



THE GREAT REVELATION

Actor Rhea Chakraborty reveals two things of her late boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput that she possesses

LEISURE P2



CONNECTING KASHMIR

A 600-km-long highway will be constructed along the border touching all picturesque tourist spots in the Kashmir Valley

TWO STATES P7



BEIRUT ANGER

Protesters gather in Martyrs' Square to vent anger against the gov't's handling of explosion in the city

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, I can't go to that area wearing mask. Public might recognise me!

Aviation Min, DGCA warned back in 2011

CAPTAIN RANGANATHAN, MEMBER OF CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL, A GOVERNMENT-APPOINTED AIR SAFETY PANEL, HAD SOUNDED CAUTION THEN

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: Precious lives have been lost in the Air India Express runway mishap Friday evening. The Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and the Airports Authority of India (AAI) were alerted about the dangers associated with the runway of the Kozhikode airport in 2011, it was revealed.

The civil aviation authorities were alerted about the dangers associated with the Kozhikode runway by Captain Ranganathan, Member Ops-CASAC (Civil Aviation Safety Advisory Council, a government-appointed air safety panel) in a letter dated June 17, 2011.

The letter was addressed jointly to Naseem Zaidi, Civil Aviation Secretary and Chairman, CASAC, and Bharat Bhushan of the DGCA.

"It is a dangerous situation, especially in wet conditions. The Runway No. 10 should not be permitted in view of the lack of Runway End Safety Areas (RESA) and the terrain beyond the end of the runway," Ranganathan had forewarned in what appears to be both a warning and a premonition.

"All the flights which land on Runway 10 in tailwind conditions are endangering the lives of all on board," Ranganathan had written.

"I understand that Runway 10 ILS is being used on a trial basis at Calicut. Some of the crew members are even ac-



Security personnel stand guard near the mangled remains of an Air India Express flight, en route from Dubai, after it skidded off the runway while landing Friday night, at Karipur in Kozhikode, Saturday

KOZHIKODE AIRPLANE MISHAP

cepting VOR approaches on Runway 10. The reason is the lower minima than Runway 28," he had said in the letter.

In the letter, he referred to an inspection report by Arun Rao which was submitted to the civil aviation authorities. In the letter, he blamed the AAI. "There has been no effort on the part of the AAI to rectify the safety infringements that Arun Rao pointed out in 2010," Ranganathan wrote.

The airlines have maintained that all their pilots have completed the Approach and Landing Accident Reduction (ALAR) training and the Flight Standards Directorate (FSD) appears to be satisfied with the response.

"In spite of the dangers, if the crew

accepts a landing in wet and tailwind conditions, their concept of ALAR is poor," he wrote in the letter.

"Calicut runway does not have the minimum RESA on one end and no RESA on the other. The runway strip is just half the minimum width laid down in ICAO Annex 4. This fact was known to the DGCA team that has been conducting inspections and safety assessments during the past several years. Have they considered the dangers involved? Has the DGCA or the airlines laid down any operational restrictions or special procedures," Ranganathan had asked.

He even alluded to the Mangalore incident. "The Air India Express incident in Mangalore should have alerted

WHAT IS A 'TABLETOP RUNWAY'?

18 people died and 16 were severely injured in Kerala Friday after a Boeing-737 overshot a runway known as a 'tabletop' in the aviation industry

- Tabletop runways are often constructed by excavating the peaks of hills
- Such runways have steep drops at one or both ends
- They are found in mountainous areas where flat land is scarce, or in low-lying areas like Kozhikode where space is at a premium or there is fear of waterlogging at ground level
- In May 2010, an AI flight landing at Mangalore airport overshot the tabletop runway there and burst into flames
- Other examples include the international airport of Nepal in mountainous Kathmandu

the AAI to make the runway conditions safe. We have brought up the issue of the RESA during the initial CASAC sub-group meetings. We had specifically mentioned that declared distances for both runways have to be reduced in order to comply with the ICAO requirement," he had warned.

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Mahanadi water tribunal issues notice to Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 8: Mahanadi Water Dispute Tribunal Saturday issued a notice to the Union government in an application filed by Odisha seeking information related to various projects being carried by Chhattisgarh on Mahanadi basin.

A three-judge bench of the tribunal headed by Chairperson AM Khanwilkarand comprising Justices Indermeet Kaur and Ravi Ranjan asked the state of Odisha to submit common format which was devised by the Krishna and Cauvery water dispute tribunals to summarise all the data related to Mahanadi water dispute.

The bench also asked the Central Water Commission, IMD and Central Ground Water Board to provide the documents sought by state of Odisha with respect to Mahanadi water dispute. The tribunal posted the matter for hearing August 29.

Significantly, senior advocate Mohan Katarki, appearing for Odisha, sub-



mitted in the tribunal that a common format was already devised by Krishna and Cauvery river water dispute tribunals and that can be used to summarise the information related to Mahanadi water. Data related to need and use of Mahanadi basin water by Odisha, Chhattisgarh and other states would be kept in common format and the tribunal while adjudicating the matter will assess the information available in the common format.

The counsel for Chhattisgarh had earlier argued that a common format should be prepared by the Central Water Commission.

It is to be mentioned here that Odisha and Chhattisgarh have filed petitions in the Mahanadi water dispute tribunal with respect to sharing of Mahanadi river water.

SHORT TAKES

GC Murmu sworn in as CAG

New Delhi: Former Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu was Saturday sworn in as the new Comptroller and Auditor General of India. He took the oath of office before President Ram Nath Kovind at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here at 10.30 am. Murmu's tenure will be up to November 20, 2024. Murmu, a former 1985-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Gujarat cadre, succeeds Rajiv Mehriishi, who demitted the CAG office Friday.

Mild magnitude quake hits state

Bhubaneswar: A mild earthquake measuring 3.8 on the Richter scale hit parts of Odisha's Ganjam and Gajapati districts Saturday, the Met centre said, adding there were no reports of any damage or casualties. According to the centre, the earthquake struck 73 km West South-West (WSW) of Berhampur at 7.30 a.m. "It's centre was located near to Paribheta and Tandiguda locations of Gajapati district, which is near to R. Udayagiri area," it said.

Nikhil Rath completes 'Gaganyaan' training

Bhubaneswar: Odia IAF pilot Wing Commander Nikhil Rath is one among the four astronauts selected for 'Gaganyaan', India's first manned mission to space in 2022. Governor Ganeshi Lal and two Central ministers Saturday congratulated Bolangir-born Nikhil. Rath along with three other astronauts from India have completed their training at Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Russia.

12 more in Odisha succumb to COVID

TOTAL COVID CASES IN THE STATE CROSS 44,000-MARK

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The total number of COVID-19 cases in Odisha crossed the 44,000-mark Saturday with 1,643 fresh infections, while the toll climbed to 259 as 12 more people succumbed to the disease, a Health Department official said.

The coronavirus tally in the state now stands at 44,193, he said.

Of the fresh fatalities, two each were reported from Ganjam, Kandhamal, Keonjhar and Khurda, while one each from Balasore, Bargarh, Gajapati and Sundargarh districts, the official added. "Regret to inform the demise of 12 COVID positive patients while undergoing treatment in hospitals," he said. Three more coronavirus patients

- 3 more coronavirus patients - one each from Mayurbhanj, Khurda and Balasore - also died in the state
- But their deaths were attributed to other ailments

- one each from Mayurbhanj, Khurda and Balasore - also died in the state, but their deaths were attributed to other ailments, the official said, adding that the number of such fatalities increased to 48.

Of the 259 COVID-19 deaths reported in the state so far, Ganjam, the worst-hit district by the coronavirus pandemic, accounted for the highest at 125, followed by Khurda (33), Sundargarh (17), Gajapati (16), Cuttack (11) and Rayagada (10), he said.

THEY RETURN

Labourers from Uttar Pradesh carrying their belongings arrive at Anand Vihar Bus Terminal for local travel, during Unlock 3.0, in New Delhi, Saturday. Nearly two-thirds of migrant workers, who had left for home due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, have either returned to cities or wish to do so in absence of skilled employment in villages, says a study that surveyed 4,835 households

PTI PHOTO

Last-ditch talks on new aid for US economy fail

AGENCIES

Washington, August 8: A last-ditch effort by Democrats to revive Capitol Hill talks on vital COVID-19 rescue money collapsed in disappointment at week's end. Washington gridlock will mean more hardship for millions of people who are losing enhanced jobless benefits and further damage for an economy pummeled by the still-raging coronavirus.

President Donald Trump said Friday night he was likely to issue more limited executive orders related to COVID, perhaps in the next day or so, if he cannot reach a broad agreement with Congress.

The day's negotiations at the Capitol added up to only "a disappointing meeting," declared top Senate Democrat Chuck Schumer, saying the White House had rejected an offer by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to curb Democratic demands by about USD 1 trillion.

He urged the White House to "negotiate with Democrats and meet us in the middle. Don't say it's your way or no way."

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said, "Unfortunately, we did not make any progress today." Republicans said Pelosi was relying on budget manoeuvres to curb costs and contended she has overplayed her hand.

Often an impasse in Washington is of little consequence for the public - not so this time.

It means longer and perhaps permanent expiration of a \$600-per-week bonus pandemic jobless benefit that's kept millions of people from falling into poverty.

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	32.6°C	34.2°C
TEMP MIN	25.6°C	24.0°C
Humidity	95%	94%
Rainfall	6.7mm	Nil

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

Saudi Arabia says no 'oil on loan' to Pakistan

Pak had borrowed a \$6.2 billion loan from Saudi Arabia in 2018

AGENCIES

Islamabad/New Delhi, August 8: Saudi Arabia has halted the provision of 'oil on loan' for Pakistan after the Imran Khan government threatened to split the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) over Kashmir.

Hit by a severe economic crisis, Pakistan had borrowed a \$6.2 billion loan from Saudi Arabia in 2018. The loan package included a pro-



vision under which Saudi Arabia granted Pakistan \$3.2 billion worth of oil, a year on deferred payments.

Pakistani media Saturday said that the provision meant for Islamabad expired two months ago

and has not been renewed by Riyadh. Instead, Islamabad has prematurely returned \$1 billion Saudi loan, four months ahead of repayment period, The Express Tribune said quoting sources and Sajid Qazi,

If you (OIC) cannot convene it (meet on Art 370 abrogation), then I'll be compelled to ask PM Imran Khan to call a meeting of the Islamic countries that are ready to stand with us on the issue of Kashmir

SHAH MEHMOOD QURESHI | FOREIGN MINISTER, PAKISTAN (HAD SAID)

the spokesperson of the Petroleum Division.

Recently Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi during a talk show on a news channel had threatened that if the OIC headed by Saudi Arabia did not

convene a foreign ministers' meeting on Kashmir, Prime Minister Imran Khan would hold it on his own with his allies among the Islamic countries.

"If you cannot convene it, then I'll be compelled to ask Prime Minister Imran Khan to call a meeting of the Islamic countries that are ready to stand with us on the issue of Kashmir..." he had threatened on Ary news channel.

The OIC, the biggest bloc of Islamic countries in the world, has repeatedly declined Islamabad's several requests to hold a meeting on Indian Kashmir - a region which Pakistan Army attempted to invade four times in the last seven decades and where it has been wag-

ing a proxy war against India for last three decades.

Since August 2019, when India revoked special status of the Jammu and Kashmir state and brought it directly under the control of the Central government by bifurcating it into two Union Territories, the Imran Khan government has been seeking support of the 57-member OIC over the issue in Pakistan's favour.

One of the major reasons for OIC's lack of support for Pakistan has been Riyadh's displeasure with Islamabad's proximity with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who nurtures the ambition of replacing Saudi Arabia as leader of all the Sunni Islamic countries.

leisure



FRIENDS REUNION WILL BE SPECIAL: JENNIFER ANISTON

The much-awaited Friends reunion may have been deferred twice already owing to the Covid pandemic, but actress Jennifer Aniston promises the delay gives the cast and crew time to make the experience even more special for fans, reports *deadline.com*

MADONNA HAS BEEN WRITING A SCREENPLAY

Singer Madonna has revealed that she has been writing a screenplay lately. The pop diva has been collaborating with *Juno* writer Diablo Cody. In a black-and-white video Madonna has shared, she can be seen sitting at a discussion with Cody, reports *metro.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today even if you are alone, you may not really feel lonely. You will desire to listen to your inner self, so that you can express yourself more imaginatively. Ganesh says spend the evening with your beloved who can listen to your voice in your silence also.

TAURUS
Your business is going to thrive this day, says Ganesh. Your plans, projections, speculations and gambles are likely to pay off and give you good dividends. You will be admired and respected in the business world for your honesty and integrity.

GEMINI
You will think about the issues faced by other people as well as about increasing your social standing and elevating your social esteem. It is an extremely profitable day for those in the retail business and hence make the most of it, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Not a good day for you in terms of fortune and opportunities. You will constantly find yourself in unwanted tricky situations without any fault of yours. You, however, are likely to know what to do in such situations by now, for you have been in too many of those in the past.

LEO
Working hard, or hardly working – there is a vast difference between the two. You would be wiser to be working hard today, especially if it is success that you desire, says Ganesh. Remember that there is no substitute for hard work, and the sooner you realise this, the better.

VIRGO
The bulb of ideas will burn bright today. A possible see-saw between your contractual obligation and current duties may baffle you. New contacts will stand you in good stead. Blood will prove thicker, and family and friends will consolidate their place in your life.

LIBRA
Letting things build up inside you is never a good idea. Learn from this as there is every possibility that today might turn out to be an aggravating and exasperating day for you. You may feel that way due to all the amassed emotions and resentments, so let it all go. It would be a good idea to take a break from the routine and bring in some freshness. Recharge yourself by indulging in some fun and frolic today, says Ganesh.

SCORPIO
It is very likely that the moment of victory is often preceded by a moment of peril; but that is not where the danger ends. In the heat of victory, arrogance and overconfidence can push you away from what you aimed for. So, it is important for you to learn when to stop in victory.

SAGITTARIUS
Life is bubbling within you and you shall be in a hyper-elevated state of bliss today. Your high-spirits and energy will inspire you to perform at your best. Moreover, your inner voice will be loud and bellowing. Make the most of this superb day, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You will be overpowered with nostalgia and may long to get in touch with old pals. And as Ganesh says, chances are that you may take a liking to your ex-lover, while simultaneously strengthening your social standing. All in all, the day will be a productive one.

AQUARIUS
Ganesh says it's okay to cry on somebody's shoulders. In fact, sharing problems lightens the load, and if nothing else, your friends will think you're as human as them. You will feel much better by evening and will even smile a little, says Ganesh.

PISCES
Today your professional and love life will cause worry. You will want to be emotionally balanced but you may not find the time to sort things out. Long sightedness and open discussions will help resolve matters easily.

SSR's 'properties' that Rhea possesses

Mumbai: Actress Rhea Chakraborty has revealed the only two things of her late boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput that she possesses.

Rhea's lawyer Satish Maneshinde has shared a photo of a 'gratitude list' written by Sushant on Rhea's notebook, where he has mentioned that he is grateful for his life and the presence of Rhea's family in his life.

She also shared a photo of the late actor's sipper with Chhichhore - the title of Sushant's 2019 hit - written on it.

"The only property of Sushant that I possess. And this is his handwriting lillu is showik (her brother), bebu is me, sir is my dad, ma'am is my mom, fudge is his dog," Rhea explained the names on the note.

The note is undated and it comes a day after the Enforcement Directorate questioned Rhea, her brother Showik, her chartered accountant Ritesh Shah and former manager Shruti Modi for over eight hours in connection with the money laundering probe, in the wake of

Sushant's death. Payal Dev composes her first monsoon song

Mumbai: Singer-composer Payal Dev is set to release her first monsoon song. Titled *Baarish*, the song is a beautiful journey, Payal says, adding that she is super excited about this.

On how she worked on the song, the Tum hi aana composer shared: "I was brainstorming on a new composition, Kunaal Verma had beautifully penned the lyrics for it. Then I made a scratch of this melody with Aditya Dev, who produced it and the label liked it too."

The video features popular TV couple Mohsin Khan and Shivangi Joshi.

"I believe they have done more justice to the song. I hope the audience enjoys this song as much as we did while making it," said Payal.



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Abhishek tests Covid -ve, discharged

Mumbai: Abhishek Bachchan has tested negative for Covid-19 and has been discharged from hospital, the actor revealed on his verified Twitter and Instagram accounts Saturday afternoon.

"A promise is a promise! This afternoon I tested Covid-19 NEGATIVE!!! I told you guys I'd beat this. thank you all for your prayers for me and my family. My eternal gratitude to the doctors and nursing staff at Nanavati hospital for all that they have done. THANK YOU!"

tweeted @juniorbachchan on his blue-tick Twitter handle. Shortly after that Abhishek posted a picture on Instagram of the 'care board' that was maintained on his behalf at the hospital. On the board, the 'Discharge Plan' column says, 'Yes'.



Batch of 2020 makes it to Toronto film fest

RELEASED A FEW WEEKS AGO, THIS HOUR-LONG EDUCATIONAL DOCUMENTARY WAS THE FIRST TO BE COMPLETELY WRITTEN, SHOT AND PRODUCED DURING THE LOCKDOWN

New Delhi: India's most celebrated educational docu-film *Batch of 2020* will share screen space with four other Indian regional feature films as a prestigious entry to the International Indian Film Festival in Toronto (IIFFT).

Set to be screened on the evening of August 10 - the graduation documentary is written, narrated by debut director Anto Philip and produced under the Under 25 Studios banner. Released a few weeks ago, this hour-long educational documentary was the first to be completely written, shot and produced during the lockdown; it gathered over 100K views in less than 48 hours. It has been heralded as the 'true north' for India's graduating 2020 batch by offering a repository of information, inspiration, and insights by chosen motivators and disruptors who are educators, em-



ployers, entertainers, CEOs and leaders from varied backgrounds and graduation batches.

Via *Batch of 2020* Philip successfully brought together stalwarts such as Armaan Malik, Anupama Chopra, Bryden-Parth, Debosmita Majumder, Deepika Padukone, Dhruv Chitgopekar, Hrithik Roshan,

Jha, Roshan Abbas and Tanmay Bhat, to address key topics that India's batch of 2020 will find value in. These included chats around "Everything you need to know about graduating in 2020", "Lessons from other batches", "First-Year after graduation", "Dropping Out", and others. "For many students across the Indian sub-

continent, their graduation was unceremoniously stolen by COVID-19, leaving many confused and disillusioned by what their future could possibly hold for them now," says Philip, Co-founder of Under 25.

"Our film is a brave message of unconformity for all the students, educators, parents or anyone across the world who has, throughout the years, succumbed to the pressure and anxiety of being defined by just certificates and degrees. We are grateful to IIFFT who will help spread our message to a global audience and inspire millions to break free from these traditional shackles and cultivate a new mindset for the new dawn that is upon us," added Philip.

Philip has also become the youngest director to be selected for a feature film screening at the renowned festival in 2020.

