Service Ltd (EESL) Wednesday said the electric vehicles deployed by the company have helped reduce air pollution and mitigate 5,604 tonne of CO2 emissions. EESL is combating air pollution in the nation by driving India's e-mobility transition. In line with the #Commit initiative launched by Power and New & Renewable Energy Minister R K Singh, EESL is celebrating the World EV Day by continuing its commitment to transform India's mobility landscape, it said in a statement.

# Localised lockdowns slowing down revival: RAI

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 9:** Localised lockdowns are slowing down revival and impacting retail sales as retailers saw de-growth of 52% in August as compared to the same month last year, although there is a marginal recovery from the preceding months this year, according to a survey by RAI.

As per the 6th edition of the Retail Business Survey by the Retailers Association of India (RAI), the only category that showed a significant improvement was consumer durables, though sales were still down 23% compared to the year-ago month.

RAI said other sectors continued to be sluggish with the food and grocery category down by 46%,



footwear fell 47%, apparel and clothing plummeted 54%, sports goods dropped 58% and beauty and well-

ness slipped 56%. Regionwise, the country's southern region posted a bit lesser impact with sales de-

The retail industry has started to witness some green shoots, especially in states that are allowing retail to operate with fewer interruptions

KUMAR RAJAGOPALAN | CEO, RAI

clining 46%, followed by eastern part that dropped 52%, and western and northern parts that saw a fall of 54% last month as compared to August 2019.

"On the whole, across regions, large retailers are performing marginally better than medium-sized retailers," it added.

RAI said, "The smooth rollout of Unlock 3.0 in August 2020 encour-

tered hurdles in the form of localised lockdowns in some states interrupting business planning and operations. The lockdowns are slowing down revival."

Commenting on the findings, RAI CEO Kumar Rajagopalan said, "The retail industry has started to witness some green shoots, especially in states that are allowing retail to operate with fewer interruptions."

He further said, "Support from governments at local levels across the country with the assurance of no more localised lockdowns will help fast-track recovery of sales during the upcoming festive season to almost to the same levels as last year...perhaps just 20% short of last year's figures. Some segments may even do better."

## YONO biggest startup by a legacy bank: SBI chairman

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 9:** Within three years of its launch, YONO, the digital banking platform of the country's largest lender SBI, has a valuation of over USD 40 billion, the bank's chairman Rajnish Kumar said Wednesday.

The bank is also working on creating a business-to-business (B2B) platform for bill receivables, called 'Bharat Draft', which will have all the MSMEs registered, he said. SBI had launched the YONO platform in November 2017 to help its customers' banking, investment and shopping needs.



# Fuel consumption posts biggest monthly decline in August

REUTERS

**New Delhi, Sept 9:** India's fuel demand slipped further in August and posted its biggest monthly decline since April, as a surge in coronavirus infections continue to throttle economic activity and transportation, government data showed Wednesday. Coronavirus cases have soared past 4.3 million Wednesday making India the second worst-hit country in the world after the US.

Sales of refined fuels, a proxy for oil demand, fell to 14.39 million tonnes in August, about 16% lower from a year earlier, its sixth consecutive year-on-year slide.

It also fell 7.5% from the prior month, its biggest month-on-month decline since April, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) of the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas showed.

Diesel consumption, a key parameter linked to economic growth and accounts for about 40% of overall refined fuel sales in India, fell by about 12% to 4.85 million tonnes last month from 5.51 million tonnes in July.

On an annual basis, demand for diesel declined about 20.8%. Falling monthly diesel sales indicate a slowing economic and industrial activity. India's economy contracted 23.9% in the June-quarter as consumer spending, private investments and exports collapsed during the lockdown imposed in late



## THE FREE FALL

Sales of refined fuels, a proxy for oil demand, fell to 14.39mn tonnes in August, about 16% lower from a year earlier, its sixth consecutive y-o-y slide

Diesel consumption fell by about 12% to 4.85mn tonnes last month from 5.51mn tonnes in July

India's economy contracted 23.9% in the June-quarter as consumer spending, private investments and exports collapsed during the lockdown imposed in late March to curb the coronavirus outbreak

March to curb the coronavirus outbreak.

India's economy is projected to contract 11.8% on the year in the current fiscal year beginning from April, India Ratings and Research, a domestic arm of ratings agency Fitch, said on Tuesday. The economy is projected to contract 11.9% in the current quarter.

