



## UNTRIED CONCEPT

Actor Bhumi says her character in her new film breaks all tags associated with being a woman

LEISURE P2



## ENDEMIC SPECIES SIGHTED

Around 80 bird species in June and July were spotted in Pallikarai Marsh, the wetland in Chennai

TWO STATES P7



## WARRING AFGHANS MEET

Afghanistan's warring sides start negotiations for the first time to end decades of war

INTERNATIONAL P10

# WITHIN SHOOTING RANGE

## In eastern Ladakh region, India and China troops are in an eyeball-to-eyeball situation



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 12: China has mobilised thousands of soldiers, tanks and howitzers within rifle range of Indian Army deployment at Spangur Gap in the southern part of Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh, sources said, even as Indian troops are on high alert.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army made provocative military deployments at Spangur Gap, which is between Gurung Hill and Magar Hill, from August 30 after Indian soldiers seized tactical heights on the ridge line on the southern bank of Pangong Tso near Chushul at the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

"Seeing the Chinese PLA troop and guns mobilisation, the Indian Army too made mirror deployments at Spangur Gap. Both the countries' troops and



Army trucks move towards LAC eastern Ladakh, amid the prolonged India-China stand-off, in Leh, Saturday

guns are within shooting range," said a government official.

Further, sources said, China has deployed its militia squads to "consolidate the border" and "stabilise Tibet region." They have been tasked to try and dislodge the Indian Army soldiers from the tactical heights.

The militia is an irregular mix of mountaineers, boxers, members of local

## Talks after talks but nothing conclusive

**NEW DELHI:** To prevent the situation at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh from further escalating, the armies of India and China held an interaction Saturday where they discussed withdrawing forces from the points where there are in eyeball-to-eyeball situations. Brigade commanders of both sides met at Chushul and held an interaction from 11 am to 3 pm but the talks remained "inconclusive." Both the countries' military delegates are continuously in talks since September 7, the day Chinese People's Liberation Army made a provocative move to occupy Indian territory at the LAC that was thwarted by the Indian Army. Both countries have now decided to hold their sixth round of top-level military talks within the next few days. The corps commanders - 14 Corps commander Lt-General Harinder Singh and South Xinjiang Military District chief Major General Liu Lin have not met since August 2.

fight clubs and others. Most of the members are raised from the local population, sources added.

"Militia is basically a reserve force of the Chinese's People Liberation Army. They are deployed during war time situations and to help the PLA in its military operations," said a senior government officer. The officer also said that Chinese militia also conducts independent operations and provides combat support.

## Five 'missing' Arunachal youths returned to India



Five Indian youths handed over by China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) to Indian Army at Kibithu in Anjaw district, Saturday

**ITANAGAR:** Five youngsters from Arunachal Pradesh, who went missing September 2, but were later found to be in Chinese territory, were handed over to India by the People's Liberation Army Saturday.

The five returned to India nearly 10 days after they were allegedly abducted, defence sources said.

The youth were handed over to Indian authorities in Damai near Kibithu in Anjaw district of eastern Arunachal Pradesh.

"The Indian Army took custody of the five individuals at Kibithu Saturday after completing all the formalities. They will now be quarantined for 14 days as per Covid-19 protocol and thereafter handed over to their families," Defence

PRO Lt Col Harsh Wardhan Pande said in a statement.

The Kibithu (Arunachal)-Damai (China) area is a place where Indian and Chinese armies hold border meetings.

Local media had reported that Toch Singkam, Prasat Ringling, Dongtu Ebiya, Tanu Baker, and Ngaru Diri - all belonging to the Tagin community - had gone to the forest for hunting when they were reportedly kidnapped near Nacho in Upper Subansiri district.

The PLA had Tuesday conveyed to the Indian Army that the five youths, who went missing on the Sino-Indian border in Upper Subansiri district, were found by them in their territory.

## SENA VS KANGANA

# SENA WORKERS GRANTED BAIL

The party workers had assaulted an ex-Navy officer over a cartoon showing Uddhav Thackeray prostrating before pictures of Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and NCP prez Sharad Pawar

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Sept 12:** Four Shiv Sena workers who were arrested for assaulting a retired Indian Navy officer for allegedly forwarding a cartoon on Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray, were released on bail here Saturday, officials said.

The victim, Madan Sharma, 65, is a resident of Lokhandwala Complex in Kandivali east, who had reportedly forwarded a cartoon showing Thackeray prostrating before pictures of Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and Nationalist Congress Party president Sharad Pawar, on a WhatsApp group of his society members. The incident happened Friday afternoon when a group of around eight-ten persons, all allegedly Shiv Sainiks, came and assaulted Sharma in his society compound.

The Shiv Sainiks, including a Shakhya Pramukh Kamlesh Kadam, found the cartoon objectionable, stormed inside Sharma's complex and attacked him, said an official of Samata Nagar Police Station here. **No end to war of words between Sena, Kangana**

**MUMBAI:** Taking a jibe at Kangana Ranaut - without naming her - the Shiv Sena Saturday conveyed 'Mubarak Ho' to the Hindi film actor for kicking off a row over whether Mumbai is in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, adding that the country's commercial capital is quite accustomed to such controversies.

"Like Draupadi's 'chirharan' (disrobing) by the Kauravas while the Pandavas kept their heads down, even now we are witnessing a similar scenario," said the Sena in strong edits in the party newspapers 'Saamana' and 'Dopahar Ka Saamana'.

"Though it is well-known that Mumbai symbolises 'national integrity', why should the 'Controversy-Mafia' always blow this trumpet only for Mumbai and not in any other state capital?" the Sena asked.



The injured retired Navy officer; Video of the assault

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



You can't go in. He is getting ready for tonight's show against drugs.

## MONSOON SESSION

# BJD MPs to sit in separate Houses



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 12:** For the first time in the history of Parliament, MPs of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) and other parties will sit in different Houses during the Monsoon Session due to Covid-19 pandemic.

As per the plan, out of 12 BJD Lok Sabha MPs, six will sit in Lok Sabha chamber; four MPs will sit in Lok Sabha gallery and two MPs will sit in the chamber and gallery of the Rajya Sabha. Similarly, out of nine Rajya Sabha MPs, two will sit in Rajya Sabha chamber including the Parliamentary party leader; one MP will sit in Rajya Sabha gallery and six MPs have been given seats in Lok Sabha chamber and gallery. **P3**

# Now, nCoV drugs will be available in 'open market'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Amid rising number of nCoV cases, the state government has allowed sale of Favipiravir tablet and Remdesivir injectable formulation in medicine stores for the treatment of Covid-19 infected persons.

The Directorate of Drugs Control of Odisha Saturday issued an order in this regard following necessary permission from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

As per conditions set by the DCGI, the tablet and injection will be available for patients or patients' representatives producing prescription by medical specialists and residence proof.

Consent of the patient or his/her representative in the prescribed form is mandatory before initiating the treatment, the order said.

"The drug will be made available to the patient/ his representative only through in-house retail chemists attached to hospitals/nursing homes having valid drug licences. Where there is no in-house retail chemist shop in the hospital/nursing home, the local Drugs Inspector will identify one or more retail chemist shop through whom the drugs will be made available," it said. The official is to ensure the stockist and retail chemist having valid drug licences must have a good track record under the provision of the Drugs and Cosmetics Act and Rules there under.

As per the norms, the retail chemist shop will mandatorily have to retain a photocopy of the prescription, written consent of the patient or his/her representative and also residen-



Favipiravir tablet and Remdesivir injectable will be available at medicine shops in the hospital premises

The drugs will be available to patient/ their representative after producing prescription by medical specialist along with residence proof

## Odisha logs 3,777 fresh Covid cases

**BHUBANESWAR:** State's Covid-19 tally mounted to 1,46,894 Saturday with 3,777 more people testing positive for the disease. Moreover, 11 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's death toll to 616, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said. Three deaths were reported in Cuttack, two in Khurda, and one each in Bolangir, Jajpur, Kandhamal, Keonjhar, Nayagarh and Rayagada, said the official. Of the 3,777 fresh cases, 2,191 were recorded in various quarantine centres and 1,586 were detected during contact tracing.

tial proof to supply the drugs.

Remdesivir formulations are required to be supplied for use only to the hospitals/institutions to ensure proper use of the drug under the Restricted Emergency Use. "In no case Remdesivir formulation is to be sold to any patient/his representative directly," the drugs controller highlighted.

The retail chemists have been asked to submit details of purchase/sell of the drugs to the local drugs inspector on a weekly basis.

# City cop duped of ₹1 lakh while ordering food online

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** A lady police officer lost around Rs1 lakh to cyber fraudsters after ordering food through a popular online food ordering and delivery platform, few days back. The victim identified as Binodini Nayak has been staying at Jayadev Vihar area under Nayapalli police limits here.

Nayak is currently working as an Inspector of Police at the Biju Patnaik State Police Academy. As per her complaint, she ordered some food items from a local restaurant through the food delivery app. She also made advance payment of ₹386 from her bank account through PhonePe, a digital payment app.

However, the online food delivery platform failed to deliver the order and sent a cancellation message on her email address

after several hours during the night. The app also deducted ₹193 as service charges.

Subsequently, Nayak called the 'officials' of the food aggregator who transferred her complaint to another person with mobile number - 9064131625. The accused person on the other side sent a code to the victim lady inspector's mobile number.

Suddenly, she received two messages in quick successions informing about the withdrawal of amounts worth Rs24,905 twice from her account. Later, she tried to contact her bank SBI and PhonePe authorities to block her account, but to no avail.

Meanwhile, the cyber fraudsters withdrew another Rs49,905 from her account as well. Police have started investigations into the matter after registering a case in this regard based on the complaint of the lady cop.

# Wildlife population has declined by 68%

## THE WWF REPORT PAINTS A GRIM PICTURE AMID THE COVID PANDEMIC



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 12:** Global populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and fish have suffered an average two-third decline in less than half a century. This has contributed to environmental

degradation, leading to the emergence of zoonotic diseases such as Covid-19, according to WWF's Living Planet Report, 2020.

The Living Planet Index (LPI) shows that factors believed to increase the planet's vulnerability to pandemics - including land-use change and the use and trade of wildlife - were also some of the drivers behind the 68 per cent average decline in global vertebrate species population between 1970 and 2016.

"The Living Planet Report, 2020 underlines how humanity's increasing destruction of nature is having catastrophic impact not only on wildlife populations but also on human health and all aspects of our lives," said Marco Lambertini, Director General, WWF International.

"We can't ignore the evidence - the serious decline in wildlife species populations are an indicator that nature is unraveling and that our planet is flashing red-warning signs of system failure. From the fish in our oceans and rivers to bees which play a crucial role in our agricultural production, the decline of wildlife affects nutrition, food security and livelihoods of billions of people," he added.

In the midst of a global pandemic, it is now more important than ever to take unprecedented and coordinated global action to halt and start to reverse the loss of biodiversity and wildlife populations across the globe by the end of the decade and protect our future health and livelihoods.

The LPI, which tracked almost 21,000 populations of more than 4,000 vertebrate species between 1970 and 2016, also shows that wildlife populations found in freshwater habitats have suffered a decline of 84 per cent - the starker average population decline in any biome equivalent to four per cent per year since 1970.

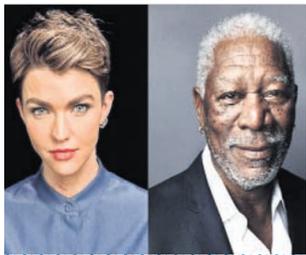
One example is the spawning population of the Chinese sturgeon in China's Yangtze river which declined by 97 per cent between 1982 and 2015 due to the damming of the waterway.

The modelling makes clear that stabilising and reversing the loss of nature caused by humans' destruction of natural habitats will only be possible if bolder, more ambitious conservation efforts are embraced and transformational changes made to the way we produce and consume food.

**This year has seen catastrophic events across the country and the world - forest fires, cyclones, locust plagues and the Covid-19 pandemic. These events have shaken the world's environmental conscience and forced us to rethink and reset our relationship with nature**

RAVI SINGH | SECRETARY GENERAL AND CEO, WWF INDIA

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
MAX	34.2°C   34.0°C
MIN	26.7°C   25.0°C
Humidity	94%   79%
Rainfall	Trace   Nil
Forecast: Generally cloudy sky	



## MORGAN FREEMAN, RUBY ROSE TO STAR IN THRILLER VANQUISH

Hollywood veteran Morgan Freeman and Batwoman star Ruby Rose are set to play the lead roles in George Gallo-directed action-thriller *Vanquish*. In the film, Freeman essays the role of a retired police commissioner who attempts to clean up the city.

## WOULD LOVE TO DO A TOUR IN INDIA: ELLIE GOULDING

Singer Ellie Goulding says she would love to do a music tour in India, hopefully next year or after that. "Thank you for your love, I would love to do a tour in India sometime," Goulding said when asked if she has a message for her Indian fans.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

**ARIES**  
Your creative juices are flowing today, says Ganesh, and you are raring to take on new challenges. Your workplace may offer some interesting benefits. Remember to relax, your body requires attention every now and then.

**TAURUS**  
Today is the day of showing care and concern to all family members, says Ganesh. There is a possibility that you may feel estranged from your spouse and your relationship might be in danger of hitting the dead end. Stay calm and avoid escalating the tension, for the sake of your family, if nothing else, advises Ganesh.

**GEMINI**  
Emotionally, this will be a delightful day; professionally, it will be a successful day; and personally, it will be a beautiful day. A very good day, indeed! If you haven't already, get ready to tie the proverbial nuptial knot.

**CANCER**  
There is a sound prospect that you will work hard to improve the welfare of your children, portends Ganesh. In the afternoon, you may hear good news about their academic success. In the evening, meditation and prayer will take much of your time, hopes Ganesh.

**LEO**  
There are good days, bad days, and then there are days like today, when Ganesh foresees a mixed bag of fortunes for you. Make your family the centre of your world, and show them the love and affection that they deserve. Early in the day, you may make an attempt to sever ties with your spouse or life partner.

**VIRGO**  
Creativity is bubbling inside you, asking to be uncorked. You may be struggling more than enough to tackle challenges thrown at you. Cash benefits will come your way in office. But Ganesh advises you to pay due attention to your health.

**LIBRA**  
Some private possessions are close to your heart, and you may want to keep them that way, says Ganesh. Let your mind walk the hidden alleyways of mysticism in the afternoon as you seek peace of mind. Also, do not discount a trip to a sacred place, says Ganesh.

**SCORPIO**  
Health issues are on top of the list today. Spend more time working out those muscles than working, says Ganesh. Those in marketing and advertising shall have a golden day today. The correct dose of marketing mix will help reap maximum profits.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
A day where your thoughts will be inclined towards God and divinity, says Ganesh. Don't ease those purse strings easily too. At work, rise to the occasion and take charge. Your superiors will give you a pat on the back. Romantic escapades will be marked by rude health – as if you mind!

**CAPRICORN**  
In total control of yourself, you will have the tendency to dominate those around you. It's a trait that keeps resurfacing at intervals, making you feel all powerful, says Ganesh. Later in the day, you may even enrol yourself for a personality development course to hone your communication and professional skills.

**AQUARIUS**  
It's time for some family bonding! You realise that you've neglected your near and dear. Now, you need to do something substantial to win back your family's approval. However, your sincerity alone will melt their hearts. Holding your sweetheart's hand at dinner is a perfect way to end the day, says Ganesh.

**PISCES**  
Friends are the subject of all your activities today. You will make new acquaintances that will prove to be helpful in times of need. A loved one will make you happy like you've never been before. A candlelight dinner with your sweetheart is probably in the offing, says Ganesh.

## BHUMI'S next a fresh take on womanhood

**Mumbai:** Actress Bhumi Pednekar says her character in the upcoming film, *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitare (DKAWCS)*, breaks all the tags associated with being a woman.

Bhumi says *DKAWCS* has an incredibly fresh take on womanhood. "I think what I loved the most was the fact that this character (Kitty) is just about being a girl, just about being a person. We always have these tags -- she is a good girl, she is a bad girl. This character breaks those tags," Bhumi said.

Bhumi feels the audience hasn't seen two sisters like Dolly and Kitty who aren't perfect in the stereotypical sense of the word.

"In our film, the sisters are real and they are perfect in their own way. Human beings aren't black and

white. They are complex, they are unique and each person needs to be celebrated for who they are," she added.



## Anuradha's son dies of kidney failure at 35

**Mumbai:** Aditya Paudwal, son of singer Anuradha Paudwal, succumbed to kidney failure on Saturday morning. He was 35.

Aditya was battling kidney related ailments for a long time. Several celebrities from the world of music have mourned his death on social media.

Singer-composer Shankar Mahadevan wrote on his verified Facebook page: "Devastated hearing this! Our dearest Aditya Paudwal is no more!! Just can't believe this! What an amazing musician and a lovely human being!! I just sang a song which was programmed by him so beautifully two days back! Just can't come to terms with this!! Love you brother... miss you." Singer-composer Kaushal S. Inamdar tweeted from his verified account: "Aditya Paudwal passes away. Such a talented guy. We talked about working together. The opportunity never came by. I'll always rue that. May his soul attain sadgati." Aditya was a music composer, arranger and producer.



## Samantha shares her weekend therapy

**Mumbai:** Actress Samantha Akkineni has shared that she has started the weekend by doing 108 Surya Namaskars.

She took to Instagram Stories to share a picture after her workout session, and exclaimed that it was a good start.

"Good start to the weekend... surya namaskar 108 times," she wrote with the image.

A while back, Samantha sent netizens into a frenzy when she shared a picture with her husband, actor Naga Chaitanya, in which they were trying out a few touch yoga poses including the headstand and a complex body balance.

The actress has also been using her social media to share about her gardening and diet routine.

Samantha is known for her performances in films such as *Ye Maaya Chesave*, *Neethaane En Ponvasantham*, *Eega*, *Mersal* and *Rangasthalam*. She impressed all with her role in *Super Deluxe* last year. Soon, she will be seen in the second part of *The Family Man*.

## Of Shelley, Covid and India-Italy collaboration

The objective of making 'Human O.A.K.' was to create a positive environment amongst the global film industry during such dreadful situation, says Odisha-born Jitendra Mishra who has produced many international films

**New Delhi:** Percy Bysshe Shelley was a poet of the Romantic era who had inspired Mahatma Gandhi. Now, his *Ode To The West Wind* written two centuries ago, Covid-19, an Italian director and an Odisha-born Indian producer have come together for *Human O.A.K.*, a short film that is "absolutely poetic, something delicate, something that speaks about the pandemic but in a gentle way".

"The film could only be thought and realised in the lockdown period. If there had not been the Covid-19 I would never have thought of it and shot it. I wanted to do something absolutely poetic, something delicate, something that spoke about the pandemic but in a gentle way," the director, Ulisse Lendaro, said.

"I wanted to start from a poem that was possibly related to a pandemic. I read *Ode to the West Wind* by Shelley, all his biography and his connections with India, with Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. So I immediately felt the strong need to talk about this idea with my friend and producer Jitendra Mishra



Director Ulisse Lendaro with the cast of *Human O.A.K.*

who gave me a lot of good advice about the mood of the film," he added. "Human life is like the life of an oak tree. The west wind in autumn comes every year and takes out all the leaves of the tree but the tree stands tall to sprout new leaves again in spring next year. Humanity has always emerged stronger after such pandemic each time. This poetic film is a portrayal of change and hope for a new better life," said Jitendra who was born and brought up in Titlagarh of Odisha.

His most recent production, *The Last Color* directed by Michelin-starred Chef

Vikas Khanna, starring Neena Gupta, has already been selected in more than 50 international film festivals and received more than 15 different awards as of now.