FUN post

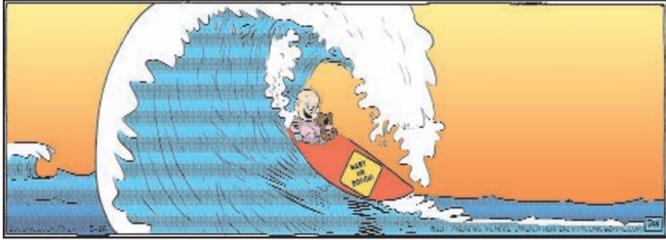
PEANUTS



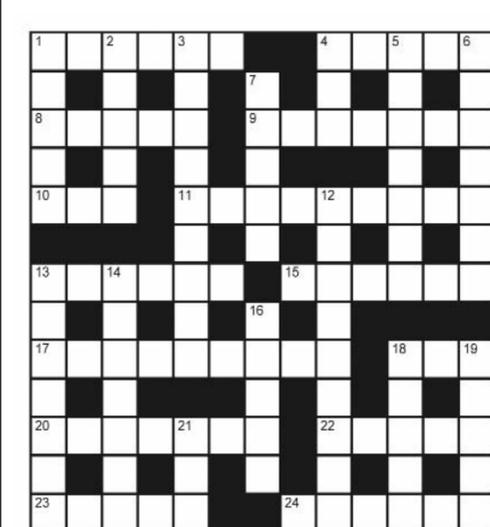
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Kind of iron
 - 4 Old Roman port
 - 8 "Pecr Gynt" dramatist
 - 9 Declines
 - 10 Like some wines
 - 11 Mortify
 - 13 Resting places
 - 15 Skewer
 - 17 Imagines
 - 18 Chinese tea
 - 20 Swanky
 - 22 La Scala offering
 - 23 Repentant
 - 24 "Romeo and Juliet" setting
 - 5 Mexican dish
 - 6 Spartan
 - 7 Picture holder
 - 12 Sedimentary rock
 - 13 Some angels
 - 14 Personal guru
 - 16 Shoe parts
 - 18 Doctrine
 - 19 Small terrestrial lizard
 - 21 "___ luck?"

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



78TH ANNIVERSARY OF

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT



THE SONS OF THE SOIL & THEIR VALOUR...



NILAMANI SAMAL

Born February 23, 1923, Nilamani Samal, 97, of Balipadia under Barchana block in Jajpur had responded to the clarion call by Gandhiji and joined the Quit India Movement in 1942. Samal was recently elected as the President of Odisha Freedom Fighters' Association.

I was then 17-year old... I used to listen to the speeches of Gandhiji and other leaders which inspired me to join the local leaders in fight against the Britishers. I was arrested and persuaded by local police to leave the protest for the safety of my family. But I told them that this is the fight for our motherland and will not tolerate the British colonialism anymore. It's 'do or die' for us. I was sent to jail in Cuttack for three years. After independence, I started teaching at a school in Barchana block for 15 years



BISWANATH DAS

Centenarian Biswanath Das, 102, of Bhagaban Sindhol under Balikuda block in Jagatsinghpur district still remembers the golden moment when India got Independence. At this age, Das is still active and performs all his daily chores himself. He is still able to resolve disputes and address problems whenever he is approached. Das claims that he has never suffered from any major disease.

I was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi to join the struggle for Independence. During that time, I used to ride my bicycle and I used to cover long distances on my cycle to take part in the Freedom Movement and campaigns. I was imprisoned during Quit India Movement in 1942 and 1943. I am happy with everything that I've done in my life. Take care of your health. It is the greatest gift for all



DEBANANDA GUPTA

Debananda Gupta, 94, of Kalami village under Maneswar block in Sambalpur district also drew the inspirations from Gandhiji and other leaders and joined the freedom struggle. He had also faced arrest and imprisonment when he along with his friend joined the Independence struggle. Gupta had undergone one-year jail term.

During the Quit India Movement, I along with my friends fought for the freedom of the country. I was arrested for protesting against the British rule. I was presented in a local court which sentenced me to nine months jail and imposed a penalty of ₹50. When I declined to pay the fine, they extended the jail term to one year



SAHADEB BEHERA

Freedom fighter Sahadeb Behera, 98, of Kantilo Chhamusahi Patna in Nayagarh district was a teen when he joined the Quit India Movement. He was inspired by the speeches of Gandhiji, Sardar Ballabhbai Patel and others.

I was 19-year old when the bugle for Quit India Movement blew. Gandhiji, Sardar Ballabhbai Patel and Morarji Desai came to Cuttack Swaraja Ashram and delivered inspiring speeches. The moment they inspired us to join Quit India Movement, I simply followed them and joined the struggle for Independence. I still remember, before Quit India Movement, I was into hiding from the British administration. I still feel the Quit India Movement on August 8 every year which makes me feel as a warrior



ESHWAR BISOI

Freedom fighter Eshwar Bisoi was born in 1921. The 99-year old freedom fighter belongs to Majhiakhanada village in Nayagarh. Bisoi along with his father had left his village at a tender age to Rangoon and joined Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) created by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose. He feels proud to be part of the Indian freedom movement.

I joined the Quit India Movement under the guidance of Subhash Chandra Bose and still feel proud to be a part of the movement. Let's remember all those who have lost their lives during the movement and wish every Indian to remember the sacrifices made by all who had joined the movement

Legacy of Odisha

The Quit India Movement, more than anything else, united the people against British rule. Odisha's contribution to the final phase of freedom struggle has not been properly documented. Orissa POST takes a look on how the sons of the soil showed their valour in the revolt against the British...



FILE PHOTOS

When the Cripps Mission failed, Mahatma Gandhi August 8, 1942, made a call for 'Do or Die' in his Quit India speech delivered in Bombay at the Gowalia Tank Maidan. On the same day, at the All-India Congress Committee (AICC) session in Bombay, Gandhiji launched a resolution for the 'Quit India' movement. The next day, Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and many other leaders of the Indian National Congress were arrested by the British Government. Disorderly and non-violent demonstrations took place throughout the country in the following days.

The AICC meeting held at Bombay to pass Quit India resolution was attended by five Odia leaders. They were Harekrushna Mahatab, Malati Chaudhury,

Laxminarayan Mishra, Radhakrushna Biswasroy and Surendranath Dwivedy. Most of them were arrested at Bombay following Gandhiji's detention. When Surendranath Dwivedy met his private secretary at Birla Bhavan, he was handed over a small piece of paper containing a message by Gandhiji which read "Paralyse the administration. We are free from today, Be your own leader: Do or Die." These words ignited the spirits of the people of Odisha to participate in the patriotic movement.

Cuttack was the nerve centre for the Quit India Movement in Odisha. The first re-

sponse was from the students of Ravenshaw College. On August 12, the students of Ravenshaw College, led by Bhagirathi Mishra, Upendra Mohanty, Narasingha Tripathy, Biren Mitra, Durga Charan Mohanty and Manmohan Mishra, organised public meetings to condemn the arrest of Congress leaders by the Government. On August 14, under leadership of Banamali Patnaik, Ashok Das, Biren Mitra, Bibudhendra Mishra and Suraj Mal Saha, about 200 students entered the college premises and burned records and laboratories. Bibudhendra and Saha were later arrested and were confined in Behrampur Central Jail. The students had coined a term S.N.S. (Secret News Service) and notices and bulletins were circulated under this banner.

Socialists under Surendran Nath Dwivedy took lead and about 71 incidents of large-scale burning, loot and sabotage in various parts of Cuttack was reported during August.

Koraput was a partially excluded area and it was not administered by laws and regulations of the

province. It was primarily noted for its tribal population who lived in the forest and hilly areas and its literacy rate was the lowest in the province. However, Laxman Naik, the 'Gandhi of Malkangiri' proved to be a hero of Quit India movement. By August 14, most of the Congress leaders of Koraput were in jail as the district Congress committee was declared illegal. Naik mobilised the tribals to offer stiff resistance to the British. On August 21, 1942, Laxman, along with 1,000 people, gheraoed the Mathili police station in Malkangiri. However, they were intercepted by the police and magistrate Mujibar Rahman gave orders to lathi charge and open fire.

As a result of the en-

counter, five persons were killed and 17 were injured. Naik himself fell unconscious and lay by the side of the body of a forest guard who come to control agitators and was inadvertently shot by police.

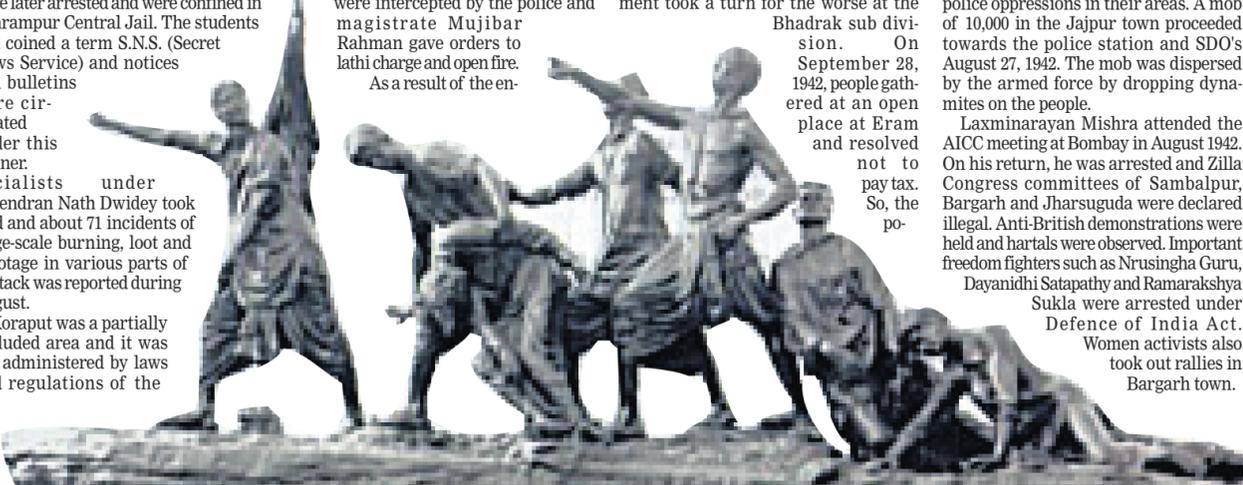
The police oppression was most severe in Balasore district. At the beginning of the movement, some prominent Congress leaders were arrested. On August 17, 1942, a mob of about 5,000 armed men invaded the police station in Bhandaripokhari village and injured a police official, smashed the furniture and tore records in the police station. However, the movement took a turn for the worse at the Bhadrak sub division. On September 28, 1942, people gathered at an open place at Eram and resolved not to pay tax. So, the po-

lice came to arrest some leaders. When the police arrived, people started blowing conches and about 5,000 people armed with lathis gathered. As the 'choukidars' were carrying the luggage of police officials to the residence of a Zamindar, two satyagrahis Ratnakar Biswal and Mani Bej snatched them away by saying "You cannot carry the belongings of the British Government." Over this, DSP Kunja Bihari Mahanty was enraged and ordered open fire on the mob at Melan Ground. Official reports said that about 26 persons were killed and 54 persons were injured. Later the police unleashed a reign of terror over Eram and surrounding villages.

The Puri district was comparatively quiet during the movement. Sulakshana Mali Jema, wife of zamindar of Manijong, initiated the movement by proposing to occupy the police station of Nimapara. A meeting was held September 16 to discuss the plan at Barabati Field. Agitators proceeded towards the police station and pelted stones at the police force. Uchhab Mallick, a dalit agitator, made efforts to break the police cordon following which the police fired upon the people leading to death of Uchhab and injury to 16 others. Hereafter, the police arrested 41 persons including Bhabani Patnaik, Gajendra Malik (son of Uchhab Mallick), Padma Charan Samantasinghar, Pitabas Sahu and many others.

Maximum cases of revolutionary activities were reported in Jajpur subdivision of Cuttack district. The revolutionary mob at Jajpur set afire police uniforms in twenty six places, six canal revenue offices, four post-offices, five excisable articles, six zamindari Kutcheries, and four PWD bungalows in August 1942. The violent mob started burning various government offices and cut down the embankments, canals and telegraph lines in different areas of Jajpur. In Binjharpur, a violent mob attacked police persons when the latter were escorting some prisoners. The mob was dispersed after police firing. In some villages, young men formed defence associations for fighting against police oppressions in their areas. A mob of 10,000 in the Jajpur town proceeded towards the police station and SDO's on August 27, 1942. The mob was dispersed by the armed force by dropping dynamites on the people.

Laxminarayan Mishra attended the AICC meeting at Bombay in August 1942. On his return, he was arrested and Zilla Congress committees of Sambalpur, Bargarh and Jharsuguda were declared illegal. Anti-British demonstrations were held and hartals were observed. Important freedom fighters such as Nrusingha Guru, Dayanidhi Satapathy and Ramarakshya Sukla were arrested under Defence of India Act. Women activists also took out rallies in Bargarh town.



Coming soon: 65 civil judge courts in state

RAIN PAIN



Motorists negotiating a waterlogged stretch on Rasulgarh-Bomikhal road in Bhubaneswar following heavy rain, Saturday

JUSTICE DELIVERY



Three new courts would be set up at Chandrapur, Muniguda and Padampur in Rayagada district while Malkangiri would get new courts at Mathili and Kudumuluguma. Similarly, Balasore district is all set to get two new courts at Oupada and Khaira while a new court would be established at Gania in Nayagarh

New courts would come up at Balia, Bolagarh, Balipatna and Chilika in Khurda district while Angul district would get the same at Banarpal and Kishorenagar in Angul

The western Odisha district of Bargarh would get new courts at Gaisilet, Paikamala and Bijepur while Jharsuguda district will have the same at Lakhanpur, Laikera and Kirimira

trict while Malkangiri would get new courts at Mathili and Kudumuluguma. Similarly, Balasore district is all set to get two new courts at Oupada and Khaira while a new court would be established at Gania in Nayagarh.

Polsara while Jajpur district would get the same at Baripal, Binjharpur and Sukinda.

Besides, three new courts would be set up at Chandrapur, Muniguda and Padampur in Rayagada dis-

On the other hand, the western Odisha district of Bargarh would get new courts at Gaisilet, Paikamala and Bijepur while Jharsuguda district will have the same at Lakhanpur, Laikera and Kirimira. The letter further said that new

civil judge courts would come up at Golamunda, Thuamulrampur, Kariamunda and Lanjigarh in Kalahandi district. Similarly, Kandhamal would get new courts at Tumudibandh, Raikia and Chakapad in Kandhamal.

According to the letter, new courts would come up at Balia, Bolagarh, Balipatna and Chilika in Khurda district while Angul district would get the same at Banarpal and Kishorenagar in Angul.

In addition to that, new courts will be set up at Jashipur, Rasagovindapur and Thakurmunda in Mayurbhanj. Cuttack district would get new courts at Nischintakoli, Dampara and Mahanga.

Bolangir district would get its lone new court at Bangomunda while Jagatsinghpur would get the same at Erasama. Nabarangpur is scheduled to get two civil judge courts at Kosagumuda and Jharigaon.

As per the letter, a new court would be set up at Rajkanika in Kendrapara while Sambalpur will get a new court at Rengali.

Experts seek more tests to contain pandemic in Cuttack

Heavy rain to occur in south, interior Odisha

A fresh low pressure over north and adjoining west central Bay of Bengal to take shape in 24 hours

POST NEWS NETWORK

Met Centre director HR Biswas.

heavy rain Monday.

and strong monsoon current, strong surface wind speed reaching 40-50 kmph is likely over west central Bay of Bengal, the Met department said. The weathermen advised fishermen not to venture into deep sea of west central Bay of Bengal.

In view of the IMD prediction, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena has advised all Collectors to closely monitor the situation and remain prepared to meet water-logging or flood like situation including in urban areas. The Collectors are also instructed to ensure that fishermen follow the advisory strictly.



and Abdul Akhtar, project director, district rural development agency (DRDA).

The two had a discussion with police commissioner Sudhansu Sarangi and later with CMC commissioner Das and DCP Prateek Singh to take proper measures to check the spread of coronavirus in Malgond area of the city. The meeting decided to provide duty passes to labourers and staff in the area on a rotation basis and take steps to make them work separately.

The meeting also decided to target reducing the death toll based on Covid combat measures and medical consultation facilities at SCB Medical College and Hospital and at Acharya Harihar Post Graduate Institute of Cancer (AH-PGIC) in Cuttack.

Dr Annada Prasad Pattnaik, superintendent, Dr Dattaswar Hota, principal of SCB Medical College and Hospital and Dr Lalatendu Sarangi, director, AHPGIC talked about various steps being taken in the hospital to contain the Covid pandemic.

CDMO Dr Satyabrata Chhotray said that 2,855 persons have been identified as Covid positives through testing of 37,101 samples in RTPCR and 7,495 samples through antigen testing. He said testing of 900 to 1,000 samples are being conducted on a daily basis which will be increased in the coming days.

Dr Aswini Jena, director of Aswini Hospital said steps are being taken to install 50 more beds in the Covid hospital. Rural SP B Jugalkishore and senior officials attended the meeting.

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Saturday said heavy to very heavy rainfall will occur in south Odisha and some interior pockets of the state from Sunday.

A cyclonic circulation between 3.6 km & 5.8 km above mean sea level has been formed over northwest Bay of Bengal & neighbourhood. Under its influence, a low pressure area is likely to form over north and adjoining west central Bay of Bengal by Sunday. This system will bring heavy rainfall in the south and interior Odisha, said Bhubaneswar

PUJARI TESTS COVID POSITIVE

Bhubaneswar: BJP leader and Bargarh MP Suresh Pujari has tested positive for Covid-19. Pujari through his twitter handle informed about contracting the virus. "Even though I did not have any symptoms, I got myself tested for Covid-19 yesterday. Today Bargarh Collector informed me that I am positive," Pujari tweeted. The MP said he is in home isolation on the advice of doctors and the District Collector and his health condition is good.

Surge in +ves due to increased testing: BMC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: With a sudden surge in COVID cases in the state capital, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Saturday clarified that the rise in cases was due to increased number of testing that has risen to 30 per cent over past 10 days.

The BMC until Tuesday reported 190 new cases, raising the city's tally of COVID cases to 3,763. Out of these, 1,262 cases have been detected over last 10 days. Moreover, out of the total active cases, 207 are from slum areas and more than 37 cases are being reported from five major slums of which Kancha Sahi has the highest 21 cases.

Addressing the media, BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary said, "Testing in the city has increased by 30% and this has helped in larger detection of the infection. On July 29th, only 1749 tests were carried out which detected 105 positives. However, 2285 tests were done, August 7 which detected 190 cases."



Chaudhary also mentioned that testing teams have gone up to 13 to meet the increased rate of testing. However, the commissioner also said that the civic authorities are facing challenges with people not coming forward for testing. "We have allowed most cases for home quarantines and in critical cases we have immediately shifted people to COVID hospitals. Thus, people should not panic and come ahead for testing," he requested.

Meanwhile, speaking over the improved recovery rate, Chaudhary stated a 13% improvement in recovery cases. As per the latest information, the city has 2360 recovered and 1383 active cases out of 3763 cases. "The recovery rate stood only 50 per cent until 10 days ago, however, it now stands at 63.16%," the commissioner said.