Heavy floods in some Indian states, such as Gujarat, Assam and Odisha, also disrupted life and hit

industrial and construction activity. Sales of gasoline, or petrol, fell by 7.4% from a year earlier to 2.38 million tonnes, although it rose 5.3% from 2.26 million tonnes in July. August naphtha sales decreased by 24.6% to 1.07 million tonnes from a year earlier and was down 16.4% from July.

Sales of bitumen, used for making roads, rose 39.1% on an annual basis, but was down about 18% month-on-month.

# 'Banks catalysts of economic revival'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 9:** Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Wednesday said banks are going to be the catalysts for economic revival and also urged them to adopt digital technologies for efficiency and growth.

Applauding lenders for their contribution towards the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), she, however, added that banking services have still not reached certain areas.

"At this stage, the catalysts for this economic revival, the catalysts who have the pulse of every one of their customers, are banks," the finance minister said.

She was speaking at the launch of PSB Alliance-Doorstep Banking Services, a customer outreach initiative by state-run lenders.

The catalysts are going to play a very active role in making sure that every gap in the expectations of businesses which are struggling to get back to normalcy is adequately addressed, Sitharaman emphasised.

"How much ever you can, using your prudential norms, fill that gap and expectation and make sure that economic revival is facilitated very efficiently by using digital technologies," she said.

The minister said easy access and efficiency in providing banking services will help in revival of businesses which are restarting operations after the lockdown. "This is where I have praised



How much ever you can, using your prudential norms, fill that gap and expectation and make sure that economic revival is facilitated very efficiently by using digital technologies

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

you for the wonderful service that you did during the lockdown. Now, it is incumbent on all of us to make sure that facilitation for the revival is going to be even better served by you all," she said.

The finance minister said it will make a huge difference if banks are able to provide services to customers through feature phones and not just smartphones.

"The 40 crore (beneficiaries of PMJDY) that you are able to talk about today, cannot be a laurel on which we can afford to live any further. Yes, we achieved that. Kudos to everyone who achieved."

"But what I still feel is that there is still a gap even in the most developed states. There is a gap in some pockets of a district, some pockets of forested remote areas, some pockets which are hilly," she said.

# PM to launch flagship fisheries scheme today

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 9:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi will digitally launch the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) Thursday and also inaugurate the e-Gopala App, a comprehensive breed improvement marketplace and information portal for direct use of farmers.

In a statement on Wednesday, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said that Modi will also launch several other initiatives in the fisheries and animal husbandry sectors in Bihar, a state which is heading for the assembly polls in October-November. The prime minister tweeted that

the PMMSY will "transform" the fisheries sector and add strength to the efforts of building an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

"The advantages of PMMSY include: Address critical gaps in fisheries sector; Infuse the sector with latest technology, focus on value addition; Upgradation of critical infrastructure. Boost welfare of those associated with fishing. Employment creation," he added.

The PMMSY is a flagship scheme for focused and sustainable development of fisheries sector in the country with an estimated investment of Rs.20,050 crore for its implementation during 2020-21 to 2024-25 as part of Aatmanirbhar Bharat package.

# Silver Lake to invest \$1 bn in Reliance retail

THE MOVE ALSO SETS THE STAGE FOR A THREE-WAY BATTLE BETWEEN RELIANCE, AMAZON AND FLIPKART

REUTERS

**New Delhi/Bangalore, Sept 9:** Reliance Industries Ltd said Wednesday US private equity firm Silver Lake Partners will invest \$1.02 billion in its retail business, helping the Mukesh Ambani-controlled company widen its lead as India's biggest retailer.

The move also sets the stage for a three-way battle between Asia's richest man, Jeff Bezos' Amazon and Walmart Inc's Flipkart to rope in the Indian middle class customer, many of whom are newly adopting online purchases of food and groceries due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In May, Reliance launched online grocery service JioMart. It has been aggressively building its retail presence through acquisitions, moving beyond its mainstay oil and gas business.

Silver Lake will get a 1.75% stake in Reliance Retail, giving the business a pre-money equity value of Rs 4.21 trillion (\$57.14 billion), Reliance said here. Powered by Reliance's



Jio tech platform, the unit owns retail businesses as varied as grocery stores and fashion chains, and operates close to 12,000 stores.

