LITTLE CHOICE

Sanjay Dutt's wife Maanayata says the actor's treatment will continue in Mumbai till the situation improves LEISURE P2



CHINA ON ALERT

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY, AUGUST 20 | 2020

China's Three Gorges Dam, the world's biggest hydroelectric station, is set to receive its largest flood peak INTERNATIONAL P10



**PSG IN CL FINAL** 

PSG qualify for the Champions League final for the first time after beating RB Leipzig 3-0

SPORTS P1

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Cement

#### OLUME 10, ISSUE 139 | www.orissapost.com

My Lord, he respects this court a lot. In past few days, he tweeted many times against Prashant Bhushan!

#### SHORT **TAKES**

#### Ex-Prez Pranab's health worsens

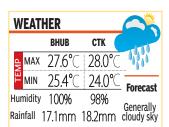
New Delhi: Former President Pranab Mukherjee's health condition deteriorated Wednesday as he developed lung infection, the Army Research and Referral Hospital said. He has been hospitalised for the past nine days and been on ventilator support following a brain surgery. The hospital authorities said, "There has been a decline in the medical condition of Hon'ble Shri Pranad Mukherjee as he has developed features of lung infection.

#### Emergency vaccine approval 'possible'

Mumbai: A top ICMR official told a parliamentary panel Wednesday that phase-two clinical trial of two indigenously developed Covid-19 vaccine candidates has almost been completed and emergency authorisation of a vaccine could be considered it the Centre decides so. Indian Council of Medical Research Director General Balram Bhargava informed that the vaccine candidates developed by Bharat Biotech, Cadila and the Serum Institute of India are at different stages of trial.



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# **SUSHANT: SC NOD TO CBI**

New Delhi, August 19: In a massive victory for Sushant Singh Rajput's family, the apex court has given a nod to CBI investigation into the death of the actor. Judge Hrishikesh Roy has dismissed Rhea Chakraborty's plea.

The Supreme Court has directed the Mumbai Police to handover all the evidence it collected to the CBI

A fair, competent and impartial investigation is the "need of the hour", the top court said, holding that the CBI probe is "lawful" and the Bihar government was "competent to give consent for entrustment of investigation to the CBI".

Putting a quietus to the ongoing high-decibel political statements for and against the CBI probe, the top court held that Patna Police had not committed illegality in lodging an FIR against Chakraborty and six others on the complaint of Rajput's father.

There has been a rising clamour for CBI probe to unravel the mystery surrounding Rajput's death. Rajput was found hanging from the ceiling of his apartment in suburban Bandra in Mumbai June 14 and since then Mumbai Police has been probing the case keeping in mind various angles.

A bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy noted in his 35-page verdict that as both Bihar and Maharashtra are "making acrimonious allegations of political interference against each other", the legitimacy of probe has come under a cloud and



Rhea's plea dismissed

ctor Rhea Chakraborty, SSR's girlfriend, had asked the SC to transfer the FIR registered by his family in Patna to Mumbai

rince the Mumbai police had registered only an accidental death report, it had limited probe powers. The Bihar police, however, registered a "full-fledged FIR"

in such a situation there is a reasonable apprehension of "truth being a casualty and justice becoming a victim".

The verdict came on a plea filed by Chakraborty who had sought transfer of the FIR lodged against her at Patna to Mumbai.

Therefore, while according approval for the ongoing CBI investigation, if any other case is registered on the death of the actor Sushant Singh Rajput and the surrounding circumstances of his unnatural death, the CBI is directed to investigate the new case as well. It is ordered accordingly," the bench said, while invoking the plenary power under Article 142 of the Constitution

### New LOPAR may brew trouble

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Amid heavy rainfall in the state due to the formation of four back-to-back low-pressure areas, the Met department has predicted another low pressure area to be formed over NW Bay of Bengal around August 23.

After a brief lull, many parts of Odisha were battered by fresh downpour Wednesday due to the formation of a new low pressure area over the Bay of Bengal, submerging low-lying places, officials said.

Incessant rainfall was recorded in Malkangiri district, where a flood-like situation had shown signs of improve-

Due to the fresh spell of rains, water overtopped roads in some areas of Kalimela and Mathili blocks of the district, the officials Heavy downpour since August 13 had

created a flood-like situation in several parts of the state, affecting 933 villages and damaging 321 houses in the worst-hit Malkangiri district, they said.

Under the influence of a new low pressure area, most parts of north and south coastal Odisha were lashed by heavy rainfall since Tuesday night.

The low pressure area, which has become well marked, now lies over northwest Bay of Bengal. It is likely to concentrate into



a depression by Thursday and move westwards gradually, the Meteorological Centre

Rainfall of varying intensity is likely to persist for at least two days in northern, southern and interior areas of the state, said H R Biswas, Director of the Meteorological Centre here.

### 1800 266 266 1 (tollfree) Plus II Commerce results out; 74.95 %

students clear exam

Start Strong, Grow Stronger.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: As many as 74.95 per cent commerce students of the state cleared the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) Plus-II (commerce stream) examinations for the year 2019-20, the results of which were announced Wednesday.

The pass percentage has increased by 4.69 percent than last year when the pass percentage was 70.26 percent. School and Mass **Education Minister Samir** Dash announced the results at the council office.

Situ Behera of Nayagarh high school was the state topper with 94.5 per cent (567 out of 600). 40 students got marks above 90 per cent. Students can check their

scores by visiting www.chseodisha.nic.in and www.orissaresults.nic.in. A total of 25,772 students had appeared for the com-

While 29 higher registered 100% pass percentage, two junior college recorded nil results in the exam

them, 12,215 male and 7,103

female candidates passed

the examination. While 6610 students secured 1st class. 4,259 got 2nd class and 8,361 3rd class. While 29 higher secondary schools registered 100% pass percentage, two jun-

ior colleges recorded nil results in the examinations. Out of all districts, Nayagarh again topped the

list with 88.70 pass percent and Deogarh was placed last with 34.17 pass percentage.

Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said, "The pass percentage has improved by 4.69 percent this year. The number of students in first and second divisions has also increased.



Siberian cranes at an enclosure in Lucknow zoo, Wednesday

# '1 nation, 1 test' for govt jobs

New Delhi, August 19: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the creation of National Recruitment Agency (NRA) for conducting a common eligibility test for central government jobs, initiating a landmark reform in the recruitment

Briefing the media on the Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, I&B Minister Prakash Javadekar said it was a historic decision that will allow jobseekers take one common test and save costs and time spent on writing multiple exams.

This has been a major demand of the youths for many years which has been fulfilled, he said.

Union minister Jitendra Singh termed it a revolutionary and landmark reform in the history of the

It will lead to ease of selection, ease of job placement and ease of living, especially for those sections of society that are considered disadvantaged, he said.

This will also help the poor and

It will lead to ease of selection, job placement and living, especially for the disadvantaged sections PRAKASH JAVADEKAR UNION I&B MINISTER

women who have to travel long distances for taking exams for various

The NRA will conduct a Common Eligibility Test (CET) to shortlist candidates for the Group B and Group C (non-technical) posts

The NRA will have representatives from the Ministry of Railways, the Ministry of Finance Department of Financial Services, the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), the Railway Recruitment Board (RRB) and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection

It is envisioned that the NRA would be a specialist body bringing the state-of-the-art technology and best practices in the field of Central government recruitment, an official

For now, the scores of the common test will be used by three major recruitment agencies, but other agencies would be included over a period of time.

Singh said the NRA will come into force from next year and will be headquartered in Delhi.

He said state governments will also be advised to come on board in a true spirit of cooperative feder-

Singh also hoped that in the near future the private sector will also join the NRA.

He said the NRA will have representatives of the Ministry of Ministry of Railways, Finance/Department of Financial Services, Staff Selection Commission (SSC), Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs) and the Institute of Banking Personnel Selection (IBPS).

It is envisioned that the NRA would be a specialist body bringing the state of the art technology and best practices to the field of the central government recruitment, the

### Centre withdraws 10K troops from J&K

de-induction of

Article 370

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The Centre Wednesday ordered immediate withdrawal of about 10,000 paramilitary personnel from the Union Territory of Jammu This is the biggest

and Kashmir, officials This is the biggest deinduction of these forces after additional troops

were rushed to the UT post the abrogation of the Article 370 of the Constitution that gave the erst-

while state a unique status. They said the decision was taken after the Ministry of Home Affairs reviewed the deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in the union territory

The Home Ministry had last withdrawn 10 CAPF companies from the UT in May, while 72 such units were taken out in December last year. A senior official told PTI that a total of 100 CAPF companies have been ordered to be withdrawn immediately Wednesday and they have been asked to revert to their base locations in the country. As per the directions, a

total of 40 companies of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and these forces after 20 each of the Central additional troops **Industrial Security** were rushed post Force, the Border the abrogation of Security Force and the Sashastra Seema Bal, will be taken out from

Jammu and Kashmir by this week. The CRPF has been asked to make arrangements for air lifting of these units to Delhi and other lo-

cations, they said. "It was felt that the counter-insurgency and counter-terrorist grid is intact in the UT and these additional units that were sent in last year can be de-inducted giving them the much required rest, recuperation and training," a sen-

#### Woman posing $\stackrel{\leftarrow}{}$ as IPS officer held in Rourkela



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rourkela, August 19: The city police Wednesday arrested a woman for allegedly impersonating as an IPS officer in Basanti Colony here.

A resident of Dhamnagar locality of Bhadrak district, the accused has been identified as Sarmistha Behera. The woman had allegedly defrauded the owner of a motorcycle showroom here by posing as an IPS officer.

The owner said the woman, dressed up in police attire including a holster with a gun. reached the motorcycle showroom and introduced herself as an IPS officer, August 11. She expressed her desire to purchase a Royal Enfield 'Bullet'.

She then produced an IPS ID card and other documents required to buy the two-wheeler. During the sale process, the woman also gave the name of a finance company from which she was taking a loan to buy the bike. She handed over two blank cheques to the owner of the showroom. She also paid ₹25,000 and left with the bike. The price of the two-wheeler was ₹1,90,000.

However, when the time came to encash the cheques, the showroom owner found out that the finance company mentioned in the form did not exist.

A complaint was lodged at the police station here in this regard. Based on the complaint, police launched an investigation. They first found the woman by tracking her mobile. They conducted a raid on the rented premises. The cops seized a khaki uniform, a fake iden-tity card with the IPS logo, other

fake documents and a toy gun.

Biden and Trump campaigns woo Hindus in US

on August 14 announced the formation

of the "Hindu Voices for Trump." Two days later, prominent Hindu leader Neelima Gonuguntla participated in an interfaith service to kick off the Democratic National Convention, which the Biden campaign said was another sign of the growing political prominence of Hindus

> in America. The details of the new coalition of the Trump Campaign to woo the Hindu-American community in the US are expected to be announced during the

Republican National Convention next week. "Hindus for Trump honours contribu-

e-electing President Trump will reduce obstacles to religious reedoms for Hindus in America, asserted the Trump campaign

houses of worship, such as temples, and increasing the security grants available to such houses of worship

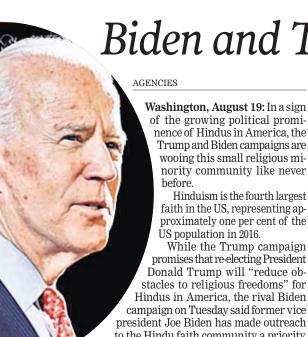
tions by millions of Americans of Hindu faith," said the campaign which has taken

> "The inclusive economy, commitment to building up US-Indian relations, and fierce support for religious liberties for all is unmatched. Re-electing President Trump will reduce obstacles to religious freedoms for Hindus in America," asserted the Trump campaign.

Biden, who Tuesday was officially nominated as the Democratic presidential nominee. "has made outreach to the Hindu faith community a priority," South Asians for Biden, a political platform, said.

paign released the platform for Indian-Americans, which addresses several key concerns of the Hindu com-

"Increased access to the security grants and prioritising the prosecution of hate crimes is critical for our Hindu community," said Niki Shah, a Hindu community organiser who worked closely on Hindu initiatives for former president Barack Obama's faith-based council.



of the growing political prominence of Hindus in America, the Trump and Biden campaigns are wooing this small religious minority community like never before. Hinduism is the fourth largest

faith in the US, representing approximately one per cent of the US population in 2016. While the Trump campaign promises that re-electing President

stacles to religious freedoms" for Hindus in America, the rival Biden campaign on Tuesday said former vice president Joe Biden has made outreach to the Hindu faith community a priority. For the first time in an American presidential election, the Trump Campaign

iden proposes stiffening penalties for hate crimes committed at

a lead ahead of the Biden campaign.