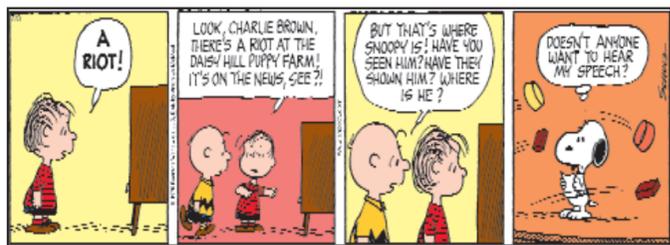
The objective, he said, was to create a positive environment amongst the global film industry (between him and Lendaro, between Italy and India). "When everyone was getting negative because of the uncertain pandemic, to bring hope for others by making an international co-production possible even if we are sitting thousands of miles

away and fighting against this dreadful situation," added Mishra. "Shelley's eagerness for vegetarianism is connected with India. In 1812 he was converted to vegetarianism by his friend John Frank Newton, who had himself been converted while living in India. Shelley wanted his message of reform and revolution spread, and the wind becomes the trope for spreading the word of change through the poet-prophet figure," he elaborated.



Producer Jitendra Mishra

### PEANUTS



### CALVIN AND HOBBS

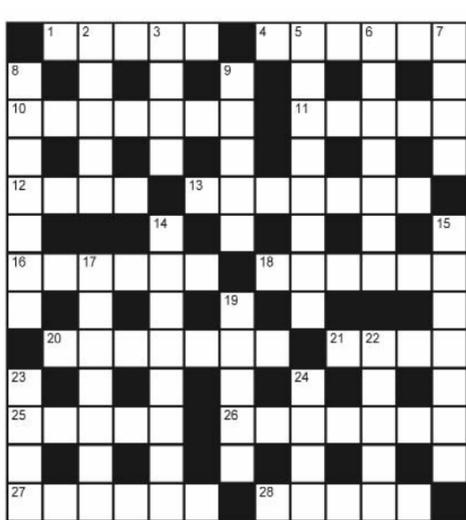


### BREVITY



### FUN post

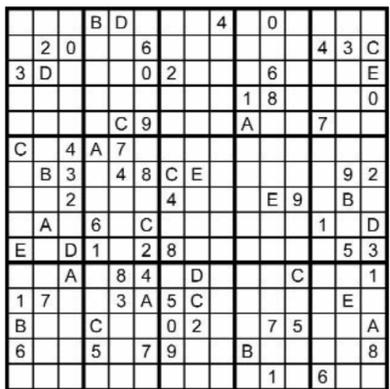
### CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1 Roof ring
  - 4 Wine order
  - 10 Reprimand
  - 11 Designer's concern
  - 12 River of Hades
  - 13 Various
  - 16 Stereo knob
  - 18 Misbehaves
  - 20 Two-toed flightless bird
  - 21 Popeyed
  - 25 Wheeled vehicle
  - 26 Hard to pin down
  - 27 Former
  - 28 Spanish money
  - 28 Roars
  - 6 Buttonholes
  - 7 Emerald Isle
  - 8 Storage places
  - 9 Jeans material
  - 14 Orchestra member
  - 15 Orbital extremes
  - 17 Flags
  - 19 Santa's reindeer, c.g.
  - 22 Hibachi
  - 23 Trade
  - 24 Camera setting
- Down
- 2 Cheap
  - 3 Praise
  - 5 Gallery

### SUDOKU

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

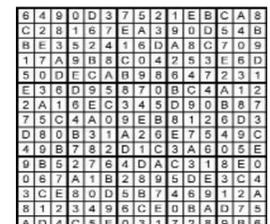


### SOLUTIONS

#### CROSSWORD



#### SUDOKU



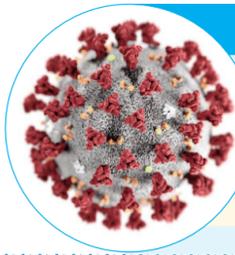
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## FOR KITE FLYERS

Artisans making kite reels in Bamphi Sahi area of Cuttack, Saturday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,87,62,485	2,06,52,944	9,21,596
India	46,59,984	36,24,196	77,472
Odisha	1,46,894	1,15,279	616

# CM unveils ROB, lays stone for ginning mill



The newly-inaugurated ROB at Berhampur

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday inaugurated a railway overbridge (ROB) at Berhampur and laid the foundation stone for a cooperative ginning mill at Digapahandi through videoconferencing. Inaugurating the project, Naveen said that as an important higher education, health and commercial hub of southern Odisha, Berhampur deserves special attention of the government.

“To transform Berhampur into a modern city, a lot of initiatives are being worked out. The new ROB constructed at a cost of ₹27 crore will fulfill the aspirations of the people for a hassle-free communication,” he said. The cooperative ginning mill of Digapahandi will provide jobs to 100 skilled and unskilled workers besides helping cotton growers of the nearby 6 blocks, Patnaik said. Although Ganjam is slowly returning to normalcy, the danger is not over yet, he appealed to people

to remain alert and follow COVID-19 guidelines scrupulously till the war is over. He appreciated the dedicated service of doctors, paramedics and the hard work of district administration in containing spread of COVID-19. The work for the ROB from Lanjipali to Engineering School had commenced in 2015 and completed by the deadline. The proposed cooperative ginning mill of Digapahandi will provide jobs to 100 skilled and unskilled workers besides helping cotton growers of the nearby 6 blocks set up in PPP mode with an investment of ₹2.10 crore. The unit will have capacity to produce 50 quintal lint cotton per day. The unit will employ 100 skilled and unskilled labourers. The cotton producing areas of Digapahandi, Sanekhemundi, Dharakote, Sheragada, Patrapur, Jagannathprasad and Bhanjanagar blocks of Ganjam district will be benefited by this unit.

## TRANSFORMING SILK CITY

The ROB constructed at a cost of ₹27 crore is expected to fulfill the aspirations of the people for a hassle-free communication

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# IN A FIRST, BJD MPs TO SIT IN SEPARATE HOUSES

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Out of 12 BJD Lok Sabha MPs, six will sit in Lok Sabha chamber, four MPs will sit in Lok Sabha gallery and two MPs will sit in the chamber and gallery of the Rajya Sabha

Of nine RS MPs, two will sit in the RS chamber including Parliamentary party leader, one MP will sit in Rajya Sabha gallery and six MPs have been given seats in Lok Sabha chamber and gallery

Rajya Sabha. However, sources said that the seating arrangement of the Congress and BJP MPs would be finalised by Sunday. In order to create awareness about COVID-19, the Lok Sabha Secretariat has organised a two-

day orientation programme for MPs Sunday and Monday. AIIMS will apprise the MPs of the precautions to be taken during the Monsoon session. Significantly, the session will commence Monday and conclude October 1. According to reports, the government has listed 23 new bills, including 11 which seek to replace ordinances, for introduction in the monsoon session. On the first day of the Session, the Lok Sabha will sit from 9am to 1pm while proceeding of the Upper House will be from 3pm to 7pm. The Zero Hour will be for 30 minutes. On subsequent days, proceedings in the Rajya Sabha will be held from 9am till 1pm while that of the Lok Sabha will be from 3pm to 7pm.

# NGT BRAKE ON WATER PROJECT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has prohibited construction work of a piped water project in Kendrapara district without environmental clearance from the Union government.

breach under... Forest Conservation rules, 2003.” The state government during the hearing of the case informed the tribunal that the work in forest land was stopped pending grant of the clearance from the ministry for which necessary proposal was submitted by the state government

## GREEN NOD HURDLE



The order was issued after the tribunal was informed that the project on 2 acres of land comprising forest land was in progress without valid environmental clearance

The piped water project was being undertaken at Manikunda village under Marshaghai tehsil of Kendrapara district

The order was issued after the tribunal was told by the officials that the project on 2 acres of land comprising forest land was in progress without valid environmental clearance from the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF). The piped water project was being undertaken at Manikunda village under Marshaghai tehsil of the district. The written order of the NGT said, “In view of the above we did not deem it essential to keep this matter pending further except to direct the state government not to commence the work without first obtaining clearance under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 from the ministry.” It also added, “We expect the MoEF to expedite the process in accordance with law considering the public interest involved in the project. We also leave it open to the MoEF & CC to decide as to whether action should be initiated against the persons responsible for the

to the ministry. The tribunal had earlier sought a clarification from a joint inspection committee comprising the district Collector and divisional forest officer (DFO) if the land involved was 1 acre or more than that. On November 18, 2019, it became quite evident that the area involved in the project was in excess of 2 hectare which led the applicant to seek a direction to obtain clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. The petitioner in the case, Alaya Samantaray, had alleged that despite earlier order of a temporarily halt on the project, the construction works were continued by the deployed firm. The state government had informed the NGT that the firm had been penalised for the act. It also talked about the importance of the project which was envisioned to supply drinking water to around 200 villages in the area.

## TROUBLED WATERS & FISHING



A fisherman casts his net into a swollen Mahanadi river at Jobra anicut in Cuttack, Saturday

# Pradhan urges CM to implement NDHM, AB-PMJAY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Union Petroleum and Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has urged Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to implement the National Digital Health Mission (NDHM) and Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) to improve the lives of the people in the state. In a letter to Patnaik, the Union minister who hails from Odisha said NDHM, which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi August 15 will leverage the power of technology to ensure the well-being of all citizens including poor migrants of the state. Describing NDHM as a holistic and voluntary healthcare programme, Pradhan said it will involve all relevant stakeholders for the transformation of digital health infrastructure in India. NDHM leverages the transformative power of e-governance by in-



roducing the concept of Unique Healthcare ID (UHID) for every citizen. The UHID will be a repository of all health-related information of a person, such as medical tests, previous prescriptions, diagnosis, treatments all... health records, he said in the letter dated September 11. The portable, nation-wide UHID will liberate citizens from the challenges of finding doctors in different locations, seeking appointment with them, payment of consultation fee, making visits for prescription sheets and will empower them to

take informed decisions for availing the best possible healthcare services, Pradhan said. The NDHM will bring about a revolution in the country's healthcare sector where technology will play a leading role in minimising the challenges citizens face while seeking healthcare, he said in the letter. A copy of the letter was released to the media. Pradhan said NDHM will not only improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of health service delivery in the country but will also be a major stride towards achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3.8 of universal health coverage, including financial risk protection. As the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has shown us, among the most vulnerable sections of our society are migrant workers who suffer due to the geographic redundancy of social welfare schemes. The nation-wide portability of UHID will greatly benefit migrant work-

ers who will be able to digitally access all their health records anywhere in the country while seeking medical treatment, the union minister said. UHID will also be a boon for people living in remote rural areas of the country who are not able to access healthcare facilities frequently. By using telemedicine services and ensuring continuity of their medical history and treatments, they can save on their out-of-pocket expenses for medical diagnostics, Pradhan said. NDHM will be developed and implemented by National Health Authority (NHA), the attached office of the ministry of health and family welfare and the apex central government agency responsible for the implementation of AB-PMJAY. Pradhan said NDHM will be able to offer maximum benefit to states when integrated with the ABPMJAY, a game changer and give an opportunity to serve the poor.

## DON'T POLITICISE DURGA PUJA: BJD

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Debashish Samantaray Saturday urged people not to politicise the issue of making Durga Puja celebrations a low-key affair during COVID-19 pandemic. “Such festivals should not be dragged into controversy. The matter has also been raised before the Orissa High Court. We will abide by the High Court order. In case we try to allow parading height of the idols, we can work out accordingly with the authorities,” he said. He criticised the agitation on the issue and said views of individuals should not be given importance keeping in mind the gravity of the pandemic situation. He also said that the HC and the police should look after the matter keeping in mind the ground reality.

## FACE NEET WITHOUT FEAR, GOVT TELLS ASPIRANTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Health & Family Welfare department Additional Chief Secretary, Pradipta Kumar Mohapatra, has advised the aspirants to appear for the National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET) without fear for COVID-19. Mohapatra said that all arrangements have been put in place for the entrance test September 13 in seven districts as per the guidelines of National Testing Agency (NTA) by the respective Collectors and municipal commissioners. As per earlier announcement, the state government has made arrangements of free transportation and accommodation for the students. Over 37,000 candidates will appear for the examination. The examinations will be conducted from 11am to 5pm in strict adherence to health safety protocols to prevent the spread of the coro-

navirus disease. The examination will be held at centres in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Angul, Berhampur, Rourkela, Balasore and Sambalpur. The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has also made accommodation for NEET candidates and their parents at five engineering colleges here. Meanwhile, NEET Odisha Convenor Palli Patnaik said that the Covid symptomatic students and those having high body temperature will appear at the test with the advice of the doctors. For them, isolation rooms in 31 examination centres have been earmarked. The invigilators in the isolation rooms will do their duty by wearing PPE kits, he said. With strict adherence to COVID-19 guidelines, sitting arrangements have been made for 12 students in each room to maintain social distancing. Mask and sanitizers will be provided to every student, sources said.

# 8 of notorious gang held in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The Commissionerate Police Saturday claimed to have busted a gang of notorious criminals with the arrest of eight of its members involved in several snatching and bike-lifting cases in the City. Police said that they have recovered several stolen mobile phones, gold ornaments and two-wheelers from the possession of Seikh Abid of Jadupur under Khandagiri police limits, Jitendra Pradhan of Dhalapur, Biswajit Das of Chhatrapur and Mithun Samudra of Polasara in Ganjam, Kashinath Patra of Jashipur in Mayurbhanj, Ajay Kumar Mandal and Sanjay Kumar Das of Tangi in Khurda and Dharmendra Kumar of Munger in Bihar. While Sanjay and Ajay were residing at Haladipadia slum in Laxmisagar, others were staying at Salia Sahi under Nayapalli police



The arrested accused and the seized motorcycles

limits here, they said. Following reports of regular snatching and bike-lifting instances from various areas of the City, a special team involving Nayapalli police was formed to curb the menace, said an official of Nayapalli police. The gang's involvement was found in a series of snatching and bike-lifting cases including those re-

ported from Khandagiri, Nayapalli, Capital and Kharavela Nagar police station areas. “Rs 3 lakh in cash, 26 mobile phones, five two-wheelers and 45 gram worth gold ornaments were recovered from them. The accused were sent to judicial custody after a local court nixed their bail pleas,” said the official.

## 2,400 LITRE PDS KEROSENE SEIZED

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The Special Task Force (STF) of state Crime Branch Saturday seized 2,400 litre kerosene meant for Public Distribution System (PDS) which was illegally stored in a godown at Rairakhol of Sambalpur district. The STF officials also arrested one person, Pabitra Sahoo of Baisnavajhuli under Rairakhol police limits in this regard. Following a tip-off, the sleuths carried out a raid at the godown and seized the oil worth ₹2,85,910 from there. The STF sources claimed that the seized kerosene was pilfered from tankers transporting kerosene to different places for distribution under PDS. A case (156/20) under sections 379, 411, 285 of IPC and 7 (1)(ii) Essential Commodities Act, 1955 has been registered at Rairakhol Police Station in this regard.

# MAHENDRA DAS AKA BHIKU SETH PASSES AWAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Choudwar, Sept 12:** Legendary stage artiste of Odisha Mahendra Kumar Das popularly known as Bhiku Seth breathed his last at his Choudwar residence in Cuttack district after a massive cardiac arrest. He was 55.



Das became a household name for his memorable role in the play ‘Saguna Basichi Dena Melei’

The veteran Jatra artiste was taken from his house to SCB Medical College and Hospital after he complained of acute chest pain. Sources close to the artiste said that he suffered heart stroke Friday late night and died on the way to hospital. The stage artiste became a household name for his memorable role in the play ‘Saguna Basichi Dena Melei’ which earned him the moniker of Bhiku Seth. Mahendra, a member of Kalinga Gananatya, was among the most influential stage actors in the state who was noted for his portrayal of negative characters. He had also worked with troupes such as Parbati Gananatya and Dhauri Gananatya. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Saturday condoled the demise of the artiste on Twitter.

# Spike in nCoV cases headache for Puri admin

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The coastal district of Puri may soon emerge as a troubled zone for COVID-19 pandemic as there has been continuous surge in infections for the last few days.

As per the government data, the district alone has seen a total of 1,769 new positive cases for novel coronavirus in the past one week. The district recorded at least 300 new cases on several days recently.

As per the data, Puri has been reporting increased number positive cases after Khurda and Cuttack district. Puri district had reported around 100 cases on daily basis just a week ago. However, it registered a total of 387 positive cases September 9 and 332 new cases September 10.

The district has been reporting the third highest number of positive cases in the state for the last few days.

Till now, the district has witnessed a total of 6,074 positive cases, the fourth highest number of cases reported by the districts in Odisha.



DATE	CASES
Sept 12	237
Sept 11	279
Sept 10	332
Sept 9	387
Sept 8	217
Sept 7	200
Sept 6	117
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,769</b>

Puri district has also seen 25 coronavirus deaths while three more patients perished due to reasons other than the novel coronavirus.

## COLLECTOR SEEKS COOPERATION

**PURI:** In the wake of continuous spike in COVID-19 infections in the district, Puri Collector Balwant Singh Saturday sought the cooperation of citizens to fight off the deadly virus.

The district witnessed as many as 237 new infections during the last 24 hours as per data revealed by the Health and Family Welfare department.

It was reported that most of the positive cases were from Puri municipality area. "COVID-19 positive cases include people who are gov-

ernment employees, police officials, servants and even residents. Almost 75 per cent of infected people have recovered," said Singh.

"Our fight against the virus is far from over. We need to be careful and strictly follow the COVID-19 guidelines. I urge you all to wear face masks whenever going out and maintain hand hygiene all the times. If you start showing any symptom similar to COVID-19 or as soon as you know that you have come in contact with a positive patient, inform local health officials," he added.

The district administration records claim that the recovery rate in Puri stands at 70.55 per cent while around 8.50 per cent of the total samples tested found to be positive for COVID-19. The district has 26 active containment zones to tackle the pandemic. While 20 active containment zones are in Kanas, five

are in Nimapara.

As per the data, the maximum number of positive cases has been reported from the Puri city followed by Puri Sadar block. Nimapara and Bramhagiri blocks of the district also reported more number of new cases than other localities.

## CIVIC WOES



Residents of Puri Jagannath Colony inconvenienced as drain water inundates the road, Saturday

OP PHOTO

## JEE-Main: Sourabh Soumyakanta Das state topper

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The Joint Entrance Examination (JEE)-Main 2020 results have been announced and this year a total of 24 candidates have scored 100 percentile in the national level entrance test.

Sourabh Soumyakanta Das has become Odisha's topper with 99.99 percentile in the engineering entrance exam while Stitiprajna Sahoo topped among girls with 99.98 percentile.

With eight 100 percentile scorers, Telangana is at the top followed by Delhi with five 100 percentile scorers, Rajasthan four, Andhra Pradesh three, Haryana two and Gujarat and Maharashtra one each.

The examination was conducted in 633 centres across 233 cities and towns from September 1 to September 6 this year by the National Testing Agency (NTA), following all the precautions and measures of COVID-19 pandemic.

## ECOR's new PCPO

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Tushar Kanti Mandal, a senior Indian Railways Personnel Service (IRPS) officer, has joined as Principal Chief Personnel Officer (PCPO) of East Coast Railway (ECOR), an official said Saturday. Prior to the new posting, Mandal worked as the Chief Personnel Officer (Admin) of Central Railway at Mumbai.

The senior IRPS officer has also served as the Railway Recruitment Board Chairman at Guwahati among other senior positions in Indian Railways. Mandal has done his Post Graduate on Strategic Management Programme in Indian School of Business Management at Hyderabad.

## COVID docs should be punctual: BMC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Keeping in view the rising cases of COVID in the city, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has requested all COVID Care Centres and hospitals to ensure timely attendance of its doctors and establish a mechanism to monitor the same.