"The real competition is going to be between Amazon, Walmart and Reliance," said Harinder Sahni of retail consultancy Wazir Advisors. "Walmart is self-funded and Amazon is too, so the company to bet on now is Reliance."

Reliance, which has been on a fund-raising spree, saw its share price rise as much as 1.5% in a weak Mumbai market. Silver Lake, whose portfolio includes stakes in Airbnb and Twitter Inc, has previously invested in Reliance's digital business as part of a funding round.

# Beating the slowdown! Amazon seeks to hire 33K people

AGENCIES

**New York, Sept 9:** Amazon is on a hiring spree. In the latest sign of how it's prospering while others are faltering during the pandemic, Amazon said Wednesday it is seeking to bring aboard 33,000 people for corporate and tech roles in the next few months.

It's the largest number of job openings it's had at one time, and the Seattle-based online behemoth said the hiring is not related to the jobs it typically offers ahead of the busy holiday shopping season.

Amazon can afford to grow its workforce: It is one of the few companies that have thrived during the coronavirus outbreak. People have turned to it to order groceries, sup-

plies and other items online, helping the company bring in record revenue and profits between April and June. That came even though it had to spend \$4 billion on cleaning supplies and to pay workers overtime and bonuses.

Demand has been so high, Amazon has struggled to deliver items as fast as it normally does and had to hire 175,000 more people to help pack and ship orders in its warehouses.

Walmart and Target have also seen sales soar during the pandemic.

But other retailers have had a rougher time. JC Penney, J Crew and Brooks Brothers have all gone bankrupt and Lord & Taylor, which has been in business for nearly 200



years, recently said it will be closing its stores for good.

Companies across other industries have announced layoffs, in-

cluding Coca-Cola and American Airlines.

Amazon said the jobs will be centered around Amazon's offices across

To fill the 33,000 jobs, Amazon will hold an online career fair September 16 to collect resumes and give people a chance talk to a recruiter

the country, including Denver, New York, Phoenix and its hometown of Seattle. The new hires will work from home at first, but the company said it does want employees to return to the office eventually.

Ardine Williams, Amazon's vice president of workforce development, said plans to build a second

headquarters near Washington, D.C., are going as planned, despite the pandemic, with 1,000 workers already hired.

To fill the 33,000 jobs, Amazon said will hold an online career fair September 16 to collect resumes and give people a chance talk to a recruiter. Those not interested in a job at Amazon can also get resume help, the company said.

At a similar career fair last year, about 17,000 people showed up in person and Amazon said it received more than 200,000 applications for 30,000 jobs.

In July, the company said its workforce topped 1 million worldwide for the first time, making it the second-biggest US-based private employer behind Walmart Inc.

# CR7'S NIGHT OUT

RONALDO REACHES CENTURY OF INTERNATIONAL GOALS FOR PORTUGAL AS THE JUVENTUS TALISMAN SCORES TWICE AGAINST SWEDEN IN HIS TEAM'S 2-0 WIN IN THE NATION'S LEAGUE



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stockholm, Sept 9: Considered as one of the world's best footballers, Cristiano Ronaldo achieved an extraordinary milestone Tuesday, as the Juventus talisman reached 100-goal mark for Portugal.

The 35-year-old Ronaldo became just the second male player to reach a century of goals for a national team when he curled a free-kick into the top corner from 25 meters for the first of his two strikes in Portugal's 2-0 away win against Sweden in the Nations League.

Scoring one of the best goals of his international career was a fitting way to enter the '100 Club', where he joins former Iran striker Ali Daei, and he wheeled away in delight in an empty Friends Arena in Stockholm before performing his trademark celebration — the mid-air pirouette. Ronaldo, who was playing in his 165th game for Portugal, then added a second goal — another curler into the top corner — and needs nine more to surpass the international record of 109 scored by Daei from 1993-2006.

The five-time world player of the year already holds the record for goals in the Champions League with 131 — 16 more than nearest rival Lionel Messi — and has now scored an international goal for the 17th straight calendar year.

Portugal have won their two opening group games after beating Croatia 4-1 Saturday, when



RIGHT ON THE MONEY: Cristiano Ronaldo about to strike for his second goal against Sweden, Tuesday

Ronaldo was absent because of a toe infection.