Over the weekend, the Biden cam-Notably, Biden proposes stiff-

ening penalties for hate crimes committed at houses of worship, such as temples, and increasing the security grants available to such houses of worship. He has also pledged to make the prosecution of hate crimes a priority for his Department of Justice, the campaign said.









#### **BRITNEY ASKS COURT TO CURB FATHER'S CONTROL OVER HER**

**Britney Spears on Tuesday** asked a court to keep her father from reasserting the broad control over her life and career that he has had for most of the past 12 years.

#### RACHEL WEISZ SET TO APPEAR IN **DEAD RINGERS REBOOT SERIES**

Oscar-winner Rachel Weisz is heading to the small screen to lead the series reimagining with a gender swap of Dead Ringers, the 1988 psychological thriller. The show, set up at Amazon Studios, will see the actor step in for the original protagonist Jeremy Irons who starred in David Cronenberg's cult classic.





GaneshaSpeaks.co™

#### ARIES

Your charismatic appeal is always ready-to-use. And today, you will possibly reap rich dividends through it. But there is always scope for improvement and you wil find yourself drawn to altruism. Ganesha quarantees satisfaction in lending a helping hand to the needy.

#### **TAURUS**

You will enjoy your responsibilities at the home front, says Ganesha, People whom you trusted to watch your back might let you down today. Remember, what you sow is what you reap, so do not fall short of putting in the effort required to make

#### **GEMINI**

A favourable day to put an end to all the doubts surrounding your ability to do well, especially in the field of com munication. People around you will find you incredibly charming and enchanting. You will win hearts with your verve and panache. You may want to spruce up your surroundings at work and at home

#### CANCER

It is quite possible that vour personal life will your professional life.

You will not be able to repress or ignore your feelings, and you should not either says Ganesha. But you should be carefu

#### about how you express yourself in public



If it's a fresh start that you are looking for, then this day promises to give you just that, predicts Ganesha. If you have chalked out plans for your future, today you may go ahead and implement some nember that rushing blindly into any thing is not the solution: it is always the slow and steady who wins the race.

Today, your power and finance will be greater than ever before, says Ganesha. You will also be inclined to make monetary provisions for any future economic instability that may arise. The people around you will stand up and take notice of the leader in you.

Today promises to be a busy day that will keep aiso engage in written correspondence to re-establish some old contacts. Ganesha doesn't rule out optimum use of the phone for this purpose. When it comes to the work front Ganesha predicts you will be asked to bring order to the workplace.

#### **SCORPIO**

You might find your spirit your thinking. Small things might probably bother you in a big way. Do not let them bog you down as life is all about mind over matter. As the day progresses, things will

#### SAGITTARIUS Watch out for Cupid's

arrow today, warns and strike hard. Alternatively, you may also find yourself in an argument with a loved one that ought to have been avoided. An evening of romance beckons... keep the roses ready and the carpet rolled to heal any bruises you might have caused.

#### CAPRICORN You may be attentive, as

much as an eagle is whil chasing its prey, but you still need to be careful when signing any important legal documents, advises Ganesha. Brokers and dealers, especially, are likely to incur heavy losses unless they take necessary precautions to avert misfortune

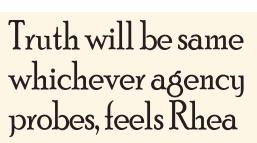
#### **AQUARIUS**

Today, you're up against those who want to get back at you. But not for nothing are you the king Ganesha says you needn't worry, as few can match your prowess. Amid all the hullabaloo, your spouse will be a supportive presence.

#### **PISCES**

says Ganesha.

Within adversity, lie the lessons of success: avoid having to resort to that philosophy by implementing your plans, if they are well thought out, in a phased man ner. This will help you achieve your targets,



Mumbai: Actress Rhea Chakraborty is ready to face CBI investigation and she maintains that the truth will remain the same, said her lawyer after the Wednesday morning ruling of the Supreme Court that ordered a court-monitored CBI probe into the death of her boyfriend, actor Sushant Singh Rajput.

'The Hon'ble Supreme Court after examining the facts and circumstances of the case and the report

of the Mumbai police, has observed that it will be the desired justice as Rhea herself called for a CBI investigation. The Hon'ble Supreme Court also observed that due to the allegations made by the two states of political interference against each other, it would be in the interest of justice to hand over the case to the CBI. Satish lawyer Maneshinde said in a statement "Since the court has

transferred the investi gation to CBI invoking its powers under Article 142 of the Constitution of India, she will appear and face the investigation by the CBI as she has done earlier with the Mumbai Police and the Enforcement Directorate,' added the lawyer.



Mumbai: Actor Ayushmann Khurrana returns to film shooting in October, for the first time since the Covid outbreak, and he feels it should be a surreal experience.

"I'm starting to shoot for my progressive love story with Abhishek Kapoor in October and I'm looking forward to being on a film set again. It feels like we are all making movies in another lifetime," he said, about the Vaani Kapoor-co-starrer.

Meanwhile, the actor has shot three new endorsements in his hometown Chandigarh amid the Covid-19 pandemic, and he says he has taken a step in the direction to restart the in-

"I have shot multiple things while being in my hometown and it has been super smooth for me shooting with the crew, who are also based out of Chandigarh. It's really refreshing to be on the sets and working after so many months Ayushmann said.



## Maanayata issues statement on Sanjay's health

Mumbai: Maanayata Dutt, wife of actor Sanjay Dutt, has released an official statement to update information about the actor, who has been diagnosed with lung cancer.

In the statement, Maanayata said that the initial treatment of the actor would continue at Kokilaben Hospital in Mumbai. The family would consider going abroad for further treatment when the Covid pandemic situation eases.

The statement read: "To all of Sanju's fans and well wishers, I can't begin to thank you for the him all these

through many ups and downs in his life, but what has kept him going through every tough phase has always been your adulation and support. As a family, we have decided to face this with positivity and grace. We are going to go about our life as normally as possible, with a smile, because this will be a tough fight and a long journey," it added.

'While our family is shaken up, we are determined to fight tooth and nail. With God and your prayers on our side, together we will

#### **WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY DAY**

# City shutterbugs find silver lining during pandemic

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: Photography is not just a form of art which captures precious moments, a good snap often expresses a thousand emotions. In a bid to pay tribute to the art of photography, World Photography Day is observed every year August 19. But unfortunately, the pandemic has largely restricted photographers' freedom across the globe. On this occassion, a couple of city lensmen spoke to Orissa POST about photography skill and the challenges ahead.

Well known photographer Siddhartha De said, "I consider a photograph not just a document, it is, for me, an expression of creative art form. A photographer sometimes locks some unusual moments which words may fall short to describe."

Siddhartha is a member of Bhubaneswar Photography Circle,



an association of professional photographers. He said his group in collaboration with 113 Signature Studio, is hosting an online musical show and a digital photo exhibition in the city Wednesday to commemorate the World Photography Day. This is an attempt to help out budding photographers and musicians.

Ace lensman Sanjit Patnaik said, "The pandemic has definitely restricted our movements, but interestingly 'life under the mask' is also a great subject for the photographers to work on.

Asked about his message to the beginners, Sanjit said, "This is definitely a challenging period for everyone including the photographers. There is need to give your best instead of leaving the profession at this

FUN

However, both the phoographers admitted that the state of professional photography in Odisha is not in a good shape if compared to other states. This is the reason, many promising photographers

are moving to cities like Bangalore and Mumbai to boost their careers, the duo

Some shutterbugs, however, have returned to Odisha following the imposition of countrywide lockdown But they find it difficult to meet ends

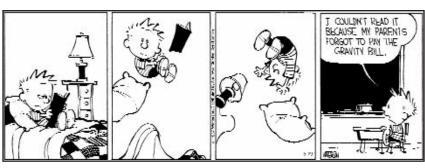
The photographer-duo, on the occasion of World Photography Day, urged 💆 the art lovers to buy photographs and support the lensmen in these dark times.



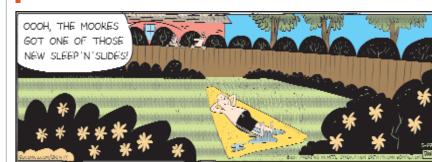
#### **PEANUTS**



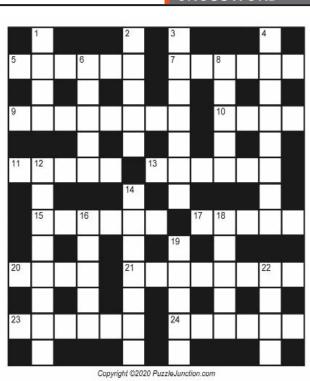
#### CALVIN AND HOBBES



#### BREVITY



### **CROSSWORD**



21 Opine (5,3)

23 Train

24 Soak

Across 5 Lumberjack's cry

7 Bear cats

9 Special time 10 Earthen pot

11 Theatre worker

13 Crude stone

artifact

17 Expression 20 Mother of Ares

15 Hair decoration

Down

1 Bluish-white metallic element

2 Physically weak

3 View 4 Hoopla

6 Sword compartments 8 Ruth's mother-

in-law 12 Wizard

14 Own 16 Small goose

18 Sidestep

19 Compadre 22 Cliff part

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

#### SUDOKU

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

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#### SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU





# downtown



#### **HUNT FOR FOOD**

A squirrel searches for food on a thatched house in Chandini Chowk area of Cuttack, Wednesday

200	COVID-19 TRACKER							
		INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD				
	World	2,23,96,382	1,51,22,088	7,86,147				
	India	27,67,273	20,37,870	52,889				
	Odisha	67,122	46,936	372				
	111111111			11 11 11 11 11 11 11				

# Real estate tribunal to hear pleas from Sept 2

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Odisha Real Estate Appellate Tribunal (OREAT) established by the state government to resolve issues related to real estate sector will start its judicial proceedings September 2, 2020.

The tribunal will hear appeals against the order of Odisha Real Estate Regulatory Authority (ORERA), which was set up three years ago, in accordance with the provisions of the Real Estate (Regulation & Development)

Since real estate sector is highly capital intensive, absence of institutional mechanism to curb any tendency of fraud or cheating can have catastrophic consequences. Therefore, the government is putting all kinds of institutional mechanisms in place so that no one will be deprived of his/her rights, official sources said.

The number of applications received for registration of projects and resolution of disputes in ORERA is increasing rapidly. At the same time, grievances against the orders and directions of ORERA are also pilling up. Therefore,

The OREAT will hear appeals

against the order of Odisha Real **Estate Regulatory Authority** 

Since real estate sector is highly capital intensive, absence of institutional mechanism to curb any tendency of fraud or cheating can have catastrophic consequences

The number of applications received for registration of projects and resolution of disputes in ORERA is increasing rapidly

the government has set up a full-fledged

Orissa High Court retired judge Subash Chandra Parija has been appointed as the chairperson of the tribunal while Ishan Kumar Dash and Malaya Chatterjee have been appointed as its members. An officer of the rank district judge Akhila Kumar Pashimakabat has also been posted as registrar of the

Though the permanent office of OREAT will be at Toshali Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, it is now operating from a temporary office at Fortune Towers.

The required logistics and 38 posts

have been sanctioned by the state government. Many of the employees have already joined the tribunal, sources said.

The tribunal has completed all the preparations to commence its functioning. All the cases filed before the Sales Tax Tribunal and at other places during the interim period have also been transferred to the OREAT.

In view of Covid-19 pandemic, the tribunal will hear cases through video conferencing and arrangements have also been made for making the order available to interested parties through e-

### NGT hearing on Mahanadi encroachment today

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is all set to hear a petition about encroachments on flood plain areas of Mahanadi river in Cuttack district, Thursday.

This comes after a joint inspection committee, which visited the disputed area in the district, has given an adverse report and said that a temple has illegally been constructed and expanded on the flood plains of the river basin which is a 'prohibited zone'.