In a letter to all Covid Care Centres (CCC) and Dedicated Covid Hospitals (DCH), the civic authority urged that a mechanism be setup to ensure timely presence of doctors and paramedics for effective treatment of patients.

The BMC also said that such planning will help in timely shifting of patients more often in a day.

"The mere presence of a doctor near the patient has great psychological advantage and, hence, it is essential that doctors should visit patients more often daily to ascertain the health condition of a patient. This will also help in shifting patients from general to ICU wards and decrease the mortality rate," the letter said.

"It, therefore, needs strict monitoring of the attendance of the doctors and paramedics. This will enable the BMC to obtain daily/weekly advanced duty schedule for cross-checking. It is further suggested that surprise checks be conducted at least twice a week half-an-hour before and after shift change," the letter added.

Stating that there are limitations of Assistant Medical Officers (AMOs) visiting the COVID wards, the civic authority has asked the CCCs and DCHs to install CCTVs in hospital buildings, wards and corridors to ascertain the movement of doctors in the wards.

The backup of the CCTV footage should be kept further verifica-



A fleet of ambulances on 24x7 Covid duty

tion, the letter said. **More doctors to tackle mental health calls**

With a large number of mental cases being identified on daily basis, the civic authority here stated that it may increase the number of doctors keeping in mind the mental health challenges faced by the patients during quarantine period.

Doctors deputed at 1929 Call Centre of Bhubaneswar Operations Centre are involved in helping people fight mental stress of COVID-19 in a better way. As per sources, patients fearful of being admitted to a COVID hospital are now more confident and prefer to stay under home isolation after proper counselling.

"Currently two doctors have been assigned per shift to take calls at the 1929 Call Centre and gradually the number will be increased depending on the call load," said BMC Additional Commissioner Parul Patawari.

Meanwhile, explaining the anxiety and stress of the COVID-19 positive patients, a doctor, Gopal Krushna said that majority of the callers assume that if one is found Covid positive, he/she needs to be hospitalised and there is no way out. "However, we talk to people and build their confidence levels. Many are now following our advice with a positive attitude and opting for home quarantine."

## Door-to-door screening begins

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday started door-to-door health screening programme in non-slum areas of the Capital city.

A two-member team of an AYUSH doctor and a female health worker has started visiting each and every household under three zones of the BMC to collect information about any illness or flu-like symptoms or Covid-19 symptoms, travel history, information about elderly people and children.

While 42 teams have been deployed in the North and South-West zones each, 55 teams are engaged in South-East zone to carry out the massive health screening exercise. Each team will cover at least 100 households on daily basis. The health screening will continue for three weeks.

"People surveying households wore basic safety gears like masks, gloves and hand sanitisers etc. The teams have been given thermal gun to check temperatures and pulse oximeters to monitor a person's



oxygen saturation levels," stated BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary. Apart from basic details like name, age, address and contact, teams will ask questions individuals about symptoms of cough, cold, fever or breathing problem

## 2 more MLAs test +ve

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Two more MLAs—Saroj Kumar Meher and Shashi Bhusan Behera—Saturday tested positive for the novel coronavirus. Patnagarh MLA Meher and Kendrapara MLA Behera informed about the development through their twitter handles.

Despite being asymptomatic, Meher is in home isolation as per the advice of doctors.

Meanwhile, Minister Padmini Dian along with her husband Sadashib Dian and Nabarangpur MP Ramesh Chandra Majhi, who had tested positive for the virus, were shifted to COVID hospital here after they complained of difficulty in breathing.

## Woman among 5 nabbed for murder in Silver City

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Sept 12:** A special squad of the Commissionerate Police, along with Choudwar police, here Saturday arrested five persons including a woman on charges of killing a middle-aged man over past rivalry earlier this month.

"Anil Samal, 25, Hakim Samal, 28, Rajendra Samal, 32, Sagar Samal, 22, and Anusaya Samal, 40, all residents of Banipada under Choudwar police limits here have been taken into custody for killing Saroj Samal of the locality," the Cuttack deputy commissioner of police (DCP) tweeted.

**A two-member team of an AYUSH doctor and a female health worker has started visiting each and every household under three zones of the BMC**

and whether or not they use the Sachetak mobile App.

"It's a public welfare exercise, and we urge the citizens to be truthful while providing information to the surveyors. The aim is to identify people with Covid-like symptoms, create a comprehensive database and then get them tested to check its spread," said ADUPHO (Additional District Urban Public Health Officer), CVSN Rao.

The information collected at the end of the exercise will be compiled and the data will then be used to map out areas that are reporting more cases of Covid-like symptoms and help in further surveillance activities.

## State Cong welcomes leadership changes

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** The state unit of Congress Saturday welcomed the move of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) to make several new changes including changing the in-charge of Odisha Congress.

The new move replaced Jitendra Singh, Odisha Congress in-charge at AICC with Dr Chellakumar. The state leaders in a media briefing welcomed the move.

Congress leader Suresh Routray said, "I would like to extend my greetings to Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi for choosing the young team in the recent reshuffle of All India Congress Committee (AICC) committees. Dr Chellakumar is the only Congress MP from Tamil Nadu and a dedicated worker."

He also said that the new in-charge is a gentleman and known for serving the people as a doctor too. "He has taken the leadership of the party. I think this will be a revolution and it will bring the party members from all areas together. We will follow the new leadership," he said.

"We will accept the directions of the new leader. Let us leave all things to Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi. They will take care of the party. All the new decisions will be welcomed by us. But we would like not to see any changes till the next by-elections," he added.

Bhakta Charan Das, who has been made the in-charge of Manipur Congress, said that the new decision will boost the morale of Odisha Congress.

He said, "I have worked in 11-12 states as secretaries and observer for the party and handled other national level posts too. I plan to work hard and bring positive results for the party. This is a matter of pride for the state Congress."

He also said, "This will definitely help the state at large."

## NOON DRIZZLE



Commuters take shelter under Rajmahal overbridge as rain lashes the Capital city, Saturday

OP PHOTO

## SIDDHAMHAVEER LEVEL CROSSING

# Delay in ROB project irks Puri residents

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, Sept 12:** The National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) is yet to begin construction work for a railway overbridge (ROB) at Siddhamhaveer level crossing on Puri-Konark National Highway here even though the Centre has approved the project around 10 months ago.

The NHAI and the district administration had initiated the process for acquisition of land for the ROB project in January this year. However, the authorities concerned are yet to begin work for the same.

Members of Jana Jagaran Manch, a Puri-based voluntary outfit, Saturday submitted a memorandum to the NHAI and the district administration seeking early execution of the ROB project.

It is worth mentioning here that the residents of the Pilgrim city



■ The residents of the Pilgrim city have been demanding construction of an ROB at Siddhamhaveer level crossing for the last two decades

■ The Centre had given its approval for the project in December 2019

■ The authorities had planned to acquire 2.66 acre land for the 900-metre long ROB

■ However, the land acquisition process was stopped due to unspecified reasons

have been demanding construction of an ROB at Siddhamhaveer level crossing for the last two decades. The Centre had given its nod to the project in December 2019.

The NHAI and the district administration had initiated process for land acquisition for the project January 16 this year. The authorities had planned to acquire 2.66 acre land for the 900-metre long ROB, sources said.

"The land acquisition process for the ROB was stopped midway. We have submitted a memorandum to the NHAI and district administration pleading for the early execution of the project," said the outfit convener, Jyotiranjana Nayak.

According to the locals, the railway authorities usually shut the level crossing gates once in every 15 minutes to facilitate rail traffic, much to the inconvenience of the

commuters.

"Many tourists depend upon the NH to visit the Sun temple at Konark. But lack of an ROB puts the tourists in trouble near Siddhamhaveer level crossing. Even ambulances and vehicles carrying patients are being forced to wait for more than 15 minutes. Students also face difficulties in reaching classes on time," said a local.

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# Finally, green signal for restart of Lower Suktel proj

The work of the irrigation project has been disrupted several times in the past due to frequent conflicts between pro- and anti-dam activists

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, Sept 12:** Here is some good news for farmers in Bolangir! Hopes of resuming the work of the ambitious Lower Suktel Irrigation project has been rekindled again. Its construction work, which remained stalled for over two years now, is going to start soon.

According to a report, a high level technical team recently visited the project site and signaled restart of work on the project from Friday.

The state government had sent this four-member high-powered committee to the area a couple of days ago.

The team comprising chief engineer of the Water Resources department Jyotiraj Rath, additional secretary of department Rajendra Pattnaik, OCC's managing director Asim Kumar Mohapatra and chief engineer of the Subarnarekha Irrigation Project Prabhat Ranjan Rout held talks with the local MLA Narasingh Mishra and members of the different Action Committees.

The Chief Engineer hinted that construction work of the dam will start from Friday.

He also said that the state government has appointed a special

officer to deal with problems of the displaced people.

Locals, the MLA and members of Bolangir Action Committee (BAC) demanded that with the start of the dam work, problems of the displaced people should be redressed on priority basis.

They stressed on the need of this irrigation project for a drought-prone district like Bolangir.

Some weeks ago, locals united under Bolangir Action Committee (BAC) had warned of agitation over the stalemate if the work on the project was not started within a month. A six-member delegation led by MLA Narasingh Mishra had submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister through Collector Arindam Dakua.

MLA Narasingh Mishra, president of the BAC Gopalji Mishra, president of the Nagarika Committee Bikramananda Bohidar, president of the district Bar Association Pramod Kumar Tripathy, lawyer Bhawani Shankar Satpathy and Ratan Kumar Moharana held discussions with the Collector over the status of the project and the bottlenecks that are hampering the work of the irrigation project.



▶ A high level technical team recently visited the project site and signaled restart of work on the project from Friday

▶ Once commissioned, the project will irrigate 29,146 hectares in Balangir district and 2,684 hectares in Sonepur, covering 189 villages

The state government has already spent over Rs1,000 crore for the project

They had demanded that the administration appoint a regular land acquisition officer and other staff in addition to pay appropriate compensation of the displaced people and others affected by the project.

"For a long time, RPDAC did not hold any meeting. As a result, the problems of the displaced villagers were not taken up for discussion. The displaced people should get what they deserve and the RPDAC meeting should be called immediately,"

said Mishra. Mishra also said that he would hold talks with the Speaker, the minister of the Water Resources department and the department secretary during his stay in Bhubaneswar so as to ensure resumption of work within a month.

The BAC is spearheading a movement in support of the dam project. Members of the BAC had visited Paradihapi and conducted a meeting with the villagers who were up in arms against the project.

The construction work of the project was stopped due to stiff opposition from villagers around seven months back.

Paradihapi village is the epicentre of the agitation against the project. Its residents are seeking one-time compensation as per Land Acquisition and Rehabilitation Act, 2013. They also demand that their family members, who are 18 years of age, be included for compensation.

Worried over stoppage of project work, the BAC had earlier urged the district administration to end the impasse with the agitating villagers.

BAC leader Gopalji Panigrahi urged the villagers of Paradihapi to cooperate with the administration in carrying out the project work. It may be noted here that the state government has already spent over Rs1,000 crore for the project. At the meeting, the villagers raised their concerns over the proposed dam and pressed their old demands.

Once commissioned, the project will irrigate 29,146 hectares in Balangir district and 2,684 hectares in Sonepur, covering 189 villages.

Due to frequent conflicts between pro and anti-dam activists, the work on the project has been disrupted several times in the last 12 years.

# Elephant herd stuck in Mahanadi; rescue operation underway

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Sept 12:** A herd of elephants are trapped in an alluvial plain in the Mahanadi river near Mundali here Saturday.

There are 18 to 20 elephants in the herd.

Locals first spotted the jumbos being stuck in the middle of the river. Realising the seriousness of the incident, they immediately informed the forest department.

Meanwhile, officials from the

Forest department have reached the spot and are keeping a close watch on the herd. At the same time, they are also working on rescuing the trapped pachyderms.

According to sources, the herd from Athagarh's Sukasan jungle was heading towards Chandaka forest. They were crossing the river when they got stuck near 'Daspur ghat'.

As the news spread, people from nearby areas also thronged the river bank to see how the elephants are being rescued.

# Jumbos on rampage in Ujwalpur range

**SUNDARGARH:** People living near Ujwalpur forest range in Sundargarh district are gripped with panic as a herd of elephants is on a rampage in villages for the past 20 days. The herd, comprising 17 elephants, has damaged five houses and paddy in several acres. Half-a-dozen other villagers have also suffered a huge losses as the herd consumed stored paddy and damaged the fields. The herd has sneaked in from Chhattisgarh. The elephant menace coupled with the fear of coronavirus, the villagers are finding it difficult to deal with the situation. Friday evening, the elephant herd was spotted near Kankerjura and Kulaba villages. Forest department officials along with a few volunteers from these villages were able to successfully drive the herd into Kukirdih forest.

# Farmers fret as paddy plants rot in floodwater in Jajpur



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bari, Sept 12:** This year's flood has left a trail of destruction in farmlands of Bari block in Jajpur district as ready-to-harvest crops in thousands of acres were damaged.

Since floodwater remained in the paddy fields for more than 15 days, shad (winter paddy) and biali (autumn paddy) varieties of the crop remained submerged for several days. As a result, the harvest has been lost, leaving the farmers a worried lot.

Besides the paddy cultivators,

farmers who earn their livelihood by growing vegetables, sugarcane and betel vine too have been left nowhere as the flood damaged their crops as well.

On the other hand, the flood-affected people are yet to receive any relief from the government. According to them, the waters of three rivers — Brahmani, Kharasrota and Dudhei — were flowing through as many as ten breaches, washing away portions of Shukala-Mahakalpara, Gokunda-Ratnagiri, Golakunda-Indupur, Bari-Balibili, Banababaji-Kaipada

and Bari-Kalimatia PHD roads.

Till date, the villagers of the affected villages have not received any relief material. The worst affected villages are Angalo, Madhusudanpur, Bhanra, Bodua, Mahakalpara and Udayanathpur in the block. At the same time, communication on the main road connecting Ratalang panchayat has come to a halt as the road is severely damaged due to the flood.

The villagers are now living with another fear — fear of being infected by the novel coronavirus as it has been not possible on their part to follow Covid-19 guidelines during this post-flood situation.

With the floodwater still stagnant at some places, people are forced to live in polluted surroundings.

Locals urged the administration to repair roads and deliver health-care facilities in the affected areas. But little has been done so far.

# YOGA FOR HEALTH



People take part in a yoga camp at Matapaka panchayat of Malkangiri district

OP PHOTO

# Two youths critically injured in road mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, Sept 12:** Two youths riding a motorbike were critically injured in an abrupt series of accidents that occurred on an over bridge near Tamulia in Balasure district Saturday.

The identities of the injured youths are yet to be ascertained. They were rescued by local people and admitted to Balasure district headquarters hospital (DHH).

A dumper was crossing the over bridge, the driver lost control and it hit a car before colliding with a truck. The bikers then abruptly hit the truck and sustained severe injuries as their bike caught fire after the collision. Police and fire personnel doused the flame.

Police seized the dumper. The dumper driver is said to be absconding. A hunt has been launched to nab him, it was learnt.

# Villagers kill wild boar

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kendrapara, Sept 12:** A wild boar was hacked to death by residents of a village in Kendrapara district after it attacked two persons, an official said.

The incident took place at Barakanda village under Mahakalpara forest range.

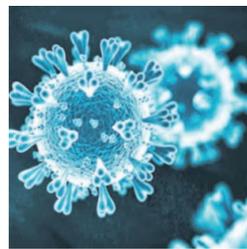
"The animal had entered into cropland and had attacked two locals. They were hospitalised and are currently out of danger. The villagers later had beaten it to death Thursday," said Mahakalpara forest range officer, Sahaji Charan Biswal. The locals, after killing the boar, were about to take away the animal's meat when the Forest department personnel, acting on a tip-off, seized the meat, he said.

# 12L screened under Oxygen checking drive in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Chhatrapur, Sept 12:** During the five days since the 'Oxygen Checking Campaign' was launched in Ganjam district 12,35,740 persons have been screened till September 11.

Informing about the progress of the campaign in a tweet, Ganjam district Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange Saturday said that as many as 4,19,067 persons were screened September 11 alone. So far 312 persons have been under medical supervision and 99 have



been reported as having very low SPO2. Ganjam district administration says that the campaign

will make a difference in early detection of symptomatic Covid-19 cases and awareness generation. The campaign will end September 14.

Notably, the district Saturday reported 58 fresh Covid-19 cases, taking the district's total tally to 19,125. Of them, 18,361 patients have recovered from the disease and 542 are undergoing treatment.

The pandemic disease has so far claimed 214 lives in the district while eight patients have so far died due to reasons other than Covid-19.

# Docs, nurses Covid positive, Bargarh DHH shut

**BARGARH:** All services at Bargarh District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) here have been suspended after some doctors and nurses tested positive for Covid-19 in last 24 hours. Services have been suspended from Friday for three days and patients asked not to visit the facility.

"We have suspended all services at the hospital in order to contain further spread of the virus. The fire brigade team is sanitising the hospital premises. Doctors, nurses and other healthcare staff who have come in contact with infected

persons have been asked to undergo home quarantine," Bargarh Chief District Medical Officer Dr Arun Kumar Patra said.

The CDMO also said that contact tracing is on and the swab samples of the hospital staff will be sent for Covid-19 tests during their home quarantine period. Patients who were undergoing treatment at Bargarh DHH have been shifted to VIMSAR College and Hospital in Burla and Old Hospital in Bargarh, informed Patra. 97 new Covid-19 cases were reported in last 24 hours, taking the tally to 4,038.

# Another Covid hospital to come up at Balasore

POST NEWS NETWORK

**BALASORE:** Against the backdrop of rising Covid-19 cases in the state, the government is planning to establish another Covid-19 hospital in Balasore district.

Chief Secretary Asit Kumar Tripathy, who along with Additional Chief Secretary Pradeep Kumar Mohanty and Dr CBK Mohanty, visited

Balasore and reviewed the Covid-19 management in the district here.

After the meeting, Tripathy informed that the new dedicated Covid-19 hospital will have 100 beds with ICU and OT facilities. There is already a 100-bed hospital in Balasore.

Tripathy also informed that ten more

nurses will be deputed at Jyoti Hospital to address the staff crunch.

The Chief Secretary further said a public awareness campaign will be launched. More than 200 paramedic employees will participate in the campaign. The trio also visited the district headquarters hospital (DHH). The district re-

ported 209 fresh Covid-19 cases till Friday. With this, the district's tally has gone up to 4,913. Of these, 3,763 patients have recovered from the disease and 1,131 are undergoing treatment. While 14 patients have so far succumbed to the pandemic disease in the district, five have died due to reasons other than Covid-19.

# Daringbadi woman scripts success in farming

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Daringbadi, Sept 12:** Undeterred by adversities and moving ahead to achieve something with determination and sustained efforts is what 28-year old Mita Pradhan believes.

Mita, a resident of Sudarpada under Daringbadi block of Kandhamal, established herself as a leading woman farmer in the area with her sheer determination. She has broken the stereotypes in the farming in this tribal-dominated region.

Life was normal for her till 2018 as her husband was shouldering all the responsibilities of the family. In the same year, fate

took a different turn when her husband Milan Pradhan passed away.

Mita has two children. After losing husband, she was plunged into mental distress, but did not lose her courage to survive for her two kids.

At this critical juncture, two organizations — Antaranga Yubak Sangh and Jagruti came forward with some financial help to enable her to start farming.

Since then she has been cultivating all kinds of crops depending on the seasons and manages to lead her life.

She is now focusing on cabbage and groundnut farming that earns her enough to feed the family.