Belgium and France also have maximum points. The top-ranked Belgians beat Iceland 5-1 and France defeated Croatia 4-2 — the same scoreline as the 2018 World Cup final. England drew 0-0 at Denmark in Copenhagen.

### ENGLAND HELD

A difficult few days for England coach Gareth Southgate ended with his team being held to a tame draw against Denmark, though Harry Kane came close to snatching victory when his late shot was cleared off the line.

England was without highly rated youngsters Mason Greenwood and Phil Foden, who were sent home for breaching coronavirus rules in Reykjavik after making their international debuts in the 1-0 win over Iceland Saturday.

Video posted on social media appeared to show the players meeting women from outside the team bubble.

### 'Empty stadiums like a circus without clowns'

STOCKHOLM: Cristiano Ronaldo compared empty football stadium to a circus without clowns. The Portugal great scored his 100th and 101st goals for his country in a 2-0 win over Sweden Tuesday in the Nations League. "It's like going to a circus without clowns, going to a garden without flowers," Ronaldo said. "We don't like that as players, but I'm already used to it. I do my pre-match meditation already knowing that the stadium will be empty," Ronaldo said he even missed opposing fans. "It's sad," the Juventus forward said. "I like when I'm jeered in away matches, it motivates me. But health has to come first and we need to respect that. But it's sad."

Midfielder Calvin Phillips and center back Conor Coady started for their England debuts, while attacking midfielder Jack Grealish came on in the second half for his debut.

### De Bruyne named PFA player of the year

LONDON: Manchester City midfielder Kevin De Bruyne was voted English football's player of the year, denying Liverpool a third straight winner of the prestigious award. De Bruyne became the first City player to capture the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA) award after scoring 13 goals and making a record-tying 20 assists last season. Liverpool players Virgil Van Dijk (2019) and Mohamed Salah (2018) won the award — voted on by players in the top flight — the past two seasons, but the team were denied a hat-trick of winners despite becoming champions last season for the first time in 30 years. Liverpool finished 18 points clear of City, the runner-up. Trent Alexander-Arnold was named the young player of the year. Beth England won the women's player of the year award, having helped Chelsea capture the Women's Super League and the League Cup by scoring 21 goals in all competitions. PREMIER LEAGUE TEAM OF THE YEAR: Nick Pope (Burnley); Trent Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool); Virgil Van Dijk (Liverpool); Caglar Soyuncu (Leicester); Andrew Robertson (Liverpool); David Silva (Manchester City); Jordan Henderson (Liverpool); Kevin De Bruyne (Manchester City); Jamie Vardy (Leicester); Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang (Arsenal); Sadio Mane (Liverpool).



### Red Devils set fire on Iceland



Michy Batshuayi strikes from the rebound for his first goal Tuesday against Iceland

### BATSHUAYI STRIKES HELP BELGIUM CLINCH 5-1 VICTORY

BRUSSELS: Striker Michy Batshuayi scored twice and teenager Jeremy Doku marked his first international start with a goal as Belgium beat Iceland 5-1 to claim a second consecutive win in the Nations League.

Despite the absence of several key players, including Thibaut Courtois and Eden Hazard, the Red Devils quickly recovered from going one goal down and monopolized the ball in the second half.

Midfielder Kevin De Bruyne provided two assists at an empty King Baudouin stadium. The match was played without fans because of the coronavirus pandemic. The hosts trailed for only two minutes after Holmber Fridjonsson put Iceland ahead

in the 11th. After Axel Witsel's equaliser, Belgium took the lead in the 17th through Batshuayi, who slotted the ball home from the rebound.

Dries Mertens added his name to the score sheet with a clean finish five minutes into the second half after being set up by De Bruyne. Batshuayi made it 4-1 with a back-heel flick and Doku completed the rout 10 minutes from time.

The 18-year-old Anderlecht forward collected a pass from De Bruyne, cut inside the box on the left and unleashed a powerful strike into the top corner at the far post. Belgium had won 2-0 at Denmark in their Nations League A Group 2 opener last weekend.