A NGT bench comprising

**Startup launchpad** 

Bhubaneswar: The Atal Incubation

Centre (AIC) - Nalanda Institute of Technology Foundation, Bhubaneswar Wednesday

announced the launch of a startup launchpad. In its first chapter, it launched its incubatee Smart Farming, a Bhubaneswar-based

startup. Smart Farming provides a

through bio-refining that can be

used in agriculture, aquaculture

**SK Barik new RCS** 

appointed IAS officer Susanta Kumar Barik as new Registrar of

is now working as additional

secretary at the SC, ST

service recently.

Cooperative Societies (RCS), Barik

Development department. Bibhuti Bhusan Patnaik, who was serving

as the RCS, has retired from the

Bhubaneswar: The state

government, Wednesday,

range of organic products extracted from plants and animals

and animal science.

in City institute

A temple has been constructed illegally and expanded on flood plains of Mahanadi basin - a prohibited zone

Justice Adarsh Goel and Justice SP Wangdi has scheduled the case for hearing for Thursday as per the Cause List of the tribunal. The listing claimed that the hearing would focus on consideration of the inspection report.

The tribunal had earlier

passed an order and directed formation of a joint committee which could visit the site and verify the authenticity of the allegations. The inspection report submitted to the NGT claimed that

such illegal structures

should not be encouraged

by the government. The original petition had alleged that several illegal constructions were coming up

> petition was filed by social activist Dilip Samantaray. The petition had alleged that the spree of illegal constructions is likely to threaten free flow of river water and

near Rantilo in Cuttack. The

natural process of flood water absorption during floods. The petition had said that these constructions were in contradiction to several

judgments of NGT and Supreme Court relating to

#### **SABUJA ODISHA MISSION**

### Forest dept raises record 15 crore seedlings in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Forest and Environment department has raised a record 15 crore seedlings for massive plantation drive under Sabuja Odisha Mission this year.



The feat was achieved despite the prevailing pandemic situation, said the department sources. Last year, the state was able to raise only 5.50 crore seedlings. The government has set a target to distribute 5 crore seedlings this year, out of which about 2 crore have already been distributed during this rainy season so far, Bikram Keshari Arukha said here, Wednesday.

The government had undertaken plantation in 68,358 hectare during 2019. However, the plantation target has been doubled to 1.3 lakh hectare this year, he said.

Due to successful execution of forest fire prevention and management measures and with immense support of the field functionaries, the number of forest fire incidents has come down to 11,088 during 2020 fire season against 19,787 incidents last year, Arukha said.

# Brainstorming on doubling fish catch

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: ICAR-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture (CIFA). Bhubaneswar in association with National Fisheries Development Board. Hyderabad, Wednesday, began a series of Virtual Stakeholder Consultation meetings on 'Strategies for Freshwater Aquaculture Development' under Pradhan Mantri Matsva Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).

All the stakeholders such as fisheries departments, private stakeholders, developmental agencies and Krishi Vigyan Kendra networks participated in the meet to deliberate on various issues and constraints on development of freshwater aquaculture sector in the country.

On the occasion, Union Fisheries department Secretary Rajeev Ranjan spoke about various dimensions of PMMSY. The government has set a target of producing 220 lakh tonne fish in FY 2024-25 from current 137.58 lakh tonne, he said adding that to achieve the target, average aquaculture productivity has to go up from 3.3 tonne per ha to 5.0 tonne per ha through effective implementation of PMMSY.

To achieve the target, ICAR-CIFA has to play a major role as additional fish

#### PRADHAN MANTRI MATSYA SAMPADA YOJANA



The government has set a target of producing 220 lakh tonne fish in FY 2024-25 from current 137.58 lakh tonne

To achieve this target, average aquaculture productivity has to go up from 3.3 tonne per ha to 5.0 tonne per ha through effective implementation of PMMSY

ICAR-CIFA has to play a major role as additional fish production of 50 lakh tonne has to come primarily from freshwater aquaculture sector

production of 50 lakh tonne has to come primarily from freshwater aquaculture sector. He also spoke about the role ICAR-CIFA could play in bridging the technology gap in freshwater aquaculture. He discussed the key strategies of PMMSY such as quality brood and seed, collectivisation through Farmer Producer Organisations, participation of youth, species diversification, strong institutional framework and entrepreneurship models and grouping of activities with end-to-end solutions.

ICAR, New Delhi, deputy director general (DDG), JK Jena, emphasised on horizontal and vertical expansion of inland fisheries sector through implementation of PMMSY. He also encouraged all the institutions to carry out a SWOT analysis regarding the present status of freshwater aquaculture. Jena suggested resource characterisation and developing strategies according to the resource base of the states. Fisheries directors of 10 states presented their views on developing aquaculture in their respective states.

# Make home guards' wage ₹533: HC

Cuttack, August 19: In a significant development, the Orissa High Court Wednesday directed the state government to pay Rs 533 as daily remuneration for home guards. The order is likely to benefit 16,894 home guards in the state.

A division bench of Chief Justice Mohammad Rafiq and Justice AK Mishra directed the state government to pay the hiked remuneration to the home guards within three months. The court also made it clear that the new remuneration would be effective from January this year retrospectively.

The division bench refused to tweak an earlier order of a single judge bench on the issue.

#### BMC, OYO tie up for paid isolation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has joined hands with OYO Hotels and Rooms to facilitate stay of COVID patients who are asymptomatic. A notification to this effect was issued by BMC Wednesday.

Three hotels that have been selected for isolation facilities by BMC are at Ghatikia, Chandaka Chandrashekharpur.

The BMC said that those who want to avail non-AC facilities, including food and water would need to pay Rs 1,299 per day while the facility for executive-AC room with food will cost the patient Rs 1,899 with taxes.



**GOVERNMENT TO PAY RS 533** AS DAILY REMUNERATION TO HOME GUARDS

THE HC ASKED THE STATE GOVT TO PAY THE HIKED REMUNERATION TO THE HOME **GUARDS WITHIN THREE MONTHS** 

THE COURT ALSO MADE IT CLEAR THAT THE NEW REMUNERATION WOULD BE EFFECTIVE FROM JANUARY THIS YEAR

As per the proceedings, the Supreme Court had asked the state governments in 2016 to pay remuneration to home guards in line with the salaries of police personnel. Though at least eight state governments have implemented the SC order,

Odisha was lagging behind. The director general of home guards had also recommended the state government to revise the remuneration of home guards, but to no avail.

Protesting the state government's approach on the issue, Prakash Kumar Jena and two others had filed a petition in the HC. Taking up the case, a single-judge bench of Justice Bishwanath Rath had directed the state government to pay Rs 500 as daily remuneration to home guards.

However, the state government did not accept the judgment of the single judge bench

and filed a review petition. Representing the state government, advocate JP Patnaik informed the court that the home guards are now getting a daily remuneration of Rs 300, which is similar to the daily salary of

contractual constables. Pleading on behalf of the home guards, advocate Satyabrata Mohanty contradicted the claims of state government's counsel and told the HC that the home guards are now getting Rs 240 as daily re-



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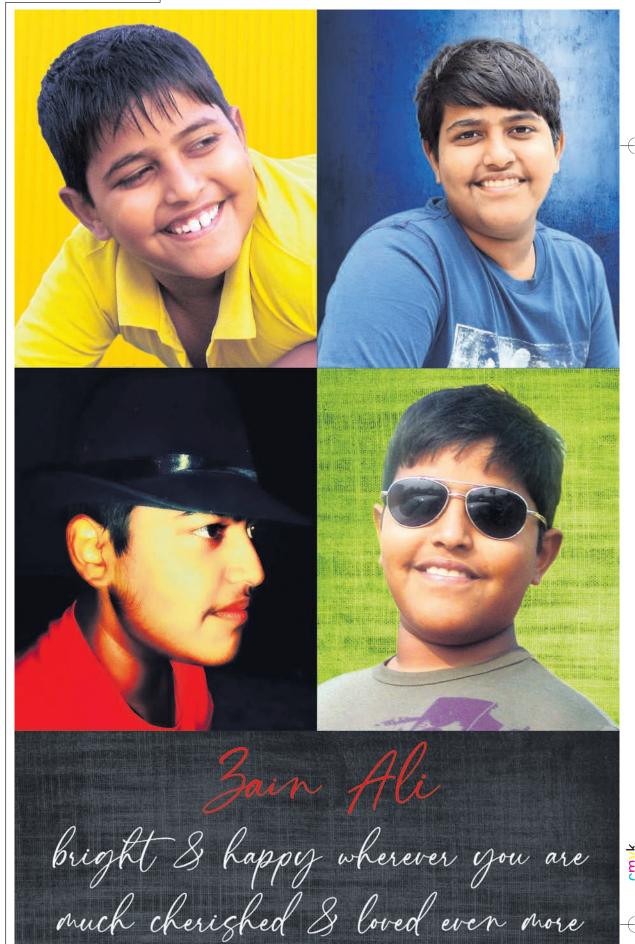
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# 2nd-highest single-day Covid spike

Govt attributes the sudden increase in number of nCoV cases to rising number of tests in the state



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: As many as 2,589 new cases pushed Odisha's Covid-19 tally to 67,122 Wednesday, while its death toll mounted to 372 as 10 more patients succumbed to the infection, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

A total of 1.574 new infections were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,015 people tested positive for the novel coronavirus during contact tracing, said the

Wednesday's spike in Covid-19 cases is the second-highest in the state after the detection of 2,924 infections August 16, the official pointed out.

The fresh cases were reported from 29 of the 30 districts in the

Khurda registered the highest number of fresh cases at 466, followed by Ganjam (242), Cuttack (222), Rayagada (211), Sundargarh (155), Balasore (150) and Mayurbhanj (117). Twenty-two districts reported less than 100 new infections each, the official further said, adding that Ganjam reported four fresh fatalities, folInformation vis-à-vis national data

lowed by two each in Khurda and Sundargarh and one each in Bargarh and Bhadrak districts. Meanwhile, 1,621

persons recovered Ganjam accounted for 162 of the 372 Covid-19 deaths reported in Odisha so far, fol-

in the state

by 51 in Khurda, the official pointed out, adding that fifty-three Covid-19 patients have died due to other ailments

Odisha has so far tested

10,62,469 samples for Covid-19,

including 53,015 Tuesday. The state government has at-

tributed the sudden increase in the number

Covid-19 cases to the rising number of Covid tests in the state. For the last four days,

over 50,000 tests were being conducted on a daily basis in the state. The five hotspot districts such as Ganjam, Khurda, Sundargarh, Cuttack and Rayagada have together reported 35,847 Covid cases, over 53 percent of the total Covid cases in the state.

These five districts have also

registered 272 Covid deaths which

is 73.11 per cent of the total Covid

deaths reported so far in the state.

City registers biggest spike, tally

breaches 6K-mark The Capital city Wednesday saw an all-time-high of 370 Covid-19 cases taking its tally to 6,077, according Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation

Of the fresh cases, 204 were quarantine cases and 166 were local contact cases. Meanwhile, as many as 150 persons who had earlier tested positive for novel coronavirus recovered from the viral infection Wednesday.

#### Shreemayee Mishra tests +ve for virus

BHUBANESWAR: BJD leader and chairperson of Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) Shreemayee Mishra tested positive for coronavirus, Thursday. Mishra through her Twitter handle informed about this and said she was stable. "I have tested positive and with the blessings of Lord Jagannath I'm

### **TROUBLED SEA**



High tides lash Puri beach as low pressure triggers heavy rain across state, Wednesday

### Aid for kin of teachers died on nCoV duty

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The state government, Wednesday, announced financial assistance for the kin of teachers who died while on COVID-19 duty, a state minister said

The assistance will be given at the rate of the last pay drawn, along with dearness allowance as admissible from time to time, till the date of superannuation of the teacher, had he remained alive.

School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said, 13 teachers deployed on COVID-19 duty have so far died of novel coronavirus in Ganjam district alone. Over 62,000 teachers have been

assigned the responsibility of COVID-19 management in temporary medical camps (TMCs), COVID care centres and COVID care homes, he said. The kin of the deceased will

get financial assistance as per the notification issued by the Finance Department August 4," Dash told PTI. The notification issued by the Finance department says that the spouse or the family members of the deceased employee will get the **COVID Warrior Family Assistance** at the rate of the last pay drawn/ due along with DA as admissible from time to time till the normal date of superannuation of the deceased government servant, had he remained alive.