Robbers' gang busted in City

Bhubaneswar: The special squad of Commissionerate Police has busted a looters' gang involved in several car lifting and robbery incidents in the city and its adjoining areas. The squad arrested four members of the gang including Manua, the mastermind, from Pipili. According to sources, the gang also allegedly looted a gold chain and other ornaments of Vigilance DSP, Tanuja Mohanty, from near her residence July 26.

Three of family critical in LPG blast

Kendrapara: Three members of a family sustained critical burn injuries in an LPG cylinder blast while their house was completely charred at Dhumat village under this tehsil and district, Saturday. The injured persons were identified as Rama Chandra Nayak, 50, his wife Sasmita, 45 and daughter Varsha, 2, in the village. Their house and ₹50,000 which the couple had saved for construction of a new house was completely destroyed in the fire. They were rushed to the district headquarters hospital from where doctors administered their treatment. The incident occurred when Sasmita was preparing tea in the morning. Fire personnel rushed to the spot and doused the fire.

Cyber crooks dupe lady professor



pay account. However, the amount could not be credited to the payee's bank account due to some technical glitches. Meanwhile, she also found that the same amount was debited to her bank account.

Subsequently, she searched the contact number of Google Pay cus-

tomers care on the internet so that she could officially request for the refund. The victim came across as a fake website https://countryloxliving.business.site claiming to officially help customers get refund from Google Pay. None picked up the call when she tried to make contact with the executive mentioned in the website. Later, the fraudster phoned her and asked her to download the Google Pay app as per his instructions. Accordingly, the victim entered the codes and account details including a different IFSC code on the new Google Pay app

downloaded according to the instructions by the accused. The accused also told the victim that she had to transfer the EMI amount again using the new IFSC code through the fresh downloaded app. A few minutes later, the accused again called her and asked her to pay ₹8296 once more so that the refund process could be completed. However, she disconnected the call immediately smelling foul play. Subsequently, she found around ₹60000 was withdrawn from her account in two installments. Police have started an investigation into the case.

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Bamboo seed balls to keep jumbos off villages

BPUT STUDENTS COMPLAIN SNAGS DURING ONLINE TESTS



"Man-elephant conflict continues to pose trouble for Athgarh forest division area from time to time. We are hopeful that bamboo cover in the forest will check the conflict to a great extent. Bamboo shoots are relished by elephants. We are highly optimistic that it will meet the food requirement of wild elephants in

their habitat and they will not stray out of the forest in search of food."

Officials of the forest department and people bearing the brunt of elephant depredation nurture hope that growing bamboos will be a game-changer in confining elephants to forest limits.

GAME CHANGER

Officials of the forest department and people bearing the brunt of elephant depredation nurture hope that growing bamboos will be a game-changer in confining elephants to forest limits

'Dendro calamus' bamboo or Salia bamboo seed balls were prepared by community involvement and were dropped to restock salia bamboo to enrich elephant habitats in 38 reserve forests of Athgarh forest division

Salia bamboo seed balls were prepared by community involvement and were dropped to restock salia bamboo to enrich elephant habitats in 38 reserve forests of Athgarh forest division.

The experiment to increase bamboo cover is taken up in July - August. These seeds germinate and the saplings grow up in four months. The plants take six to seven months to fully grow up and provide shoots to elephants. Prior to the implementation of the bamboo experiment to arrest man-elephant confrontation, a massive awareness campaign had been set in motion in all the villages hit by elephant depredations for restoration of natural habitat of elephants. One quintal bamboo seeds which were brought from silviculture division at Jashipur, Baripada would be thrown in the open patches inside the dense forests. Elephants love chewing bamboo shoots. Once the shoots come out of the plants, the animals' interference into villages will definitely come down.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: A group of BPUT students, who are appearing for their final semester examinations through the online mode, Saturday said they have encountered numerous problems while writing the online tests.

The hassles included automatic logging out during examinations, non-availability of questions on time and answers not being accepted properly. The semester examination started August 4.

Pritam Das, one of the students, said the university should immediately strengthen its infrastructure and install a backup support failing which it will be difficult for students to give examinations. The university had given an op-

tion to students to use laptops/Android mobile handsets/ tablets to write online examination.

The university had also asked students, especially those appearing for online examinations not feel let down as they will be given another chance to sit for offline examinations as a regular student.

Deepak Kumar Sahoo, Director, Examinations, said the students, who could not pass in their theory papers for whatsoever reasons, will be given another chance to re-appear for the final year exams once colleges are re-opened and normalcy is restored. Earlier, the students had protested the examination citing prevalence of Covid-19. The online exams are being conducted for B.Tech, B Phara, BBA and BCA, M.Tech, M Pharm, MBA and MCA streams.

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IDCO bid to develop MSME park faces hurdle

About 37 years ago, nearly 180 acres were acquired for a paper mill in Kesinga at throwaway prices; now land losers strongly oppose the new project

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kesinga, August 8: About 37 years ago, efforts had been initiated to set up a paper mill at Kurlupada under Kesinga block in Kalahandi district, but that project could not be realized. Now efforts are being made to set up an MSME park at the place. This has enraged the farmers of the area. The farmers strongly opposed it and halted its work a couple of days ago.

According to reports, land was acquired for Kurlupada for the paper mill project in 1983. Locals were upbeat about employment scope for them. In 1984, then Chief Minister Janaki Ballabh Pattnaik and then MLA Bhupinder Singh laid the foundation stone of the project. But the project was not executed even after 37 years, local farmers alleged.

"The paper mill project was shelved, but an MSME park is being developed instead, they lamented. Over 3000 families of ST/SC and other communities live in Kurlupada and Nuapada villages. Farming is the sole source of their livelihood.

"When the land acquisition was carried out for the paper mill, 300 families were promised jobs. 180 acres were acquired by Seva Paper



Mill of Jeypore at throwaway price," they said. The land losers kept their fingers crossed for the ambitious project for 14 years, but the project could not happen. Thereafter, the paper mill authorities sold off the land to IDCO in 1994-94 without the knowledge of the land losers.

Then, IDCO renamed the area as Kurlupada Industrial Estate. A signboard was put up there while barbed fences were raised around the land. The farmers were upset over this development and moved the Bhawanipatana civil court. The farmers demanded return of their land. In 1995-96, the IDCO author-

JOB PROMISES COME TO NAUGHT

On promise of jobs, land was taken away for the paper mill. Locals were upbeat about employment scope for them. In 1984, then Chief Minister Janaki Ballabh Pattnaik and then MLA Bhupinder Singh laid the foundation stone of the project

■ As the land losers kept their fingers crossed for the ambitious project, the paper mill authorities sold off the land to IDCO in 1994-94 without the knowledge of the land losers

■ IDCO later renamed the area as Kurlupada Industrial Estate with barbed fences around the land. The farmers were upset over this development and moved the Bhawanipatana civil court. The farmers demanded return of their land. In 1995-96, the IDCO authorities, after facing legal tangle, assured the farmers to return their land

ities, after facing legal tangle, assured the farmers to return their land. 150 farmers were told to send demand draft of Rs 500 each in favour of IDCO, Bhubaneswar, they added.

"After receipt of the demand drafts of Rs 75,000, the IDCO tried to play delaying tactics, by asking farmers to submit various documents. We were harassed," they pointed out. Then, farmers again moved the court in this connection. In 1995-96, the IDCO paid Rs 10,000 as compensation per acre of Bahal land and Rs 15,000 per acre of Bhatta land while an acre of Bhatta land was valued at Rs 30,000

and an acre of Bahal land was Rs 60,000. In 2007-08, the IDCO leased out 12 acres of this land to Kesinga NAC for a new bus stand. Kapila Majhi of the area had moved the High Court against the lease of the land.

"The land was taken away from us at throwaway price. Now the IDCO will earn in crores of rupees by leasing out the land for the MSME park, schools, industrial units and food parks," the farmers said, adding that what they will get. Alok Ranjan Bai, a JE of IDCO, said, "The land will be used for an MSME park, schools and industries. No paper mill will come up."

Infra development projects hang fire amid admin apathy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, August 8: Infrastructure development projects like food & textile parks, a district level stadium, a district jail and an indoor stadium in Bhadrak have faltered due to an apathetic attitude of the district administration.

Even as several ambitious projects have come under red-tape, others could not see the limelight amid administrative impasse even after land acquisitions. Nearly 217 acres have already been acquired for different projects in Bhadrak district so far. Denizens have resented lack of development in the district over the years. The government representatives allegedly show no willpower for infrastructure development in the district.

Even though there was a long standing demand for development projects like medical college, agricultural university, university status to Bhadrak autonomous college, nursing school in the district, there has been very little progress in this regard.

A food & textile park, which was proposed at Dhamnagar Chhak under Bhandaripokhari block, has faltered. Construction work of this project has failed to begin despite land acquisition.



Initially, 217.71 acres were acquired for the construction of the proposed Dharani Sugar Factory in 1995 beside Dhamnagar Chhak along the national highway. However, over 26 years have passed since then and there has been no progress whatsoever. Later, it was decided by the district administration to set up a food & textile park in the same place.

On the other hand, hundreds of displaced villagers belonging to Pahimadura, Manjurigadia and Helapur areas under Bhandaripokhari block have lost their hopes for infrastructure development. Similarly, the ambitious Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium project proposed at Bhadrak town suffers the same fate. Interdepartmental officials are engaged only in discussions and official correspondences. Likewise, the

district jail at Bhadrak town was decided to be shifted due lack of space to Amargadia and then again to Bahudarada area. The district administration had chalked out plans to construct a new district jail here on 20 acres of land.

The Deputy Inspector General (Jail) demarcated the land for the purpose, but this project has made no progress, it was alleged.

Bhadrak additional project officer Rajendra Kumar Panda said, "No decision was taken as yet about which company would set up the food & textile park."

Lawyer Gadadhar Bal said, "With no industries being set up in the district, poor people migrate to outside districts and cities." "217 acres of land acquired here are unutilised for the past 26 years," alleged labour union leader Samar Bal.

OPD of Bhadrak DHH closed for 48 hours as doc tests +ve

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, August 8: The outdoor patient department (OPD) of the district headquarters hospital (DHH) in Bhadrak has been closed for 48 hours from Saturday. According to chief district medical officer Dr Santosh Kumar Patra, the OPD will remain closed till Sunday as a doctor and his driver tested positive for COVID-19. During this period, sanitization of the hospital premises and contact tracing will be carried out. "However, emergency healthcare will continue unaffected," he added.

Notably, Principal Secretary to Government, Commerce and Transport Department-cum-Bhadrak district COVID-19 observer,

Madhusudan Padhi visited Bhadrak Friday to review the COVID-19 management in the district. In view of the cases increasing in the district, he advised the district administration to increase the number of COVID Care Centres in the district. He also directed conduct of tests of footpath vendors and people coming to the markets by setting up mobile testing camps at block headquarters and town areas. Notably, the district Saturday reported two fresh COVID-19 positive cases. With this addition, the district's tally has gone up to 856. Of them, 603 patients have already recovered from the disease and 245 are undergoing treatment. So far four patients have died due to COVID-19 and four others due to reasons other than COVID.

UNITED EFFORT



People of Dasamanthpur in Koraput district laying a road with their own efforts after the administration failed to act on their long demand for a road

Hirakud dam opens eighth gate to release floodwater

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, August 8: The Hirakud dam authorities Saturday opened another gate to release floodwater. As of now, floodwater is being released through eight gates. As per the information provided by the dam authorities, the dam's present water level stands at 608.31 feet against the maximum level of 630 feet.

The inflow and discharge of floodwater through eight gates was 1,48,012 cusecs and 1,20,795 cusecs per second respectively by 9 am Saturday.

Another low pressure is all set to form in the west-central Bay of



Bengal over next 24 hours which will trigger heavy rainfall in the upper catchment areas of the River Mahanadi. The dam authorities decided to open more gates in the event of more water inflow into the dam. Notably, the dam had reportedly received less water than the set target in July. The dam had received 4.163 million acre feet of water as against 5.419 million acre feet.

No road to Nagada village in Jajpur yet

RD DEPT SAYS, A PUCCA ROAD CANNOT BE LAID UNDER PMGSY CITING POOR POPULATION IN THE VILLAGES AS PER 2001-CENSUS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, August 8: Following the state government's announcement to take up Nagada as an 'ideal village' after a large number of children died there from malnutrition in July 2016, it was decided to construct a kutcha road on priority basis to facilitate a road link to the village.

However, the ambitious road project at Nagada village under Sukinda block in Jajpur district, as it seems, may not see light of the day. Same is also the fate of infrastructure development here.

A district level report of Jajpur Rural Development Department has revealed that constructing a pucca road to Nagada village is not possible. The RD department said population of the villages is very low according to 2001 census and a pucca road cannot be constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.

The department has also mentioned in its report that, Nagada village comes under forest area.



Nagada villagers resented such absurd statistical information which dates back to nearly 20 years.

As per plans, the proposed 7.66 km-long kutcha road connecting to Nagada village was constructed from Naliadaba area on the foothills of Ashokajhar passing through Badanagada, Majhinagada and stretching up to Talanagada. Rs 12.95 crore was spent on this road project from the district mineral

foundation (DMF) funds.

Notably, most of the villagers are Juanga tribals. Construction work of the kutcha road was assigned to a contract firm named Higreeva Infrastructure 10 November, 2016. The contract firm was asked to carry out construction work as per guidelines of the Forest and Environment Department vide its letter (No.-9047/23.08.2016).

The Scheduled Castes and

Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department had sanctioned Rs 2 crore and the DMF had sanctioned Rs 12.81 crore for the purpose.

However, Higreeva was given contract for Rs 12.95 crore only. Even as the kutcha road was completed 31 July, 2017, the road has become dilapidated within a very short span of time.

"Murram layers from the kutcha road have run down, rendering the road inaccessible and unsuitable for local commuters. The villagers had demanded a through e-grievance before Jajpur Rural Development Department chief engineer for constructing a pucca road instead," some Nagada villagers expressed.

A complaint is pending at Lokayukta alleging low quality road construction work that has been done here. After getting e-grievance from Nagada villagers, the chief engineer had sought an investigation report from his subordinate executive engineer Bijay Kumar Maharana.

Accordingly, the executive engineer has reported that Nagada vil-

lage comprises Badanagada, Majhinagada and Talanagada areas of Chingudipal panchayat under Sukinda block in Jajpur district.

Notably, as per the 2001 census Nagada had a population of only 231 persons. According to central government guidelines, the population of a village should at least be around 250 in order to be included under PMGSY for the purpose of constructing a pucca road.

The report of RD department added that the entire region came under Daitari forest range. For obvious reasons, it appears that kutcha road is the only option available for villagers of Nagada.

Erstwhile Principal Secretary of Health and Family Welfare Department Arati Ahuja had visited Nagada 13 July, 2016. In sharp contrast to RD department's report, Ahuja had reported to the state government that the total population of Nagada village was 295.

Badanagada had a population of 61 villagers, Majhinagada 72 and Talanagada had 162 persons, her report had said.

Man hacked over suspected sorcery

POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, August 8: An elderly person was allegedly hacked to death on suspicion of practicing sorcery at Jamitar village under Bamebari police limits of Keonjhar. His body was buried in a forest by three persons Thursday night. The deceased was identified as Mansingh Munda (55)

According to police, three persons came to Mansingh Munda late Thursday night and accompanied him to a nearby forest. They hacked him with an axe and buried the body in a pit. Following a complaint by Mansingh's son, police started an investigation.

Joda IIC Raisan Murmu and Bamebari IIC Amitabh Das recovered the body. Meanwhile, police arrested an accused while others are absconding.

Odia pilot picked for Gaganyaan mission

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, August 8: Among 25 shortlisted test pilots, Wing Commander Nikhil Rath from Bolangir district has been selected for ISRO'S ambitious lunar mission - Gaganyaan. Two unmanned and one manned flight will be undertaken as part of the mission, a report said.

Nikhil is the son of Ashok Rath, a renowned advocate and leader of Bolangir district and Kusum Rath, a member of Mahila Commission. After getting selected, Governor Ganeshi Lal has sent him words of praise and accolades for this rare honour.

Nikhil was selected from among 25 test pilots. However, three other test pilots have also been selected for the lunar mission. All the 25 shortlisted pilots, including Nikhil, will undergo training in Russia for



■ NIKHIL, SELECTED FROM AMONG 25 TEST PILOTS, WILL UNDERGO TRAINING IN RUSSIA FOR ONE YEAR BEFORE THE ISRO SET IN THE MOTION THE MUCH-AWAITED SPACE MISSION UNDER GAGANYAAN

■ HE COMPLETED HIS SCHOOLING FROM KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA IN 1998 AND 12TH FROM DELHI PUBLIC SCHOOL IN 2000. HE WAS SELECTED FOR NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY (NDA) WHILE PURSUING HIS GRADUATION AT HINDU COLLEGE. IN 2003, HE JOINED THE INDIAN AIR FORCE (IAF)

■ THE AMBITIOUS GAGANYAAN PROJECT WAS SANCTIONED RS 10,000 CRORE AND WAS ANNOUNCED BY PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI DURING HIS INDEPENDENCE DAY SPEECH IN 2018. A THREE-MEMBER CREW WILL BE SENT TO SPACE FOR SEVEN DAYS. THE SPACECRAFT WILL CIRCLE THE EARTH AT A DISTANCE OF 300-400 KM

one year before the onset of the space mission under Gaganyaan.

Nikhil completed his schooling from Kendriya Vidyalaya in 1998 and 12th from Delhi Public School in 2000. He was selected for National Defence Academy (NDA) while pursuing his graduation at Hindu College. In 2003, he joined the Indian Air Force (IAF).

Mission Gaganyaan aims to

launch an Indian-crewed spacecraft by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) by 2022. The first Gaganyaan flight scheduled for 2022 will carry three astronauts, who will be picked from among the test pilots in the armed forces.

Notably, Indian Air Force had completed the first level of selecting astronauts for ambitious Gaganyaan mission from its pool of

test pilots at the Institute of Aerospace Medicine in Bangalore.

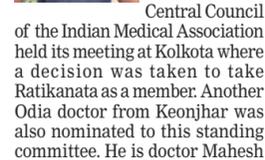
The ambitious Gaganyaan project was sanctioned Rs 10,000 crore and was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Independence Day speech in 2018. A three-member crew will be sent to space for seven days. The spacecraft will circle the earth at a distance of 300-400 km.

Odia doc in natnl healthcare panel

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, August 8: A doctor of Koraput has been nominated as a member of All India Standing Committee on tribal healthcare.

People have congratulated Doctor Ratikant Khatusa for his nomination to a national committee. The Central Council of the Indian Medical Association held its meeting at Kolkata where a decision was taken to take Ratikanata as a member. Another Odia doctor from Keonjhar was also nominated to this standing committee. He is doctor Mahesh



EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. e-TM-KUR-MR-PRDP-113-2020

Name of the work: MAJOR WAGON REPAIR WORK AT PRDP (PARADEEP) CARRIAGE & WAGON DEPOT FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.

Advised Value: ₹1,46,03,713.81, EMD: ₹2,23,000/-, Completion Period: 24 Months.

Bidding Start Date: 10.08.2020, Date & Time of Tender Closing: 24.08.2020, 1530 hrs.