After receiving training in organic farming, Mita has adopted this method of cultivation. "I was helped by Angarang Club

and Jagruti," she said. In coming days, she aims to expand and diversify the farming. "I plan to cultivate

# STEELY WILL

▶ Mita, a resident of Sudarpada under Daringbadi block of Kandhamal, established herself as a leading woman farmer in the area with her sheer determination

▶ After losing husband, she was plunged into mental distress, but did not lose her courage to bring up her two kids

vegetables," he added.

The block coordinator of the Antaranga Youth Club said that Mita was recently given Covid help and provided farming consultancy.

Kailash Dandapat, secretary of Jagruti, said that Mita has set an example for others. Some other women farmers have also started cultivating millets, turmeric, cashew, red gram, black gram, castor and soya.

They are encouraged and empowered to be self-sufficient by taking up organic farming in this region, he added.

Farmers are taught about protecting biodiversity and ensuring food security and fair price for their produce.

**AFFIDAVIT**

Before the Notary Public,  
Chikiti, Dist: Ganjam  
SI.No: A-1364, Dt: 07.09.2020  
I, Mrs Ashalata pradhan (26 years), W/o. Shambhu Shankar Pradhan, resident of village/Po: Badapur, P.S. Jarada in the district of Ganjam do hereby solemnly affirm and state on oath as follows:  
That I ma permanent resident of village Badapur which comes under Patrapur Tahasil. That I intend to create a charge (Equitable Mortgage), on basis of laminated original title deeds of Khata No. 179/1679, Plot No.1345/4852 under Shanivarpentha Mouza in Chikiti Tahasil, Ganjam.  
Theat in case any party has any claim towards the said relevant property(ies), the same should be lodged with me and also with the above stated Branch of Stated Branch of State Bank of India, within 15 days from publication of this news papers i.e. Anupam Bharati/The New Indian Express. That this affidavit is to be produced before the appropriate authority. Hence this affidavit. That the facts stated above are true the best of my knowledge.  
**Asha Lata Pradhan**

It is only when we are not disturbed that we can always do the right thing at the right time in the right way.

THE MOTHER



# Sullyng past for follies of present

India's Foreign Minister comes from a family of scholars. His father, K Subrahmanyam was the founder of the famous think tank IDSA in Delhi and advised Indira Gandhi. On the weaponising of India's nuclear programme and on military intervention in Bangladesh, Subrahmanyam had a hand.

Subrahmanyam's son Sanjay, Jaishankar's brother, is one of the world's most famous scholars of medieval India. He has written books on commerce in Surat (my home town) and South India as well as on Vasco Da Gama. My point is that Dr (he is a PhD himself) S Jaishankar has a background which is not the same as our other ministers. Jaishankar has recent a book released a few days ago that said three things had negatively affected India's foreign policy. The first was the partition, which reduced the size of India and gave China even more importance than it was. The second was the delay in the economic reforms of 1991, which had they come earlier would have made India a wealthier nation earlier than it will become. And third the delay in choosing to make atomic weapons. He called them the three burdens. What should we make of what he is saying? We need to examine two separate things, first to see to what extent what he says is true.

India's partition did reduce the size of the country and if India had not been partitioned, the undivided nation would be larger geographically, stretching from Burma to Iran and with a population of 1.7 billion people. It would not be particularly different in terms of its economy, per capita income, productivity or any other way. South Asia has developed together, none of the three countries which were part of British India have either become a developed country. A visit to Pakistan and Bangladesh reveals them to be no different than most parts of India. The second issue is the delay in economic reforms. This is not Jaishankar's subject because he is not an economist. So we must be cautious when we accept what he is saying as true. The Indian economy of Nehru's time had little capacity. State capital was needed as an element, especially in heavy industry. And without the state, the institutions we take for granted, for example in higher education, would not have come at all. Whatever bhajans we may sing to privatisation there is no private equivalent of the IITs or the IIMs even today in the country. This is not to say that the license raj of Indira was a good thing. It was not. The best we can offer Jaishankar's statement on the delay in reforms is a qualified yes, not a full endorsement.

The third is the exercise of the nuclear option, which happened in May, 1974. India makes a big deal of having an atom bomb. It is not such a big deal. Many nations in South America, Europe, Asia and Africa had the capacity to make one but choose not to. The other thing is that India violated its foreign commitments to make the bomb. The reactors producing the material used in our bombs came from Canada whom we had promised that we would only use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes (this is why Indira Gandhi made the claim that the 1974 was a "peaceful explosion"). We have held these weapons for 45 years now. How have they helped us? We cannot use them against Pakistan which for 30 years we have accused of terrorism. We cannot use them against China which is today inside our borders. It is debatable that the early weaponising of our programme could have helped us in any way.

Jaishankar calls these three things 'burdens' and he lays them at the Congress' door. Let us see what his party has done and is doing. India may have been partitioned but its Pakistan and Bangladesh are still next to us. They have not been relocated to Africa. What stops India from unifying the subcontinent through trade or travel? It is our nationalism. We have free movement (without visas) with Nepal but not with Bangladesh. Why? We could unify South Asia with visa free travel and trade if we chose to. The BJP does not want it.

The assumption Jaishankar makes about liberalisation automatically producing economic growth is false. Under the BJP, India's economic growth has been declining since January 2018 according to its own figures. That is two and a half straight years of decline in six years of government. This did not happen during socialism or license raj. This year we will see a contraction of the economy. Mere liberalisation does not mean economic growth. What Jaishankar says in his three points is reductive and simplistic. The past does not matter that much. If we think that it does it is because we are not good enough at running the nation competently today and are searching for excuses. If Jaishankar's diagnosis is correct, what stops him from correcting it today? His book does not say that. Perhaps that will come in a future book.



Aakar Patel

The past does not matter that much. If we think that it does it is because we are not good enough at running the nation competently today and are searching for excuses



Jayati Ghosh

AS WITH ALL CROSS-COUNTRY COMPARISONS, FOLLOWERS OF DOING BUSINESS FOCUS ON A COUNTRY'S RANK RATHER THAN THE VALUE OF THE INDEX, AND THE STANDINGS GENERATE HUGE MEDIA COVERAGE EVERY YEAR

The World Bank's Doing Business index has been both conceptually and operationally suspect since its inception in 2003, but mainstream economists have only recently started to criticise it. Although the Bank's own recent acknowledgement of some of the problems is welcome, the index has already caused huge damage to developing countries, and it should be scrapped.

The Bank has already been forced to suspend publication of the index, owing to 'irregularities' in its data. The latest brouhaha concerns straightforward number fudging. Apparently, data from four countries - Azerbaijan, China, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates - were inappropriately altered, at least for 2017 and 2019 (thus affecting the 2018 and 2020 Doing Business reports). Other irregularities may have occurred, too. The Bank has begun a 'systematic review' of the last five years of data, launched an independent audit of the process, and pledged to correct the most-affected countries' data.

But this is a minor issue compared to all the other concerns with the index. Paul Romer, then the Bank's chief economist, highlighted some of these in a stinging 2018 criticism of the tool. According to Romer, most of the changes in country rankings over the previous four years had resulted from repeated methodological changes that gave more weight to national governments' political orientation. Specifically, Romer said that data for Chile appeared to have been manipulated to show that the country's business environment had deteriorated under a left-wing government. Chile's overall ranking fluctuated between 25th and 57th between 2006 and 2017, when the country's presidency alternated between the socialist Michelle Bachelet and the conservative Sebastian Piñera.

Under Bachelet, Chile's ranking consistently worsened, while it consistently climbed under Piñera. Romer even offered "a personal apology to Chile, and to any other country where we conveyed the wrong impression." He implied that the Bank had manipulated the country's rankings for political reasons, but was later forced to retract that allegation, and resigned from his position two weeks later.



Polymakers have sometimes resorted to desperate (and effective) measures to game the system. Most notoriously, the Indian government tweaked regulations in order to improve the country's index score, enabling India to rise dramatically in the rankings, from 142nd in 2015 to 63rd in 2020

Justin Sandefur and Divyanshi Wadhwa of the Center for Global Development compared the official Doing Business rankings with their own re-created rankings from 2006 to 2018, based on a constant sample of countries and a consistent methodology. They found that the decline in Chile's ranking during the Bachelet presidencies and its rise when Piñera was in office resulted entirely from methodological tinkering. Chile's laws and policies barely changed.

As with all cross-country comparisons, followers of Doing Business focus on a country's rank rather than the value of the index, and the standings generate huge media coverage every year. Even academic researchers have (wrongly) used the rankings as indicators of government support for private investment. As a result, governments vie to improve their country's ranking in the hope of attracting more foreign investment and boosting their domestic credibility.

Polymakers have sometimes resorted to desperate (and effective) measures to game the system. Most notoriously, the Indian government tweaked regulations in order to improve the country's index score, enabling India to rise dramatically in the rankings, from 142nd in 2015 to 63rd in 2020. But again, India's rise stemmed largely from methodological adjustments, as well as ranking changes caused by small differences in scores across similar countries. Ironically, India's ranking improved even as its investment rate (as a share of GDP) declined continuously, from 40 per cent in 2010 to around 30 per cent in 2019.

How could the Doing Business index be so off the mark in these two cases? True, strong conflicts of interest can potentially arise when the Bank calculates the index, whether because of its staff's ideological inclinations or the need to placate big, financially important countries. But the index's biggest problem is that its design is fundamentally flawed.

The index is supposed to measure a country's overall business environment, but it really covers only government regulation (ex-

cludes taxes as share of gross profit). It leaves out some regulations that affect businesses, such as financial, environmental, and intellectual-property rules. More important, the index does not measure all aspects of the business environment that matter to companies or investors, including macroeconomic conditions and policies, employment, crime, corruption, political stability, consumption, inequality and poverty.

Moreover, the index focuses entirely on the 'ease' of doing business and the costs of regulation for companies. It gives no consideration to the benefits of these regulations and whether they create a better overall business environment. Likewise, Doing Business regards taxes only as a cost, and not as a source of revenue that can be used to deliver important economic benefits such as modern infrastructure and an educated workforce.

The overall thrust of Doing Business is thus anti-regulatory: the fewer regulations a country has, the better it performs on the index. The inclusion of the tax rate in the underlying indicators is so egregious that two independent evaluations commissioned by the World Bank suggested leaving it out.

As Isabel Ortiz and Leo Baumach have noted, the index effectively "undermines social progress and promotes inequality." That is because it "has encouraged countries to take part in the 'deregulation experience' including reductions in employment protection, lower social security contributions (denominated as 'labour tax'), and lesser corporate taxation."

Ortiz and Baumach are correct to argue that it is time to stop publishing Doing Business. And the World Bank owes the developing world a debt of contrition for all the harm this misleading and problematic tool has already caused.

The writer is Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM SOCIETY

# The insidious in the pandemic

The coronavirus continues to spread, by now afflicting all continents except Antarctica. Humanity at this moment is in a state of utter shock, disbelief, fear and consequent panic!

This is where the adverse side-effects of Covid-19 reveal themselves, whereby what is not and should not be normal is accepted to be so by a fearful mankind.

The most insidious of these side-effects, perhaps even more of concern to mankind than the economic downturn, is the enormous power suddenly vested upon the State by the affliction, whereby the needs of the "individual," including her or his liberty, have been subsumed by the needs of "society," its safety and wellbeing. Such subsuming, of course, is considered to be "normal" in an authoritarian regime like China. If China could attempt to contain the epidemic within Wuhan, from which the virus is thought to have originated, placing its 11 million citizens in quarantine, and also imposing lockdown in cities in the Hubei Province, thereby cutting more than 50 million of its people off from the rest of the world, it had been because the Chinese people have long been conditioned to accept the unquestionable power of the State and unhesitatingly obey whatever directive it imposed. Not surprisingly, in the absence

of alternatives, the liberal nations of the Western world, as also vibrant democracies amongst developing nations like India, have had to take up the Chinese model of containment, and impose lockdowns upon their citizens. In order to do so, most of them have had to decree stringent directives which violate the basic rights of citizens. People's movements restricted, professional activities stopped and sources of livelihood taken away by the State.

The irony is that such violation of civil liberties is actually of exigent requirement at this moment if mankind is to get the better of this deadly virus and save lives. Equally ironic is the fact that the course adopted by the State in most democracies has the sanction of scientists and the medical fraternity.

Obviously, directives for people to stay at home will not directly prevent deaths; what these are designed to do is to slow the rate of infection, thereby ensuring that health-systems are not overwhelmed by sheer number of cases and authorities can keep a grip on the therapeutic handling of the pandemic. In ensuring that people are kept at homes, the governments of democracies have adopted the same autocratic methodology that China had, thereby removing the broad line which divides the two. Yet it would be a foolhardy civil

rights activist who will question the legitimacy of the formers' actions, given that these are necessary to protect the lives of people. Neither would any rational individual question the right of global leadership to assume the "Big Brother" mantle or attempt to create an Orwellian, dystopian world.

Little wonder that, in the context of the pandemic, the steps a country like South Korea had taken, are not only being lauded, but also being presented as an ideal modus operandi. The moment the danger of a pandemic had loomed on the horizon, that nation had put into place a strict identification, monitoring and tracing mechanism whereby the movements of each of its citizens could be tracked, something akin to what China had done. In other words, the argument for surveillance and monitoring of individuals in society, thereby breaking the canons of right to privacy, has been legitimatised. Yet, given that South Korea has not only succeeded to a great extent in controlling the pandemic, but also kept its fatalities comparatively low, the necessity of such measures have been underlined! A similar psychology is behind the reality that all of a sudden in a nation like India highhanded behaviour by the police has won a nod of approval from a panic-stricken mid-

dle-class which, in another environment, might have unleashed a chorus of abhorrence. Ever since the imposition of the lockdown and also later the initiation of relaxation measures, the electronic media in the country has been filled with visuals of the police taking the law into their own hands, beating lockdown "violators" or making them perform sit ups with their hands clutching their ears. No matter that such actions do not follow the due process of law and erase the distinction between a democracy and a dictatorship, the shrill exclamations of approval from television anchors perhaps reflect the approval society has greeted them with!

Yes, these are abnormal times which require abnormal measures. Unfortunately, as Bill Gates has reminded us, the current pandemic is an "era defining event" whose effect would last for years to come. Thus the danger is very real that the insidious empowerment of the State because of Covid-19 would remain operative for a long time, and one can only hope and pray that "the new normal" does not convert into "the forever normal!"

The writer, a Padma Shri recipient, is a prominent social historian based in Guwahati.

THE BILLION PRESS

## WISDOM CORNER

- The words of truth are always paradoxical. LAO TZU
- The price of freedom is eternal vigilance. DESMOND TUTU
- Courage is grace under pressure. ERNEST HEMINGWAY

## WORDSWORTH

### Titubation

This word is mostly in medical use, to describe some abnormal way of walking or of holding oneself, usually as a symptom of a cerebral or spinal disease. This tremor was interesting not only because it involved his hands and his head, so-called titubation, but because it soon became apparent that when the politician had to concentrate or felt uneasy, the nodding head was momentarily stilled. (The Times, 21 Jan. 1983). It comes directly from the Latin verb titubare, which could mean "stutter" as well as "stumble", and this former meaning occasionally surfaced in English, though it is long since obsolete. Outside medicine, titubation has been used facetiously to refer to unsteadiness brought on by too much of the demon drink, though this wasn't the implication in the report in The Times.

## LOL

### Story of four people

This is the story of four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was asked to do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about that, because it was



Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. Consequently, it wound up that Nobody told Anybody, so Everybody blamed Somebody.

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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

### Students and 21st Century skills

Sir, On September 11, Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the Conclave on "School Education in 21st Century" under the NEP 2020 through video conference. He stressed the importance of advancing our students with 21st century skills. He listed out the 21st century skills - critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, curiosity, and communication. Now students are unable to go to schools due to the pandemic. Parents are worried, perturbed about the education and career prospects of their children. In such uncertain times, nobody is in a position to think about new educational policies. Had the PM spoken about how children can go to schools, colleges, and appear for examinations without any fear of contracting the coronavirus, it would have been better. He should have spoken how educational institutions can function smoothly during the pandemic. Many students are likely to discontinue their studies and work as child labour as their parents have lost their jobs. Now any critical thinking, creativity, curiosity that finds faults with the ruling classes are rarely appreciated. Dissent, different views are suppressed, hatred is created against dissenters, and scientific tempers are destroyed. Debates and discussions on government policies, performances are rarely done. Even participants are discouraged to speak against government policies. Manisha Mohapatra, CUTTACK

### BJP in awkward situation

Sir, Some politicians forget that their off the cuff comments no longer allure citizens who have ceased to be amused by the balderdash of politicians especially the less prominent ones. Delhi BJP chief Adesh Kumar Gupta put the party in an awkward situation when he recently invited social activist and anti-corruption crusader Anna Hazare to join the 'mass movement' of the Delhi BJP against the 'corrupt ways' of the ruling AAP. Those who know Anna will vouch for his no-nonsense approach to politics and political leaders. His integrity, too, cannot be questioned. That Anna is disillusioned with the ruling NDA government is quite obvious in his 'thank you' letter to Adesh Gupta. He has lamented how the BJP-led government has gone back on its 'promise' to eradicate corruption in the country. The social activist is right in saying that with all investigative agencies at its disposal, the Narendra Modi government could have initiated action against the corrupt elements in the AAP government. Six years have passed since the NDA government assumed office, but it has done nothing visible to check corruption. Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA



## 'Say no to NEET' chorus grows louder as another aspirant ends life in TN



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Madurai, Sept 12:** A 19-year-old medical aspirant died of alleged suicide here Saturday, apparently 'apprehensive' over the National Entrance cum Eligibility Test (NEET), police said.

The victim, Jothisri Durga, daughter of a police Sub-Inspector, was found hanging at her residence and a purported suicide note left behind by her said she was 'apprehensive' about NEET though others had high 'hopes' on her, they said.

The death, which comes days after another medical aspirant in Ariyalur in the state also allegedly committed suicide, drew sharp responses from Tamil Nadu political parties opposed to NEET, even as Chief Minister K Palaniswami and his deputy O Panneerselvam of the ruling AIADMK expressed shock over the incident.

DMK President MK Stalin said NEET "is not an exam at all."

Taking to Twitter, Palaniswami expressed grief over the 'sad' incident and said students have many avenues to taste success and resorting to such extreme steps was distressing.

"It is distressing to see students, the hope for the future, taking such steps," he said. Condoling the girl's death, he expressed his sympathies with the family.

In a tweet, Panneerselvam expressed grief over such incidents concerning the students, who are the "pillars of the future."

"Students should learn to face any situation with guts and parents should aid them in this," the deputy CM, also the AIADMK coordinator, said.

State Revenue Minister R B Udhayakumar visited the family and consoled them.

Stalin, Leader of the Opposition in the Tamil Nadu Assembly, expressed shock over the alleged suicide, but said killing oneself was not the solution.

"We can realise from the death of Anitha (a medical aspirant who died of suicide in 2017) to Jothisri Durga that NEET is severely affecting students," he said in a tweet.

"I repeat, suicide is not a solution: NEET is not an exam at all. #BanNeet\_SaveTNSStudents," he added. In a separate statement,

he appealed to students not to resort to such extreme steps, asserting that success has to be achieved through struggle.

Training his guns on the Centre and the state government, he said "the student community is falling prey to the fire called NEET fuelled by them."

Assuring his party's support to the students on the issue, he said the DMK was prepared to take forward any legal or political struggle against NEET.

Meanwhile, DMK Youth Wing Secretary and Stalin's son, Udhayanidhi visited the family and provided an assistance of Rs five lakh.

PMK MP Dr Anbumani Ramadoss, whose party is an NDA constituent, condoled the student's death and expressed his sympathies with her family.