The minister also informed that officials of his department had Tuesday visited the houses of the teachers who died and declared them as COVID-19 warriors. It has been decided to hand over

the assistance to the family members of 12 teachers soon, the minister said. No decision has been taken in the

case of a teacher identified as Simanchal Satpathy, who also died in the line of duty, as he was a bach-

#### **CB** alerts state police on fake job website

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Crime Branch (CB) has issued an advisory cautioning the state police about a fake job website of duping youths on the promise of facilitating IT-related jobs.

In an advisory to the Deputy Commissioners of Police of the twin cities and Superintendents of Police of all the districts, the CB said that a few fraudsters have launched the websitehttps://www.shinejob.tech-- on German internet protocol to defraud innocent job seekers



The CB has also explained the modus operandi of the crooks and asked the police to take precautionary measures and create awareness in their areas in order to prevent job seekers from falling prey to them.

According to the CB, the website has different web pages and as soon as a user accesses it for job, s/he will be directed to the webpage to submit her/his identity details. credit card details and CVV number. The website charges Rs 10 for applying for jobs.

Further, the user is redirected to the webpage, where the job seeker will be asked to submit PayTM pin. However, at the end the website shows payment gateway error, the CB said. In the process, the fraudsters get

the details of the users and hack the ATM card and CVV numbers to withdraw money from their accounts, alerted the CB

The CB also pointed out certain precautions to be followed while accessing any websites.

### Ecotourism in times of pandemic We are trying to

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 19: The Wildlife Wing of Forest department with support of Odisha Tourism has started training and capacity building of managers of different ecotourism destinations in the state on Covid management. The ecotourism model of Odisha has received applauds from different corners of India and abroad being the only state having community concept of ecotourism. More than 600 community members are managing these properties and hospitality experts are engaged for regular training and monitoring. Around 60 per cent community members are rural women. Presently, seven eco-tour properties in districts like Nuapada, Koraput and Sundargarh among others are under construction.

However, due to the pandemic since March all eco-tour properties have been kept closed and now Odisha Ecotourism has started training of managers and com-



munity members on different aspects of COVID management before opening. As such since launching of Odisha Ecotourism in 2016, booking is through online portal ecotourodisha.com, cash booking or on-spot booking is very minimal restricted to off-season only as during winters most of the destinations remain booked in advance.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) Wildlife, HS Upadhyay said, "We are trying to benchmark our COVID management performance in the country. We have started training of managers and community members for

handling the pandemic situation successfully. We want all our community members to be well equipped on COVID protocols during and post COVID, and our ecotourism properties will perform effectively and perfectly as it has been till date. We are following multidimensional approach, our primary objective is to restrict further transmission of COVID-19 when our nature camps open and on the other way there will be excellent service to visitors visiting our destinations. Training community members on different aspects of sanitisation and hygiene will also go a long way for manag-

benchmark our **COVID** management performance in the country. We have started training of managers and community members for handling the pandemic situation successfully HS UPADHYAY | PRINCIPAL CHIEF CONSERVATOR OF FORESTS WILDLIFE

ing the nature camps properly. We are also under process of equipping all nature camps with sanitisation equipments and safeguards. This year we are also prepared for starting many new ecotourism ini-

Director Tourism Sachin Ramchandra Jadhav said, "As Odisha's tourism and hospitality sector opens up, community-managed ecotourism camps will play a central role in our revival efforts, winning tourists' confidence,

### Support pours in for Prashant— Bhusan over contempt case

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Expressing solidarity with Supreme Court lawyer and human rights activist Prashant Bhusan, citybased activists organised a peaceful protest here Wednesday.

They demanded for withdrawal of the 14th August order by the apex court against Bhusan. The demonstrators also alleged that by trying to prosecute Prashant Bhusan by the three-member bench for his tweets regarding present as well as former Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India is nothing but an attack on freedom of expression and

Odisha-based lawyers, political and social activists expressed their disappointment over the SC verdict in the Prashant Bhushan contempt case and threw their support behind the lawyer. A statement with signatures of more than 100 members of legal, political and civil society



earlier Monday.

Social activist Prafulla Samantara said that the Supreme Court has always held that it is not immune to criticism and the Court has broad shoulders to carry it. "In fact, in the 70 years of its existence, the Supreme Court has adopted a magnanimously charitable attitude even when utterly uncharitable and unfair criticisms of its workings have been made out of bonafide concern for improvement.

"We feel that the tweets were a bonafide expression of Bhushan to improve the administration of justice dispensation in the country,'

# Dabugaon MLA is a farmer at heart, earns praises

#### THREE-TIME MLA MANOHAR RANDHARI TOILS ON HIS FARMLAND: VICE-PRESIDENT. CM NAVEEN LAUD HIM

Bhubaneswar, August 19: A ruling BJD MLA in Odisha ploughs his agricultural field and sows paddy saplings along with other workers.

With rain creating favourable conditions for agriculture, Manohar Randhari, a three-time lawmaker from Dabugaon Assembly seat in Nabarangapur district, has been spending seven hours every day on his 25-acre farmland.

The MLA, along with his government servant wife, starts work on his farmland at 5am. Randhari's wife leaves for office at 10am and he continues to toil on his field till noon. Randhari's dedication to farming has earned him praise from Vice-President M Venkajah Naidu and Chief Minister Naveen

"I have been farming even before I became a legislator. Since my father died last year, I am active

this time. Though I work as a politician to do social service, agriculture is my profession and source of income." Randhari told PTI over the phone. The MLA said he does farming for two months every year

lage Nabarangapur district. Observing that only agriculture can fill stomachs during the COVID-19 outbreak, he urged youths to

focus on farming. The legislator said he earns Rs 7 lakh a year

from paddy and corn cultivation. "I want everyone from government servants to businessmen to devote some time to farming so that we alleviate poverty and become self-sufficient," he said.

With the government prioritising

at his Majhiguda vilwant everyone from government servants to businessmen to devote sometime to farming so that we alleviate poverty and become self-sufficient

MANOHAR RANDHARI MLA, DABUGAON

agriculture, the nation's economy will be strengthened if many youngsters take to farming, the legislator said. Randhari said he does not yearn for publicity and is clueless on how the photograph of him toiling on his field went viral on the so-

The MLA, along with his government servant wife, starts work on his farmland at 5am

cial media.

The MLA had earlier come to limelight when he washed the feet of a grade IV employee, worked as a labourer to repair a road and taught students in schools.

"I have no passion for publicity.

My people are my strength. They know me and I work for them," he said. Asked about whether he has a political ambition to become a minister. Randhari said. "My sister Padmini Diyan is already a minister. It is the Chief Minister's prerogative to choose his council of ministers. If he wants, I may also become a minister. But that is not important.'

Praising the MLA, Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu tweeted in Hindi and Odia, "Odisha MLA Manohar Randhari toils on the field for two months in a year. He says that youths should not hesitate to do farming.'

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said in a Twitter post, "Appreciate party MLA Manohar Randhari for leading by example with his commitment to agriculture and taking pride in his work on the field."

Randhari said, "I thank both Vice-President and our chief minister for recognising my work. I



CM Naveen Patnaik retweets VP M Venkaiah Naidu's tweet and lavishes praises on the lawmaker

seek their blessings."

Randhari has been elected to the Odisha Assembly three times in a row. He won the Dabugaon seat in 2019, and emerged victorious from the Nabarangpur constituency in 2009 and 2014. His sister Padmini Diyan is the Minister for Textiles, Handlooms and Handicrafts and the MLA of Kotpad seat in Nabarangpur district.

#### CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STAT

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# SAND MINING BANE OF MAHANADI Floodwaters play havoc

Cuttack/Kendrapara/Balasore, Auguat 19 : Sand is an essential part of the river ecosystem. However, illegal and unsustainable mining of sand and boulders in the Mahanadi river across Cuttack, Balasore and Kendrapara regions is taking a heavy toll on lives and livelihood of locals on the banks of the river as they live in persistent dread of natural calamities like floods.

Soil erosion along the Mahanadi riverbed at Pinpur under Uttarkul panchayat in Cuttack district due to illegal sand extraction from the riverbed has triggered flood-panic among the villagers.

Due to extreme soil inundation, around 200 feet of natural floodplain has been eroded in flood waters recently leaving embankments weak and villagers anxious.

Notably, riverside villagers like Uttarkul, Babujang, Manijang, Mahammadpur panchayats under Nischintakoili block in Cuttack district and Tendakuda panchayat of Garadpur block in Kendrapara district are also facing a similar fate.

Similarly, riverside villages located close to the Subarnarekha river that flows through Balasore district are also spending sleepless nights due to the fear of floods.

Villagers allege that rampant illegal sand mining has led to soil erosion as a result of which many big trees near the river which had been saving the riverside villagers from



Subdued 'Nuakhai' in W Odisha this year

flood have been washed away.

Recently, heavy rains due to low pressure have been pushing water level in the Mahanadi river dangerously. And increased water levels in the river is a major threat to locals here.

On being informed, the district  $% \left( 1\right) =\left( 1\right) \left( 1\right)$ administration has started filling sandbags along riverbank as a temporary solution to tackle possible flood threats during monsoon. However, the villagers have demanded a permanent solution to their problem.

"The sand mafia continued to operate the Balighat in the area with impunity with the support of local political leaders and revenue officials, even though their five-year-term lease agreement lapsed in March. Excess sand lifting has resulted in changing the course of the river and destroying the natural floodplain," alleged a villager of Nischintakoili block in Cuttack district

Some villagers have also alleged that they have lost their agricul-

Coil erosion caused by illegal Sand extraction from the riverbed along the Mahanadi at Pinpur under Uttarkul panchayat in Cuttack district has triggered flood-panic in riparian pockets

Riverside villages like Uttarkul, Babujang, Manijang, Mahammadpur panchayats under Nischintakoili block in Cuttack district and Tendakuda panchayat of Garadpur block in Kendrapara district are also facing a similar fate

ocals say: Sand mafia continue to operate the sand quarries in the area with impunity with the support of local political leaders and revenue officials, even though their five-year-term lease agreement lapsed in March. Excess sand lifting has resulted in changing the course of the river

tural land which was near riverside due to the soil erosion. Subhasis Mishra, a villager of Kendrapara district, said the river is continuously moving towards the human habitat. If the situation continues like this. our farmland and houses will also go under water, he added.

Superintending Engineer of Cuttack Baleswarnath Sahoo said steps are being taken to check the erosion of the Mahanadi floodplain by using wooden piles and sand bag packing on a war-footing.

# to farming in north Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhamnagar/Balasore, August **19:** Heavy rains for the last few days caused flood in Reba and Kapali rivers, two tributaries of the river Baitarani flowing through Dhamnagar block in Bhadrak district. Hundreds of acres of farmland in the district have submergedunder floodwaters. The situation has become a cause of concern for already battered farmers who are already suffering from Covid-19.

Due to incessant rains over last few days, the water level in these rivers has swelled, resulting in breaches at several places. Consequently, hundreds of acres of agricultural land in Asurali, Gadhiali, Fatepur, Kothar, Dhushuri, Khaparapada, Bamakura and Kasimpur panchayats are sub-

Already reeling under coronavirus restrictions and erratic rainfall, farmers in the affected panchayats had managed to complete paddy transplantation work but are now apprehending that these transplanted paddy saplings have gone wasted due to the sand cast.



logged roads in moving to Dhushuri. The villagers alleged that they along with Kotha sarpanch Nimain Nayak have been demanding a bridge in place of the culvert but to no avail.