Complete information of tender documents is available in website <http://www.irps.gov.in>. The tenderers are required to watch the website for any corrigendum's issued.

Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer/PR-196/L/20-21 Khurda Road

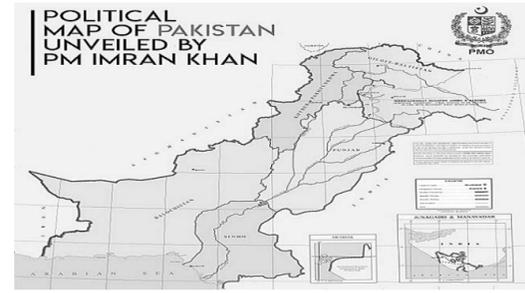
NOTICE

We Sujata Panda, aged about 58 years, W/o- Late Tirthankar Panda, Parthasarathi Panda, aged about 37 years & Siddhartha Sankar Panda, aged about 36 years, both S/o- Late Tirthankar Panda, all R/o- Attabira, Main Road, P.O/PS/ Tah.- Attabira, Dist- Bargarh declared that, we are the recorded owner of Khata No. 535, total area of Ac. 2.89 (8 plots) of Mouza-Attabira, P.S-Attabira, Dist- Bargarh. That the aforesaid original R.O.R. has been lost somewhere at Attabira, P.S- Attabira, Dist- Bargarh. Further we declared that we have never mortgaged the above land/ R.O.R in any Bank of Financial Institutions. Now we are applying for a loan from the State Bank of India, Attabira Branch, Dist- Bargarh by mortgaging the same. If anybody has any objection may kindly draw notice before State Bank of India, Attabira Branch, Dist- Bargarh within 30 days of publication of this notice. Later on no Objection or Claim will acceptable in any circumstances.

Sujata Panda, W/o Late Tirthankar Panda Parthasarathi Panda & Siddhartha Sankar Panda, both S/o- Late Tirthankar Panda, All R/o- Attabira, Main Road, P.O/PS/Tah.- Attabira, Dist- Bargarh

FOCUS GEOPOLITICS

PAK'S CARTOGRAPHIC WAR



Unless New Delhi successfully rebuffs China, our discomfiture in South Asia will get worse, not better. New Delhi's China policy still lacks teeth. The Foreign Minister continues to prevaricate and talks of no alliance

grandisement and backs it with cross-border terrorism. Pakistan's cartographic attack is not unpredictable and New Delhi also has reacted on predicted lines. What is interesting to note is Islamabad mirroring Nepal. Kathmandu did a new map claiming Indian territory, got it approved by their Parliament and is now sending it to international bodies. Islamabad wants to do the same.

Why have India's neighbours raised their tempo against India? It is not difficult to unravel their strategies. Both the neighbours are working at the behest of Beijing, piggy-backing on China's aggression. We have written ad nauseam how New Delhi fumbled against the Chinese and emboldened our neighbours. Unless New Delhi successfully rebuffs China, our discomfiture in South Asia will get worse, not better. New Delhi's China policy still lacks teeth. The Foreign Minister continues to prevaricate; talks of no alliance, appeals to Chinese to trust India that it is still not aligned with USA, Australia, Japan, or France.

At any rate, we are not engaging here with our policy on China. We deal with our Pakistan policy. Why do we let Kashmir issue fester? How does Pakistan raise its time and again? Clearly, we are not doing enough to silence Pakistan. Also, we allow the other countries to comment on Kashmir

as a disputed territory. Our diplomacy has been found lacking. As luck would have it, Pakistan became isolated in the world after the United States pulled off its hand. Islamabad is left with China and Turkey to support it on Kashmir. In the past, Pakistan used to get more support as we had to depend upon the former Soviet Union to veto any resolution in the Security Council. Even in international politics, you have friends and adversaries.

Facts do not speak for themselves. You need supporters to present the facts for you. Imran Khan talks about United Nations Security Council; we refer to the Shimla Agreement mandating both countries for a bilateral solution. What is the background to Kashmir issue? Does Pakistan have a case? The answer is a big No. Why is New Delhi not placing the facts before the international community and calling Pakistan's bluff?

In August 1947, when India and Pakistan became independent from Britain about 600 principalities were given the choice of joining India or Pakistan. About 500 joined India and 100 or so annexed to Pakistan. This was done through an Instrument of Accession, which stated that if the king along with the largest party signed to join, that will be treated as final and irrevocable. Jawaharlal Nehru taking it to the United Nations and of

fering a plebiscite is fraught with legal complexities and cannot override the Instrument of Accession. To illustrate, Nehru did not get his proposal to go to UN approved by the Cabinet, nor was it ratified by the Parliament. Hence it does not obligate India to adhere to it. Second, the UN clearly suggests that India could keep some amount of its forces necessary to maintain law and order, whereas Pakistan had to withdraw all of its army and the irregulars.

Lord Mountbatten, Governor-General of India wrote to Maharaja Hari Singh who signed the Instrument of Accession, that "as soon as Kashmir soil is cleared of the invader, people could be consulted on the accession." Pakistan had not vacated Kashmir; so there was no question of any referendum. Third, a resolution that had not been implemented in over 70 years is no longer valid. New Delhi should write to the UNSC for the revocation of that resolution.

So we are back to the Instrument. Here, the shoe is on the other leg. Pakistan is the invader and the illegal occupier of Indian territory. Worse, it has given away parts of it to China. So China also is the illegal occupant of part of Kashmir. Why has India not formally claimed POK except in informal talks within the country? The Indian Parliament passed a unanimous resolution to say the entire Kashmir belongs to India. Why has New Delhi not launched a diplomatic offensive to claim POK?

India's foreign policy has been reactive, not pro-active. That is the crux of the problem. Pakistan talks of self-determination of Kashmiris. What about the self-determination of Baluch? New Delhi can recognise Baluchistan as a separate country and open diplomatic contact with them. If that is too radical, open a Centre to deal with human rights violations in Baluchistan. It is time New Delhi took the fight to Beijing and Islamabad. There has to be a serious strategy shift, not the outdated platitudes we get to hear from our Foreign Minister.

The writer is Professor, International Politics, JMI.

Dr DK Giri

IMRAN KHAN ANNOUNCED THAT THE NEW MAP WILL BE A PART OF THE CURRICULUM IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES. THIS MEANS PAKISTAN IS PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATIONS TO CONTINUE TO CLAIM TERRITORIES FROM INDIA

Islamabad has launched a fresh attack on India. Following the new map released officially by Nepal, Pakistan seeks to engage India in a cartographic war. The government supporters say the new is a fresh rendition of the old one issued in 2017. The only changes are in the language and emphasis.

The map was released August 4, a day before the first anniversary of the repeal of Article 370, and 35A. Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan, flanked by his Foreign Minister Shah Muhammad Qureshi released it. He said the new map represents the aspirations and opinions of all political parties of Pakistan and the leadership of Kashmir. He added, it was a historic day. They would begin to campaign worldwide to secure Kashmir from India's occupation. The Pakistan PM emphasised on the political resolution of the status of Kashmir under the UN Security Council, not a military solution.

Imran Khan announced that the new map will be a part of the curriculum in schools and colleges. This means Pakistan is preparing the next generations to continue to claim territories from India. Pakistan has also decided to celebrate August 5 as You-e-Istehsal (Day of Exploitation). The Foreign Minister's tone was more aggressive, as he declared that their next destination was Srinagar and said in the India-China border conflict, Islamabad has a view too.

The map shows entire Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Sir Creek region, Junagarh, and Manavadar regions of Gujarat, Siachen Glaciers as parts of Pakistan. The areas of Ladakh bordering China are stated to be undefined territory in deference to China.

The reaction from South Block was prompt and sharp. It said "Pakistan's new map is an exercise in political absurdity." The argument is untenable without any legal validity or global credibility. Pakistan claims that the map is the first step towards self-determination of Kashmiris. New Delhi dismissed it as a cheap stunt; in reality, Islamabad uses terror as an instrument state policy. Pakistan is obsessed with territorial ag-

SPECTRUM VIROLOGY

Why do HIV vaccine trials keep failing



Denis Chopera

THE FACT THAT MORE PLACEBO RECIPIENTS CONTRACTED HIV HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THEM BEING LESS PROTECTED THAN THOSE WHO HAD RECEIVED THE VACCINE

Yet another seemingly promising HIV vaccine has failed in clinical trials. According to Anthony Fauci, the head of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases at the United States National Institutes of Health, which was conducting the trial, a vaccine is 'essential to end the global pandemic.' But while the latest failure is a disappointment, it should come as no surprise.

To understand why, it is useful to go back to the beginning. Just over 12 years ago, two studies involving a vaccine candidate known as MRK-Ad5 were halted. The failure was comprehensive: the studies - STEP (which enrolled men and women in the Americas, the Caribbean, and Australia) and Phambili (including men and women in South Africa) - found that MRK-Ad5 failed to protect subjects against HIV infection. Worse, there was evidence that it may have increased the chances of acquiring HIV.

The next year, however, hopes were again raised, as another clinical trial - known as RV 144 - seemed to show modest positive results in Thailand. Yet the conclusion that the vaccine worked was based on somewhat dubious statistical analysis.

In fact, of the 125 (initially HIV-negative) trial participants who became infected with HIV (out of a total of 16,402), 74 had received the placebo and 51 had received the vaccine. That amounts to an efficacy rate of 31.2 per cent - a good starting point, but nowhere near the level required to tackle a public-health challenge of the magnitude of Sub-Saharan Africa's HIV epidemic.

A closer look at the results indicates that they are even weaker than they seem. As the former Harvard Medical School professor Ronald Desrosiers observed in 2017, the HIV-acquisition curve for the placebo group is nonlinear, with a sudden increase in acquisition among the placebo recipients within the first year of the trial.

That 'anomalous' increase accounts for 'most or all of the difference in acquisition' compared to the vaccine recipients. In other words, the fact that more placebo recipients contracted HIV had nothing to do with them being less protected than those who had received the vaccine. Desrosiers argued, if the vaccine did have a protective effect, vaccinated individuals who became infected would have lower viral loads than their unvaccinated

counterparts. That was not the case. Nonetheless, some researchers considered the results promising enough to proceed with the recent South Africa trial, HVTN 702, which tested a vaccine candidate based on the RV 144 candidate, but adapted to the HIV strain that is most prominent in the country. After 18 months, 129 of the 5,400 participants who received the vaccine had become infected, compared to 123 of those who received the placebo.

This outcome was a major blow to the millions of Africans who hoped that researchers were finally approaching a long-term solution to the AIDS epidemic. But the results of the Thailand trial were never strong enough to justify such a large - and expensive - clinical trial.

This is not to say that trial results have to be overwhelmingly positive to merit further study. But, as Desrosiers also emphasises, spending hundreds of millions of dollars to manufacture and test products with little reasonable hope of efficacy is wasteful, at best. More comprehensive basic and preclinical research would enable scientists to identify approaches with a far better chance of success. In the case of RV 144, a smaller inter-

mediary trial could have enabled researchers to determine whether it was worth investing in another large-scale trial - at much lower cost. The leftover money could have been channelled toward other mitigation strategies for HIV/AIDS, including basic research.

Fauci is right: a vaccine is essential to end the HIV epidemic in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond. But it is a long-term solution, and we don't yet have the knowledge to merit highly expensive, large-scale clinical trials. Small-scale human trials, which can be scaled up once they have been convincingly shown to work, are simply more appropriate at this point.

In the meantime, vulnerable or infected people need other kinds of support, from education to treatment. As exciting as they may seem, pie-in-the-sky ideas - or even 'intelligent' guesses - are not sufficient reason to sacrifice the health and wellbeing of people today.

The writer is a medical virologist and Programme Executive Manager for the Sub-Saharan African Network for TB/HIV Research Excellence. @PROJECT SYNDICATE

“We have every one of us a role to fulfill, a work to do, a place which we alone can occupy.”
THE MOTHER



Mahabharata against Covid has been lost

The Mahabharata against Covid has been lost. India has registered more cases this week, about three lakh, than any other nation including the United States. We are clocking over 60,000 cases a day and there is nothing to stop the number going to one lakh a day and higher.

The only places in India that have registered a drop are those cities where the levels of infections are so widespread that half the entire city has already been touched and the scope for increase is limited. Nothing is stopping the spread of Covid.

It may interest readers to know that India is the only nation to show a consistently exponential trend of growth. Our graph from the beginning of March to today is one that goes straight up and steeply. This is not how other nations have responded. Europe saw peaks in March and then Italy, Spain, UK and others have declined since then. America saw a peak in April led mostly by the spread in New York, then a fall and now is seeing another rise in other parts of the country.

Bangladesh saw a peak in June and has since been in decline. Pakistan was clocking half the number of cases as India but peaked in June and has been dropping since, averaging less than 1,000 cases a day now. Sri Lanka has been in total control of the epidemic and has only 300 active cases at the moment and a total of only 11 deaths since its first cases appeared in March.

India is the only nation, to repeat, that has consistently been going up in terms of number of cases from the start till now.

This was not the result expected when the Centre took charge of the problem on March 24 when we had 500 cases. We have 30 times more cases each day today after various lockdowns from total bans on all activity to a series of unlocks that nobody really understands any longer and almost nobody follows. Even the police, initially enthusiastic about stopping movement, have lost interest across the country in trying to combat the plague. The question is not whether we have lost the Covid Mahabharata because the numbers are clear: The question is why. The answer is that we never had a strategy to counter the pandemic. The first lockdown was the biggest mistake we made. What Modi should have told the country was that this was a highly infectious disease but with a very low fatality rate. People should be extremely cautious about not touching their face, washing their hands regularly and wearing a mask to protect others. They could go about their work and business otherwise.

What he did instead was to send panic into the entire country. By calling it a Mahabharata and saying specifically that we would win it in 21 days, he took the seriousness out of the fight against Covid. It would end after the lockdown as what he told us, and this was wrong. This was not a short and sharp battle that would be won or lost over three weeks but a long one of vigilance rather than extreme measures.

The three-week strict lockdown was called by an Oxford University study as the harshest in the world. The lockdown in India, along with that in Mauritius, New Zealand and South Africa, was rated 100, meaning individuals had no freedom. New Zealand peaked in March, Mauritius in April and South Africa in July. In India it made no meaningful difference to the rate of spread. Not only that, it has comprehensively gutted the economy in a way that all of us can palpably feel at the level of each individual. All of us are suffering in a way that we have not before in our lives. Those who are not yet, will soon do so. This is a recession, a word whose meaning none of us is familiar with.

The mismanagement of the lockdown has made India pay a real price that it is still continuing to pay a full four months later. A report in the Hindu Frontline headlined 'Surat: Silence of the looms' said that 35 lakh migrants in the Surat area had gone back home after suffering great deprivation. There was nobody to operate the machines and even markets that were open would be shut down when one positive case was discovered. There was no plan to move forward and things were happening by default. If the workers would return, and if demand for fabric would return, then the great manufacturing city of Surat would try to stand again on its feet. Till that time, things would continue the way they were. This level of incompetence is not to be found in any other nation that has been hit by Covid.

The truth is that Modi is attracted to the grand announcement. He likes the spotlight and the energy of the moment. Covid was a struggle not of brief violence, an 18 day war like Mahabharata, but a long one of carefulness and patience. Other nations knew it and their leaders communicated it in that fashion. Modi's style has left us with 20 lakh cases and over 40,000 deaths and who knows how many more to come. The peak is nowhere in sight still. And it has absolutely ruined an economy that was already tottering last year.

WISDOM CORNER

- “Convictions are more dangerous foes of truth than lies.” FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
- “Progress lies not in enhancing what is, but in advancing toward what will be.” KAHLIL GIBRAN
- “He will win who knows when to fight and when not to fight.” SUN TZU

WORDSWORTH

Taqwacore

Taqwacore is a recent musical genre. The name combines the Arabic taqwā, which may be translated as piety or the quality of being God-fearing, with the music term hardcore. Its inspiration is a fictional work of 2003 by a white American Islamic convert, Michael Muhammad Knight, which featured a fictitious Muslim punk scene in the US. This led to real-life imitations, with bands rebelling against what they see as the stultifying convention and religious dogma of Islam while maintaining their faith. It's variously seen as a backlash against hate and fundamentalism, as a protest against Islamophobia in the US (9/11 is mentioned a lot), as a way to find an identity as a child of immigrants, or as a rebellion against the attitudes of their parents. The genre has received public attention as the result of a Canadian documentary, Taqwacore, and a feature film, The Taqwacores, screened at the Sundance Festival earlier this year.

LOL

New Office Supplies

The little church in the suburbs suddenly stopped buying from its regular office supply dealer. So, the dealer telephoned Deacon Brown to ask why. "I'll tell you why," shouted Deacon Brown. "Our church ordered some pencils from you to be used in

the pews for visitors to register." "Well," interrupted the dealer, "didn't you receive them yet?" "Oh, we received them all right," replied Deacon Brown. "However, you sent us some golf pencils...each stamped with the words, 'Play Golf Next Sunday.'"

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Road accidents

Sir, Two days ago, three of a family were killed in a road accident at Rathia Chhaka in Jajpur district. Nowadays, road accidents have become common as people are driving haphazardly and injudiciously. In a state like Odisha vehicular traffic is not regulated strictly. Unruly and uncivilised people violate road safety norms and park their vehicles in unauthorised places which result in road accidents. Over-speeding and drunken driving are other reasons for road accidents. In the lockdown period, the state registered 836 road accidents accounting for 84 deaths while 722 persons suffered injuries. In April 2020 (during the lockdown period) the number of deaths stood at 118, but it was 458 in April 2019. In 2017, about 4,790 road accident fatalities were registered; in 2018 about 5,315 fatalities were registered; and in 2019 about 5,333 fatalities were registered.

Hitesh Kumar Parida, PANIKOILI, JAJPUR

Twin tragedies

Sir, It was a black day for Kerala as twin tragedies struck the state Friday. While a landslide buried 18 tea workers in Idukki, an Air India Express aircraft carrying 190 passengers skidded off the runway in Kozhikode, leaving 17 people dead and scores of other passengers injured. One learns that torrential rains led to the tragedies, and the death toll could climb. The Boeing aircraft, carrying 189 passengers and six crew members, attempted to land amidst heavy tailwinds and rain on the table-top runway but failed to hold on the runway and skidded before breaking into two pieces.