"#SayNoToNEET #BanNEET," the PMK Youth Wing leader tweeted. His father and party founder Dr S Ramadoss also called for scrapping the exam.

MDMK founder and Rajya Sabha MP Vaiko slammed the BJP-led Centre, saying suicides of students in the state was happening due to the "imposition" of NEET on them.

Recalling various instances of suicides by students in Tamil Nadu, including that of Anitha, which had sparked an outrage in the state, Vaiko alleged that despite their high class XII scores, students from the poorer sections were 'filtered' in NEET and their medical dreams 'destroyed.'

"Cancellation of NEET alone can prevent such deaths," he said in a statement.

Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam leader and independent legislator, TTV Dhinakaran and Makkal Needhi Maiam founder Kamal Haasan also expressed anguish over Durga's death.

Wednesday, the Supreme Court had refused to entertain a batch of pleas seeking deferment or cancellation of NEET scheduled for Sunday.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan had said that authorities will take all necessary steps for conducting the NEET undergraduate exam amid the COVID-19 pandemic for admission in medical courses.

**We can realise from the death of Anitha (a medical aspirant who died of suicide in 2017) to Jothisri Durga that NEET is severely affecting students**

MK STALIN | LEADER OF OPPOSITION

## Time to announce political solution: Naga groups

*It said that the central government has "acknowledged the fact that Naga tribes and civil societies had spelt out their positions over the political issue"*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kohima, Sept 12:** A closed-door meeting was held between R N Ravi, Centre's interlocutor for Naga peace talks, and representatives of Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs), during which all stakeholders have agreed that the "defining hour" for announcing an honourable solution to the vexed issue was soon approaching, a statement here said.

The "waiting period is over," and the Centre is taking necessary steps for arriving at a solution that is acceptable to all, the statement by the media cell of NNPGs working committee said, following the meeting at Dimapur Friday.

Ravi, who is also the Governor of Nagaland, was not available for comments, but the statement said that he has given an assurance that the Centre is "taking forward the decision of the Naga groups October 31, 2019". It also said that the central government has "acknowledged the fact that Naga tribes and civil societies had spelt out their positions over the political issue".

Hectic parleys were held in October last year between the Naga groups and Ravi, following which the two sides said that talks have "concluded".

"The Naga issue must be settled and the waiting period is over... The government is preparing necessary steps," the media release stated, calling for Naga unity.

"WC NNPGs cordial engagement with neighbouring communities was appreciated by the Centre because any outcome will affect all in



with neighbouring communities was appreciated by the Centre because any outcome will affect all in the neighbourhood..." the working committee of the NNPGs said.

Both the Centre and the Naga people wish to arrive at one solution, and the "government will not wait for any one anymore", the statement said.

"WC NNPGs have disclosed the status papers of the negotiations to the Naga tribes, elected representatives, past and present, Naga civil societies and church leaders. This has created a positive impact as it has proven to be the only practical approach to resolve the Naga political issue. The solution is a Naga solution. It is going to be a people's solution," the media cell release added.

## HOMeward WALK



Women belonging to tea tribe community walk towards their homes after the day's work during Unlock.4 at Baghjan in Tinsukia district, Assam.

## AASU, AJYCP want roadmap for new party before Sept 15



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Guwahati, Sept 12:** The All Assam Students Union (AASU) and the Asom Jatiyatadabi Yuba Chatra Parishad (AJYCP) have urged the two convenors of a panel of eminent citizens to come out with a roadmap for the formation of a political party on or before September 15.

The AASU and the AJYCP had set up the "Assam Advisory Committee" August 19 and the panel has suggested that the two influential organisations of the state float a political party to contest assembly elections due next year, according to sources.

The new regional party will be formally launched after the con-

venors prepare the roadmap for its formation and submit the details, AJYCP Chief Convenor Palash Changmai said in a press meet organised jointly with the AASU.

The new party will focus on providing a clean government to the people and upholding the dignity and development of various communities of the state, Changmai said. AASU president Dipanka Kumar Nath said that the two organisations will never directly involve with any political parties and will maintain their non-political character.

To a query, he said that the new party will welcome like-minded individuals and organisations from ethnic communities that share similar interest and objectives.

AASU general secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi said that implementation of the Assam Accord, 1985 will be the key agenda of the new party which will maintain the "Assam first; and will forever" policy.

The election to the 126-member Assam assembly is likely to be held in March-April next year. The 2016 elections gave a fractured mandate and no party has an absolute majority in the current House.

## Coronavirus situation worsens, Tripura HC asks govt for details

*Tripura's mortality and recovery rates are 1.02 per cent and 60.27 per cent, respectively, the worst among the northeastern states*

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**Agartala, Sept 12:** In view of the deteriorating Covid-19 situation, the Tripura High Court Friday asked the state government to file a detailed affidavit by September 18 about the entire situation and treatment facilities.

In a suo motu case, a division bench comprising Chief Justice Akil Kureshi and Justice Subhashish Talapatra asked the state government to furnish answers to eight points, including the details of fund allocation at different government hospitals treating coronavirus patients.

"We are sure the government would address the concerns of the general public as are projected by the print media and take such measures as are necessary to improve the condition in government treatment centres."

It is a matter of public knowledge that the number of coronavirus cases in the state is steadily increasing and has reached a high figure. The number of deaths related to coronavirus is also on the rise. Recent newspaper reports have reported the plight of the patients and relatives of those who have been tested positive for the virus. Certain shortcomings in public health care system are projected," the HC order said.

Till Friday night, Tripura reported 17,833 Covid-19 cases, of which 10,734 persons have recovered while 182 people have succumbed since June 9, when the first death was reported.

Tripura's mortality and recovery rates are 1.02 per cent and 60.27 per cent, respectively, the worst among the eight northeastern states.

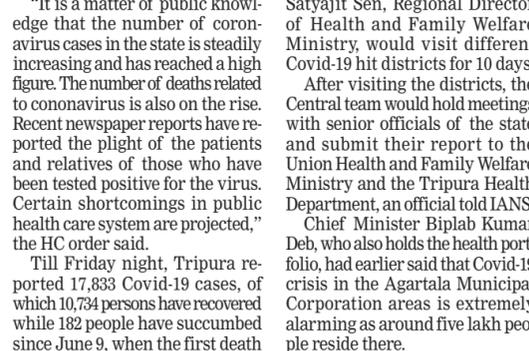
At least 91 deaths and 6,571 cases have been reported from West Tripura district alone, under which capital Agartala falls.

In view of the worsening situation, a three-member team of Central experts arrived in the state on Thursday on a 10-day visit to study the situation and suggest measures to control spread of the disease.

Officials of the Health and Family Welfare Department said that three experts, Daisy Panna, Consultant Epidemiologist, National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), P.K. Verma, Assistant Professor, Respiratory Medicine, Lady Hardinge Memorial College (LHMC) and Satyajit Sen, Regional Director of Health and Family Welfare Ministry, would visit different Covid-19 hit districts for 10 days.

After visiting the districts, the Central team would hold meetings with senior officials of the state and submit their report to the Union Health and Family Welfare Ministry and the Tripura Health Department, an official told IANS.

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb, who also holds the health portfolio, had earlier said that Covid-19 crisis in the Agartala Municipal Corporation areas is extremely alarming as around five lakh people reside there.



## Endemic species sighted during lockdown

*At least 80 bird species in June and about 83 in July were spotted in the Pallikaranai Marsh, the last remaining wetland in Chennai, which also attracts migratory birds*

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Sept 12:** The lockdown forced people to largely remain within the confines of their homes, but it was life as usual for birds and a good number of them were sighted by bird watchers here and in other parts of Tamil Nadu.

At least 80 bird species in June and about 83 in July were spotted in the Pallikaranai Marsh, the last remaining wetland in the city, which also attracts migratory birds, according to the Tamil Nadu Forest department.

"The Greater Flamingo was the seasonal migratory bird here. The marshland is the home for about 8,300 birds," a senior official told PTI.

Apart from breeding residents, the biodiversity rich area attracts a good number of winter visitors. The migratory bird season at



Pallikaranai usually begins with the onset of the North East monsoon in October. Some of the resident bird species include Purple Swampphen, Common Moorhen, Pheasant-tailed Jacana, Purple Heron, Black-Winged Stilt, Common Coot, Indian Spot-Billed Duck, Spot-Billed Pelican, and Pied Kingfisher.

Asian Koel, Cattle Egret, Red-vented Bulbul, common Myna and Yellow billed Babbler were among the birds spotted in Salem.

With a steep decline in noise pollution and industrial and other human activities coming to a halt, the call or song of birds fill our ears, said wildlife activist K Mohan Raj.

"But the sky, the air, the birds are always there. We are experiencing them anew as we are staying at home. It is not that the birds have suddenly surfaced because of the lockdown," he said.

"Had we kept our eyes and ears alert, we would have spotted the resident birds on normal days," says N Subramaniam, an avid bird watcher.

"All the birds that have been spotted in towns and villages were always there, but we failed to see

them due to our fast-paced life," Raj said.

S Venkatesh, a naturalist and member of the SOF, said the foundation managed to keep its members engaged during the lockdown by requesting them to sight the birds even from their backyards and record them.

"With the lockdown imposing numerous restrictions we could not venture out. So, we were asked to spot the birds from our windows, gardens and villages. Since our members were spread across the rural areas of Salem district we were able to notice and record 81 endemic species on World Endemic Day (in May)," he said.

The foundation had even introduced Lockdown Nature Writing Challenges to encourage the habit of nature writing and also to keep boredom and stress at bay.

## Over 1 lakh cancer patients treated since March in TN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Chennai, Sept 12:** The Tamil Nadu government has helped provide cancer-related medical treatment to over 1.30 lakh people in government hospitals and government medical college hospitals across the state since March, Health Minister Dr C Vijaya Baskar said Saturday.

Also, about 250 cancer patients, who had tested positive for COVID-19, were treated, he said.

Of the total 1,31,352 cancer patients who were provided treatment till date, 48,647 were admitted to hospitals.

In a press release here, the Minister said efforts were being taken to provide uninterrupted medical care to cancer patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As many as 2,191 patients underwent surgery, including for breast cancer.



While 27,721 people underwent chemotherapy, 11,678 took radiation therapy, and 6,664 received treatment through pain and palliative care units.

The state government's 102 vehicle service was utilised to shift patients from their homes to the hospitals and back after treatment during the COVID-19 lockdown.

"This has facilitated uninterrupted treatment for the patients during the lockdown period. About 1,396 patients benefited through the vehicle service from March till date," the Minister said.



Our floor leaders will speak to every party. They are already in touch and we will put up a joint opposition to the draconian ordinances of the Modi government aimed at subjugating the farming community and abolishing the livelihood of crores of people who are aligned with the grain markets and other market systems

RANDEEP SURJEWALA | CONGRESS LEADER

## DOORSTEP DELIVERY SCHEME RESUMES

Delhites can now avail the doorstep delivery of services such as those related to income certificates, driving license and new water connections, as the AAP government has restarted its ambitious scheme



## of the day quote

What Rahul Gandhi says is absolutely justified. The BJP had promised to give 2 crore jobs every year if it came to power at the Centre. On the contrary, crores of jobs have been lost in the past few months. Salary cuts are happening; China has entered our border areas in Ladakh; however, other issues are being discussed to divert public attention

The people of Pondicherry will teach the BJP a lesson in the forthcoming Assembly polls for sticking to its guns to hold the NEET

The Centre must sanction funds to the tune of Rs 736.74 crore for COVID-19 hospitals and care centres in the state

# Kangana flight chaos: DGCA warns airlines

THE ORDER STATED THAT AS PER RULE 13 OF THE AIRCRAFT RULES 1937, NO PERSON IS ALLOWED TO TAKE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS INSIDE A FLIGHT EXCEPT WHEN PERMISSION IS GRANTED BY THE DGCA OR THE CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Aviation regulator DGCA Saturday said a scheduled flight will be suspended for a period of two weeks if anyone is found taking photographs inside the plane.

This announcement comes a day after the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) asked IndiGo to take "appropriate action" after it found alleged violation of safety and social distancing protocols by mediapersons in the airline's Chandigarh-Mumbai flight that had actor Kangana Ranaut as a passenger.

According to a video of the incident that took place inside Wednesday's flight, reporters and cameramen were jostling and bunched up to get a comment from Ranaut, who was sitting in one of the front rows of the plane.

The DGCA order on Saturday

said, "It has been decided that from now on, in case any violation (photography) occurs on any scheduled passenger aircraft - the schedule of flight for that particular route shall be suspended for a period of two

weeks from the next day (of the incident)." The order was sent to all the domestic airlines in India. The order stated that as per Rule 13 of the Aircraft Rules 1937, no person is allowed to take any photographs inside a flight except when permission is granted by the DGCA or the Civil Aviation Ministry.

Therefore, the order said if any incident of photography takes place inside any flight, that scheduled flight will be suspended for a period of two weeks and it will be "restored only after the airline has taken all the necessary punitive action against those responsible for the violation".

As per the DGCA rules, an airline can put an "unruly passenger" on its "no-fly list" for a certain period of time after an internal enquiry. About the Chandigarh-Mumbai

flight incident, a DGCA official had on Friday said that the prominent issues with the incident were related to "photography on board in violation of Aircraft rules 13, violation of COVID-19 protocols and certain actions falling within the purview of unruly behaviour on board".

The Shiv Sena, which heads the alliance government in the state, and Ranaut had engaged in a war of words after she likened Mumbai to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and said she feared Mumbai Police more than alleged movie mafia. On Wednesday morning, a team of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) had demolished the alterations allegedly made without the civic body's approval at Ranaut's bungalow at Pali Hill in Mumbai. Ranaut arrived in Mumbai the same day after the demolition through the aforementioned IndiGo flight.

## Delhi airport sets up Covid testing facility

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Delhi airport Saturday started its on-arrival COVID-19 testing facility wherein an international passenger can pay Rs 5,000 to avail a RT-PCR test and also use the waiting lounge, said senior officials of its operator DIAL.

The Civil Aviation Ministry had on September 2 said that international passengers, who have to take connecting domestic flights after landing in India, will have the option of getting themselves tested for COVID-19 at the entry airports.

Passengers who opt for the test will have to wait in a specified lounge in the airport or a designated hotel in the city till their results come, the ministry noted.

## VENTING ANGER



Police detain Congress party workers during a protest against BJP government alleging irregularities in purchase of Covid-19 medical equipment, outside Vidhan Sabha in Lucknow, Saturday

# BSF TURNS SAVIOUR AT BANGLADESH BORDER

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Amid Covid-19 crisis that left many jobless across the world and led to spurt in human trafficking, the Border Security Force (BSF) at India-Bangladesh border turned 'saviour' for 17 people being trafficked to India with lucrative job offers.

The BSF rescued these people during 11 operations between June 19 and August 26. These Bangladeshis were held while either being trafficked from Bangladesh to India or vice-versa. The BSF during this period also nabbed two touts - one Indian and another Bangladeshi - and handed them over to the police from that respective state. They are the members of various active human trafficking gangs operating from both India and Bangladesh sides.

Of the 17 Bangladeshis rescued by the alert BSF troops near 4,096 km India-Bangladesh border, 10 were women, seven men and 2 children - including one female child. Eight of these Bangladeshis

were held while entering Indian Territory from Bangladesh while 11 were caught when they were going back to their country.

An Indian Home Ministry data revealed the details which were shared with its border management wing earlier this month by the BSF - a 2.65 lakh personnel strong force which is mandated to guard India-Pakistan borders as well as 3,323 km India-Pakistan borders. As per the secret border management details, which are submitted to the Home Ministry by the BSF on regular intervals, maximum of the illegal

Bangladeshi migrants were trafficked by touts through South Bengal frontier.

The paramilitary force has noticed some innovative methods to push the poor and vulnerable from across the border by luring them with job opportunities in cities like Kolkata, Guwahati, Bengaluru and some other towns in north-east India and as far as Delhi and Mumbai, a senior BSF official said.

# Bhushan seeks right to appeal

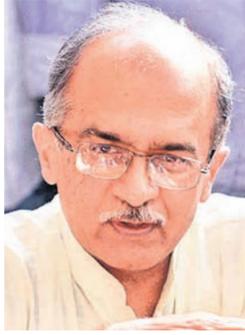
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan, convicted and awarded one rupee fine for his contemptuous tweets against the judiciary, on Saturday moved the Supreme Court seeking the right of appeal against convictions in original criminal contempt cases to be heard by a larger and a different bench.

Bhushan on August 31 was directed to deposit the fine with the Supreme Court registry by September 15 and failure to comply would entail a three-month jail term and debarment from law practice for three years.

In a fresh plea filed through lawyer Kamini Jaiswal, he has sought a declaration that a "person convicted for criminal contempt by this court, including the petitioner herein, would have a right to an intra-court appeal to be heard by a larger and different bench".

Bhushan, in the plea, suggested procedural changes to reduce the chances of "arbitrary, vengeful and high-handed decisions" in criminal contempt cases saying that in such cases the top court is the aggrieved party, the "prosecutor, the witness and the judge" and hence



they raise fear of inherent bias.

The petition said the right of appeal is a fundamental right guaranteed under the Constitution and is also guaranteed under international law and this would act as a "vital safeguard against wrongful conviction and would truly enable the provision of truth as a defence".

The plea, to which the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Registrar of the apex court have been made parties, has also sought a direction for framing rules and guidelines "providing for intra-court appeal against conviction in original criminal contempt cases".

# There will be 'flood' of pending cases: CJI

The CJI said he believes that this is the time when a lot of emphasis has to be placed on utilising mediation, pre-litigation and post-litigation mediation to resolve many matters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: Chief Justice of India S A Bobde Saturday said that the COVID-19 pandemic would present a "huge pendency of cases" in courts and a lot of emphasis has to be placed on utilising mediation for resolving many of these matters. The CJI also stressed on the need to focus on mental health and referred to the "uncomfortable prediction" that there might be a suicide pandemic following the COVID crisis.

"This COVID pandemic is going to present us with huge pendency of cases. I do not see any way out of it. We have to decide cases," the CJI said during a virtual event where he launched the book - 'Judiciary, Judges and the Administration of Justice' - authored by former top court judge Justice R Banumathi.

The CJI said he believes that this is the time when a lot of emphasis has to be placed on utilising mediation, pre-litigation and post-litigation mediation to resolve many matters.

"I am not suggesting every matter can be, but when the pandemic goes away and the lockdowns are all lifted, we are going to face a flood of cases which I do not know how we are going to decide if we go in the usual way of following the detailed procedure and this is something which we all have to put in our minds together to deal with," he said.

Addressing the gathering, Justice N V Ramana said judges are now being construed as soft targets for criticism and are becoming "victims of juicy gossip and slanderous social media posting".

Justice Ramana, the senior-most



judge of the apex court after the CJI, said that judges have to balance their social life in order to be independent. "It is completely upon the judge to maintain a distance. Judges themselves restrain from speaking in their own defence and they are now being construed as soft targets for criticism. This issue is further complicated by the proliferation of social media and technology. Judges are becoming victims of juicy gossip and slanderous social media posting," he said.

Raising the issue of mental health, the CJI said it requires serious attention as there is a very "uncomfortable prediction" about a suicide pandemic. "I don't believe and sincerely hope that it does not happen," he said, adding that pandemic has brought two things amongst people which is very troublesome - depressive tendency and unnecessary aggression.

"It is high time that we devote energy to mental health," he said, adding that the Supreme Court has taken an initiative to deal with the mental health issue and provide professional mental health advice, which the secretary general of the top court would soon announce.