The worst affected panchayat is Asurali. Here the flood water has not only submerged the farmlands in Gandhi Nagar, ShreeNath Nagar, Kalyani Nagar, Sahu Sahi, Lanjera, Mallick Patna, Dinajpur, Dilo, Torabantia and Hatiapada villages but also left the aforesaid villages

played havoc in Koraput. Due to heavy rains, 67 houses have collapsed in the district. according to sources in the district emergency department. The report said three houses were damaged in Koraput tehsil: 22 houses in Bainariguda tehsil: eight in Machhkund tehsil: five in Dasmanthpur tehsil: 13 in Naravanpatna tehsil: seven in Jeypore tehsil; fice in Kotpad tehsil and four in Kundra tehsil

67 houses get

damaged in Koraput

induced by a low pressure have

KORAPUT: Incessant rains



Besides this, floodwaters rising up to 4-ft was seen on the culvert located in the middle of Patri Sahi and Khop Sahi, snapping the connection between Dhushuri and Tihidi

Villagers of Fatepur, Kasimpur, Banka Sahi, Khop Sahi, Naugadia villages are having major commutation problems due to waterwaterlogged, it has been learnt.

Reports from Balasore said. incessant rains in Balasore and Mayurbhanj districts have resulted in rise of water level in Jalaka. Rainwater flowed over the danger mark, a report said.

According to reports, water that had earlier been flowing over the danger mark of 5.5 metre at Mathani

area, has touched 6.50 metre. Upper catchment areas of Jalaka at Rasagobindpur, Morada, Chitrada and Suliapada areas in Mayurbhanj district have been receiving very heavy rainfall which has left the river in a spate, informed the water resources department officials.

However, if water level continues to increase in the days ahead then farmlands in close vicinity of the Jalaka might get waterlogged.

Notably, low pressure coupled with weak monsoon has brought moderate to intense rainfall in Kendrapara, Malkangiri and Dhenkanal districts.

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#### ern Odisha, will not see any major celebrations this year in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. 'Nuakhai' is August 23 this time

and it will be a low-key affair sans any Nuakhai Bhet - the social gettogether to greet each other on the occasion, according to community leaders.

Sambalpur, August 19: 'Nuakhai',

a major agrarian festival of west-

People of the region worship their presiding deities during 'Nuakhai' celebrations as a mark of gratitude for bumper crops, good rain and favourable weather

No puja at Siddhi

Vinayak temple

**BERHAMPUR:** Berhampur's

closed on the occasion of

Siddhi Vinavak temple will be

Ganesh Puja August 22 to avoid

any type of public congregation

on the temple premises, said

District Collector Viiav Amruta

Kulange, Wednesday. Kulange

said that every year thousands

of devotees throng the temple

to offer prayers to Lord Ganesh.

But, this year the administration

has decided to close the temple

August 22 to stop further spread

gatherings during the Puja may

lepan' ritual on Siddhi Vinayak's

idol by devotees is a major one

CHHATRAPUR: Ganjam

Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange

Tuesday said that the number of

active COVID-19 cases in the dis-

that about 4 lakh migrants re-

turned to Ganjam amid COVID-19

induced lockdown. With many of

Kulange took to Twitter to say

trict has been decreasing.

hike infection cases. 'Sindoor

of the pandemic as public



Traders in Bhawanipatana sell leaves and paddy bunches for festival

ers offer the first grains of the harvest to the deity and then partake it. The head of the family worships the household deity and offers the rice and other food before distributing the 'prashad' among the other members. Customarily, all the family mem-

As per the tradition, the farm-

for farming activities.

bers sit and eat together on the occasion, while people who work outside also visit their homes to celebrate the festival.

Maintaining the tradition, people will worship their presiding deities and offer the first crop. However, social and cultural aspects

#### of the festival will be missing this time due to the pandemic, said city-based writer Siddharth Panda. Many people who stay away

from their families will not be able to visit their homes during the festival due to the pandemic, he said. Family get-togethers will also be missing this time, he added.

Folklore researcher Shyam Sundar Dhar says, the Nuakhai Juhar is a major ritual of the festival. Social outfits also hold 'Nuakhai Bhetghat' and other events in the evenings. But all the action will be missing this time as public gatherings are prohibited due to the pandemic.

## Infection scare in Koraput circle jail

KORAPUT: Even as Covid infection cases are increasing in Koraput, the deadly virus has made its entry into Koparut cir-

In the last four days, 37 Covid positive cases were detected in the cases Wednesday, taking the tally to 2077. The infections continue to rise in various jails in the state despite the fact that the four walls of prisons are considered safer spots because of its isolated environs, free from outside exposure.

Wednesday, five prisoners tested positive for COVID-19 in the circle jail. Besides, local infection

them testing positive for COVID-

19, the number of positive cases

to August 15 revealed that the

coronavirus active cases in the

It was observed that the total

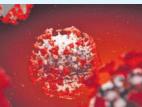
number of active cases August 2

However, data from August 2

in the district crossed 15,000.

district have decreased.

Active Corona cases dipping in Ganjam: Collector



is spreading in Koraput. Of today's 92 infected cases, 71 had come in contact with some positive cases while 20 are said to be local in-

23 infected cases were reported from Jeypur municipality, 23 from Koraput municipality, 11 from Sunabeda Municipality and 35

was 3,422 while it has decreased to

2,272 August 15. Ganjam district

emerged as a corona hotspot be-

tween June 30 and July 30. The

number of coronavirus cases of the

district was in peak in compari-

son to other districts of the state.

trict Tuesday, the total number of

With 246 fresh cases in the dis-

cases from various rural pockets.

To keep the jails free from infections, the authorities have insisted on conducting RT-PCR tests of arrested persons before they are remanded to judicial custody.

It was learnt that over the last four months, 16,789 inmates including 5,231 inmates in Berhampur circle were released from jails across the state on parole to decongest prisons in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of 17,509 inmates are lodged in the 85 prisons of the state.

Besides, 1,200 inmates were shifted to other prisons in order to reduce overcrowding.

cases in the district went up to

15,256. As many as 2,162 people

are undergoing treatment at var-

ious COVID-19 hospitals while

12,928 patients have recovered

from the disease. Meanwhile, 158

patients succumbed to the dis-

ease while eight COVID-19 pa-

tients died due to co-morbidities.

## sodomising minor in Jharsuguda

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, August 19: Town police arrested the founder of a social outfit 'Faith Outreach' on charge of sodomising a minor boy in his institution here Wednesday.

The accused was identified as John P Bridge, the founder of Faith Outreach, a social outfit at Cox Colony in the town. John, originally a native of England, had taken Indian citizenship

which rejected his bail plea and remanded him to judicial custody. It was alleged that John had sodomized the minor boy who was reading in the organisation in 2015.

The minor boy in question with the help of his family members lodged a complaint with police after he became an adult and passed out from the institution August 14. John was booked under 586/20 of the POCSO Act.

Sources said John was allegedly involved in sexual exploitation of inmates. Understanding the gravity of the matter, the district administration has entrusted the investigation on a senior police official.

Later, police produced John in court

It was alleged that John was in the midst of a controversy after a New Zealand national had leveled similar charges against him through the em-

the decision of the state govern-

ment, these roads have been allotted

to various R&B divisions.

Maintenance works of these roads

are being done accordingly, he added

# **UK man held for**

# be seen in Govt. website i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Kalahandi as mentioned in DTCN 2. Total No of Works 3.Estimated Cost:

5.Other Details:

At 10.00

: Rs.0.79 lakhs to Rs.48.85 lakhs : One Month

:Road works in the District of

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIV ENGINEER RURAL WORKS DIVISION, DHARMAGARH

O-251:- "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
Bid documents consisting of Work, Estimate Cost, Cost of tender

Paper, EMD, Time of Completion, Class of Contractor and the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can

05.09.2020 Up to 5.00 Up to 5.00 Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division

Dharmagarh OIPR-25100/11/0004/2021

**ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LIMITED** (A Government of Odisha Undertaking)
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, L.I. DIVISION, BHUBANESWAR e-Mail: eeolicdivn.bbsr@ymail.com Tel. 0674-2391847

e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. 1570/2020-21 Dt. 10.08.2020

No. CAD-373:- The Executive Engineer, Lift Irrigation Division, Bhubaneswar behalf of ODISHA LIFT IRRIGATION CORPORATION LIMITED, BHUBANESWAR nvites percentage Rate bids in online mode for installation of Lift Irrigatio Projects in Puri district under BKVY in TURNKEY BASIS as mentioned below from the reputed Contractors/ Firms having valid HT license issued by E.L.B.O., Odisha and Civil license as mentioned below with experience in similar nature of work

Nature of work

No. of packages

Period of Completion Date & Time of availability of bid documents in portal Last date & time for receipt

Date & time of seeking clarification

Name & address of the officer inviting Bid

: Execution of work for installation & energisation of 10 Nos L.I. Projects in different blocks of Puri district. 10 Nos. Varies from Rs. 1749202/- to

Rs. 3654117/-24.08.2020 at 10.00 A.M. 10.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.

24.08.2020 at 10.00 A.M. to 09.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M. 14.09.2020 at 03.00 P.M.

Executive Engineer, Lift Irrigation Division, Bhubaneswar details of tender are available in Government tender website

www.tendersorissa.gov.in and other related documents are available in the DTCN for bidding. Any Addendum/ Corrigendum/ Cancellation of tender will be availab in the said website Sd./- Executive Engineer, L.I. Division, Bhubanesw

#### **GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA** OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, KARANJIA (MAYURBHANJ) E-mail ID:- eerwkaranjia@yahoo.com lding through "e" Procurement Notice for Road Works National Com Bid Identification No- RWDKNJ- 04/2020-21 . Estimated Cost Rs.1.80 to Rs.16.07 lakhs (Approximately) (As per Annexure) 3. Class of Contractor (Eligible) 'C' & 'D' class (of Odisha P.W.D) or relevant class of other licensing authority. Period of Completion 2 (Two) & 1(One) Calendar months. (As per Annxure) . Tender Paper Cost Rs.600/- to Rs.6000/- (As per Annexure) Availability of Tender online for bidding O/o E.E., R.W. seeking tender No. From

#### Cuttack, Keonjhar decide fate of Jajpur's major roads It was alleged that though Panikoili R&B division said as per POST NEWS NETWORK partment to hand over the road to

Jajpur, August 19: A dozen of major roads in this district belong to neighbouring Cuttack and Keonjhar dis-

These roads are still under the road and building divisions of Cuttack and Keonjhar and are in bad shape while the R&B division of the neighbouring districts has zero concern for the restoration of the roads, it was alleged.

On the other hand, the district administration has no say on the Cuttack R&B division. Sadly, even though 24 years have passed since Jajpur was made a separate district. no effort has been made by the district administration to bring these roads under the control of the R&B division of Jajpur.

Most of these roads spanning about hundreds of km are connected to Cuttack and Koenjhar.

A case in point is 20-km Duburi-



Brhaminipal road. This road is under Keonjhar R&B division. When this road construction was completed, there was a demand to hand over the road to the Jajpur R&B division (Panikoili). Sukinda MLA Pritiranajan Ghadei had earlier written to the secretary of the R&B de-

Panikoili R&B division. However, the road was brought under the control of Ghatagaon R&B division.

This road is in tatters as the engineers of the Ghatagaon R&B division have not paid attention to its repair and restoration. Commuting on this route is always fraught with dangers and accidents, because diversion parts of the road have not been repaired.

Similarly, 11 important roads in Barchana and Bari blocks are under Charbatia R&B division.

These roads are Barchana-Darpanigarh, Krushnadaspur-Ratnagiri, Barchana-Balichandrapur, Chhatia-Champaur-Kalakala, Bairi-Chandikhole, Janaka-GHaladharpur, Balichandrapur-Dekudi, Bandalo-Endarpada, Darpanigarh-Siha,9(under Barchana block) Ratnagiri-Kampagada and Dargha Brahmani bridge-Haladibasant(under bari block).

Charbatia R&B division had spent lakhs of rupees for the restoration of Balichandrapur-Dekudi road, it was left in bad shape, giving nightmares to the commuters. It was learnt that in the last two years, about Rs 4 crore has been spent towards restoration of the road. During the British Raj, tourists used to commute on this road to visit Biddhit hubs like Lalitagiri, Ratnagiri and Udavgiri.

Locals pointed out that the R&B division of the neigbouring district botched up the repair and maintenance of these roads.