N J Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Raging wildfires

Sir, Raging wildfires in the Amazon have become a matter of concern for environmentalists. Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's critics have placed the blame at his doorsteps for his 'anti-environment' policies. The pro-development image of Bolsonaro has angered conservationists who feel that he is not doing enough to save the forests from man-made disasters. Species of plants and animals in the rainforests slow down global climate warming. Rainforests contribute to a healthy maintenance of the ecosystem. In contrast, wildfires emit a high content of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, and ozone precursors let alone nitrogen oxides and organic materials - all detrimental to climate.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Kashmiri village leaders moved to safety after wave of attacks

Underlining the difficulties the government faces in restoring normalcy to Kashmir, around a dozen BJP members resigned from the party this week, fearing militant attacks

REUTERS

Srinagar, August 8: India has shifted scores of village and municipality leaders, mostly from Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), to secure locations in Kashmir after a spate of militant attacks, police and two security officials said. Separatists fighting Indian rule in the region have stepped up attacks on lower rung politicians, many of whom do not have personal security guards, in recent weeks. "It is a temporary arrangement," Kashmir Valley's police chief Vijay Kumar told Reuters. "We will devise a strategy to provide security to those who are vulnerable." Two security officials, asking not to be named, said that around 500 politicians had been moved since Thursday, after militants shot dead a village council leader from the ruling BJP in southern Kashmir. Many of those under protection have been housed in hotels and government buildings guarded by paramilitary troops, one official said. "We don't want to take any



chances," he said. Sofi Yousuf, a BJP vice-president in Kashmir, said that his colleagues were being targeted to prevent the party from expanding in the Himalayan region, where insurgents have waged a war against New Delhi since the late 1980s. "They want to create a fear psychosis on the ground," Yousuf said. The federal government has been trying to promote political activities since it revoked Kashmir's special status in an attempt to draw it closer to the rest of the country. But the loss of special privileges stoked anger across the region and this week authorities imposed a strict lockdown on the first anniversary of that decision. Underlining the difficulties the government faces in restoring normalcy to Kashmir, around a dozen BJP members resigned from the party this week, fearing militant attacks.

Migrants risk tiger attacks for livelihood

At least 12 people were killed in tiger attacks in the Sundarbans in the past three months

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, August 8: Prashanta Mondal of Chargheri village in Sundarbans' Gosaba went into the dense mangrove forests Sunday (Aug 2) to catch fish and crabs with other villagers. He was a migrant labourer working in the construction sector in southern India but was forced to return home before the Covid-19 lockdown. Prashanta and his associates went to Marichjhapi's Bantala forest when he was attacked by a tiger. But Prasanta failed to escape. He was dragged 4 km inside the mangrove forest by the man-eater. Later his mutilated and beheaded body was recovered by his companions from inside the core area. His friend Alok Mondal, who is also a migrant worker, said that they had no other option but to venture into the deadly forests of Sundarbans in search of livelihood. "Crab and fish are a lucrative catch if we can sell them in the

market. The ongoing lockdown due to the Covid pandemic has crippled everything. We have practically zero income now. We have come back from different states, but we also have to run our families," he said. At least 12 people were killed in different tiger attacks in the Sundarbans in the past three months, of which about six were migrant labourers, official sources said. The helplessness of the rural folks in the Sundarbans has forced them to risk their lives amid the Covid-19 outbreak. As a result, they are easily falling prey to tiger attacks. The devastation caused by the Cyclone Amphan has also forced the marooned residents to depend more on forest products like honey and timber. This apart, people also go into the forest area to catch crab and fish in the creeks in the restricted areas. Lack of livelihood resources has increased incidents of poaching in the Sundarbans as people are left with only a few options. "This is a real cause of concern. It is true that there is no livelihood. We, on behalf of the state forest department, are mulling over this issue. We have already decided to provide them with honey box so that they can collect honey easily. That will churn out an option for them to sustain during the lockdown phase," West Bengal Forest Minister Rajib Banerjee said. The minister said that a meeting has also been convened to take a call on the issue.



Crab and fish are a lucrative catch if we can sell them in the market. The ongoing lockdown due to the Covid pandemic has crippled everything. We have practically zero income now. We have come back from different states, but we also have to run our families

ALOK MONDAL

a mangrove cover of 2,125 sq km in India alone, and a larger portion falling in Bangladesh. Considered one of the richest but most fragile ecosystems on earth, the Sundarbans delta, formed by myriad branches of the Ganga, has forest tracts that reach 130-km inland from the coastline. Gopal Mondal, a migrant labourer who came back from Andaman, said: "The forest is our only source of income now. I used to work in a betel nut garden in Andaman and Nicobar Islands and used to send money back home every month. But now I am here and have no income as such. If we have to live, we will have to depend on the forests only," he said, adding that Amphan had devastated the entire region really badly. Joydeep Kundu, a conservationist and wildlife activist, said: "We have to remember that humans are entering into the tiger territory because of livelihood. It is not the tiger that is sneaking inside the human habitation.

"We will try to work out something to rehabilitate the villagers, especially the migrant workers who had to hum back home owing to the lockdown and have zero income currently," he said. The alluvial archipelago called the Sundarbans, formed by 56 riverine islands, has been declared a World Heritage site by the UNESCO for its rich biodiversity and is home to the famous Royal Bengal Tiger. Located in South 24 Parganas and North 24 Parganas districts, it is a vast area covering 4,282 sq km, including

'Weapons shortage is major issue for militants in J&K'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, August 8: Militants in Jammu and Kashmir have been facing a shortage of weapons despite Pakistan's attempts to provide arms to various terrorist organisations active in the Valley, Director General of Police (Jammu and Kashmir) Dilbag Singh said on completion of one year of the abrogation of Article 370 in the former state. The situation is that if Pakistan manages to recruit militants, it is not able to provide them with weapons, Singh told IANS here. The DGP said that Pakistan has failed to facilitate weapons for the militants despite adopting various methods like the use of drones and infiltration of militants, with each carrying more than three firearms.

tants infiltrated into Jammu and Kashmir carrying nine weapons. "Pakistan's tactics to send weapons through this method was also foiled by us. Pakistan's every attempt to sneak in weapons has been foiled so far." The DGP said Pakistan's attempt to send weapons into Indian territory by using drones is a matter of serious concern. "We will have to work on that aspect." Singh said Pakistan tried to send weapons through drones in Samba and Hira Nagar in Kathua district as well as Jammu's Khour sector. "They also tried to send weapons to Rajouri and Poonch districts but they could not succeed." Since the July 2016 killing of militant leader Burhan Wani, there have been around 2,600 law and order incidents, he added. Burhan



FIREARMS SMUGGLING

According to Jammu and Kashmir DGP Dilbag Singh, Pakistan has failed to facilitate weapons for the militants despite adopting various methods like the use of drones and infiltration of militants, with each carrying more than three firearms

Firearms were smuggled into Jammu and Kashmir by Pakistan through Punjab in two or three cases. Pakistan's attempt to send weapons into Indian territory by using drones is a matter of serious concern for the security forces

Citing incidents between January to July this year, the officer said the security forces foiled several Pakistani attempts when it tried to sneak weapons into Jammu and Kashmir through drones in various districts bordering the LoC and via Punjab by seizing caches of arms. "There is a weapons shortage in Jammu and Kashmir. If new recruits are made by terrorist groups they cannot provide them weapons. The J&K Police recently seized one of the dumps in a narco terrorism case. We seized around 25-30 weapons that were sent to Kupwara. These weapons were seized along with a big haul of narcotics." Pakistan tried to send weapons through drones but those were also seized, he said, adding that firearms were smuggled here by Pakistan through Punjab in two or three cases. In this year's Nagrota encounter, Singh said, three mili-

Wani, 22, was killed in an anti-insurgency operation in Jammu and Kashmir July 8, 2016, leading to violence in the Valley which claimed many lives and led to an over one month long curfew. Post abrogation of Article 370, the DGP said, there have been around 1,100 law and order incidents that include 550 incidents of pasting of posters and many linked to fixing of flags. Of the total 1,100 incidents, there were only 196 violent incidents this year and none of them were serious in nature. "No civilian was killed by bullets post abrogation of Article 370." Claiming success in the anti-militancy operations in the last two years, the DGP said it has happened as the security forces have targeted the terrorist support structure - the Jamaat-e-Islami, Hurriyat and their members and the Over Ground Workers

HEIGHTENED SURVEILLANCE



A policeman clicks a photo of truck drivers as security has been enhanced ahead of Independence Day, at the entry point of Jammu, Saturday.

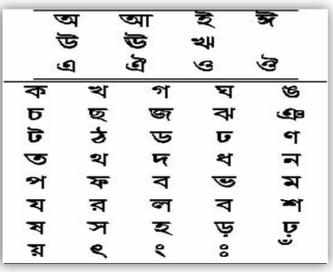
Adhir bats for classical language tag to Bengali

The National Education Policy-2020 lists Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia, among others, as classical languages

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 8: Leader of the Congress in Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury has urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to enlist Bengali as a classical language in the Centre's National Education Policy 2020. Chowdhury, in a letter to Modi, sought to know the attributes for a language to be included in the classical category.

"What are the attributes to be enumerated for enlisting a language in the pantheon of classical? While Bengali is the fifth most spoken language in the world, it has been bequeathed upon original literary tradition," the Congress MP said. Anthropological and archaeological evidence suggests that Bengali-speaking people



are a conglomerate of several racial elements welded together by the Bengali language, he said.

"Therefore, I would urge upon to consider the Bengali language in the list of classical languages in New Education Policy of India after delving deep into the entire gamut of qualification to determine the list of classical languages in the country," he said in the letter on the occasion of Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore's 79th death anniversary Friday. The new policy lists Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam and Odia, among others, as classical languages. The Union Cabinet had on July 29 approved the National Education Policy, 2020, replacing the 34-year old National Policy on Education (NPE).

600-km highway to connect Valley's unexplored sites

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 8: A 600 km-long highway will be constructed along the border touching all picturesque tourist spots in the Kashmir Valley, each of which will be "another Gulmarg", Jammu and Kashmir Chief Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam has said. The Rs 8,000 crore road project will connect Gulmarg with Kargil and Drass in Ladakh. "We are planning to construct a 600 km road which will touch tourist attractions like Keran, Gurej and Machhal. The road will connect all unexplored tourist spots and picturesque valleys and help open them for the tourists," Subrahmanyam told a group of visiting journalists. The chief secretary said there will be 12-13 major tunnels along the road and it will also facilitate connectivity to the forward locations. "Each of these tourist locations will be another Gulmarg," he said. While picturesque Keran and

Machhal are located along the Line of Control in Kupwara district, Gurez is a valley surrounded by snow-capped mountains in Bandipora district. Kargil and Drass now fall under the Union Territory of Ladakh. Gulmarg, located about 50 km from Srinagar, is one of the best tourist attractions in the country with its snow-clad mountains, magnificent beauty and winter game facilities. The chief secretary said the Jammu and Kashmir administration has also intensified construction of rural roads. "Earlier, on an average 1,300 km rural road was built in a year but now we are planning to build 5,000 km rural road in a year," he said. Referring to the efforts being made for creation of employment opportunities, Subrahmanyam said the administration has plans to create 4.5 lakh jobs in the coming years in sectors like the services and Information Technology. "We have many good doctors, en-



gineers and a huge pool of English knowing people. The potential in Jammu and Kashmir is huge. We will have to just leverage them," he said. The chief secretary also said the Jammu and Kashmir administration is constructing two huge IT towers with 5 lakh sq feet area in Srinagar and Jammu each.

After the abrogation of Article 370, a total of 2,273 infrastructure projects worth Rs 5,979 crore, which had been pending for over five to 10 years, were sanctioned and 506 of them completed. Some of the works done so far include strengthening of the panchayat structure, completion of phase 1 of Jhelum flood mitigation

project, creation of 10,000 jobs and opening up of 50 new degree colleges. Subrahmanyam said the coronavirus pandemic could not hit the agricultural and horticulture sectors much. Nearly 15 lakh families (total 75 lakh people) and about four lakh government employees (total 16 lakh dependents) are dependent on these sectors. However, the sectors badly hit by COVID-19 were tourism, transportation and other business establishments. "People of Jammu and Kashmir are more resilient when it comes to lockdowns, having witnessed many separatist-induced shutdowns in long years. I can say confidently that COVID-19's impact on Jammu and Kashmir economy will be the least among all states and UTs," he said. On the now delayed proposed Global Investment Summit, Subrahmanyam said the event may be held in the next financial year in view of COVID-19 situation.



The Centre and the state government are working very closely on the crash case. Now, all I wish to say is that let us not speculate as a full and comprehensive probe will take place

HARDEEP SINGH PURI
CIVIL AVIATION MINISTER

OVER 160 MN WATCHED LIVE TELECAST OF RAM TEMPLE EVENT

Over 160 million people tuned in to watch the live telecast of the foundation stone-laying ceremony of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, resulting in viewership of more than 7 billion viewing minutes across the TV universe in India



of the day quote

An action plan of 'Aatmanirbhar Madhya Pradesh' will be prepared and promptly implemented based on the suggestions received in the webinars organised in this regard



SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN
MADHYA PRADESH CM

Mumbai Police is investigating the (Sushant Singh Rajput death) case in a professional manner. How the investigation moves forward will depend on the order of the SC which will hear the matter August 11



ANIL DESHMUKH
MAHARASHTRA HOME MINISTER

In the past 48 hours, Kerala has seen two tragedies and they have affected the state very badly. I got a call from the President who has conveyed his deep condolences



ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN
KERALA GOVERNOR

700 tons of ammonium nitrate stuck in Chennai port

Thirty-seven containers of the compound were imported from South Korea in 2015 by an Indian firm for use in fertilizers but were seized after the substance was found to be explosives-grade

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New Delhi, August 8: Almost 700 tons of ammonium nitrate, the substance that caused the mega-explosion in Lebanon, has been stuck in an Indian port since 2015, officials confirmed.

At least 153 people died and more than 5,000 were injured when 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate languishing for years in Beirut's port caused a colossal blast.

Indian authorities afterwards ordered a review of all potentially hazardous materials in its ports and were alerted to 690 tons of ammonium nitrate in Chennai in India.

Thirty-seven containers of the compound were imported from South Korea in 2015 by an Indian firm for use in fertilizers but were



seized after the substance was found to be explosives-grade.

The local customs department Thursday sought to allay concerns, saying that the chemicals posed no danger and that an auction process to sell it off was under way.

"The seized chemical is securely stored and the safety of the cargo and public is ensured considering the hazardous nature of the substance," a statement said.

Ammonium nitrate is an odorless crystalline salt that has been the

cause of numerous industrial explosions over the decades.

When combined with fuel oils, it creates a potent explosive widely used in the construction industry, but also in homemade bombs such as those used in the 1995 Oklahoma City attacks.

Many European Union nations require ammonium nitrate to be mixed with calcium carbonate to make a safer compound.

Industrial disasters are common in India. In May, styrene gas leaked from a factory in southern India, killing 15 people.

In 1984, toxic methyl isocyanate leaked from a pesticide factory in Bhopal, killing 3,500 people – and thousands more in the years afterward – in one of the worst industrial disasters in history.

PM to launch ₹1L crore financing facility today

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch the financing facility of ₹1 lakh crore under the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund Sunday and also release the sixth installment of funds of ₹17,000 crore to ₹8.5 crore farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme.

Modi will take part in the event around 11 a.m. via video conferencing and the occasion will be witnessed by lakhs of farmers, co-operatives, and citizens across the country. Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, will also be present on the occasion.

The Union Cabinet has approved the Central Sector Scheme of financing facility under "Agriculture Infrastructure Fund" of ₹1 lakh crore. The fund will catalyse the creation of post-harvest management infrastructure and community farming assets such as cold storage, collection centres, processing units. These assets will enable farmers

THE UNION CABINET HAS APPROVED THE CENTRAL SECTOR SCHEME OF FINANCING FACILITY UNDER "AGRICULTURE INFRA FUND" OF ₹1 LAKH CRORE

Prime Minister's Office in a statement said Rs 1 lakh crore will be sanctioned under the financing facility in partnership with multiple lending institutions

The Prime Minister will also release the sixth installment of funds of ₹17,000 crore to ₹8.5 crore farmers under the PM-KISAN scheme

to get greater value for their produce, as they will be able to store and sell at higher prices, reduce wastage and increase processing and value addition.

Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in a statement said ₹1 lakh crore will be sanctioned under the financing facility in partnership with multiple lending institutions.

Eleven of the 12 Public Sector Banks have already signed MOUs with the Department of

Agriculture Cooperation and Farmers Welfare (DAC&FW). A three per cent interest subvention and credit guarantee of up to ₹2 crore will be provided to the beneficiaries to increase the viability of these projects.

The beneficiaries of the scheme will include farmers, Picture Archiving and Communication System (PACS), Marketing Cooperative Societies, Farmer Producer Organization Scheme

(FPOs), Self Help Groups (SHGs), Joint Liability Groups (JLG), Multipurpose Cooperative Societies, Agri-entrepreneurs, startups, and Central or state agency or local body sponsored Public-Private Partnership Projects.

The Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojna (PM-KISAN) scheme, launched December 1, 2018 has provided a direct cash benefit of over ₹75,000 crore to more than 9.9 crore farmers.

This has enabled them to fulfil their agricultural requirements and support their families. The rollout and implementation of the PM-KISAN scheme has happened at an unparalleled pace, with funds being directly transferred into the Aadhaar authenticated beneficiaries' bank account to prevent leakage and increase convenience for farmers.

The scheme has also been instrumental in supporting farmers during the COVID-19 pandemic, through the release of nearly ₹22,000 crore to aid the farmers during the lockdown period.

Groom hitches a ride on a tractor to get hitched

AGENCIES

Patna, August 8: A groom in Bihar resorted to using a tractor to attend his wedding at the bride's village which had been submerged by floodwaters.

The bizarre incident took place at Devkuli village under Mahammadpur police station in Gopalganj district Thursday.

The wedding of Sher Ali, a resident of Hamidpur village, had been fixed with the daughter of Alim Miya from Hamidpur village in the same district some time back and was scheduled to be solemnised Thursday.

Just ahead of the wedding, however, an embankment of the mighty Gandak river which flows by the side breached which

flooded some 200 villages in the area, including that of the bride's village. The groom's side talked to the bride's family and asked them to defer the date of the wedding but the latter didn't agree. Left with no alternative, the groom eventually hired a

tractor and rode in the trolley in the company of a few friends to accommodate the flooded roads and reach the bride's home. Carried to the roof

But as he reached the venue, he was surprised to find his bride's home was also submerged in floodwater and he hesitated in coming off the trolley.

Eventually, the bride's relatives carried him to the rooftop of the building and it was then that the wedding could be solemnised.



Now, Raj BJP sends 18-20 MLAs to Gujarat

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, August 8: It is not only the Congress that fears poaching of its MLAs by the BJP in Rajasthan, but also the latter which wishes to keep its flock intact. Close on the heels of the Congress sending its MLAs to plumb hotels, the desert state's Opposition party is busy packing off 18-20 MLAs to BJP-ruled Gujarat.

Around a dozen MLAs from Jalore, Sirohi and Udaipur divisions were shifted Friday night to a resort in Ahmedabad whereas another group of six MLAs were at the Jaipur airport at the time of filing of this report. They were about to leave for Porbandar by a chartered flight.

Rajasthan BJP chief Satish Poonia dubbed the sojourn of the party MLAs as an "excursion trip", while admitting that they were being lured by the Congress and senior officials of the state. Hence, they are being sent on a tour, he added.

Speaking to this news agency, Poonia said that the ruling Congress is "misusing" government machinery in Rajasthan for "selfish ends".

"Many officials have visited our MLAs in the tribal belt and tried to influence them through immoral ways. Our MLAs were depressed and tense and hence we planned an excursion trip for them."

Rajasthan BJP chief Satish Poonia dubbed the sojourn of the party MLAs as an "excursion trip", while admitting that they were being lured by the Congress

The BJP leader said they would be back by August 12, though the final date needs to be decided. They will offer prayers at the Somnath temple Monday, he added.