### BARCELONA FORWARD SCORES ONE SETS UP ANOTHER AS FRANCE THRASH CROATIA 4-2 IN 2018 WORLD CUP FINAL REPEAT

# A GRIEZMANN MASTERCLASS

SAINT-DENIS: Antoine Griezmann scored one goal and set up another for defender Dayot Upamecano Tuesday as France staged a repeat of the World Cup final by beating Croatia 4-2 in the Nations League.

Griezmann even passed up the chance to double his tally late on by allowing substitute Olivier Giroud to take a penalty for France's fourth goal.

Giroud is just one goal behind Michel Platini's national record, while Upamecano's header was his first. The 21-year-old impressed at center half when Leipzig reached the Champions League semifinals, and headed in Griezmann's corner midway through the second half.

France have won both their games but trail Group 3 leader Portugal on goal difference. Cristiano Ronaldo scored both for Portugal in a 2-0 win at Sweden to reach 101 international goals.

Manchester United forward Anthony Martial had a hand in the other goals as France overcame a Croatia side which had taken the lead through Dejan Lovren's 17th-minute opener.

That goal came after a corner was swung over from the right and a headed clearance fell to Lovren on the left side of the penalty area. Lovren controlled the ball with his right foot as he cut inside a de-

fender and then fired a shot into the opposite corner with his left.

Martial sprang into action in the 43rd, showing great footwork to combine with Wissam Ben Yedder on the edge of the penalty area before deftly setting up Griezmann's close-range shot.

It was Griezmann's 31st international goal, moving him level with France great Zinedine Zidane, and a confidence boost considering last Saturday's penalty miss in a 1-0 win away against Sweden.

Seconds before halftime, Ben Yedder teed up Martial with a pass from the right — but his scuffed shot hit the post before bouncing back off goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic for an own goal.

Poor defending in the 55th helped substitute Josip Brekalo grab his first international goal, too. Latching onto a pass from midfield, he held off three defenders before shooting under goalkeeper Hugo Lloris.

Lloris made his 116th appearance to tie center half Marcel Desailly in third place all-time on France's list. Highly-rated midfielder Eduardo Camavinga came on for his debut during the second half, becoming the youngest player to represent France since the World War II at 17 years, 10 months. He had a shot saved after darting in from the right, and Martial wasted two late chances.



ON A ROLL: Antoine Griezmann (No.7) is congratulated by his teammates after scoring for France against Croatia, Tuesday

### Osaka to face Brady in US Open last four



NAOMI OSAKA

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, Sept 9: Japan's Naomi Osaka advanced to the semifinals of the ongoing US Open, setting up a last four clash with Jennifer Brady. Osaka defeated Shelby Rogers in the quarterfinals in straight sets at the Arthur Ashe Stadium, Tuesday.

Osaka ousted Rogers 6-3, 6-4 in 79 minutes to make it to US Open semifinals for the second time in her career. "I'm aware that the opponents that I play from now on are going to be very tough," 4th-seeded Osaka said, in her post-match press conference as per the WTA website.

"For me, I think the last two Grand Slams, everything happened so fast. I wasn't really in the moment. I'm just really happy to be in the semis, and hopefully I can keep going," said the Japanese.

Osaka fired 24 winners, including seven aces, and made only eight unforced errors. The Japanese player, who won the first of her two consecutive Grand Slam titles

in New York two years ago, was nearly peerless off of her first serve, winning 83 per cent of points when she got that shot into play.

"The big thing for me was to be the aggressor and to be okay with making unforced errors," said Osaka. "Apparently I didn't make that many But, yeah, just to accept the unforced errors because I know that I'm going for shots."

Earlier, Brady notched the biggest victory yet in her breakout run at the Open, beating Yulia Putintseva of Kazakhstan 6-3, 6-2.

She's playing in her 13th Grand Slam event and is seeded in a major tournament for the first time. Brady agreed it was easier to overcome her butterflies in the quarterfinal because there were no fans. She said she has struggled with doubt in her career while climbing slowly through the ranks.

With a win Thursday, Brady would become the first former collegiate player to reach the women's final at the Open since Billie Jean King made it for the last time in 1974.

# Consolation win takes Australia to the top

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Southampton, Sept 9: Australia gained a consolation victory in the final match of their T20 series against England to regain top spot in the format's world rankings at the expense of their fierce rival.

Australia chased down their target of 146 with three balls to spare for a five-wicket victory at the empty Rose Bowl, with Mitch Marsh hitting the winning run to finish unbeaten on 39.