Besides, Lalitagiri-Kampagada road is now full of craters and potholes, which have made the commuting more difficult, locals lamented. People of various areas demanded that these roads should be hrought under Panikoili division

for proper maintenance. An ex-executive engineer of

clarification Division, Karanjia Executive Engineer RWDKNJ-04 03.09.20 18.09.20 21.09.20 Rural Works Division, Karanjia /2020-21 At 11.00 A.M. up to 5.00 P.M. up to 1.00 P.M at 11.30 A.M.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Karanjia



The happiness you give makes you happier than the



# Mass murder, usual suspects

elp!! I'm being cheated. The meat industry, the pesticide polluters, the hunters and the factories have combined to make so many wondrous creatures die out – even before I could feast my eves on them.

The Smooth Handfish has been declared extinct. It was an unusual fish with bulging eyes, a mohawk-like fin on its head and the ability to walk on the seafloor with its fins. Declared extinct by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, they were one too many just a few decades ago in the shallow waters of Tasmania. Now there is only one stuffed specimen left, caught in 1802. Its cousin also, the Red Handfish, lives on the seafloor and uses hand-like fins to 'walk.' There are less than 100 of them left.

The culprits of this mass murder are the usual suspects: fishing, pollution and habitat destruction. In particular, a scallop fishery that operated in the region until 1967 which dredged the fish habitat and kept throwing away millions of dead 'bycatch' (unintentionally caught fish).

This year, the hauntingly beautiful, magical, white giraffes have gone ex-

tinct. Armed poachers killed the last two, a mother and son, in Kenya. In next 10 years, all giraffes will have gone. Since 1985, some 40 per cent of them have been killed by hunters -roughly 86,000 giraffes in East Africa alone. The reasons: civil unrest, poaching and killing by farmers who have made their homesteads on giraffe land. The farms along river Tana, for instance, have blocked giraffe water points. They must walk through private farms to go to the river. Farmers use snares and pitfalls to kill them for daring to cross their land, and then cut off their tails and use them as drawing room trophies. There are just 16,000 left. My granddaughter is never going to see one.



The bees will be the

before the human is

extinct, because all

our food depends

on their survival

last animals to go

The last gigantic ponderous Pinta tortoise, Lonesome George, is also dead. He was big enough to carry me on his back. Now I will never see a tortoise of his size. The tortoises of the remote Pacific Galapagos islands were all this huge size. Then explorers and whalers arrived and ate them all. The utterly beautiful Formosan Clouded Leopard, which looked like a python on four legs, is also gone. Native to Taiwan.

the cats were first cornered by having their forests cut down and then hunted to extinction for their pelts. The people who killed them then burnt all their glorious pelts for fear of repercussions from the government. So, you will not even be able to see the beauty that I am talking about except in a few photographs which show the clouds which seem to be drawn on their tawny skins.

There were millions of passenger pigeons in America. They had pinkish body and blue-gray heads. A single white egg was laid in a flimsy nest of twigs; more than 100 nests might occupy a single tree. These were all shot to death by children in competitions to see who could shoot the most. People stood on their roofs and shot them idly as they passed by. Not to eat, not for any reason except the joy of killing.

To Christopher Columbus goes the credit of wiping out the Caribbean monk seal. The explorer nicknamed these harmless creatures as sea wolves and proceeded to kill hundreds of them in 1494. The few he left behind were killed over the centuries for their meat or oil (to light candles) and by fishermen. They were declared extinct in June 2008.

The Liverpool Pigeon with charming spotted green feathers was a close relative of the Dodo whom the sailors stopping at Mauritius ate to extinction. This one lived in Tahiti and the locals hunted it for food. The westerners who settled there brought in pigs to eat and they destroyed the pigeon's nests. It's called the Liverpool pigeon because there is only one specimen in Liverpool zoo to show you that the earth once had this beautiful bird.

Less than a century ago, there were over a million black rhinoceroses roaming across Africa. In 1960, China demanded their slaughter. They were butchered and their horns – made of normal matted hair-sold to the Chinese fake medicine trade. They do not exist anymore - and not a single human has benefitted from the so-called medicine made from their horns.

Teeny weeny brown bats called Pipistrelles, their shrill cries going far and wide over the silent ocean at night, lived on a single Christmas Island on the Indian Ocean. They have been killed off by pesticide which was meant to kill ants on the island. Why we would want to kill anything at all is beyond my understanding. The Yangtze River Dolphin was once worshipped as the river goddess. This dolphin, a common sight for one third of the Chinese population who live on the sides of this river, is now gone forever. Blind, they had a magical sonar system to catch their prey by echo location. Pollution, dams  $\,$ and hunting killed them. Japanese River Otters were once in the millions. Prized for their fur, they were hunted down viciously, hundreds being killed each day. They were done by 1980 and now poems are written about them.

Each animal on this ignominious list of extinct species is a reminder of our failure as humans: a reminder of our viciousness and greed. Scientists have discovered up to 1.3 million species, but these are only 20 per cent of the species there are on this planet. There are still millions of species waiting to be discovered, but we are killing them so fast that I will never see or hear of them. Some 90 per cent of all species on the planet are now believed to be extinct. What an amazing enchanted planet this was. And it has taken us just 300 years to finish it off. Our children are taught about dinosaurs and they are taken to museums to see their bones. But we are not teaching them about the animals we kill off every year. They are inheriting an almost barren planet.

During my lifetime, the earth is going to lose these marvellous creatures: polar bears, leatherback turtles, tigers, the Asian elephant, the Javan rhino, the Sumatran orangutans, the Bluefin tuna, the mountain gorilla. And the bees. The bees will be the last animals to go before the human is extinct, because all our food depends on their survival. Some 70 per cent of them are already extinct because of one set of pesticides – the neonicotinoids introduced in 2003; and this used widely across the country.

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org

#### WISDOM CORNER

An ant on the move does more than a dozing ox.

The purpose of our lives is to be happy.

DALAI LAMA

Showing off is the fool's idea of glory.

#### WORDS**WORTH**

#### **■** Tempest in a teapot

storm in a teacup is the common British equivalent of this word. This is a Adelightful phrase for a fuss about nothing very much, or a dispute of only minor or local importance. The big Oxford English Dictionary has examples of a storm in a cream bowl and a storm in a wash-hand basin, and suggests that there were others. All have this idea of a violent disturbance in a small compass, by implication therefore one of little significance. The alliteration of tempest in a teapot must have helped its acceptance. Of the two bestknown versions tempest in a teapot seems to be the older, since I've found an example from a long-defunct journal called The United States Democratic Review of January 1838 about the Supreme Court: "This collegiate tempest in a teapot might serve for the lads of the University to moot; but, surely, was unworthy the solemn adjudication attempted for it."



# MAKE LOCALLY, SELL GLOBALLY



Dr Sanjay Kumar

**AS HANDLOOM WEAVING PROTECTS TRADITION AND CULTURE AND SERVES THE DISADVANTAGED SEGMENTS. RESOURCE ALLOCATION BY THE GOVERNMENT NEEDS TO BE STEPPED UP** 

industrial Revolution and production of clothes by machines or power looms broke the monopoly of handloom in the textile sector. Plain clothes with less design were produced by power looms at a lesser price, which affected the market and the interests of the medium and low skilled weavers adversely. After Independence, government(s) both at central and state levels took several steps for supporting handloom weavers, so as to enable them ably face the competition from power looms. These included reservation for products, subsidy/rebate on sale, marketing through cooperatives and public sector, supply of raw material, working capital, infrastructure, setting up of work sheds, holding training sessions and introducing welfare measures.

Notwithstanding these, the number of active looms and weavers declined, as is evident from the Fourth Handloom Census 2019 in comparison with the First Handloom Census 1987. The number of active looms fell from 37.78 lakh to 21.78 lakh and number of fulltime weavers from 67.39 lakh to 35.22 lakh during this period. In Odisha, a major handloom producing state, the changes were from 1.19 lakh to 0.48 lakh in case of looms and from 2.47 lakh to 1.16 lakh in case of weavers. The problem of low and non-remunerative earnings has been the single most important factor behind this decline.

In rural economy, the weaver was producing for the local market. Availability of power loom clothes took away the major chunk of demand for ordinary day-today wears. Besides, alternative occupations came up in urban areas and service sectors. Government support was primarily targeted for protecting the low-skilled weavers while the skilled weavers had to fend for themselves.

The scenario was further affected by implementation of highly subsidised rural employment programmes like NREP and MGN-REGA. Taking Odisha as an example, in 1990, the average daily earnings of a skilled weaver was around ₹200 a day, which was about eight times the wage for unskilled labour at the rate of ₹25 per day. By 2020, wage of the skilled weaver increased to around ₹500 per day



The process of empowering the weavers is required to be supported with setting up of physical infrastructure, like a common facility centre at village level for each group of weavers

which is only 2.5 times the wage for unskilled labour at the rate of ₹207 a day. Over the last three decades, the daily wage for unskilled labour increased by eight times whereas the increase in case of a skilled weaver was only by 2.5 times. This relative deprivation and non-remunerative wage affected the economic conditions and social prestige of skilled weavers. This forced the younger generation to look for alternative occupation in the urban areas, like shop attendant and security guard. The future of handloom lies in a paradigm shift for addressing this ground reality and increasing earnings of the skilled weavers to a respectable level. Limitations in the producer weaver getting market information, marketing products through government controlled cooperative/corporation, and intermediaries taking bulk of the margin which hindered the growth in the past are required to be addressed. This will be possible by connecting the producer weavers living in the rural area directly with the consumer having paying capacity and taste/liking for handmade products, living in the urban area/abroad by digital connectivity.

Success of JAM (Jandhan, Aadhaar, Mobile) experiment is required to be extended for promoting handloom based on the 'produce locally & market globally" strategy, which will increase the earnings of weavers substantially. Digital connectivity based transactions will eliminate middlemen, reduce transaction cost, provide information on customers' preference about design, and products to the skilled weaver on a real

time basis, increase earnings of weavers and enthuse the younger generation to continue in the field and reduce the cost of fabrics for the consumer, which will increase the demand further.

This business model will be weaver-centric and driven by enterprising start-ups, preferably from the weavers' families. It will generate wealth, foreign exchange and employment, which are critical for sustainable development.

Instead of looking to cooperatives or corporations for marketing, the new generation of educated and technically empowered weaver will explore the market, get consumers' choice, produce accordingly and then despatch, sell

and get the sale value all online. The process of empowering the weavers is required to be supported with setting up of physical infrastructure, like a Common Facility Centre (CFC) at village level for each group of weavers. CFC will have facilities including a godown for storing raw material and finished product, an office with reliable power supply and internet connectivity, a shed for decentralised training, and a guest room, all to be arranged at a cost of ₹2 crore. This facility will enable the weaver take up processing, dyeing, warping as per standards with quality, and in bulk. This will remove defects at pre-weaving stage.

CFC may be managed by a producers' company with the weaver members. CFC can be financed under the approved scheme of Development Commissioner for Handloom (DC HL) as well as under Corporate Social Responsibility initiative, and other ongoing

Development Fund and MPLAD.

The second critical input relates to provision of technical assistance for quality designing and dyeing, which is the responsibility of the Weaver Service Centre (WSC) under DC HL. WSCs are required to be adequately strengthened with staff having technical (diploma in handloom) and administrative skills in information technology, accounting, marketing and exports. Supply of quality raw materials like yarn, dyes and chemicals, as also weaving accessories at reasonable price and in time has to be ensured. In accordance with the government policy for minimising government interventions, ongoing schemes like Hank Yarn Obligation and mill gate delivery may be replaced by online transfer of assistance for supporting active weavers.

Provision of institutional finance by the commercial banks is another important area. Sanction of Mudra Loan without any collateral in adequate quantity and in time to the weavers and entrepreneurs along with mentoring may be done in a proactive manner. Branding and quality control are essential for gaining consumers' confidence and success of online marketing. Launching of the India Handloom Brand on 7th August 2015 was a trendsetter.

Handloom, being the mother of weaving and fashion, students and faculty of National Institute of Fashion Technology and other such institutes may engage with handloom weavers, which will create a win-win situation for learning and guiding respectively.

As a result of the pandemic, a large number of migrant labours have returned to their native villages and are looking for livelihood. It will be worthwhile to explore and assist the migrant labour with weaving background for setting up their weaving enterprise. As handloom weaving protects tradition and culture and serves the disadvantaged segments, resource allocation by the government needs to be stepped up and directed to the

The writer is former Secretary, Textiles, Govt of India, and former Director of Textiles, Odisha.