## SHORT TAKES

### Seven get life term

CHANDIGARH: In an honour killing of a bride by her family in 2014, a sessions court in Haryana has sentenced seven people to life imprisonment. The convicts were relatives of Amandeep Kaur of Dharbi village in Sirsa district, who was married to her neighbour Manmeet Singh in August 2014 against the family wishes. Fearing threat to their lives, the couple had also sought the Punjab and Haryana High Court protection. After staying in a shelter home initially, the couple moved to Manmeet's house. In September, Amandeep was abducted by her family and her body was dumped at a village in Punjab.

### Two Army officers killed

JAIPUR: Two Indian Army officers were killed when the official vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident on the Bikaner-Jaipur highway early Saturday, confirmed Army officials. "Col Manish Singh Chauhan and Major Neeraj Sharma travelling in the vehicle suffered fatal injuries in the accident. The others injured have been evacuated to hospital," Col Sombit Ghosh, PRO Defence Rajasthan, said while informing about the 6 a.m. accident. Army officials said that the Army vehicle overturned on the highway after a tyre burst near Jodhesar village in Bikaner district.

### NCB conducts raids in Mumbai

MUMBAI: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Saturday conducted raids on drug traffickers at some locations in Mumbai, an official said. The Mumbai zone of the NCB conducted these raids based on specific information, the official said. However, these raids are not directly linked to the to the drugs Case pertaining to the death of film star Sushant Singh Rajput, which NCB's special investigation team (SIT) is probing, he said.

### Four drown

SINGRAULI (MP): Four minor boys drowned in Son river at Kudar Lamsara village in Madhya Pradesh's Singrauli district Saturday, police said. The incident took place when the victims, who had gone to bathe in the river, ventured into the deep water and were swept away by strong currents, inspector Santosh Tiwari of Garhwa police station said.

## 2 booked for 'selling' Yakub Memon grave

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

MUMBAI, Sept 12: Police have registered a case against two persons for allegedly selling the grave of Yakub Memon, the only convict in the 1993 Mumbai serial bomb blasts case to be hanged, an official said Saturday.

Memon was buried at Marine Lines Bada Kabrastan in south Mumbai on July 30, 2015 after he was hanged in Nagpur central jail. "A relative of Memon had approached the Lokmanya Tilak Marg police station in March with a complaint that his grave has been sold," the official said.

"The Memon family has been given total seven 'otthas' (graves) at the cemetery. The complaint said that besides Yakub's, three more graves given to the family were sold at Rs 5 lakh collectively," he said.

Based on the complaint, an offence under IPC sections 465 (forgery), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating) was registered against two persons on March 19 this year - one of them a trustee and another manager of Juma Masjid of Bombay Trust, under which the Muslim Bada Qabrastan is registered, he said.

# Digvijaya, Khurshid, Anwar -- the comeback men in Cong rejig

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

NEW DELHI, Sept 12: With the Congress effecting a major rejig ahead of internal polls for a new chief, political pundits feel the entire exercise is as much about stamping Rahul Gandhi's authority as it is about a careful balancing act done through the return of stalwarts like Digvijaya Singh, Salman Khurshid and Tariq Anwar along with cutting down to the size of several dissenting voices.

Political observers also feel these organisational changes may not quell the simmering dissent completely and it remains to be seen whether the country's grand-old party eventually heads for a split, as those having sought large-scale reforms have been craftily divided

- a few have been co-opted, some have been given time to make up their minds and the rest have been left out in the cold.

Several leaders and observers are of the opinion that some old-timers might have been brought back in the organisational fold to counter the 'Group of 23', who had written to interim president Sonia Gandhi seeking urgent organisational overhaul, including an active and full-time leadership. But, not many of them were not willing to be quoted for their views, citing the 'sensitivity' involved in talking about 'the family' matters.

The massive organisational shake-up is also being seen as having a dominant Rahul Gandhi imprint with Randeep Singh Surjewala and Jitendra Singh, both considered to



be close to the former party chief, becoming new general secretaries along with the veteran Anwar.



Even the reconstituted 'Central Election Authority' has a Rahul Gandhi stamp on it with his loyal-

ist Madhusudan Mistry heading it and Krishna Byre Gowda and S Jothimani becoming its members.

Though several leaders such as Pawan Kumar Bansal and Rajeev Shukla, who are former Union ministers but did not have any significant assignments in the party till recently, have also made a comeback of sorts as AICC in-charges, the party watchers feel the big comeback has been of Singh, Anwar and Khurshid.

Singh, once considered a close confidante of Rahul Gandhi, was dropped by him from the Congress Working Committee (CWC), the party's highest decision-making body, in 2018 ahead of the Lok Sabha polls. Singh, who has been brought back into the CWC as a permanent invitee, seems to have won back the confidence of Gandhis in the af-

termath of Jyotiraditya Scindia's exit from the party. He had also openly backed Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Rahul Gandhi amid rumblings over the leadership issue.

Another interesting inclusion is that of Khurshid as a permanent invitee in the CWC along with that of Jairam Ramesh, who was recently appointed convener of a five-member committee formed to discuss and formulate the party's stand on key ordinances promulgated by the government. Khurshid, known to be among leaders considered close to the Gandhi family, did not have any significant party assignment after his Lok Sabha poll defeat from Farrukhabad. However, his steadfast support for the Gandhi family's leadership seems to have worked in his favour.

# national.



**Following the coronavirus-induced lockdown, crores of people, who are already facing unemployment and an unprecedented crisis, are now facing the challenge of depositing the school fees of their children. It has come up in the form of protests and they have to face the police cane, which is very sad**

MAYAWATI | BSP SUPREMO

## NAIK DISCHARGED

Union AYUSH Minister and Goa Lok Sabha MP Shripad Naik was Saturday discharged from hospital after recovering from the novel coronavirus infection



## of the day quote

The state government has no plan to reopen schools anytime soon

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

It is illegal and unconstitutional to destroy anyone's home without giving them a home. Kejriwal government won't let this happen

RAGHAV CHADHA | AAP SPOKESPERSON

I am grieved to learn the passing way of Swami Agnivesh. All his life he fought with great courage and conviction for the most marginalised sections of our society, fearless in defending their rights and in facing up to those who exploited and oppressed them and terrorised the poor, often at great personal risk

SONIA GANDHI | CONGRESS INTERIM PRESIDENT

# NDA will contest Bihar polls unitedly: Nadda

At the meeting which lasted for more than half an hour, the leaders of the two parties are understood to have discussed the key issue of seat-sharing among alliance partners in the NDA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 12: BJP president Jagat Prakash Nadda Saturday asserted that the NDA in Bihar, which also comprises JD(U) and LJP, will contest upcoming Assembly polls in the state "unitedly" under Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and retain power with a thumping majority.

The BJP chief's avowal at the state headquarters here, dropped hint that the party was looking forward to using its clout to iron out the differences between Kumar's JD(U) and Chirag Paswan-led LJP which have been at loggerheads for some time.

Nadda was addressing party workers on the final day of his whistle-stop tour of Bihar, minutes after meeting the JD(U) president whom he is understood to have given the assurance that all differences among the allies will be resolved in time.



Paswan, who has of late adopted a rebellious stance against Kumar, swears by his loyalty towards Prime Minister Narendra Modi in whose cabinet his father and LJP founder Ram Vilas Paswan is a minister. It is speculated that the chief minister is of the view that LJP is a late entrant in the NDA in Bihar and hence it need not be given much leeway in seat-sharing arrangements since the JD(U)-BJP alliance has achieved spectacular success in the past. Getting a wind of this, the LJP has reacted with indignation and recently some of its leaders asserted that while it will remain in the NDA, it might consider fielding candidates against JD(U) nominees. The BJP president,

who takes pride in his association with Patna where he had spent his early childhood, began his day with a visit to the famous Patan Devi shrine after which the city is named.

He followed it up with a visit to the chief minister's official residence where he was accompanied by BJP colleagues like Deputy CM Sushil Kumar Modi, national general secretary in-charge of the state Bhupendra Yadav and state president Sanjay Jaiswal.

At the meeting which lasted for more than half an hour, the leaders of the two parties are understood to have discussed the key issue of seat-sharing among alliance partners in the NDA. Later, he visited the state BJP headquarters to launch the "Atmanirbhar Bihar" campaign, which is a part of the Prime Minister's "Atmanirbhar Bharat" (self-reliant India) drive.

# Hateful content: FB official summoned

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 12: A Delhi Assembly panel has issued a notice to Facebook India vice president and managing director Ajit Mohan asking him to appear before it on September 15 in connection with complaints about the social media platform's alleged "deliberate and intentional inaction to contain hateful content" in the country.

"Summon was issued on the basis of scathing depositions of the key witnesses as well as incriminating material submitted by them on record," an official statement stated Saturday. Last month, Facebook had said its social media platform prohibits hate speech and content that incites violence



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said in the notice sent on September 10. Last month, Facebook had said its social media platform prohibits hate speech and content that incites violence and these policies are enforced globally without regard to political affiliation.

"We prohibit hate speech and content that incites violence and we enforce these policies globally without regard to anyone's political position or party affiliation. While we know there is more to do, we're making progress on enforcement and conduct regular audits of our process to ensure fairness and accuracy," a Facebook spokesperson had said.

## BSF seizes cache of arms

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Ferozepur, Sept 12: The BSF Saturday seized a cache of arms and ammunition from the Abohar sector in Punjab near the Indo-Pak border.

The 124th Battalion of the BSF seized three AK-47 rifles, six round magazines, 91 round 7.62 mm ammunition, two M-16 rifles, four M-16 rifle magazines, 57 rounds 5.56 mm ammunition, two made in China pistols, four pistol magazines and 20 rounds 7.63 mm ammunition. The BSF in Punjab frontier has so far this year seized 394.742 kg heroin, arrested 77 who crossed Indian border, 10 Pakistan intruders, 32 (including Saturday's seizure) different kind of weapons, 57 different magazines (including Saturday's seizure), 650 rounds ammunition of various calibres, six Pakistan mobile phones and 10 Pakistan sim cards.

## WATER WOES



People carry cans and other containers to collect drinking water from a tanker during Unlock 4 in East Delhi, Saturday

## Works worth ₹23K cr done: PM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Saturday that the government had completed works worth Rs 23,000 crore under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana (PMGKY) and that the number of days to build a house under the PM Awas Yojana (Gramin) had gone down from 125 days to between 45 and 60 days.

Modi was speaking on the occasion of handing over of 1.75 lakh houses in Madhya Pradesh to the beneficiaries through videoconference, wherein Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Governor Anandiben Patel, BJP MP Jyotiraditya Scindia and several beneficiaries also joined in.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said: "With the handing over of 1.75 lakh new houses, about 2.25 crore persons have got their own houses in the last six years." Modi said that it rein-



Modi was speaking on the occasion of handing over of 1.75 lakh houses in Madhya Pradesh to the beneficiaries through videoconference

forces the belief of crore of Indians that the government schemes made with right intentions are also realised and reach the beneficiaries.

"I can feel the satisfaction of my colleagues who have got their houses today, their confidence," he said. The Prime Minister said that of the 2.25 crore houses built across the country, 1.75 lakh were completed in Madhya Pradesh, which is a record.

"Earlier, it usually took around 125 days to build a house. But during the Covid-19 pandemic, we took only 45-60 days," Modi said. He said that this happened due to the migrant workers who returned from the cities to their native places and joined the workforce.

"I am satisfied that under the PM Garib Kalyan Yojana, works worth about Rs 23,000 crore have been completed in many states, including Madhya Pradesh," the Prime Minister said.

## Will fight Bihar polls jointly: Soren after meeting Lalu Prasad

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, Sept 12: Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren met RJD president Lalu Prasad in RIMS here Saturday and said they will fight Bihar polls together.

Soren spent more than an hour with Prasad at RIMS Director's bungalow, where the RJD leader is staying. Coming out of the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS), Soren said, "we will fight Bihar elections together." RJD is a partner in the coalition government headed by Soren in Jharkhand. Besides JMM, the Congress is also part of the government in the state. Asked on how many seats the JMM will field its candidates in Bihar where polls are due in October-November, Soren said "wait for some more time to know who will enter the poll fray from where."

## SHORT TAKES

### 3 killed, 5 hurt

Jammu: Three persons, including a 26-year-old woman and her newborn, were killed and five persons injured Saturday when a van skidded off the road and fell into a gorge in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district, police said. The accident took place near Dhanas village and it is suspected that the driver lost control over the vehicle at a blind curve, a police official said. The vehicle was coming from Chenani, he said.

### Ornaments seized

Kolkata: Border Security Force (BSF) personnel have seized 14.62 kg silver ornaments while they were being smuggled into Bangladesh from West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, a spokesperson of the paramilitary force said Saturday. Acting on a tip-off, BSF personnel at Hakimpur border outpost carried out a search operation on Friday and noticed three-four persons trying to drop something into the Sonai river, which forms the India-Bangladesh international border in that region, he said.

### Man killed

Thane: A 21-year-old man was killed in Bhiwandi in Thane district by unidentified persons and efforts were on to nab them, police said Saturday. The incident took place late Friday night and the victim has been identified as Karanjote-resident Akash Shelar, said Senior Inspector Suresh Manore of Padgha police station. Shelar was hit on the head with a sharp weapon, Manore said.

### Man mauled to death

Korba: A 25-year-old man was mauled to death by bears in a forest in Chhattisgarh's Surajpur district, a forest official said Saturday. The attack took place Friday when Shivkumar Pavle, a native of Abhaypur village under Premnagar forest range, was on his way to his paddy field on a bicycle, said J R Bhagat, divisional forest officer (DFO) Surajpur forest division.

### Three held

Bhopal: The Madhya Pradesh police have arrested three persons, including two women, from Noida for allegedly running a fake call centre and duping people of roughly Rs 10 crore by offering them soft loans, an official said Saturday. The police Friday arrested leader of the racket David Kumar Jatav (21), a B.Com graduate and a website designer and two of his accomplices.

## Student adopts tiger on b'day

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hyderabad, Sept 12: A 12-year-old student has adopted a tiger at Nehru Zoological Park (NZP) here for three months by spending his birthday budget.

Chinmay Siddharth Shah, a Class 7 student of a city school, has come forward to adopt a Royal Bengal Tiger named "Sankalp". He along with his father Siddharth Kantilal Shah visited the office of the curator and handed over a cheque of Rs 25,000 to Deputy Curator A.Nagamani towards adoption of the tiger for a period of three months.

Five other children also presented a cheque of Rs 5,000 each to adopt nocturnal animals and small birds. Havisha Jain and Vihaan Atul Shah, Preksha, Priyal, Dhvani and Bhakti Nagda handed over the cheques to NZP official.

Nagamani thanked the children for showing great gesture, love and affection towards the conservation of wildlife by adopting the tiger and birds

in the Zoo Park. She also appealed to the citizens to come forward in more numbers and adopt the animals.

The zoo, which has suffered a loss of more than Rs 6 crore due to the ban on entry of visitors since March 22, is looking for celebrities and businessmen to come forward and adopt the animals, by sponsoring their expenses for a fixed period.

The officials hope that this gesture would help the zoo tide over the financial constraint triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic. In July, Tollywood actor Ram Charan's wife and superstar K. Chiranjeevi's daughter-in-law, Upasana Kamineni konidela came forward to adopt an elephant for one year.

A businessman also adopted a Royal Bengal tiger for one year. Spread over 300 acres, the zoo is home to nearly 181 indigenous and exotic species, including 1,716 animals, birds, and reptiles. Known as one of the best zoos in Asia, it attracts around 30 lakh visitors every year on an average.



## COVID IMPACT

# Overeating home-cooked junk food caused lifestyle diseases

A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATE LESS NUTRITIOUS FOOD, BINGED ON JUNK DURING THE LOCKDOWN AND PUT ON WEIGHT

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 12: The impact of Covid-19 has been far-reaching, and in ways, no one could have imagined. It impacted the health directly and in corresponding manners. One such impact it had was on the food and nutrition.

Coronavirus-led lockdown widened the health and financial inequalities and worsened food poverty among marginalized sections. However, most of the privileged population used this period for feasting and indulging in unhealthy eating habits leading to a low intake of nutrition and weight gain.

A significant number of people ate less nutritious food, binged on

junk during the lockdown, and put on weight. The nutrition experts said that they have started receiving complaints from people developing lifestyle diseases. The most common and alarming among these was weight gain. "The sudden restrictions on physical activity, lack of exercise, increased intake of calorie-dense food, and sweets have pushed many people under the looming threat of obesity and related comorbidities.

"The majority of our patients are from the newly adopted 'Work from Home' culture," said Ushakiran Sisodia, Head of Dietary Department and Clinical Nutritionist, Nanavati Super Speciality Hospital, Mumbai. Majority indulged into unhealthy



eating practices, said Sandhya Pandey, Chief Clinical Nutritionist, Fortis Memorial Research Institute in Gurgaon, and estimated that around 60 per cent of the people would have gained weight due to

unhealthy eating. Priyanka Rohatgi, Chief Nutritionist at Apollo Hospitals, said that the exposure and consumption to AGE (Advanced Glycation End) foods with high fat

and sugar content, highly processed and prepackaged products, have been the highest during this pandemic.

"A majority had a lot of home-cooked unhealthy stuff right from ready-to-eat pasta or noodles to baking cakes and making sweet dishes such as jalebis, gulab jamuns, and Mughlai delicacies," she said. Rohatgi added that the immediate impact was weight, higher oxidation in the body. "However, we are yet to see their long term repercussions," she said.

Doctors observed that over-eating was the primary factor behind weight gain among people during the lockdown. However, it was triggered by multiple factors like social media challenges and stress.

"While the fast-food eateries were closed during the lockdown, people turned into master chefs and cooked all the high-caloric foods, beverages, and junk ranging from Dalgona coffee to Pani Puri at home. They were either influenced by social media challenges or indulged into emotional eating due to stress," she said.

Sisodia also said an abundance of instructive cooking videos on social media and the luxury of time had motivated those addicted to junk foods to cook oily, high-calorie food items at home. "Besides, the lack of physical activities as people were forced to stay at home during the lockdown period added to the weight-gain problem," Sisodia added.



When media workers are targeted, societies as a whole pay a price  
**ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL**

## GOOGLE TO BLOCK AUTOCOMPLETE SUGGESTIONS FOR US ELECTIONS

Google has announced to block autocomplete suggestions - that could be viewed as being for or against a particular candidate or party - in its Search platform ahead of the US presidential election in November



### of the day quote

I saved Saudi Arabia's crown prince from greater scrutiny over the killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. I was able to get Congress to leave him alone. I was able to get them to stop



DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT

Let's make the EU take their threats off the table. And let's get the Internal Market Bill through, back up our negotiators, and protect our country



BORIS JOHNSON | UK PRIME MINISTER

Brazil is "practically winning" the battle against the coronavirus pandemic due to a reduction in the number of single-day deaths over the last week



JAIR BOLSONARO | BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT

## DISPLAY OF MIGHT



Members of the Iranian army fire missiles during the annual military drill in the Gulf of Oman, Iran

REUTERS PHOTO

# Warring Afghan groups meet in search of peace

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Sept 12: Afghanistan's warring sides started negotiations Saturday for the first time aimed at ending decades of war, bringing together delegates appointed by the Afghan government and the Taliban.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo attended the opening ceremony, which was held in Qatar where the meetings will take place. It's the latest in a flurry of diplomatic activity by the Trump administration ahead of the US presidential election in November. The discussions are important in the search for lasting peace that will also provide an exit for US and NATO troops after nearly 19 years.

The sides will try to tackle tough issues. This includes the terms of a permanent cease-fire, the rights of women and minorities and the disarming of tens of thousands of Taliban fighters and militias loyal to warlords, some of them aligned with the government.