However, Poonia refused to use the word "camping" for the BJP MLAs and said that this word has been coined by the Congress and its MLAs in Jaisalmer are literally being monitored by security teams.

Meanwhile, former PCC vice-president Archana Sharma told this news agency that "they (BJP) are blaming the Congress, but there is a dispute within the party. Hence, they are taking their MLAs to Gujarat."

A senior politician, who wanted anonymity, said that the state BJP is feeling threatened after former Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje's meeting with the party leadership in Delhi and her readiness to regain her foothold in Rajasthan politics.



Pigeons feed on grain as others fly on a cloudy day in Jaipur, Saturday

PTI PHOTO

5 Indian airports have tabletop runways

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: At least five airports, including at Kozhikode in Kerala where an Air India Express aircraft crashed Friday, have tabletop runways.

Airports Authority of India (AAI) Chairman Arvind Singh said tabletop runways are there at four airports operated by it. They are at Kozhikode, Mangalore (Karnataka), Shimla (Himachal Pradesh) and Pakyong (Sikkim). The Lengpui airport in Mizoram, which is with the state government, also has a tabletop runway. State-owned AAI operates 137

aerodromes, including the ones through joint ventures.

A senior Air India pilot said that automation might not help in the case of tabletop runways. There is also the issue of optical illusion, where the runway might seem to be nearer whereas it would actually be further away, he added. The pilot also stressed that there is not much buffer zone unlike normal runways.

There are tabletop runways in different parts of the world and only when the runway length is less, there could be issues with landing of aircraft. In the case of Kozhikode airport, the runway is

about 9,000 feet which is quite long, according to a senior regulatory official.

Tabletop runways are there at some airports, both in north and south India, he added. According to the official, pilots are generally told about such runways and various restrictions.

In the Court of Inquiry report about the plane crash at Mangalore airport in May 2010, it was mentioned that there were three tabletop airports in the country from where scheduled flights operate at Mangalore, Kozhikode and Lengpui.

Ch'garh distributes over 4 lakh forest rights certificates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Raipur, August 8: Chhattisgarh has become the leading state in the country with regard to distribution of community and individual forest rights certificates, an official claimed Saturday.

At least 4,84,975 individual and community forest rights certificates have been distributed to scheduled tribes and other traditional forest dwellers in the state so far, the official from the public relations department said.

Chhattisgarh stood at the top position in the country for providing these certificates, he said. As many as 2,56,997 certificates have been distributed in Madhya Pradesh, while 1,72,116 were distributed in Maharashtra, 4,43,000 in Odisha and 93,704 in Gujarat, he said.

Individual and community forest rights have been given on over 50.16 lakh acres of forest land in the state, the official said.

So far, in individual claims, recognition was given to over 9.18 lakh acres of land and 4,41,429 forest rights certificates were distributed, he said. Similarly, recognition was given to over 40.97 lakh acres of land in community claims, under which in 43,546 forest rights certificates were distributed, he said.

In a meeting with cabinet colleagues and senior officials Friday, Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel directed officials to reconsider the forest rights claims.

INDIA AND CHINA HOLD MAJOR GENERAL-LEVEL TALKS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: Talks between senior army commanders of India and China were underway Saturday to take forward the disengagement process along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) at a number of friction points including in Daulat Beg Oldi and Depsang in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the developments said.

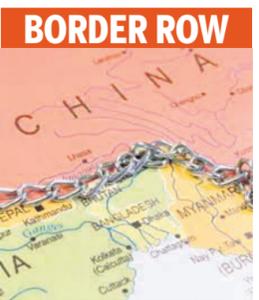
The Major General-level talks are being held at a border personnel meeting point in Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) area on the Chinese side of the LAC, they said.

The meeting comes a week after the two armies held the fifth round of Corps commander-level (Lt Gen)

discussions in an effort to expedite the disengagement process.

At the military talks, the Indian side has been insisting on complete disengagement of Chinese troops at the earliest and immediate restoration of status quo ante in all areas of eastern Ladakh prior to May 5 when the standoff began following a clash between the two armies in Pangong Tso.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has pulled back from Galwan Valley and certain other friction points but the withdrawal of its troops has not moved forward from the Finger areas in Pangong Tso, Gogra and Depsang as demanded by India, according to sources.



India has been insisting that China must withdraw its forces from areas between Finger Four and Eight. The mountain spurs in

the area are referred to as Fingers.

The formal process of disengagement of troops began on July 6, a day after a nearly two-hour telephonic conversation between National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on ways to bring down tensions in the area.

Both sides held several rounds of Major General-level talks in May and June before the level of negotiations was upgraded to the level of Corps commanders.

The people familiar with the developments said Saturday's talks will primarily focus on the disengagement process in Daulat Beg Oldi and Depsang areas.

Considering the situation on the

ground, the Indian Army and the IAF have decided to maintain a very high-level of operational readiness in all areas along the LAC in Ladakh, North Sikkim, Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh till a "satisfactory" resolution to the border row with China is arrived at, sources said.

Chief of Army Staff Gen MM Naravane has already conveyed to all the senior commanders of the Army, overseeing operation of the frontline formations along the LAC, to keep up a significantly high state of alertness and maintain the aggressive posturing to deal with any Chinese "misadventure", he said.

The fresh directive to maintain a very high-level of alertness came in the wake of lack of

forward movement in implementation of the disengagement process by Chinese military in friction points like Pangong Tso, Depsang and Gogra.

The Indian Army has already made elaborate plans to maintain current strength of troops and weapons along the LAC during the harsh winter months in eastern Ladakh and all other sensitive areas along the LAC.

It is also in the process of procuring a number of weapons, ammunition and winter gears for the frontline troops

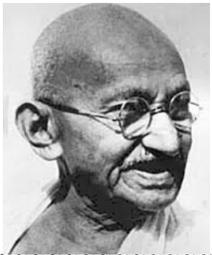
The temperature in some of the high-altitude areas along the LAC drops to minus 25°C in the winter months.



August 14 will bring freedom to people of Rajasthan from Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's misrule
KAILASH CHAUDHARY | UNION MINISTER

IIT KHARAGPUR ORGANISING INT'L E-SYMPOSIA ON GANDHI

IIT Kharagpur is organising an international e-symposia in association with top global universities to commemorate the completion of the 150th birth anniversary celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi



of the day quote

Someone is out to get Rajnath Singh out of the Defence Ministry! Otherwise, why would the Defence Ministry of India website put out the truth about the Chinese aggression and occupation of Indian territory

P CHIDAMBARAM | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

Gandhi ji's slogan of 'do or die' will have to be given a new meaning on the 78th anniversary of the Quit India Movement. Fight against injustice, do not be afraid

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

The YSRCP's actions would only push the state into darkness and destroy the opportunities of future generations

CHANDRABABU NAIDU | FORMER ANDHRA PRADESH CM

IMA writes to PM as 196 docs succumb to Covid-19 in India

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: Disturbed by incidences of doctors not receiving proper beds and treatments after getting infected with COVID-19, the Indian Medical Association has written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday to draw his attention.

The association said that such incidents would create a demoralising effect on the healthcare community, who are also at the frontline of the corona war.

"Disturbing reports have appeared about doctors and their families not getting beds for admission and also lack of drugs in many cases. It is pertinent to draw your attention to the demoralising effect it will have on our healthcare community," the letter read.

The association demanded adequate care for doctors and their families. "We need his (PM) attention and indulgence because



THE IMA SAID that such incidents would create a demoralising effect on the healthcare community, who are also at the frontline of the corona war

THE ASSOCIATION also demanded the extension of state-sponsored medical and life insurance facilities for doctors in all sectors

THE DATA SHARED by the IMA revealed that 87 per cent of the doctors who died due to COVID were above 50 years of age

of the rising concerns of the safety of doctors during this Covid crisis. An increasing number of doctors are getting infected and losing lives due to COVID," said RV Asokan, secretary-general of IMA.

Besides, the association also demanded the extension of state-sponsored medical and life insurance facilities for doctors in all sectors.

As per the IMA, 40 per cent of the

doctors who succumbed to the pandemic are general practitioners who work in private sectors or independently. "It is pertinent to mention COVID does not differentiate between the government and the private sector."

"Of all the fatalities we recorded, many of them are general practitioners. A significant proportion of the population consults them for fever and related symptoms. They remain the first point of contact

and care. They also happen to spend quality time in consultation and practising clinical medicine," Asokan said.

The data shared by the IMA revealed that 87 per cent of the doctors who died due to COVID were above 50 years of age. "A huge chunk of them were already in vulnerable group. Yet, they did not deter from their duty to treat everyone despite facing the risk to their lives," Asokan added.

KOZHIKODE AIR CRASH

Survivors yet to recover from shock



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kozhikode, August 8: Several injured passengers of the ill-fated Air India Express flight from Dubai which overshot the runway and crashed at the airport here are yet to get over the horror moments that took them close to death.

It was a black Friday for all the 184 passengers who after a long wait managed to get tickets in the repatriation flight from Dubai as part of the Centre's Vande Bharat Mission to evacuate Indians stranded abroad due to coronavirus pandemic.

"We did not realise what really happened other than the flight was shaking," said Ramshad, who was injured as the aircraft dived into the valley and broke into two portions Friday night after landing amid rains.

Though he was injured, Ramshad's wife Sufaira and four-year old daughter Saidasherin escaped without any serious wounds.

Similar is the experience of Ashraf, a native of east Kozhikode, now under treatment at the Medical College Hospital here, who said he was yet to recover from the shock.

"As soon the flight crashed, the emergency door was opened and people jumped out to safety, another survivor said.

Ashik, undergoing treatment at a hospital here, said the fire force personnel reached immediately and shifted the injured to hospital soon. Eighteen people, including pilot-in command Captain Deepak Sathe and Co-

BLACK BOX FOUND

KOZHIKODE: A team of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) investigating the crash of Air India Express aircraft at the Kozhikode airport recovered its black box on Saturday, officials said. The black box records the conversation between the pilots as well as with the air traffic control tower, apart from the flight data. The flight commanded by veteran pilot DV Sathe and co-pilot Akhilesh Kumar had skidded off on Friday evening and plunged 35 feet down the table-top airport runway, killing 18 persons.

pilot Akhilesh Kumar were among those killed in the accident. Four members of the cabin crew are among the 172 people who escaped with injuries.

The incident also saw local people joining the police and Fire and Force personnel in rushing to the rescue of the victims despite pouring rains and unmindful of social distancing and other COVID-19 protocols.

Dr Shimma Azeer, a doctor of a private hospital in Malappuram, who attended to a few of the injured brought there, said she was astonished at the manner in which the volunteers from the accident spot quickly managed to bring the affected.

In spite of the restrictions imposed due to containment and the heavy downpour that lashed since evening, the volunteers did a fantastic job, forgetting all protocols of social distancing or wearing masks which were fully wet during the course of rescue operations, Azeer said.

SHORT TAKES

Civilian hurt in Pak shelling succumbs

Jammu: A 65-year-old man injured in Pakistan shelling on the Line of Control (LoC) Friday in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, succumbed overnight, taking the toll of civilians killed in the flare up to two, officials said Saturday. Officials said 65-year-old Mohammad Sadiq of Tain Mankote in Poonch district succumbed to critical injuries sustained in Pakistan shelling. Two civilians have been killed and six injured in Friday's flare up on the LoC. One civilian was killed and six others injured when Pakistan resorted to unprovoked, indiscriminate targeting of defence and civilian facilities in Tangdhar sector of the LoC in Kupwara district Friday.

BSF kills suspected Pakistan intruder

New Delhi: A suspected Pakistani infiltrator was killed Saturday by the Border Security Force (BSF) along the International Border in Rajasthan's Barmer district, officials said. The intruder was seen climbing the border fence and a BSF patrol team challenged him, the officials said, adding that it later shot him. The incident took place around 1 a.m. in the Bakhasar area along the border, the officials said.

Meth worth ₹10.50cr seized

Aizawl: Methamphetamine tablets worth ₹10.50 crore were seized near the Myanmar border in Mizoram's Champhai district, officials said Friday. A Myanmar national was also arrested in the joint operation by the Assam Rifles and Mizoram police Thursday, they said. Total 3 lakh tablets were seized, they added. A case has been filed under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, officials said.

Special trains for Ganesh Chaturthi

Mumbai: The Railways is likely to announce special trains for Konkan region for the upcoming Ganesh Chaturthi festival after having consulted the Maharashtra government about the same, an official said Saturday. The Central Railway had written to the state government seeking its views on running special trains to the Konkan region through Central, Western and Konkan railways, the official said. The special trains may be scheduled for the 10-day festival, which begins August 22.

J'khand Assembly roof collapses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ranchi, August 8: Apart of the ceiling of Jharkhand's State Legislative Assembly collapsed Friday. The mishap happened in the library area of the building where only a handful of people were present during the incident as the building was sealed following some coronavirus cases there. No one was injured.

The building was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019 and was built on the expenditure of ₹1,500 crore.

The chairman of library development committee Irfan Ansari along with congress MLAs Purnima Niraj Singh, Akala Yadav and Rajesh Kachhap inspected the site. Ansari said that he wants a probe in the matter. "Neither the contractor nor the erring officer having complicity will be spared," he said.

He blamed the former Raghubar Das government for allocating a mega tender to a contractor who did not stick to his job properly and delivered a poor quality building.

TOTAL SHUTDOWN



Locals bathe in Ganga river next to the deserted Howrah Bridge during the complete bi-weekly lockdown to curb COVID-19 spread in Kolkata, Saturday

Modi launches week-long drive for 'garbage-free' India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Saturday launched a week-long garbage-free India campaign in the run up to Independence Day and asserted that the Swachh Bharat Mission has been a big support in the fight against coronavirus.

He also launched the Rashtriya Swachhata Kendra, an interactive experience centre on the Swachh Bharat Mission at the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti at Rajghat.

In his speech, Modi urged children, who attended the event, to follow social distancing norms and wear masks to guard against coronavirus.

The 'Gandagi Mukh Bharat' drive begins Saturday and would go on

till Independence Day to re-enforce the ongoing campaign on cleanliness and sanitation.

"Imagine the situation if a COVID-19-like pandemic had hit us before 2014. Due to lack of toilets, could we have checked the spread of the infection? Had lockdown been possible when 60 per cent of the population was forced to defecate in open," the Prime Minister observed.

He also said that the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (clean India mission) has been a big support in the fight against coronavirus.

The Prime Minister said the week-long campaign is to "honour swaraj (self-rule), meaning 'gandagi Bharat choro saptah' (garbage quit India week)", and reminded that August 8 is the anniversary of Quit India Movement.

INDIA RECORDS 61,537 NEW nCoV CASES, 933 DEATHS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Aug 8: With India registering 61,537 more cases, the coronavirus tally reached 20,88,611 Saturday, while 14,27,005 people have so far recuperated from COVID-19 pushing the recovery rate to 68.32 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said.

The death toll due to the disease rose to 42,518 with 933 fresh fatalities being reported in a day, data updated at 8 am showed.

There are 6,19,088 active cases of COVID-19, comprising 29.64 per cent of the caseload. The case fatality rate has further dropped to 2.04 per cent. This was the 10th day in a row that the COVID-19 tally increased by more than 50,000.

A total of 5,98,778 samples were tested on Friday, taking the total to 2,33,87,171 so far, according to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

Of the 933 fresh deaths reported, 300 are from Maharashtra, 119 from Tamil Nadu, 101 from Karnataka, 89 from Andhra Pradesh, 63 from Uttar Pradesh, 52 from West Bengal, 23 in Delhi, 22 from Punjab and Gujarat, 16 from Madhya Pradesh, 14 each from Uttarakhand and Telangana, 13 from Jammu and Kashmir, 12 from Odisha and 10 each from Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh.

Nine fatalities were reported from Haryana while six each from Bihar, Assam and Jharkhand, five in Kerala and Puducherry, four in Goa, three in Andaman and Nicobar

Islands while Nagaland and Tripura have registered one fatality each.

Of the total 42,518 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 17,092, followed by 4,690 in Tamil Nadu, 4,082 in Delhi, 2,998 in Karnataka, 2,605 in Gujarat, 1,981 in Uttar Pradesh, 1,954 in West Bengal, 1,842 in Andhra Pradesh and 962 in Madhya Pradesh.

So far, 767 people have died of COVID-19 in Rajasthan, 615 in Telangana, 539 in Punjab, 467 in Haryana, 449 in Jammu and Kashmir, 369 in Bihar, 247 in Odisha, 151 in Jharkhand, 132 in Assam, 112 in Uttarakhand, 102 in Kerala.

Chhattisgarh has registered 87 deaths, Puducherry 75, Goa 70, Tripura 37, and Chandigarh 23.

Kerala landslide: 24 bodies dug out so far



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, August 8: As the confirmed death toll in the landslide in Kerala's Idukki district climbed up to 24 with the recovery of five more bodies Saturday, the gloom deepened as the loud wails of a survivor Manjula rent the air when her son's body was dug out of the debris.

On Saturday, the body of her son Dinesh was among the five retrieved from under the debris. As the men, who were toiling to dig out the victims, were taking Dinesh's body to a waiting vehicle, Manjula wept inconsolably.

The landslide had occurred about 30 km from the popular tourist destination of Munnar Thursday night.

Area residents said at least 43 persons were still missing. The search operation was continuing despite inclement weather. "I do not know why I should live now - I have lost both my sons. While one of them has been taken out, the other still lies under the debris. They were studying in a college and had come home due to the coronavirus pandemic. And now, they are gone; why should I live?" wailed Manjula. She now has only her husband to share her grief with.

Deepan, who survived the tragedy and is awaiting a surgery at a hospital in Idukki district, broke down as he said that he has lost his parents and wife who was over seven months pregnant.

Virus rages in small towns, and so does stigma

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

New Delhi, August 8: Sarthak Anand says his neighbours treated him like a "criminal" when he was infected by coronavirus, a common experience in India's vast hinterland where the pandemic - and stigmatisation - are now raging.

"Even though I have recovered fully, no one wants to come near me," Anand, a government employee, told this news agency outside his home in Meerut.

On Friday India's official caseload passed two million, and while previously metropolises like New Delhi and Mumbai were the hotspots, smaller cities and rural areas are now reporting sharp rises.

According to public health expert Preeti Kumar, the probable reason is the return home of mil-



lions of migrant workers who were left jobless by India's sudden lockdown imposed in March.

"We are seeing the numbers rise especially in states like Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and with poorer healthcare systems, it is going to be a challenge," Kumar said.

The poor northern state of Uttar Pradesh, home to roughly as many people as France, Germany and Britain combined, has now seen the pandemic reach almost every district, no matter how remote.

The state has recorded 100,000 cases. Its capital Lucknow is reporting more than 600 new infections every day, compared to only 100-150 just a few days ago.

But the official number may be a big underestimate, experts say, with the real scale potentially hugely under-reported because of insufficient testing, and deaths not being properly recorded. Uttar Pradesh has conducted an impressive-sounding 2.8 million tests, according to a senior state official. But given its enormous population of over 200 million people, this equates to just 14,000 tests per million. In the US state of Texas, the rate is almost 10 times higher.