#### SPECTRUM DRINKING WATER

# How does Odisha fare in JJM

Shoumyakant Joshi & Mosharaf Hossain

IN TERMS OF **MISSION PROGRESS IN RESPECT OF FINANCIAL UTILISATION UNDER JJM**, **ODISHA DEPICTS AN ABYSMAL PICTURE** 

The Union Government has restructured and subsumed the ongoing National Rural Drinking Water Programme into Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) with an ambitious target to provide Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) to every rural household under the scheme Har Ghar Nal Se Jal by 2024. The estimated outlay is ₹3.60 lakh crore with central and state shares of ₹2.08 lakh crore and ₹1.52 lakh crore respectively.

The fund sharing pattern between the Centre and the state is in the ratio of 90:10 for Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and North-Eastern states, 100:0 for UTs and 50:50 for other states. Under JJM, the total 94.5 crore of India's rural population will get 55 litres per capita per day (LPCD) of water through FHTC. However, India has a big milestone to achieve. Till July 2020, only 36 per cent of the population has household tap connection (40 LPCD) through Pipe Water Supply (PWS). Against the mammoth target of 7,21,420 rural habitations, only 29.99 per cent is fully covered with PWS. Around 12.49 per cent of water-quality-affected habitations are partially covered with PWS; which draws special attention for universal coverage. The current provision of 40 LPCD has to be upgraded to the targeted 55 LPCD. Twelve states have already been successful in bringing more than 50 per cent of the total targeted habitations under PWS. Harvana. Gujarat, Goa and Telangana are at top with 92 per cent, 91 per cent, 84 per cent and 82 per cent coverage respectively. Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh are lagging behind with a meagre coverage of less than 20 per cent.

Odisha's progress against target under JJM is not very encouraging. Some 45.58 per cent of the population has got the FHTC (40LPCD) connection through previously implemented pipe water supply schemes along with JJM. But, geographical reach is pretty less. Only 26.38 per cent of habitations are fully covered under PWS. In Kendrapara, Boudh, Dhenkanal, Kandhamal, Cuttack, Gajapati, Jajpur and Rayagada districts less than 20 per cent of habitations are connected with FHTC. Puri, Balasore and Khurda are the best three districts with more than 40 per cent fully covered habitations.

With a view to achieving full coverage with piped water, water scarce

areas, quality-affected areas, Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana villages, villages in aspirational districts and SC/ST dominated habitations in Odisha have been prioritised and being targeted with special focus. Efforts in this direction should be stepped up as six out of 10 aspirational districts are reported to have less than 20 per cent of coverage (habitation with FHTC). Of the 81 lakh rural households in Odisha, the state's plan is to provide 16.21 lakh household connections in 2020-21.

In terms of mission progress in respect of financial utilisation under JJM, Odisha depicts an abysmal picture. In 2019-20, against a target of 15.61 lakh, only 4.37 lakh (27.97 per cent) households were provided with tap connections in the state, as it could utilise only ₹275.02 crore against the allocation of ₹364.74 crore.

States like Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Himachal and Karnataka have spent more than 90 per cent of the allocated budget in 2019-20; whereas Tamil Nadu, Manipur and Punjab reported fund utilisation of less than 30 per cent. With the unspent balance of ₹90crore, this year's (2020-21) central allocation of ₹812 crore and a match-

ing state share, Odisha will have around ₹1,805 crore in 2020-21 under its kitty for implementation of the JJM. During these Covid times, fund flow from both state and Centre may be restricted. With anticipation of this situation, the state has the scope to utilise existing resources through convergence of various programmes like NREGS, 15th Finance Commission Grants to PRIs, DMF, CSR and LAD funds to build and maintain the momen-

tum for implementation of JJM. The 15th Finance Commission has granted Odisha ₹2,258 crore for PRIs in 2020-21, and 50 per cent of this amount is mandatorily to be utilised for water supply and sanitation. This amount should be strategically planned and spent on water supply, rainwater harvesting and water recycling as well as on ODF sustainability works. This will ease current financial crunch of state exchequer considerably.

Shoumyakant Joshi is Regional Monitoring & Evaluation Lead, WaterAid India; Mosharaf Hossain is Impact Assessment Specialist, International Rice Research Institute.

#### District names

Sir, The British arrived in Odisha in 1803. The whole Empire was built in the spirit of colonialism and imperialism. Their policy was to divide and rule. For their own comfort, they pronounced our places differently. Odisha was pronounced as Orissa, Kendrapada as Kendrapara, Katak as Cuttack, Aali as Aul, Sundergad as Sundergarh, Baleswar as Balasore and Brahmapur as Berhampore. A Constitutional amendment in 2011 helped Orissa to be renamed as Odisha and Oriya as Odia. But, the other names here have not been changed till date. If Madras was changed to Chennai, Bombay to Mumbai, and Calcutta to Kolkata, then why the other original names of districts could

not be restored vet? Prabhudutt Dash, BHUBANESWAR

#### Bhushan case

Sir, Senior Supreme Court advocate Prashant Bhushan should have exercised restraint while criticising the Supreme Court. Notably, he had been expelled from the AAP for his anti-party activities. He stood with Rahul Gandhi in attacking Prime Minister Modi in the Rafale case. He argued but stopped short of proving that there was corruption in the Rafale deal. The Bhushan case sends a strong message to those who criticise the Supreme Court selectively, and only when their interests are hurt.

KV Seetharamaiah, HASSAN

#### Visva Bharati vandalism

Sir, The ransacking of the Visva Bharati University installations at the Poush Mela ground this week by a group of people was on an unprecedented scale, in the 99-year history of the esteemed institution. This incident is shocking also as we cherish the memory of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore. It is through Gurudev that Visva Bharati acquired the name and fame. In the past too, the Poush Mela ground had been vandalised by miscreants. Anti-social elements enter the campus and engage in objectionable acts. This time, the scenario was worse. The security and sanctity of the university were violated. The law and order situation in the state, at the time of Tagore and now, is different. If the authorities feel that fencing is necessary for the ground, it must be done. The vandalism this time seems to be politically motivated and an FIR is registered against the VC by bypassing the guidelines of the National Green Tribunal. Neither were the miscreants punished nor the structures there protected.

Ramdas Ray, BHUBANESWAR

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

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

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columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are

postal address/email ID. They may also

and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

send in their valuable comments, opinion



#### **OrissaPOST**

THURSDAY | AUGUST 20 | 2020 | BHUBANESWAR

# Bismillah Khan's house being razed in Varanasi

thrown away. It was not just a room, but a place of worship for music-lovers. It is a heritage, and I appeal to all to preserve it SHOMA GHOSH | VOCALIST

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi, August 19: Shehnai maestro Ustad Bismillah Khan's house in Varanasi's Benia Bagh is being demolished to make way for a three-storied building.

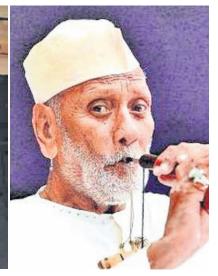
The house had been purchased in 1936 and it was here that Bismillah Khan lived all his life. He even turned down offers made by his disciples to settle in the US.

The house is now owned by the maestro's grandsons -- sons of late Mehtab Hussain, one of his five sons.

One of the grandsons, Sufi, said that the decision to raze the house had been taken due to financial considerations.

"A three-storied commercial apartment will be constructed and we will have a museum of Bismillah Khan in





one part of the building. We will keep all his personal belongings, awards, commendations in this museum,' he said.

Khan's disciple and foster daughter, singer Soma Ghosh, said she was 'shocked' to know of the demolition of the house.

"I was shocked to know the room of 'Baba' (Khan) was demolished and his belongings thrown away. It was not just a room, but a place of worship for music-lovers. It is a heritage, and I appeal to all to preserve it," she

Incidentally, the demolition has begun just days

ahead of the 14th death anniversary of Bismillah Khan which falls August 21.

The maestro, who passed away in 2006, was conferred the Bharat Ratna

Bismillah Khan had played Shehnai at the Red Fort August 15, 1947, and became a part of history.

In January 2017, his grandson had stolen his four shehnais, including three made of silver, and sold them to local jewellers for ₹17,000.

The Uttar Pradesh STF had arrested his grandson and two jewellers and recovered the melted silver. The three silver shehnais had been gifted by former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, Rashtriya Janata Dal chief Lalu Prasad and Congress leader Kapil Sibal

# Vijayan backtracks on CDR, tells court seeking only tower location



A division bench of the court was hearing a petition filed by Leader of Opposition Ramesh Chennithala demanding the intervention of the court to

prevent the new directive from being implemented, terming it as gross violation of people's privacy

Chennithala had said last week that contracting the disease was not a crime and the patients were not criminals, as he slammed the CM for trying to turn Kerala into a surveillance state

The Leader of Opposition also alleged that a careful scrutiny of the circular would prove that

Thiruvananthapuram, August

19: After maintaining all through that its decision **'SURVEILLANCE STATE'** 

to collect call detail records (CDRs) Covid positive patients was a correct one, the Pinaravi Vijayan-led

Kerala government Wednesday went back on it and informed the Kerala High Court that it will only collect the tower location of a Covid

patient, and nothing else. A division bench of the court was hearing a petition filed by Leader of Opposition Ramesh

Chennithala demanding the

intervention of the court to prevent the new directive from being implemented, terming it as gross violation of people's privacy. The state government pointed out that it's only intention is to ensure that those under quarantine do not break the rules, and the process of contact tracing is made easier using CDRs of the infected persons.

The court, however, asked the state government to come back with all the modalities of what they actually plan to do and posted the matter for the next hearing Friday.

Chennithala had said last week that contracting the disease was not

a crime and the patients were not criminals, as he slammed Vijayan for trying to turn Kerala into a surveillance state.

In his PIL filed Monday,

Chennithala alleged that collection of CDRs of COVID-19 positive patients by police is an illegal expansion of police powers, which was nothing but an infraction on the right to privacy of individuals. He said the state police chief issued the circular August 11, directing Additional DGP (Intelligence) and police headquar-

ters to take up the matter with BSNL and Vodafone for prompt collection of CDRs. Chennithala submitted that the circular was vague and worded in a very deceptive manner, which does not disclose the purpose for which CDRs of COVID-19 patients are required by police.

It is evident that there is no informed voluntary consent also obtained from the infected patients undergoing quarantine before collecting CDRs, he said.

## Why UP BJP MLAs are disgruntled with party INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 19: With one-anda half years left for the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, legislators of the ruling BJP seem to be

running out of patience. More and more MLAs from the ruling party are taking to social media and public platforms to air their grievances, causing embarrassment to the Yogi Adityanath government.

Sultanpur MLA Devmani Dwiwedi, posted a question two days ago demanding to know how many Brahmins had been killed in encounters and what steps were taken to ensure the security of the

A copy of the handwritten question went viral on social media. Party leaders and government spokespersons were too embarrassed to even react.

Another BJP legislator Umesh Dwiwedi queered the pitch for the government when he announced the BJP would introduce a medical insurance scheme for all Brahmins.

A day later, Umesh Dwiwedi, who is an MLC from the teachers' quota and had joined the BJP in

with the legislator and the police of-November 2019, said he is also the

National Chief of the Rashtriya Brahmothan Manch, an organisation that he claims is working for the welfare of the Brahmins.

"I will ensure insurance of ₹10 lakh for 10 years for the poor members of my community," he said. The BJP completely distanced itself from the legislator's statement.

Last week, BJP MLA from Aligarh, Rajkumar Sahyogi, created a ruckus after a brawl with a local police official. The entire incident went viral on the social media

ficer exchanging unpleasantries and accusing each other of physical assault.

Adityanath managed to redeem the situation by suspending the officer concerned. Senior BJP MLA from Gorakhpur Dr Radha Mohan Das Agarwal is also known to speak his mind even if it embarrasses the party and the government.

In his latest Facebook post, he has opposed the Madhya Pradesh government's decision to reserve jobs

#### **BREWING DISCONTENT**

ore and more MLAs from the ruling party are taking to social media and public platforms to air their grievances, causing embarrassment to the Yogi Adityanath government

A senior party MLA admitted resentment was brewing in the party because the state's bureaucracy had gone out of

he Chief Minister remains inaccessible and his officers make sure that complaints of MLAs do not reach him

"This is a divisive move and should be opposed," he wrote.