The talks in Doha follow the US-brokered recognition of Israel by two Gulf nations - Bahrain Friday and the United Arab Emirates earlier this month. The Afghan sides are also expected to discuss constitutional changes, and power sharing.

Even seemingly mundane issues like the flag and the name of the country - the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan or as the Taliban's

■ Afghanistan's warring sides started negotiations Saturday for the first time aimed at ending decades of war

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■ The discussions are important in the search for lasting peace that will also provide an exit for US and NATO troops after nearly 19 years

administration had been known, when it ruled, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan - could find their way on to the negotiation table and roll thence.

Among the government-appointed negotiators are four women, who vow to preserve women's rights in any power-sharing deal with the fundamentalist Taliban. This includes the right to work, education and participation in political life - all denied women when the Taliban ruled Afghanistan for five years.

The Taliban were ousted in 2001 by a US-led coalition for harbouring Osama bin Laden, the architect of the September 11 terrorist attacks on America.

There are no women on the Taliban's negotiation team, led by their chief justice Abdul Hakim. Pompeo has said he expected the discussions to be contentious.



### SHORT TAKES

#### 6.1-magnitude quake hits Japan

Tokyo: An earthquake measuring 6.1 on the Richter scale struck Japan's Miyagi prefecture Saturday, officials said, adding that no tsunami was issued. The tremor occurred at around 11.44 a.m. (local time), with its epicentre recorded at latitude of 38.7 degrees north and a longitude of 142.4 degrees east, and at depth of 40 km, reports Xinhua news agency. There has been no immediate information on damages or injuries.

#### Two killed in LA plane crash

Los Angeles: Two people were killed after a small plane crashed into a parking lot near the Van Nuys Airport in Los Angeles County, according to officials. Officials from the Los Angeles Fire Department said that there was no apparent structure damage in the incident which took place on Friday, Xinhua news agency reported. Preliminary information indicates that the single-engine Navion B plane had taken off from the Van Nuys Airport and was heading for Santa Ynez Airport in Santa Barbara County, a Department official was quoted by the City News Service as saying.

#### Israel, Bahrain reach peace deal

Tel Aviv/Manama: Israel and Bahrain have agreed to a peace agreement, brokered by the US, almost a month after the former reached a historic deal to normalise relations with the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Friday's development makes Bahrain the fourth Arab nation after Egypt, Jordan and the UAE to establish diplomatic ties with Israel, Xinhua news agency reported. Bahrain King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and US President Donald Trump agreed to the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the two countries in a joint statement.

#### Pak scribe held for defaming Army

Karachi: A senior Pakistani journalist working with a leading English daily was arrested on Friday for allegedly defaming the country's Army and fanning sectarian hate. Bilal Farooqi, who works with The Express Tribune, was taken into custody from his home in Defence Housing Authority by a police team accompanied by two men in plain clothes. Additional Inspector General Ghulam Nabi Memon told the media that Bilal has been arrested after FIRs were registered.

# China imposes fresh curbs on US diplomats' activities

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beijing, Sept 12: China has announced new restrictions on the activities of US diplomats working in mainland China and Hong Kong, in what it called a justified response to similar measures imposed on Chinese diplomats in the US last year.

In a statement posted online late Friday, a foreign ministry spokesman said the rules would apply to senior diplomats and all other personnel at the American Embassy in Beijing and consulates throughout China.

However, the spokesman said China supported "normal exchanges and cooperation between all sectors of the two countries" and said the restrictions could be lifted if the US were to revoke the measures it imposed last October.

"Once again we urge the US side to immediately correct its mistakes



and lift the unreasonable restrictions imposed on the Chinese Embassy and consulates and their staff. China will make reciprocal responses to US actions," the spokesman, who wasn't identified, said.

No details were given about the new restrictions. US diplomats already face limits on what parts of the country they can visit and even access to college campuses. The US rules require Chinese diplomats to report travel and meetings

in what was seen as an attempt to prevent interference within the overseas Chinese community and foreign students.

Washington has also complained about a lack of reciprocity in access to media, saying Chinese diplomats are able to put their views across US outlets while America's representatives are shunned by Chinese state media.

Most recently, the State Department protested over the refusal by the Communist Party's flagship newspaper People's Daily to publish an op-ed by Ambassador Terry Branstad. The paper responded that the piece did not meet its editorial standards.

China-US tensions over trade, technology and a multitude of other issues have increasingly spilled over into the areas of diplomacy and media, with the US ordering the closure of the Chinese Consulate in Houston in July.

## US budget deficit hits record \$3tn

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Sept 12: The US budget deficit hit an all-time high of \$3 trillion for the first 11 months of this budget year, the Treasury Department said Friday.

The ocean of red ink is a product of the government's massive spending to try to cushion the impact of a coronavirus-fueled recession that has cost millions of jobs.

The deficit from October through August is more than double the previous 11-month record of \$1.37 billion set in 2009. At that time the government was spending large sums to get out of the Great Recession triggered by the 2008 financial crisis.

With one month to go in the 2020 budget year, which ends September 30, the deficit could go even higher. The Congressional Budget Office is forecasting the deficit this year will hit a record \$3.3 trillion.

Nancy Vanden Houten, an economist at Oxford Economist, predicted the September deficit would hit \$200 billion, giving the country a deficit for this budget year.

## Rape of woman in front of her kids sparks uproar in Pakistan

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lahore, Sept 12: Brutal gang rape of a woman in front of her two minor children in Pakistan's Punjab province has caused widespread uproar, condemnation and protest. Women in the country have demanded more measures for their safety and security as the country bays for public hanging of the culprits.

The incident was reported from Gujjarpura area in Punjab province Wednesday, when two men robbed and raped the woman at gunpoint while she was waiting for help on the motorway after her car broke down.

The woman had crossed the toll plaza on the Lahore-Sialkot motorway, her car stalled due to shortage of fuel. As per police report, she called her relative in Gujranwala, who asked her to call the police



for help while he also left from home to reach her. However, by the time he reached the location, he found the woman terrified with her clothes stained with blood.

Police officials stated "at least two armed men found the woman alone, took her and children to a nearby field at gunpoint and gang raped her".

"So far, 12 suspects have been arrested and search is going on," said Mussarat Cheema, spokesperson of Punjab government.

"No stone will be left unturned to provide immediate justice to the victim and her family," stated the Punjab police.

# Dozens missing in 2 large Oregon fires

HUNDREDS OF FIREFIGHTERS BATTLED TWO LARGE WILDFIRES FRIDAY THAT THREATENED TO MERGE NEAR THE MOST POPULATED PART OF OREGON, INCLUDING THE SUBURBS OF PORTLAND

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Salem (US), Sept 12: Hundreds of firefighters battled two large wildfires Friday that threatened to merge near the most populated part of Oregon, including the suburbs of Portland, and the governor said dozens of people are missing in other parts of the state.

The state's emergency management director, Andrew Phelps, said officials are "preparing for a mass fatality event" and that thousands of structures have been destroyed.

Gov Kate Brown said more than 40,000 Oregonians have been evacuated and about 500,000 are in different levels of evacuation zones, either having been told to leave or to prepare to do so. She was dialling back on a statement late Thursday



issued by the state Office of Emergency Management that said a half-million people had been ordered to evacuate statewide.

Dozens of people are missing in Jackson County in the south and Marion County, where a fire continues to burn east of Salem, Brown

told a news conference Friday.

Also Friday, authorities announced that a man had been arrested on two counts of arson for allegedly starting a fire in southern Oregon Tuesday.

The Oregon Convention Center in Portland was among the buildings

being transformed into shelters for evacuees. Portland, shrouded in smoke from the fires, on Friday had the worst air quality of the world's major cities, according to IQAir.

National Guard troops and corrections officers transferred about 1,300 inmates from a women's prison in a southern suburb of Portland "out of an abundance of caution," the Oregon Department of Corrections said. Spokeswoman Vanessa Vanderzee said it took 20 hours to transfer the inmates Thursday to another prison in a safe zone.

A change in the weather, with winds dropping and shifting direction and humidity rising, greatly helped firefighters struggling to prevent the two fires from advancing farther west into more-populated areas.

# Charlie Hebdo threatened for republishing Prophet's cartoons

12 PEOPLE, INCLUDING SOME OF FRANCE'S MOST CELEBRATED CARTOONISTS, WERE KILLED JANUARY 7, 2015, WHEN BROTHERS SAID AND CHERIF KOUACHI WENT ON A GUN RAMPAGE AT THE OFFICES OF CHARLIE HEBDO

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Paris, Sept 12: Al-Qaeda has threatened French satirical weekly Charlie Hebdo with a repeat of a 2015 massacre of its staff, after it republished controversial cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed, the SITE observatory said Friday.

Al-Qaeda in its publication One Ummah had warned that Charlie Hebdo would be mistaken if it believed the 2015 attack was a "one off", after the magazine printed the "contemptible caricatures" in a defiant issue that marked the start of the trial in Paris of suspected accomplices in the attack. The comments came in an English edition of the Al-Qaeda publication that purported to mark the anniversary of the



September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States carried out by the terror network.

It said it had the "same message"

for the France of President Emmanuel Macron as it did for his predecessor Francois Hollande who was president at the time of the 2015 attacks.

It said France under Macron "gave a green light" to the republication of the cartoons.

Twelve people, including some of France's most celebrated cartoonists, were killed January 7, 2015, when brothers Said and Cherif Kouachi went on a gun rampage at the offices of Charlie Hebdo, whose no-taboo style, including publishing cartoons of the prophet, had divided the country.

The trial, which began September 2 and is expected to continue until November, sees 14 suspected accomplices face justice even though all the perpetrators were killed in the wake of the attacks.

It had reopened one of the post painful chapters in France's modern history which heralded a spate of jihadist attacks on its territory that have claimed more than 250 lives.

Charlie Hebdo's director Laurent Sourisseau, known as "Riss" and who himself was badly wounded in the shoulder in the attack, told the court this week that there was nothing to regret in publishing the cartoons. "What I regret is to see how little people fight to defend freedom. If we don't fight for our freedom, we live like a slave and we promote a deadly ideology," he said.

Charlie Hebdo's republication of the cartoons drew new condemnation from states including Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

But Sourisseau, who now lives under round the clock protection, said it had to republish them.

"If we had given up the right to publish these cartoons, that would mean that we were wrong to do so" in the first place, he said.



**We have further revised downwards our GDP forecast for the year to a range of (-) 8-8.2% under the assumption of there being no fiscal stimulus from the government**

**MADAN SABNAVIS | CHIEF ECONOMIST, CARE RATINGS**

## INDIGO COMPLETES 50,000 FLIGHTS

Airline major IndiGo has successfully completed 50,000 flights since lockdown. Accordingly, till September 12, the tally of the airline includes scheduled commercial operations, passenger charters, 'CarGo' charters, 'Air Bubble flights', and repatriation flights



## of the day quote

As far as regulator is concerned, there is still lot more to be done. We are continually tracking what needs to be done, not only for the policyholders but for all the stakeholders. Some of the things which we have done are relevant to the health insurance industry



**TL ALAMELU | MEMBER (NON-LIFE), IRDAI**

We always strive to provide best banking facility to every customer even those in remote parts of the country. To make this happen we have till now appointed over 11K banking correspondents and plan to increase it to 25K by end of this fiscal



**SMITA BHAGAT | COUNTRY HEAD, GOVT. INSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS AND STARTUPS, HDFC BANK**

Despite the dampener that the pandemic has thrown over sporting events in general, what has remained undiminished is the passion for sports among avid enthusiasts, as is evidenced from the kind of job postings we are still seeing on our platform



**SASHI KUMAR | MD, INDEED INDIA**

## SHORT TAKES

### Adani Ports, SEZ raise ₹900 cr

**Mumbai:** Adani Ports & Special Economic Zone Ltd. (SEZ) has raised ₹900 crore through allotment of non-convertible debentures (NCDs) on private placement basis. In an issued regulatory filing, the company said that the NCDs will be listed on the Wholesale Debt Market segment of BSE Ltd. "The company has raised ₹900 crore today by allotment of 9,000 Rated, Listed, Secured, Redeemable, NCDs of the face value of ₹10,00,000 each on private placement basis," the filing said.

### J&J rolls out new baby care products

**New Delhi:** Johnson & Johnson has launched a new range of baby care products as it has seen a significant growth in demand in the Indian market. The new range of products comprises wash, lotion, cream and oil and is available on leading e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Flipkart, Big Basket, FirstCry and Nykaa. Johnson & Johnson said in a statement. "Cottontouch" range of products will be available in retail stores in a few weeks, the company said.

### Airtel ratings outlook revised

**New Delhi:** Moody's Investors Service has revised Bharti Airtel's credit outlook rating to stable from negative on account of easing of competition in the telecom sector, increase in 4G customer base and mobile services rates from December. It also considered options given to the company to make payment of pending adjusted gross revenue in instalments while revising the outlook.

### S'pore Convention comes into force

**New Delhi:** The Singapore Convention on Mediation came into force Saturday and will provide a more effective way for enforcing mediated settlements of corporate disputes involving businesses in India and other countries that are signatories to the Convention. Also known as the United Nations Convention on International Settlement Agreements Resulting from Mediation, this is also the first UN treaty to be named after Singapore.

# 'AI TO MAKE BANKING MORE INCLUSIVE'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, Sept 12:** Banking in the future will combine artificial and human intelligence (AI+HI) to be more collaborative, personalised, inclusive, deliver better products and consumer experience, Microsoft India President Anant Maheshwari has said.

Building a scalable model for leveraging the full potential of data and AI will be central to driving innovation and digital transformation across industries, and particularly in the banking and financial sector, Maheshwari wrote



**We're already seeing more innovation than ever in fintech as people are depending less on physical wallets and using more of digital payment mechanisms**

**ANANT MAHESHWARI | PRESIDENT, MICROSOFT INDIA**

in a foreword to a white paper released by the Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT).

"We're already seeing more innovation than ever in fintech as people are depending less on physical

wallets and using more of digital payment mechanisms," Maheshwari said. "Financial services organisations have been leveraging AI to enhance customer experience, improve operational efficiency, manage risks, detect frauds, gather data-

driven insights, and even streamline regulatory compliance."

Aimed at supporting banks in their AI journey, IDRBT in association with Microsoft has worked out a framework and strategy for the successful adoption of AI for accelerated innovation and growth.

The white paper titled "AI in Banking: A Primer" also stresses the urgent need for banks to assess their AI readiness using an AI maturity model and increase focus on AI strategy, data management, internal digitisation, talent creation and developing safe systems.

Maheshwari said that the "new normal" has accelerated data and AI adoption manifold, and this has clearly shown the benefits of investing in a tech enabled future.

"Driving utilisation of Data and AI will also be a catalyst in realizing India's 2025 vision of inclusive development, and a recent Nasscom report shows that it has the potential to deliver \$450-500B for the economy by 2025," Maheshwari pointed out. AI should be defined not just by what technology can do on its own, but by how it can augment and amplify human effort for people to do more, he said.

# Build capital buffers, manage liquidity: RBI advises MFIs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Mumbai, Sept 12:** As COVID-19 is likely to pose financial risks for microfinance institutions (MFIs), there is a need to build capital buffers and manage cash positions for micro lenders to protect their balance sheets from any disruptions, according to an article published in RBI's monthly bulletin.

The article, prepared by Snamardeep Singh of Department of Supervision, Reserve Bank of India (RBI), said though COVID-19 presents new challenges and significant financial risks for the microfinance sector, it also presents an opportunity to build long-term resilience.

"Going forward, building capital buffers and managing liquidity would be crucial for MFIs in fortifying their balance sheets against COVID-19 led disruptions," it said. The article termed COVID-19 as the biggest tail risk event in a long time.

Owing to the disruptions in supply chain and business operations, the likelihood of loss of livelihoods and consequent drop in household incomes is high, it stated.

"Non-banking financial company microfinance institutions (NBFC-MFIs), being specialised institutions extending collateral free loans to low-income groups, are particularly exposed to credit risks in this scenario," it said.

The article said the repayment rates have dropped significantly, posing liquidity risks to MFIs.

Smaller NBFCs-MFIs are particularly vulnerable to credit rating



**Though COVID-19 presents new challenges and significant financial risks for the microfinance sector, it also presents an opportunity to build long-term resilience, says the article**

downgrades, which may hamper their ability to raise fresh capital and access liquidity, it said adding they "need to diversify their sources of funds for sustaining healthy portfolio growth".

COVID-19 is expected to afflict the microfinance sector with financial risks in the near term. However, it may also incentivise digitisation, it added. Efforts to migrate loan collections to digital platforms may greatly improve operational efficiency of MFIs and help them in minimising event-based disrup-

tions, it said. The article said data analytics may be leveraged for predicting portfolio behaviour, building risk models and designing customer centric products.

At this juncture, when the risk of spread of misinformation is high, it is important that credit discipline be maintained, it added.

Increasing engagement with borrowers through virtual/telephonic means and sensitising staff on fair practices code would go a long way in restoring confidence in borrowers and rebooting the credit cycle, as per the article.

MFIs need to adopt responsible lending practices to ensure that loan amounts are commensurate with borrower's ability to repay and that there are no instances of multiple/overlending, it emphasised. "In this milieu, it is imperative that the microfinance sector utilise past lessons and work towards transforming the pandemic into new possibilities," the article said.

# Discoms' liquidity package set for hike

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 12:** The ₹90,000-crore liquidity package for discoms to help them pay their dues till the month of March, 2021 would soon be enhanced to ₹1.2 lakh crore factoring in these utilities' outstanding till June, said a senior official.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May announced a ₹90,000 crore liquidity infusion into cash-strapped discoms for payment of their dues till March 2020. Discoms have been facing demand slump due to the lockdown to contain COVID-19.

Participating in a webinar on 'Innovation in Renewable Energy' organised by PHDCCI, Power Secretary S N Sahai said the liquidity package would cover the outstanding dues of discoms for the months from April to June also and it would be enhanced to ₹1.2 lakh crore.

While announcing the package, the government had said, "At present discoms have a total outstanding of ₹94,000 crore towards power generation firms (gencos)."

However, later states demanded that the package be extended to include outstanding dues towards power generation and transmission firms for the month of April and May as well.

A source said that an official communication in this regard has already been sent to the implementing state owned non-banking finance firms Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and REC by the Ministry of Power.

The source further said now the respective boards of REC and PFC



will approve the hike in liquidity package to around ₹1.2 lakh crore covering a period of dues till June this year, by the end of September.

As much as ₹68,000 crore has been sanctioned and around ₹25,000 crore is disbursed to discoms under the package so far.

The source further revealed that more states would avail the credit facility under the package after the REC and PFC boards' decision to hike the package.

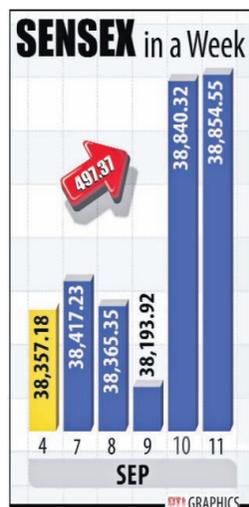
PFC and REC would apprise states about the hike in the package after their boards' decision in this regard.

Some of the discoms were not eligible for getting loans under the package because they were not meeting working capital limit norms under Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY).

Earlier in August, the Union Cabinet relaxed the working capital limit norms for discoms under UDAY to get loans as part of the liquidity infusion scheme.

Under UDAY, banks and financial institutions are restricted to lend working capital up to 25 per cent of a discom's revenue in the previous year.

The restriction was part of UDAY, which was approved in November 2015 by the Union Cabinet for revival of debt-laden utilities.