'Social boycott' Nationally, India has tested around 16,500 people per million, compared to 190,000 in the United States and 260,000 in Britain, according to a tally

by Worldometer.

Apart from having one of the world's lowest rates of spending per capita on health care, part of the reason is that coronavirus sufferers often become pariahs.

This is particularly true in smaller conurbations and in rural areas, where some two-thirds of Indians live and where face masks and social distancing are rare sights.

"A new disease with relatively high levels of complications and mortality, with accompanying directives on physical distancing, inevitably leads to fears, apprehensions and... stigma," said Rajib Kumar, who heads the Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University.

"There's both the fear of the disease as well as of isolation and quarantine," Kumar said.

international

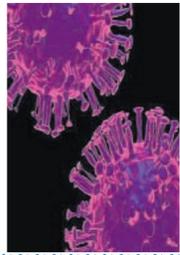


The West Coast has a special place in our relationship with the United States. The Indian-American community has distinguished itself and contributed immensely to the economic growth in this region

TARUNJIT SINGH SANDHU | INDIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE US

STUDY INFO

The incubation period of COVID-19, which is the time after which those infected with the novel coronavirus start showing the first symptoms, could be as much as eight days, longer than previous estimates of four to five days, says a new study



of the day quote

A Mahan Airlines Airbus A310 en route from Tehran to Beirut on July 23 was aggressively and unexpectedly intercepted by two US F-15 fighter jets while travelling through internationally specified air corridors in Syria's airspace

MAJID TAKHT-RAVANCHI | IRAN'S UN AMBASSADOR

I want to learn about Taiwan's incredibly effective response to the coronavirus even though the island did things that the US has fumbled, such as having a unified strategy and citizens willing to wear masks

ALEX AZAR | US HEALTH SECRETARY

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has written a letter to US President Donald Trump to extradite the killers of the country's founding father, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

AK ABDUL MOMEN | MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF BANGLADESH

SHORT TAKES

Protests held

Moscow: Thousands of demonstrators gathered again Saturday in the major Russian Far East city of Khabarovsk to denounce the arrest of the region's governor a month ago. Sergei Furgal was arrested on July 9 on suspicion of involvement in murders and taken to jail in Moscow. The estimated 3,000 demonstrators protested the charges and want him returned to the city for trial. Furgal, who has been removed from his post, is a popular figure in the region bordering China about 6,100 kilometers (3,800 miles) east of Moscow. Since his arrest, daily demonstrations have been held in the city, with attendance peaking on weekends. Demonstrations in support of the Khabarovsk protesters were held in at least seven other cities in Russia.

8 soldiers dead

Nairobi: A Somali police officer says at least eight soldiers are dead and more than 14 others wounded after a suicide bomber detonated an explosives-laden vehicle at the gates of a military base in Somalia's capital. Captain Mohamed Hussein says the toll is expected to rise. Police Colonel Ahmed Muse says the bomber struck the 12th April Army Brigade base near the newly reopened sports stadium in Warta-Nabadda district.

20 killed

Ouagadougou: Gunmen stormed a cattle market and opened fire in an eastern Burkina Faso village Friday, killing at least 20 people and injuring many others, a local government official said. The attack in Namoungou village is being investigated, said Saidou Sanou, the governor of the eastern region, who urged people to be vigilant and to closely collaborate with the army.

Canadian dies

Richmond (US): A 72-year-old Canadian man has died while in custody at an immigration detention center in Virginia that was the site of the largest coronavirus outbreak at a US immigration facility, a federal official said. Kaitlyn Pote, a spokeswoman for US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said the man died Wednesday night in a Virginia hospital, but no more information was immediately available, including whether the death was COVID-related, the Richmond Times-Dispatch reported Friday.

Beirut blast: Anger mounts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beirut, August 8: Police fired tear gas and clashed with demonstrators in Lebanon's capital Saturday at the start of a planned protest over this week's massive explosion that devastated large parts of the capital and killed more than 150 people. Thousands of people were pouring into Beirut's main square, where they had set up symbolic nooses to hang politicians whose corruption and negligence they blame for Tuesday's explosion at the Port of Beirut.

The huge blast was caused by thousands of tons of ammonium nitrate improperly stored at the port for more than six years, apparently set off by a fire. It was the biggest in Lebanon's history and caused an estimated \$10.5 billion worth of damage, according to Beirut's governor. It also left hundreds of thousands of people homeless.

The protest Saturday was the first significant demonstration since the explosion and organizers planned to hold a symbolic funeral for the dead. As the protest got underway however, small groups of young men began throwing stones at security forces.

Near parliament, riot police fired tear gas at protesters who hurled stones and tried to jump over barriers that close the road leading to the legislature. The protesters later set on fire a truck that was fortifying barriers on a road leading to parliament. The gathering at Martyrs Square and outside the parliament building and government headquarters came amid popular anger



against Lebanon's political leadership. The country's ruling class, made up mostly of former civil war-era leaders, is blamed for widespread corruption, incompetence and mismanagement that contributed to Tuesday's explosion.

The army issued a statement reminding the protesters to act peacefully and abstain from closing roads or attacking public or private property. Police also issued a statement after the protests began urging people to act "in a civilized way far away from violence." The protest came as senior officials from the Middle East and Europe arrived in Lebanon in a show of solidarity with the tiny country that is still in shock suffered after Tuesday's blast.

Lebanon is mired in its worst economic and financial crisis in decades making it difficult for many people who had their properties damaged to fix them. In a show of anger, the president of the Christian opposition Kataeb party said its

three legislators have decided to resign from Parliament over this week's "disaster." Sami Gemayel called on every "honorable" Member of Parliament to resign and work for the "birth of a new Lebanon." A senior Kataeb party official was killed in the blast, which claimed at least 154 lives, wounded more than 5,000 people and laid waste to the country's largest port and nearby areas.

Also killed were 43 Syrians, the country's embassy in Beirut said. Lebanon is home to some 1 million Syrian refugees. The Dutch foreign ministry said Saturday that Hedwig Waltmans-Molier, the wife of the Netherlands' ambassador to Lebanon, had also died of injuries sustained in Tuesday's blast.

Documents that surfaced after the blast showed that for years officials had been repeatedly warned that the presence of 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate at the port posed a grave danger, but no one acted to remove it.

WAR AGAINST VIRUS FACE COVERING USE EXPANDED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 8: Face coverings are now a legal requirement across most indoor settings in England and Scotland from Saturday as part of the UK government's efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19.

Under the new rules, face masks or some form of face covering must now be worn in cinemas, museums, places of worship and aquariums besides public transport and shops and supermarkets, where it was already mandatory.

In Scotland, the rule also covers banks and beauty salons and in the devolved administration of Northern Ireland face coverings in all enclosed public spaces will become compulsory from Monday.

Those who break the law on wearing face coverings, unless exempt on certain narrow health and age grounds, could be fined up to 100 pounds, with greater police presence in place to ensure the rules were being followed.

The move comes as the government extended localised lockdowns in northern England and added the city of Preston in Lancashire within the remit of stricter measures, as the spread of the deadly coronavirus failed to show a decrease in the number of cases per 100,000 people in the region.

"I chaired a meeting of the Local Action Gold Committee, and unfortunately, the data does not yet show a decrease in the transmission of this terrible virus," said UK Health Secretary Matt Hancock.

THANKS TO GLOBAL WARMING

CANADA'S LAST INTACT ICE SHELF COLLAPSES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Toronto, August 8: Much of Canada's remaining intact ice shelf has broken apart into hulking iceberg islands thanks to a hot summer and global warming, scientists said.

Canada's 4,000-year-old Milne Ice Shelf on the northwestern edge of Ellesmere Island had been the country's last intact ice shelf until the end of July when ice analyst Adrienne White of the Canadian Ice Service noticed that satellite photos showed that about 43 per cent of it had broken off. She said it happened around July 30 or 31.

Two giant icebergs formed along with lots of smaller ones, and they have already started drifting away, White said. The biggest is nearly the size of Manhattan — 21 square miles (55 square kilometers) and 7 miles long (11.5 kilometers). They are 230 to 260 feet (70 to 80 meters) thick.

"This is a huge, huge block of ice," White said. "If one of these is moving toward an oil rig, there's nothing you can really do aside from move your oil rig." The 72-square mile (187 square kilometer) undulating white ice shelf

of ridges and troughs dotted with blue meltwater had been larger than the District of Columbia but now is down to 41 square miles (106 square kilometers).

Temperatures from May to early August in the region have been 9 degrees (5 degrees Celsius) warmer than the 1980 to 2010 average, University of Ottawa glaciology professor Luke Copland said. This is on top of an Arctic that already had been warming much faster than the rest of globe, with this region warming even faster.

"Without a doubt, it's climate change," Copland said, noting the ice shelf is melting from both hotter air above and warmer water below. "The Milne was very special," he added. "It's an amazingly pretty location." Ice shelves are hundreds to thousands of years old, thicker than long-term sea ice, but not as big and old as glaciers, Copland said.

Canada used to have a large continuous ice shelf across the northern coast of Ellesmere Island in the Canadian territory of Nunavut, but it has been breaking apart over the last decades because of man-made global warming, White said.



PERFECT CLICK



A woman takes a selfie in a field at Hitchin Lavender farm in Ickleford, Britain

REUTERS

HK, Chinese officials mock US

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hong Kong, August 8: Hong Kong's leader and China's top representative in the city took pot shots at the United States Saturday after the Trump administration sanctioned them and nine other officials for allegedly cracking down on freedom and undermining the local autonomy of the former British colony.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam took to Facebook to say that the U.S. got her address wrong, listing the official address of her chief deputy instead. She noted that she was the deputy when she applied for her U.S. visa in 2016. "By the way, my entry visa to the U.S. is valid until 2026. Since I have no desire to visit this country, it looks like I can take the initiative to cancel it," Lam said.

The sanctions, announced Friday by the U.S. Treasury Department, block all property or other assets that the individuals have within U.S.



jurisdiction. Luo Huining, the director of the central government's liaison office in Hong Kong, said being included on the list shows that he has done what he should for the city and his country.

"I don't have a penny of assets abroad. Isn't it in vain to impose 'sanctions'? Of course, I can also send 100 U.S. dollars to Mr. Trump for freezing," he said in a statement on the office's website.

Hong Kong Commerce Secretary Edward Yau, who wasn't sanctioned, called the sanctions "unreasonable and barbarous" and said they would harm U.S. interests in the city, an Asian financial and shipping hub.

77-YR-OLD PRISON ESCAPEE ARRESTED

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Denver, August 8: A man who escaped from a Colorado prison in 1974 was found living under an alias in a small town in northern New Mexico after the Denver police officer he shot decades ago helped track him down, authorities said.

Luis Archuleta, 77, also known as Larry Pusateri, was arrested Wednesday in Espanola, New Mexico, where he had been living under the name Ramon Montoya for about 40 years, the FBI said in a statement.

Archuleta was accused in 1971 of shooting Denver police officer Daril Cinquanta, who had pulled over Archuleta to check his ID, KMGH-TV reported. When Cinquanta tried to check for weapons, the two fought and Cinquanta was shot in the stomach, KMGH-TV said.

A jury in 1973 convicted Archuleta of assault with a deadly weapon. Cinquanta, who since retired and started his own private investigation company, never stopped making phone calls and knocking on doors in hopes of tracking down Archuleta, KUSA-TV reported. His search paid off when a tipster called.

"I get a phone call from an individual and this person says, 'I've thought about it, and I'm gonna tell you where the guy is who shot you,' and of course I was skeptical," Cinquanta said.

"Forty-six years later, and out of the clear blue I get a phone call. Well, this person gives me his address and his alias ... and other facts that meant nothing at the time." A federal court in Colorado issued a new arrest warrant involving the prison escape and Archuleta was arrested in the small town about 20 miles (32 kilometers) north of Santa Fe.

AI plane crash: Two Indian expats lucky to miss flight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, August 8: One may call it good luck, but for two Indian expats it was God who prevented them at the last minute from boarding the Air India Express plane that crashed in Kerala, killing at least 18 people on board.

According to India's Civil Aviation Ministry, the Boeing 737 aircraft on a flight from Dubai to Kozhikode overshot the runway at Kozhikode airport on Friday evening. There were 184 passengers including 10 infants, 2 pilots and four cabin crew onboard the aircraft.

Noufal Moin Vetten, an Ajman resident working as an office boy in a Sharjah school, was booked to travel on the flight and had checked in as per schedule.

Recounting his miraculous escape, Vetten, a resident of Malappuram, Thirunavaya, whose visa was cancelled a week ago, told Gulf News: "I was handed my boarding pass, but when I reached immigration, they told me I had to pay a fine of Dh 1,000 (Rs 20,430) for overstaying. I had only Dh 500 (Rs 10,215) with me."

"I called my school PRO and he told me to come back. He

STROKE OF LUCK



said they would follow protocols and pay the fines before sending me," he said. Vetten was disappointed and called his family to let them know.

"When I heard about the crash, I was saddened for all the passengers. But I'm so relieved I missed it. God has been really merciful," said Vetten. Afsal Parrakodan, a resident of Abu Dhabi, had a similar stroke of luck.

"My work visa was cancelled about a week ago. After getting my boarding pass, I was told I had to pay a fine of Dh 1,000 at the immigration counter, but I had only

Dh500 on me."

"I was very keen to board the flight and be with my family. So I called a friend who brought me the additional Dh500, but by then, my baggage had been offloaded and the flight's doors were closed," said Parrakodan.

"I was feeling very sad and called my mother to tell her I had missed the flight. But a few hours later, when I learnt of the crash, I couldn't help but feel relieved and thankful to God for saving my life," said an overwhelmed Parrakodan who plans to fly back next week.

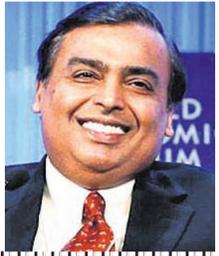
business



We are open to partnerships in the EV business and working on it. Currently, we are engaged with multiple interested parties to invest in Mahindra Electric and the process is going on
PAWAN GOENKA | MD, M&M

AMBANI BECOMES WORLD'S 4TH RICHEST

Billionaire Mukesh Ambani (\$80.6 bn) has surpassed Europe's richest man Bernard Arnault to become world's fourth richest. The Reliance Industries chairman is now behind Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates and Mark Zuckerberg. According to Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Ambani is wealthier than Warren Buffett and Elon Musk to name a few



of the day quote

A robust ODR ecosystem in India has the potential to facilitate access to justice and the ease of doing business by making dispute resolution cheaper, quicker and most importantly equally credible as conventional methods of dispute resolution

AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

With B2B fulfillment moving towards just-in-time service levels, proximity to warehouses for companies like ours helps corner stores free up their space, and working capital

SACHIN CHHABRA | FOUNDER, PEEL-WORKS

We are appealing to people in the commercial segment, big brands such as BIBA, Arvind to come together with the weavers and source their cloth directly from the weavers, thereby bringing about a synergy that was long absent

SMRITI IRANI | MINISTER FOR TEXTILES

Liquidity scheme for NBFCs, HFCs: 15 proposals get ₹6,399 cr sanction

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: The Finance Ministry Saturday said 15 proposals worth ₹6,399 crore of stressed NBFCs and HFCs have been sanctioned under the special liquidity scheme announced as part of the ₹20.97 lakh crore 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' package.

The scheme launched July 1 permits both primary and secondary market purchases of debt and seeks to address the short term liquidity issues of non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and housing finance companies (HFCs).

"The Special Liquidity Scheme (SLS) of ₹30,000 crore was announced as a part of the #AatmanirbharBharat package with an aim to improve the liquidity position of NBFCs and HFCs," Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said in a tweet.

Sharing implementation status update of the scheme, she said, 15 proposals with a total sanctioned amount of ₹6,399 crore have been cleared as on August 7 while 37 more applications seeking financing of up to ₹11,037 crore are under process.

NBFCs and HFCs came under stress following a series of defaults by IL&FS group firms in September 2018.

Any NBFC including microfi-



The Special Liquidity Scheme of ₹30,000 crore was announced as a part of the Aatmanirbhar Bharat package with an aim to improve the liquidity position of NBFCs and HFCs

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

nance institutions registered with RBI under the RBI Act, 1934 (excluding those registered as Core Investment Companies) and any HFC registered with the National Housing Bank under the National Housing Bank Act, 1987 which is complying with certain specified conditions, are eligible to raise funding from this facility.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has provided funds for the scheme by subscribing to government-guaranteed special securities issued by

a trust set up by SBI Capital Markets Ltd (SBICAP).

The scheme is being implemented by SLS Trust, the SPV set up by SBICAP.

The special liquidity scheme is open for three months for making subscriptions by the Trust.

Under the scheme, the government will provide an unconditional and irrevocable guarantee to the special securities issued by the Trust.

The instruments will be commercial papers and non-convertible debentures with a residual maturity of not more than three months and rated as investment grade.

Therefore, those market participants who are looking to exit their standard investments with a residual maturity of 90 days may also approach the SLS Trust.

COVID THWACK

Hotel industry in state posts 50% fall in RevPAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: In the backdrop of COVID-19 outbreak, Odisha hotel and hospitality industry is yet to overcome from the severe impact that seen in their business. Hotel & Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO) claimed that hotel industry recorded around 50% fall in Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) in the post Q1 of current financial year.

Secretary of HRAO Srinibash Subudhi said, "The pandemic has cast a great impact to this sector. At present, we have around 40% of hotels available, from which around 15-20% have been occupied. This is the crisis scenario and we have to wait with bated breath till the pandemic is under control."

The HRAO secretary said the highest percentage of tourist footfall is generally seen in places like Ganjam (Chatrapur and Gopalpur),

Puri, Balasore and Cuttack. "Since these places are now under alert owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the occupancy rate is very low," he said.

Subudhi also mentioned that in Q1, the hotel sector hardly made any revenue, as most of the quarter was under the spell of lockdown (declared by the government to contain the spread of COVID-19 virus).

According to sources, in the first quarter of FY'21, the hospitality sector incurred a loss of ₹800 crore; with hotel industry losing ₹100 crore and restaurants and bars incurring a loss of ₹700 crore in the state.

According to HRAO, there are around 2,500 hotels in the state and around 200 GST registered restaurants. On an average, this sector generates around ₹9,000 crore of revenue per year in Odisha. In addition, the hotels and restaurants sector contribute around 10-20% of the state's GDP.



Centre releases ₹553 cr to states for agri mechanisation



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: The Centre has released ₹553 crore to states under a scheme to promote mechanisation in the agriculture sector. The Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM) was launched in April 2014 with an aim to have inclusive growth of farm mechanisation to boost productivity.

"In the year 2020-21, budget of ₹1,033 crore has been provided for the scheme, out of which ₹553 crore has been released to state governments," an official statement said.

Agricultural mechanisation helps in increasing production through timely farm operations and cut in operations by ensuring better management of inputs. Mechanisation also enhances the productivity of natural resources and reduces drudgery associated with various farm operations.

The agriculture ministry pointed out that paddy straw burning is one of the major problems in the northern region of the country causing pollution.

With an objective of moving away farmers of this region from the practice of crop residue burning, the scheme of CRM (Crop Residue Management) was initiated in 2018 wherein, farmers are provided machinery for in-situ management of crop residue through establishment of CHCs (Custom Hiring Centres).