England won the series 2-1, but needed to sweep it to remain top of the T20 rankings after climbing into first place because of their win in the second match Sunday.

England opener Jonny Bairstow overcame a slow start to smash a 44-ball 55 containing three fours and three sixes and lead the team to 145/6. That was the lowest score of the series so far, with paceman Mitchell Starc very economical by



Mitchell Marsh pulls one during his match-winning knock against England

conceding just 20 runs off his four overs.

Joe Denly's late-innings 29 off 19 balls gave England's total some re-

spectability, but Australia went at 10 runs an over off its first seven and was seemingly easing to the win. However, the Australians slumped

### Yuvi decides to come out of retirement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 9: World Cup-winning former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh has decided to come out of retirement, giving in to a request from the Punjab Cricket Association more than a year after he called it quits.

The Player of the Tournament at the 2011 World Cup, Yuvraj had announced his retirement from all forms of cricket last June.

PCA secretary Puneet Bali was the first person to approach the 38-year-old Yuvraj with an offer to come out of retirement for the benefit of Punjab cricket.

"Initially, I wasn't sure that I



wanted to take up the offer," Yuvraj was quoted as saying by 'Cricbuzz'. "I was done with domestic cricket, though I did want to continue to play in other domestic franchise-based leagues worldwide if I got permission from the BCCI. "But I also couldn't ignore Mr

Bali's request. I gave it a lot of thought, for nearly three or four weeks, and it was almost as if I didn't even have to make a conscious decision in the end."

While working with the young Punjab quartet of Shubman Gill, Abhishek Sharma, Prabhsimran Singh and Anmolpreet Singh at the nets in the last few months, Yuvraj rediscovered his love and motivation for the game.

Bali told this agency that the dashed southpaw has written to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly in this regard. "I know he has written a letter to BCCI president Sourav Ganguly wanting to come out of retirement," he revealed.

### Malan claims top spot among T20I batsmen

Dubai: England batsman David Malan has replaced Pakistan's Babar Azam at the top of the ICC player rankings for T20I batsmen after a fruitful home series against Australia. The 33-year-old left-hander has progressed four places after a series-topping run aggregate of 129. Malan, whose previous best ranking was second in November last year, is now eight rating points ahead of Azam. India's KL Rahul has lost two places to be fourth and his skipper Virat Kohli has gained a spot to be ninth. For Australia, captain Aaron Finch's 125 runs in the series helped him retain third position. Glenn Maxwell also holds on to his sixth position. England leg-spinner Ashton Agar's five wickets have enabled him retain third position, behind the Afghanistan spin pair of Rashid Khan and Mujeeb ur Rahman.

from 70/1 to 100/5 in six overs in their latest middle-order collapse, with Adil Rashid's leg-spin accounting for the wickets of dangerous Aaron Finch (39), Glenn Maxwell (6) and Steve Smith (3). Marsh and Ashton Agar (16) put on a stand of 46 to see Australia home.

England was missing star batsman Jos Buttler and regular captain Eoin Morgan, while Australia

rested paceman Pat Cummins and opener David Warner. They should all return for the three-match ODI series between the series ending Friday.

BRIEF SCORES: England 145/6 (Jonny Bairstow 55, Joe Denly 29 n o; Adam Zampa 2/34) lost to Australia 146/5 (Mitchell Marsh 39 n o, Aaron Finch 39; Adil Rashid 3/21) by five wickets.

### DADA LANDS IN UAE TO TAKE STOCK OF IPL PREPARATIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 9: BCCI president Sourav Ganguly landed here Wednesday to oversee preparations for a bio-secure IPL beginning September 19.

"My first flight in 6 months to Dubai for IPL... crazy life changes," Ganguly posted on his Instagram handle ahead of his departure with a picture in which he is wearing a mask and face shield, part of the Standard Operating Procedure while flying amid the pandemic. He will be in quarantine for the

next six days and is expected to be in the UAE till September 23.

The BCCI managed to create a window for the IPL following the postponement of the World T20, scheduled for October-November.

The Board would have faced a revenue loss of ₹4000 crore if the tournament, which usually takes place in April-May, had not got the go ahead.

The tournament, despite its strict health safety measures, has already endured instances of contingent members testing positive for the dreaded virus.