# PPL extends support amid Covid-19 scare

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL) extended its supporting hands to people amid the ongoing pandemic through its CSR activities. During this period, PPL launched an ambitious plan to provide 100 days nutritional support to pregnant and lactating mothers, and children with nutritious food kit. The kit contains apple, banana, nuts, egg and protein supplements to address the protein and nutrition deficiency for the needy. The kit is being provided to the beneficiary twice in a week.

The programme was being launched in the presence of Tanuparava Beura, CDPO of Kujanga Block. A total of 637 peo-



ple including 65 pregnant women from Balijhara, Bagadia, Mangarajpur, Kothi and Fatepur are benefitted from this nutrition support programme. Also, PPL has been facilitating online classes in eight government primary schools of Kujang Block. Over 200 students

from primary schools of Uchhabandpur of Kothi Gram Panchayat (GP), Nuasahi of Bagadia GP, Hasina of Mangarajpur GP and Jaladharpur of Fatepur GP are provided the online learning platform facility.

Moreover, PPL is actively sup-

porting the livelihood activities of farmers, SHGs and independent women adopting entrepreneurship. Over 150 farmers are being supported with power tiller, weeder, spray machine and pump sets to regenerate the livelihood activities.

Chief Operating Officer (COO) Ranjit Singh Chugh ensured that the results are visible in a time bound manner through the CSR activities. Under the guidance of Jagannath Khuntia, General Manager (HR) and Alok Kumar Group-Head (CSR) the systematic work flow has benefitted the community in a big way. Soumyashree Omprakash Sahoo, Manager (CSR) has constantly monitoring the activities on daily basis.

# Readers' guide to first-hand insurance for a second-hand car

**BOTH THE PARTIES INVOLVED IN A SECOND HAND SALE, AGREE UPON A VALUE AND THE CONTRACT OF SALE IS THEN MADE. SUBSEQUENTLY, RC COPY IS TRANSFERRED, AND VEHICLE OWNERSHIP IS SHIFTED TO THE BUYER**

The sale of used cars is growing at a faster pace than the sale of new cars, with more persons preferring the personal vehicles over shared mobility due to the unfortunate ongoing pandemic. We also live in a country where having a third party motor insurance is mandated by law. If you could not catch the correlation, and are planning to buy a second hand car or wish to sell your previous car, this article is a must read for you!

Whenever a new car is bought, its price includes of the on-road price including the road tax and the insurance cost which is added to the ex-showroom price of the vehicle. This is not the case with the pur-

chase of second hand cars. Both the parties involved in a second hand sale, agree upon a value and the contract of sale is then made. Subsequently, RC copy is transferred, and vehicle ownership is shifted to the buyer.

After purchasing a used car, Section 157 of the MV Act casts a duty on the new vehicle owner to get the insurance policy transferred in his name by applying to the insurance company within 14 days. For these 14 days, while the "Third Party" part of the insurance policy gets automatically transferred, the "Own Damage" part will be transferred only after the policy gets registered under the new owner's name.

Post this period of 14 days the insurance company is not liable to bear any losses incurred by new vehicle owner in either of the Third Party / Own Damage sections, as the contract of insurance hasn't been transferred to his/her name. Let's consider two situations, to understand these points better:

- Situation 1 - You have sold your first car to an acquain-

tance. The RC is transferred, but the insurance is not. Months later, you receive a court notice, stating that your car has hit a pedestrian causing him severe bodily injury, and as the insurance is still in your name, you shall be liable for compensating the injured.

- Situation 2 - You have bought a second hand car from an acquaintance. You were un-

aware of transferring insurance to your name. During a road trip, your car got severely damaged in an accident. You approach the insurance company with whom the car was previously insured. They do not honour the claim.

Both these situations are not uncommon in the Indian scenario. Owing to low financial awareness, we often find ourselves in circumstances, which could have been easily avoided through some prudence. In Situation 1, as the insurance is not transferred and the policy still bears your name as the car owner, the court sends you a Notice to compensate the loss caused to third party. The

whole process of establishing the proofs of sale, the transfer of vehicle RC etc. can be a gruelling exercise.

While so much thought is put into the purchase of a second hand car, most are oblivious when it comes to transferring the Motor Insurance policy to their name. This can have huge financial impacts, in case of any damage to the vehicle, or damages to a third party in the event of an accident. Being vigilant about getting the policy transferred is definitely the smarter choice, always!

(The writer is the President and Country Head, Motor LOB, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance.)



**GURNEESH KHURANA**

Head to head (Zverev 2 - 7 Thiem)

YEAR	EVENT	ROUND	WINNER
2020	Australian Open	SF	Thiem
2019	ATP Finals	SF	Thiem
2018	French Open	QF	Thiem
2018	Madrid Open	Final	Zverev
2017	Rotterdam Open	R32	Thiem
2016	China Open	R32	Zverev
2016	French Open	R32	Thiem
2016	Nice Open	Final	Thiem
2016	BMW Open	SF	Thiem

# A GRAND FINALE

**ZVEREV RECOVERS FROM TWO SETS DOWN TO OUTSMART CARRENO BUSTA SETTING UP A TITLE CLASH WITH THIEM WHICH WILL SEE A FIRST-TIME GRAND SLAM WINNER**

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**New York, Sept 12:** For two full sets, Alexander Zverev was confused and listless, his body language as poor as his winner-to-error ratio against Pablo Carreno Busta in the US Open semifinals.

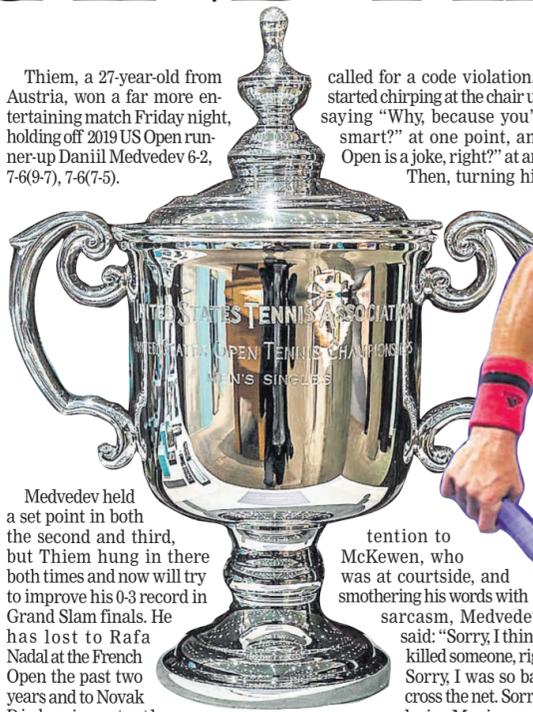
Zverev double-faulted and smacked his left hand Friday. He put a backhand into the net to cede the opening set and covered his face with both hands. He netted a forehand early in the next set, then turned a forlorn face toward his guest box and put his palms up.

When he pushed a backhand long after one hour, 25 minutes of play and shook his head, Zverev trailed by two sets, a deficit the 23-year-old German never had overcome. Never had been to a Grand Slam final, either. Done and done. Zverev constructed quite a comeback, getting his game in gear to beat a fading Carreno Busta 3-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3 and reach the title match at Flushing Meadows. Zverev, the No. 5 seed, will play No. 2 seed Dominic Thiem Sunday, and one will walk away with his first Grand Slam trophy.

"Mentally, I stayed in it. ... A lot of players would have gone away," Zverev said. "There's no easy matches anymore. Sometimes you have to dig deep. Today I dug deep, dug very deep."

Thiem, a 27-year-old from Austria, won a far more entertaining match Friday night, holding off 2019 US Open runner-up Daniil Medvedev 6-2, 7-6(9-7), 7-6(7-5).

called for a code violation, so he started chirping at the chair umpire, saying "Why, because you're not smart?" at one point, and "US Open is a joke, right?" at another. Then, turning his at-



Medvedev held a set point in both the second and third, but Thiem hung in there both times and now will try to improve his 0-3 record in Grand Slam finals. He has lost to Rafa Nadal at the French Open the past two years and to Novak Djokovic at the Australian Open this February.

The No. 3-seeded Medvedev hadn't dropped a set all tournament until facing Thiem. He'd been broken just three times, a total Thiem matched by Friday's second set.

In an interlude redolent of his heel turn at Flushing Meadows a year ago, Medvedev got into it with chair umpire Damien Dumusois — yes, the very same official who cited him for yanking a towel from a ballperson in 2019, prompting boos from fans and some egging on from the Russian — and Grand Slam supervisor Wayne McKewen in the first set.

This time, the starting point was a dispute with Dumusois over whether Medvedev challenged a call in time. Medvedev walked around the net to take a closer look at the mark and was

tention to McKewen, who was at courtside, and smothering his words with sarcasm, Medvedev said: "Sorry, I think I killed someone, right? Sorry, I was so bad to cross the net. Sorry. My apologies. My sincere apologies to the US Open for crossing the net. Oh, my God."

Thiem led 4-2 there and raced through that set. Medvedev went up an early break in the second and was two points from taking it while ahead 5-3 and Thiem serving at love-30, but couldn't come through. Medvedev then held a set point at 6-5 in the tiebreaker and faltered again, even though Thiem felt something in his right heel while chasing a drop shot.

Thiem began limping and wincing and was worked on by a trainer before the third set. His team also sent him some fresh shoes, but after he slipped behind the baseline on one point, Thiem shouted in German, clearly miffed. After the match, Thiem said he was pain-free.

Medvedev served for the third set at 5-3, and was a point from claiming it at 40-30 but framed a forehand and never got that close again. A little more than 20 minutes later, Thiem finished off the

straight-set win. Zverev is the first man to win a US Open semifinal after a 2-0 set deficit since Djokovic did it against Roger Federer in 2011 — and, keeping good company, he's also the youngest male finalist at any major tournament since Djokovic was 23 in New York in 2010.

It had been 16 years since Grand Slam semifinals were held without at least one of Federer, Nadal or Djokovic.

**“WHEN WE BOTH STEP ON THE COURT SUNDAY, IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE. I MEAN, THE MOMENT WE START THE FINALS, WE BOTH WANT TO WIN WITH EVERYTHING WE HAVE. THAT'S ALL I FOCUS ON. A GOOD RECORD AGAINST SASCHA (ZVEREV), IT DOESN'T HELP ME AT ALL. IT'S GOING TO BE A SUPER DIFFICULT MATCH. GOING TO BE A GREAT ONE AGAINST A VERY GOOD FRIEND AND A GREAT RIVAL”**

DOMINIC THIEM



**“SUNDAY IS GOING TO BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT. BUT I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT. I'M IN THE FINAL OF A GRAND SLAM. THE TWO BEST PLAYERS IN THE WORLD ARE GOING TO BE PLAYING ON COURT”**

ALEXANDER ZVEREV

## Zvonareva, Siegemund clinch women's doubles title

**NEW YORK:** Vera Zvonareva and Laura Siegemund stood awkwardly facing each other, rackets and arms in the air in confusion. Finally, Siegemund turned to the chair umpire for a ruling. "Are we allowed to give a hug?" she asked.

The rules of tennis during the coronavirus pandemic were the only thing Zvonareva and Siegemund couldn't figure out in their first tournament together.

The duo won the US Open women's doubles title Friday, beating the third-

seeded team of Xu Yifan and Nicole Melichar 6-4, 6-4.

Zvonareva and Siegemund collected USD 400,000 — and also their hug — by racing to quick leads in both sets and holding on when their opponents began to play better.

Unseeded after deciding to play together shortly before the tournament, Zvonareva and Siegemund found their games worked together and plan to partner again at the upcoming French Open.



Zvonareva, a Russian who turned 36 this week, added this title to the 2006 US Open trophy she won with Nathalie Dechy. She also was the runner-up in singles at Flushing Meadows in 2010, falling to Kim Clijsters, and rose to a career-high singles ranking of No. 2 the following month.

She also won the 2012 Australian Open doubles title but later battled injuries and began playing less, especially after giving birth to daughter Evelina in 2016. Zvonareva and Siegemund, who have

each won the US Open mixed doubles title, raced to a 5-1 lead in the first set and a 3-1 start in the second.

Siegemund, who was sharp early, paid tribute to an aunt who died of cancer while she was in New York. Her parents were late arriving to the match after returning from the funeral. Xu and Melichar finished second for the second straight tournament in New York. They were runners-up at the Western & Southern Open that's usually played in Ohio.

## Arsenal begin PL campaign in style

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**London, Sept 12:** Willian helped to set up all three goals on his debut to lead Arsenal to a 3-0 victory over promoted Fulham Saturday in the opening match of the pandemic-delayed Premier League season at an empty Craven Cottage.

The off-season recruit from Chelsea took just eight minutes to make an impact with a close-range shot parried by goalkeeper Marek Rodak and Alexander Lacazette tapped in the opener.

It was a corner from Willian four minutes into the second half that allowed Gabriel to claim a debut goal. The defensive signing from Lille was left unmarked to head into the net.

And Willian's pass fed Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, who faced little resistance as he cut in before

curling into the top corner.

It was a chastening start to life back in the top flight for Fulham. Just like Craven Cottage — where the stand by the River Thames still is being constructed — manager Scott Parker has a lot of work ahead

if the west London club is to survive in the world's richest league.

The Premier League season started a month later than scheduled due to the pandemic that is still preventing fans from attending games.



**Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang curls one for Arsenal's third goal against Fulham**

## Hamilton takes pole at Tuscan GP; Bottas 2nd

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Mugello (Italy), Sept 12:** Lewis Hamilton took pole position, a record-extending 95th time, for the Tuscan Grand Prix Saturday ahead of his Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas, whose final attempt was ended after he had to slow down because Esteban Ocon span on track just ahead of him.

Max Verstappen was third for Red Bull, 0.365 behind Hamilton, while his teammate Alexander Albon was fourth ahead of Charles Leclerc in a commendable fifth for struggling Ferrari.

A win Sunday would move Hamilton just one behind Schumacher's record of 91 GP wins.

## OZ TAKE LEAD IN 3-ODI SERIES WITH A 19-RUN VICTORY IN FIRST MATCH

# Hazlewood gets top Billings

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Manchester, Sept 12:** Josh Hazlewood (3/26) bowled brilliantly and took a diving catch for the key wicket of Jonny Bairstow (84, 107b, 4x4, 4x6) to help Australia beat England by 19 runs despite a maiden century by Sam Billings (118, 110b, 14x4, 2x6) in the first of their three-match ODI series here.

Needing a record chase at Old Trafford of 295 to win Friday, England were reduced to 13/2 by Hazlewood and then 57/4 when leg-spinner Adam Zampa (4/55) took two of his four wickets.

Bairstow and Billings put on 103 for the fifth wicket, but their partnership ended when Hazlewood got across to his right in cow corner to take a catch on the dive to remove Bairstow.

Billings pushed through for a defiant and innovative hundred but ran out of time in the face of some solid bowling under the lights, eventually losing his wicket off the final ball of the match. England

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**AUSTRALIA 294/9** (Glenn Maxwell 77, Mitchell Marsh 73; Mark Wood 3/54, Jofra Archer 3/57) **BEAT ENGLAND 275/9** (Sam Billings 118, Jonny Bairstow 84; Adam Zampa 4/55, Josh Hazlewood 3/26) **by 19 runs.**

finished on 275/9.

Australia took the lead in the three-match series against the World Champions ahead of the second match here Sunday.

Put into bat in the teams' first ODI since last year's World Cup, Australia were also in trouble — though not in quite so grave a position as England — at 123/5 in the 24th over but recovered thanks to a stand of 126 runs by Glenn Maxwell (77, 59b, 4x4, 4x6) and Mitchell Marsh (73, 100b, 6x4).

Marsh played an important anchor role while Maxwell opened up. Maxwell hit paceman Jofra Archer (3/57) for consecutive sixes in the 44th over but chopped the next ball on. Following his first fifty in

two-and-half years, Marsh departed lbw to Mark Wood (3/54).

Mitchell Starc smashed a last-ball six to set England a highly competitive total on a slow pitch, the type England sometimes struggles on.

Jason Roy (3) and Joe Root (1) missed the recent T20 series between the teams and were out cheaply to Hazlewood, who caught and bowled Roy and got an edge behind off Root.

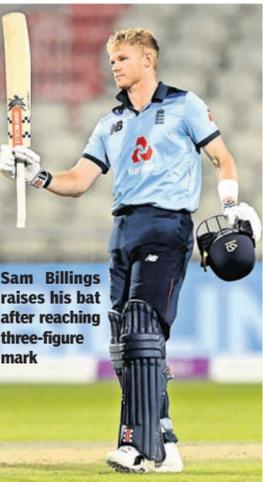
Dangermen Morgan (23) and Jos Buttler (1) then fell to Zampa. Bairstow dug in to reach his slowest ODI fifty — off 78 balls — before opting to go for some big hits to keep the run rate manageable and in the process he got out.

After Moeen Ali departed for six to give Hazlewood his third wicket, Australia were into the tail and were never really in danger of letting England back into the match.

Billings was playing in the absence of Ben Stokes — one of just two players missing from England's World Cup-winning lineup — and took his rare chance.



**Josh Hazlewood celebrates the wicket of Joe Root**



**Sam Billings raises his bat after reaching three-figure mark**

## NTHA holds webinar on evolution of sports

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 12:** Naval Tata Hockey Academy (NTHA) organised an interactive webinar Friday on "The Future to Peak Performance: How High Performance Centres, Performance Analysis and Sports Science is shaping up Indian Sports for a better tomorrow".

The webinar saw sportspersonalities from around the world discuss the evolution and future of Indian sports. The platform served as a great opportunity for sports enthusiasts across the country to hear the panelists speak and share their views on the renewed focus on sports in India and how it is preparing to compete with international athletes in the times to come.

The webinar session witnessed participation panelists including Olympian Floris Bovelander, technical director of Hockey Ace Foundation & NTHA Odisha;

Olympian Kazem Panjavi, chief coach of Odisha Weightlifting HPC; Rushdee Warley, CEO IIS & program director, Odisha JSW Swimming HPC; Heath Matthews, head of sports science & medicine (Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital & Research Institute); Dr Diggpal Singh Ranawat, director of Abhinav Futuristics and Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centres; and Ajit Markose, Endurance coach, Reliance Foundation Odisha.

The webinar was co-moderated by Rajiv Seth, project director of NTHA Odisha and renowned freelance journalist Diksha Tiwari.

Athletes training at the NTHA Academy here also participated in this webinar and asked questions to their favourite coaches and experts. The experts responded to their queries with their experienced opinions.

Bovelander spoke very highly about the popularity of sports in

Odisha, saying: "It is important to build the right environment to build the sporting spirit in the state. Race for winning medals does inspire the young athletes and motivates them to remain committed to their craft and focus on their goal."

He added, "NTHA Jamshedpur and Odisha have done tremendous work in reaching the grassroots in the past few years. We have reached about 7000 grassroots players via two hockey academies and HPCs. It is admirable to see the passion put behind this programme by Tata Steel and the State Governments."

Panjavi spoke about the current state of the weight lifting sport in the state. "There is tremendous talent in the Odisha athletes and the HPC here has been able to bring out some of the best talent through the grassroots programme."

Matthews spoke about the approach towards building a sporting ecosystem. "I strongly believe

that four key elements namely athletes or talent, corporates, sports associations or professionals and the state governments together make a great combination to creating a great sporting ecosystem.

"Odisha is blessed with the best combination of corporates, experts, leadership and government support. In Bhubaneswar, we are building athletic HPCs with a completely innovative and a holistic approach. We not only train the athletes and kids for playing the game but also educate them on the game, nutrition, health and mental preparedness."

Warley said: "Swimming as a sport is at a very developed stage right now in Odisha and I am glad the state government has provided us with the right facilities to coach the athletes. Creating a sporting environment, access to pools, upgradation of the HPCs will help in elevating India's performance in the upcoming games."