Individual farmers are also provided subsidy for procurement of machinery. Total funds of ₹11,78.47 crore were provided in the year 2018-19 & 2019-20 to Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and NCT.

Zomato brings in 'period leave' for employees

REUTERS

New Delhi, August 8: Indian food delivery company Zomato said Saturday it would give female employees up to 10 days of "period leave" per year, as part of an effort to combat what it said was stigma around the issue.

Zomato is the most high profile organisation to institute the policy in India, a country where menstruation is still taboo to some.

"There shouldn't be any shame or stigma attached to applying for a period leave," Zomato chief executive Deepinder Goyal said in an email to staff on Saturday. "You should feel free to tell people on internal groups, or emails that you are on your period leave for the day."

Founded in 2008, Gurugram-based Zomato is one of India's best-known companies, with more than 5,000 employees.

Millions of women and girls in India still face discrimination and health issues due to a lack of awareness surrounding menstruation.

In 2018, India's Supreme Court overturned a decades-long ban on women of menstrual age entering the Sabarimala temple in the southern state of Kerala, leading to a nationwide debate about women's rights.



SHORT TAKES

CIL revises production target

Kolkata: State-run Coal India Ltd (CIL) has revised its production target to 650-660MT for the current fiscal in the wake of the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, said a top company official. The miner had earlier set a production target of 710MT for the 2020-21 fiscal. "COVID-19 pandemic has affected demand for coal. However, demand has started to pick up as the industries have commenced operations. "Given the situation, we are hopeful to end the year with 650-660MT of production," CIL Chairman Pramod Agrawal said.

'WB's logistics policy ready'

Kolkata: West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra has said that the state is ready with a logistics policy and will soon seek feedback from the industry. Speaking at a webinar organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), he said the policy will try to integrate the fragmented logistics sector of the state and also drive in efficiency. "The policy on the logistics sector is ready and we will seek inputs from the industry. The logistics sector is very important since it creates huge employment opportunities," Mitra said.

Grofers starts grocery sales

New Delhi: Softbank-backed online grocery seller Grofers has announced a nine-day sales scheme and a ₹50 crore working capital and advance payments support for partners' manufacturing products locally. The company aims to sell 9 crore items produced by its partners including 5.5 crore items that are produced locally, Grofers said in a statement.

Monte Carlo incurs ₹65 cr revenue loss

New Delhi: Clothing firm Monte Carlo Fashions has incurred a revenue loss of ₹65 crore in the April-June quarter this year and is operating at around 80% capacity due to the impact of COVID-19 and resultant lockdowns. "Following govt. directives, we resumed our operations April 21, complying with safety and security norms for COVID-19," Monte Carlo Fashions Ltd said.

NTPC achieves over 100 BUs power generation mark



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: NTPC Group achieved over 100 Billion Units (BUs) of cumulative generation in the current financial year, reinforcing the group's commitment towards excellence in operation across its plants.

NTPC Talcher Thermal in Odisha produced 460 MW in the same year and has been registered among the top ten performing thermal power plants in the country.

As per the data published by Central Electricity Authority (CEA), NTPC Korba (2,600 MW) in Chhattisgarh has emerged as the top performing thermal power plant in India with 97.42% Plant Load Factor (PLF) between April to July 2020.

Exemplary performances were registered by five other flagship power plants of NTPC. NTPC Sipat

in Chhattisgarh (2,980 MW), NTPC Rihand (3,000 MW) and NTPC Vindhyachal (4,760 MW) in Uttar Pradesh, and NTPC Talcher Kaniha in Odisha (3,000 MW) featured among the top ten performing thermal power plants based on PLF performance.

Further, two 200 MW units, Unit 4 & Unit 1 of NTPC Singrauli in Uttar Pradesh commissioned way back in January 1984 and June 1982 respectively, achieved highest PLF in the country with 99.90% and 99.87% respectively from April to July 2020.

With a total installed capacity of 62.9 GW, NTPC Group has 70 power stations comprising of 24 coal, 7 combined cycle Gas/Liquid fuel, 1 hydro, 13 renewables along with 25 subsidiary and JV power stations. The group has over 20 GW of capacity under construction, including 5 GW of renewable energy projects.

BIZ BUZZ

Tata Motors rolls out health accessories

New Delhi: Tata Motors Saturday said it has launched a range of health and hygiene accessories for its customers. In line with the company's ongoing endeavour to ensure the safety of its customers at all times, these accessories are designed to provide car owners with an additional level of safety, Tata Motors said in a statement. All these will be offered as genuine accessories and will be available across the company outlets in the country, it added. The products include, air purifier, air filter and sanitisation kits. The air purifier can be easily fitted in the cup holder slot of all Tata cars. The air filter on the other hand can be installed in the Nexon and the Harrier as of now. Sanitisation kit includes hand sanitizer, N95 masks, hand gloves, safety touch key, tissue box, mist diffuser among others.



Canada to impose tariffs on US imports



Toronto: Canada's deputy prime minister has said that the country plans to impose 3.6 billion Canadian (\$2.69 billion) tariffs on US imports in response to President Donald Trump saying the US is reinstating a 10% import tax on Canadian aluminum. Deputy Prime Minister Chrystia Freeland said Friday the tariffs will match the US ones dollar-for-dollar. Canada is considering imposing a tariff on dozens of products, including golf clubs, bicycles, refrigerators, washing machines, tripods, sports equipment like bats and hockey sticks and embossed aluminum cans for beverages. Trump originally imposed the tariffs on aluminum imports in 2018. He then lifted them last year on Canadian and Mexican metals to smooth the way for the US-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which replaced the North American FTA.

'Decision in Oracle's favour will limit consumers' freedom'

San Francisco: As Google and Cloud major Oracle look forward to the US Supreme Court hearing October 7 into a decade-long copyright legal battle, the search engine giant has filed a supplemental brief to augment its position, saying a decision in Oracle's favour would limit consumers' freedom to use technologies on a range of devices. The supplemental brief was filed this week in a long-standing case where Oracle has blamed Google for "copyright infringement" where it "copied Java APIs to build the Android smartphone operating system". After Oracle acquired Java in 2010, it sued Google for using its software interfaces. In 2018, an appeals court in the US ruled that Google violated copyright laws when it used Oracle's open-source Java software to build the Android platform. In a fresh blog post this week, Kent Walker who is SVP of Global Affairs at Google pitches for "interoperability" that has let software developers build on each other's work.



PSBs need to step up provisioning to restructure loans

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 8: Public sector banks (PSBs) would need to increase their provisioning buffer factoring in the incremental provisioning requirement on restructured loans and potential NPAs, a report said.

To discourage rampant and unviable restructuring, the RBI has now mandated that banks will be required to make high provisions at 10% on restructured retail/corporate loans, (20% on corp. loans for banks outside inter-creditor agreement).

According to analysts, higher provisioning cost would deter unwarranted restructuring. But, this



would put pressure on the PSBs to accelerate the pace of increasing their provisioning buffer or disallow restructuring, even in genuine case of stress due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Assuming Covid-19-induced stressed loans at 10-15% and at least 50% restructured in the worst case, our rough calculations show system level immediate additional provisioning cost at 10% could be 50-

75 bps," Emkay Global Financial Services said in a report. This would mean certain banks would fare better while restructuring loans under stress owing to the pandemic. While ICICI/Axis

carry contingent provisions of 125-130 bps, HDFCB/KMB/IIB/RBL have around 60 bps. But large PSBs have contingent provisions of just 10-15 bps.

"Thus, we believe that some banks may have to further accelerate their provisioning buffer, factoring in the incremental provisioning requirement on restructured loans and potential NPAs," Emkay said in its report.

The provision required for restructured loans, however, provides for reversal of 50% of provisioning on retail loans in case the borrower pays 20% residual debt, and the balance 50% on payment of another 10% without slipping into NPA.

NIGHTMARE FOR GIANTS

Jesus punishes Real sins



TWO SIDES OF EMOTION: Raheem Sterling rejoices after putting Man City up front as Real Madrid defender Raphael Varane shows off his frustration, Friday

straight to Kevin De Bruyne, but Phil Foden — playing as a false nine with Sergio Aguero injured — struck wide.

But another blunder by Varane in the 68th minute was again capitalised on by Jesus. Varane failed to cut out a long ball forward and then made an ineffective attempt to head back to Courtois. Jesus closed in quickly and dinked the ball over Courtois.

In his fourth season in charge of City, Pep Guardiola remains in contention to win the Champions League for the first time since his 2011 success with Barcelona.

But the newly crowned Spanish champions were eliminated from a Champions League knockout round for the first time under Zinedine Zidane. He led Madrid to three consecutive titles from 2016 to 2018, resigned after delivering the 13th title but returned as coach in March 2019.

The lack of spectators meant the match in Manchester was not preceded by the usual booing of the Champions League anthem by supporters angered by UEFA pursuing Financial Fair Play cases against the Abu Dhabi-owned club.



Gabriel Jesus



Depay nullifies Ronaldo efforts

TURIN: Memphis Depay's penalty turned out to be the difference between Lyon and Juventus as the former sealed quarterfinal berth on aggregate, having an away goal advantage, Friday.

A Portugal international celebrated ecstatically at the end of the Champions League match between Juventus and Lyon.

But it wasn't Cristiano Ronaldo, who could only trudge off the pitch dejected after Juventus was eliminated from the competition despite his two goals securing a 2-1 victory in the rearranged second-leg match. Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes raced to the end where the away fans should have been, jumped over the advertising hoardings and sat on top of the Perspex fence at the front of the stands, kissing the badge on his shirt and pumping his fists in the air in celebration.

Lyon had eliminated Juventus and progressed to the quarterfinals on away goals after a 2-2 draw on aggregate.

Lyon will face Manchester City in the single-elimination quarterfinals in Lisbon after the English team beat Real Madrid 2-1 on the night to progress 4-2 on aggregate.

Lyon captain Memphis Depay would not have been able to play had the match taken place as scheduled because he had a serious knee injury. He scored an early penalty with a cheeky chip down the middle after Houssem Aouar went down in the area under a challenge from Rodrigo Bentancur.

Depay also conceded a penalty at the end of the first half after Miralem Pjanic's free-kick hit his arm. Ronaldo converted and doubled his tally on the hour mark when he curled a fantastic strike into the top right corner. It extended his all-time record in the competition to 131 goals.

That was Ronaldo's 37th goal in all competition for Juventus, breaking a 95-year-old club record. Ronaldo went close to scoring the goal that would have seen Juventus through but headed a corner narrowly over the bar from close range.

Key Juventus forward Paulo Dybala was recovering from a thigh injury and was on the bench. He was brought on in the second half but had to be substituted just 14 minutes later.

It was Juve's earliest elimination from the competition since the 2015-16 season. The club has, however, struggled to transfer its domestic domination to Europe and it hasn't won the Champions League since 1996.



Cristiano Ronaldo

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, August 8: Eliminating the record 13-time champion has Manchester City players believing they can deliver the team's first Champions League title. It was after Gabriel Jesus struck the decider. Real Madrid's defensive mistakes by Raphael Varane were seized on by Raheem Sterling and Jesus to lead City into a quarterfinal against Lyon. They clinched another 2-1 vic-

tory against Madrid Friday after winning by the same score in the first leg in the Spanish capital in February before the competition was paused due to the pandemic.

First the Brazilian set up the opener scored by Sterling in the ninth minute at an empty Etihad Stadium. With Madrid captain Sergio Ramos banned after being sent off in the Madrid leg, Raphael Varane was without his usual central defensive partner.

And the Frenchman was caught out in possession by Gabriel Jesus, who squared for Sterling to tap past goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois for his 100th City goal.

Real began to make their presence felt and restored parity through Karim Benzema, who headed in powerfully from Rodrygo's cross in the 28th minute.

City went close to a second before the break after a poor clearance from Courtois went

Silva bids farewell to Etihad

AGENCIES

MANCHESTER: David Silva has bid farewell to Manchester City's Etihad Stadium after 10 years of loyal service to the club, as Pep Guardiola's side capped off their star man's goodbye with a landmark victory over Real Madrid. The 34-year-old will leave the club once their Champions League campaign reaches its conclusion, having won four Premier League titles, two FA Cups and five EFL Cups during his spell in Manchester.

Guardiola couldn't find a starting place for Silva in Friday night's mammoth Round of 16 tie with Madrid, but the Spaniard was involved in the second half, replacing Raheem Sterling in the 81st minute.

Silva's first European match at the Etihad was against Politehnica Timisoara in Europa League qualifying. 10 years on, his final game there was a 2-1 win against Real Madrid, to reach the Champions League quarterfinals.

His thirteen minutes were his final moments on the Etihad Stadium turf, and he went close to capping a fairytale farewell as he saw a free-kick whistle just wide of Thibaut Courtois' post.

The diminutive midfielder helped his side see out a win that booked City's place in the quarterfinals against Lyon in Lisbon. After the game, he was seen waving goodbye at the camera as he left the pitch.

And Silva took to Twitter with a poignant image showing the

Spaniard spending a moment to himself looking out on the pitch, reflecting on what has been a decorated spell with the club.

City teammate and England international Kyle Walker replied to the tweet with a blue heart emoji. Silva's next move remains unknown, with recent reports suggesting the midfielder could be on his way to Italy, with Lazio frontrunners to secure the services of the 34-year-old.

Fernando Silva, David's father, has said that his son likes the Italian league and would enjoy playing in Serie A, amid rumours that Lazio have offered Silva a two-year deal as well as a luxurious mansion and a private jet for good measure.



NZ, Aus accept World Cup calls

REUTERS

Wellington, August 8: New Zealand said Saturday it could have probably hosted the women's Cricket World Cup next year but supported the decision of the International Cricket Council (ICC) to postpone the event for a year. Cricket Australia (CA) have also downplayed any suggestions they were annoyed at having the hosting rights of this year's postponed men's T20 World Cup pushed back to 2022, allowing the powerful Indian board to retain the 2021 tournament.

The ICC decided Friday to shift the women's 50-over tournament until February 2022 because of uncertainty around COVID-19 and to shift the men's Twenty20 tournament that was due to be held this October to late 2022.

"This is obviously a disappointing decision for cricket players and fans around the world," New Zealand Sports Minister Grant Robertson said in a statement on Saturday about the postponed women's tournament.

"The organising committee in New Zealand has been working with the government to ensure a safe and enjoyable tournament could be played. We could have done it in 2021, but now we will look to 2022. As a government we

We could have done it in 2021, but now we will look to 2022. As a government we have reiterated our commitment to support the tournament

GRANT ROBERTSON | NZ SPORTS MINISTER

have reiterated our commitment to support the tournament."

The ICC last month postponed the men's T20 tournament but had not decided on a new date. The Indian cricket board, according to media reports, was reluctant to sacrifice the 2021 slot for Australia and host back-to-back World Cups in 2022 and 2023.

CA interim chief executive Nick Hockley, however, said his organisation had been ready to host the tournament in either 2021 or 2022, while there was no problem with India holding onto their tournament next year.

"No, not at all annoyed," Hockley told reporters on a conference call on Saturday. "We are very respectful."

"Postponing it to 2022 in Australia gives us a better chance of putting on the event that we all originally planned for and were hoping for. We hope by 2022 that the world is back and we have got some normalcy."

Silverstone GP: Bottas on pole

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Silverstone, August 8: Valtteri Bottas qualified in pole position Saturday ahead of Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton for Formula One's 70th Anniversary Grand Prix. Hamilton holds a 30-point championship lead over Bottas.

Bottas clocked a fastest lap at the central England circuit of one minute, 25.154 seconds, 0.063 seconds ahead of Hamilton. Nico Hulkenberg qualified in third.

Too early to talk about it: CA

REUTERS

Melbourne, August 8: Cricket Australia (CA) interim Chief Executive Nick Hockley has said it was still too early to determine whether they would shift the Boxing Day test match against India from Melbourne as the state of Victoria battled a novel coronavirus resurgence.

The Melbourne Cricket Ground has hosted a test match from December 26-30 in all but one year since 1980 and the game has become a staple on the Australian sporting calendar.

The 'Sydney Morning Herald', however, reported Saturday that the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust were considering mounting a bid to host back-to-back Tests over the Christmas-New Year period if the COVID-19 situation in Melbourne did not stabilise.

"In terms of Boxing Day, it's one of the most iconic events in the Australian sporting calendar, and we are working full steam ahead," Hockley told reporters on a conference call Saturday.

"As long as circumstances allow,

we will be doing everything we can to play the Boxing Day test at the MCG. At the moment we are planning to have things go ahead."

Victoria, Australia's second-most populous state, is at the centre of a second wave of infections in the country, accounting for more than two-thirds of the national tally of nearly 21,000 cases.

The southeastern state, of which Melbourne is the capital, has recorded 181 deaths, almost 70 per cent of the Australia's fatalities from the pandemic.

MOVING IND-AUS BOXING DAY TEST

Hockley said the new wave of infections only showed that Cricket Australia had to be "agile and flexible" with their plans for not just the four-test, three one-day match tour by India but the entire domestic and international schedule.

"As we have seen with the winter codes, we need to be agile and flexible all the way through," Hockley said. "As, when and if things change, we are doing everything we can that we make sure we have all the backup arrangements and can get cricket played."

Buttler, Woakes counter Pakistan charge

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



JOS BUTTLER

Manchester, August 8: Jos Buttler (32 batting, 31b, 5x4) and Chris Woakes' (26 batting, 26b, 4x4) counter-attacking partnership for England stopped the Pakistan charge in the second session on Day 4 as the first Test gears up to a dramatic conclusion at Old Trafford. While England need 110 more runs to win, Pakistan need five more wickets.

England started the second session on 55/1 with captain Joe Root (42) and Dom Sibley (36) in the middle. The pair continued to hang around well into the second session and their partnership was on 64 when Sibley succumbed to Yasir Shah (2/74).

Sibley went for a hard drive across the line to a ball that Yasir delivered from over the wicket, it only took an edge and flew straight to Asad Shafiq at first slip. Two overs later, Naseem Shah successfully set up Root who also edged the delivery to first slip and England all of a sudden lost both their

set batsmen.

Yasir struck again soon with the big wicket of Ben Stokes who was done in by the extra bounce the former got and gloved it to the wicketkeeper. The umpire initially shook his head upon which Azhar Ali took the review. The replays showed a feather of a spike on ultra edge when the ball passed Stokes' gloves.

Two overs later, Shaheen Afridi's unplayable delivery that bounced off a length took Ollie Pope by surprise. It smashed into his gloves and Shadab Khan took the catch running in from gully.

With Pakistan in the driver's seat, Buttler went on the counter while Woakes also put on his batsman's hat. The pair managed to knock off 50 runs in the remaining overs of the second session and thus left the match on a knife's edge when the umpires knocked off the bats for tea.

BRIEF SCORES (AT TEA): Pakistan 326 & 168; England 219 & 167/5 (Joe Root 42, Dom Sibley 36, Yasir Shah 2/74). Match to continue.

SET FOR 2ND ESSAY



India leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal announced his engagement with choreographer and YouTube personality Dhanashree Verma on social media. "We said 'Yes' along with our families #rokaceremony," he wrote in his caption to the picture from the ceremony