BJP MLA from Sitapur Rakesh Rathore hit the headlines during the pandemic when his audio clip in which he is heard ridiculing the campaign to clap or beat 'thalis' for honouring corona warriors went viral. He was later served a show cause notice to which he reportedly did not reply to.

Another legislator who was served a show cause notice by the party is Shyam Prakash of Hardoi. Shyam Prakash in his Facebook

post said he had never seen so much corruption in his political career. He also alleged misappropriation of MLA funds. BJP MP Jai Prakash echoed similar sentiments recently when he questioned the purchase of ventilators in his constituency.

Talking to IANS Wednesday, a senior party MLA admitted resentment was brewing in the party because the state's bureaucracy had gone out of control.

"The bureaucrats and police officers do not respect us and do not listen to us. If the officials do not listen to us, how can we get work done in our constituencies. The Chief Minister remains inaccessible and his officers make sure that complaints do not reach him," he said.

However, the BJP is aware of the discontent and senior leaders have been contacting the disgruntled legislators on the phone, asking them not to raise any such issues during the Assembly session which begins Thursday.

We will definitely meet the legislators and address their grievances very soon. There has been a lack of communication due to the pandemic but we will hold meetings now," said a senior BJP functionary.

# Kerala tourism takes ₹25k cr beating in Covid times

WITH KERALA NOW WITNESSING A DAILY SPIKE IN NEW COVID CASES, THE PRESENTLY ESTIMATED LOSS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IS **EXPECTED TO FURTHER SURGE AS THE STATE'S PEAK TOURISM SEASON IS BETWEEN END OF** SEPTEMBER AND JANUARY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, August 19: The money spinning tourism industry in Kerala has taken a severe beating on account of the pandemic and according to a State Minister, the loss suffered is around ₹25,000 crore. State Tourism Minister Kadakampally

Surendran Tuesday said the tourism industry has suffered one of its worst ever "The loss that has been suffered is

₹25,000 crore and it has hit thousands of people working in the industry very badly. The state government has now announced a package of ₹455 crore for the industry," said Surendran.

"This package consists of new infusion of funds up to a maximum of ₹25 lakh to tourism entrepreneurs and 50 per cent of the interest would be borne by the state government. Likewise workers in the industry will get a loan of ₹30,000 from the Kerala Bank which will come at an interest rate of three per cent and repayment starts only after six months," added Surendran.

It was a record 1.96 crore tourists who arrived (domestic and foreign) in Kerala in the 2019 calendar year. It registered a 17.2 per cent growth as compared to the 2018 calendar year. This rate of growth is a record of sorts as



it's the first time since 1996 that such a rate has been achieved. The total earnings from tourism stood at ₹45,010.69 crore, notching a robust 24.14 per cent growth. The total number of tourists was pegged at 1,95,74,004, of whom there were 1,83,84,233 domestic tourists and 11,89,771 visitors from abroad. In 2018, the number of tourists visiting Kerala was 1,67,01,068 (domestic tourists 1,56,04,661 and foreign tourists 10,96,407)

The growth rate in the inflow of domestic tourists was 17.81 per cent while for the foreign tourist arrivals, it was 8.52 per cent

With Kerala now witnessing a daily spike in new Covid cases, the presently estimated loss in the tourism industry is expected to further surge as the state's peak tourism season is between end of September and January.

# As finances dip, zoo sends SOS to animal lovers

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 19: With less than one per cent of visitors coming to the Nawab Wajid Ali Shah Zoological Garden, popularly known as Lucknow Zoo, the zoo is facing a severe financial crunch.

Zoo Director RK Singh has now posted an open letter to all animal lovers on social media, asking them to support the animal adoption scheme and help the zoo survive.

The zoo is pinning its hopes on corporates and even individuals to come forward and adopt its animals as part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) ini-

"To continue appropriate feed to animals, security and cleanliness of the campus and to maintain the greenery, flow of funds is indispensable. Due to lockdown, the zoo income has come to a standstill. At present, barely one per cent visitors of previous years are visiting the zoo. We desperately need at least ₹one crore per month to run our zoo,"

Singh said in the letter.

He has also attached a list of animals available for adoption. The zoo is home to 1,000 animals of 100

Singh said, "Being a trust, the zoo largely depends on the entrance fee. The average number of visitors per year is around 16 lakh. However, first due to anti-CAA protests and later, because of Covid-19, there has been very less footfall this year. Unlike previous years, when around

continue appropriate feed to animals, security and cleanliness of the campus and to maintain the greenery, flow of funds is indispensable. Due to lockdown, the zoo income

> has come to a standstill RK SINGH I

used to throng the zoo per day, we now receive about 100 visitors in a



day. Since most of the food for an- is difficult for us to survive in these imals is met through ticket sales, it

He said that the zoo is left with funds that will last only three to four weeks. Meanwhile, the adoption rates vary for various animals. For instance, a tiger or white tiger can be adopted for ₹6.75 lakh per annum, leopard and panther for ₹1.7 lakh each, hoolock gibbon for ₹32,500 and white peacock for just ₹3,200. The budgerigar bird can be adopted for as less as ₹200 per year.

The scheme will also benefit patrons in the form of Income Tax rebate under 80G. The name and address of adopters will be displayed at enclosures.

The Lucknow Zoo, spread over 71  $\,$ acres, is managed by a trust -- the Zoo Advisory Committee -- with Forest Secretary to the Government of Uttar Pradesh as Chairman. state Principal Chief Conservator of Forests as Vice Chairman and state Chief Wildlife Warden as Administrator.

An officer of the rank of Deputy Conservator of Forests is posted as the Director for overall day-to-day management of the zoo.

#### **GRIM MILESTONE**

### Kerala's Covid tally crosses 50,000-mark

AGENCIES

Thiruvananthapuram, August 19: Kerala's COVID-19 tally crossed the grim milestone of 50,000 cases Wednesday, with the state recording the highest daily surge of 2,333 infections, while seven more fatalities took the toll to 182.

The tally now stands at 50,231. At least 2,151 patients were infected through contact and the source of infection of 52 people is not known, Health Minister KK Shailaja said. Seventeen health workers are among those infected.

As many as 17,382 people are presently undergoing treatment in various hospitals, while 32,611 have recovered, including 1,217 who have been discharged Wednesday.

Thiruvananthapuram continued to record the highest number of cases with 540, followed by



Ernakulam 230 and Kottayam 203 cases, Shailaja said in a press release. Seven deaths have been confirmed, including that of a 90-yearold woman from Adoor in Pathanamthitta district, taking the toll to 182, she said.

Of the positive cases, 60 had come from abroad and 98 from other states.

The minister said 1,69,687 people are presently under observation, of whom 1,55,928 are in home/institutional quarantine, 13,759 in hospitals, including 1,730 admitted Wednesday.

# national



People will teach a lesson to those who betrayed the party DIGVIJAYA SINGH | CONGRESS LEADER

#### **NEW ROLE**

Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari was Wednesday administered the oath of office of Goa Governor





The existence of cooperative banks and their cooperative











K PALANISWAMI TN CM





### SHORT TAKES

#### Man kills wife, ends life

Ranchi: A man allegedly hacked his wife to death in Jharkhand's Palamau district, before committing suicide Wednesday morning, police said. Police said Virodhi Singh, 40, of Vinayaka village under Tarhasi police station jurisdiction, had jumped into the village well this morning. He was a Panchayat Sewak. Late on Tuesday night, he had reportedly killed his wife Leelwati Devi with an axe. According to police, Singh was jailed for taking a bribe but was released a few days ago. He was said to be in a depressed mood and used to quarrel with his wife.

#### Five held

Mathura (UP): The Mathura police have arrested five robbers, who were allegedly involved in a theft of 91 kilograms of silver anklets worth Rs 60 lakh, after a brief encounter. The silver anklets had been stolen from a jeweller in Mathura on Monday. Acting on a tip-off, the police intercepted two bike-borne youths in Anantam city of Vrindavan on Tuesday evening. The two opened fire at the . However, in a retaliatory firing, the youths were injured and have been admitted to a hospital. All the stolen jewellery was later recovered from their possession.

#### Eight arrested

Port Blair: Eight fishermen were arrested in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for fishing in the area reserved for the vulnerable Jarawa tribe, police said Wednesday. Acting on a tipoff, a team of the Kadamtala police station that was patrolling near Strait Island rushed to Middle Andaman and made the arrests Tuesday, they said. The eight men were fishing in the area on a small boat, they added.

#### Naxal held

Bijapur: A Maoist, allegedly involved in the abduction and killing of a villager in 2018, was arrested Wednesday from Chhattisgarh's insurgency-hit Bijapur district, police said. Acting on a tip-off, the ultra, identified as Masram Bhogami (27), was apprehended by a team of the District Force from his village Tindodi under the Bhairamgarh police station area, a local police official said.

#### **Girl gangraped**

Agartala: A 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by five persons in Tripura's Sepahijala district. nolice said Wednesday. The five persons forcibly took the girl to a jungle and raped her while she was returning from her elder sister's house on Sunday night, the police said. The girl informed her parents about her ordeal Monday and they lodged a complaint at Bishrampur police station on the same day.

# 'Institutional disruptors': 772 lawyers write to CJI

#### THE LAWYERS SAID IF THE JUDICIARY IS TO PERFORM ITS DUTIES, IT IS ESSENTIAL TO PROTECT THE DIGNITY AND AUTHORITY OF THE COURTS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: A group of 772 lawyers have written a letter to Chief Justice S.A. Bobde to raise concerns on an emerging trend to browbeat and intimidate the judi-

"India has witnessed a series of attacks by institutional disruptors against judges who are unwilling to agree with them and toe the line drawn by them. It is unfortunate that when political ends of lawyers are not served by a decision of the court, they vilify the court by making scandalising remarks. The Supreme Court of India as well as the judges are subject to both scurrilous language, malicious attacks and scandalising remarks", said the statement.

On August 14, the Supreme Court

**STUDENT ENDS LIFE** 

Bangalore, August 19: A 24-year-

old student in the city-based Indian

Institute of Science (IISc) com-

mitted suicide fearing that he may

have contracted coronavirus after

talking to a friend who exhibited

some symptoms, an official said

IISc has committed suicide fearing

coronavirus infection," confirmed

a police official. Police booked a case

of unnatural death under the CrPc

and were waiting for the student's

Sandeep met a friend who ex-

hibited some Covid symptoms and

later isolated himself, but tested

negative for the virus. Following

this incident, he sent a mail to his

friends conveying his fear that he

may have contracted the coron-

avirus and that he wanted to com-

to have depression issues," said

'Sandeep was already known

"Sandeep, a BTech student from

Wednesday

parents to arrive.

FEARING COVID

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE



held advocate Prashant Bhushan guilty of contempt of court and fixed the date of hearing for his sentencing on August 20. A statement was issued by 'Campaign for Judicial Accountability and Reforms', (CJAR) on August 15, con-

demning the judgment and further calling upon the Supreme Court, and every judge, to reconsider their decision. CJAR includes a retired judge, Justice P.B. Sawant, former law minister and senior advocate Shanti Bhushan among others as their patrons.

In the letter to the Chief Justice, the lawyers emphasised that legitimate criticism of both judgements and the functioning of the institution has always existed however when the criticism is calculated and actuated by malice, it is the authority of the court which is undermined. "We urge you to uphold the edifice of the judicial system and protect the third pillar of our democracy from those who peddle falsehood to destroy the institution. We sincerely hope that the Supreme Court of India ensures that such persons are dealt with in an exemplary manner, even if such actions are taken thirteen years later or else such trends will only accelerate and strike a blow to the guardian of the rule of law," read the state-

The lawyers said if the judiciary is to perform its duties and function effectively, it is essential to protect the dignity and authority of the courts. "The foundation of the judiciary is the confidence of the people in its ability to deliver justice. The actions of these institutional disruptors through name calling and usage of certain phrases such as 'Supreme Court has destroyed democracy'; 'the Supreme Court is killing the Constitution' have the tendency to destroy the faith of the public in the judiciary", added the

#### RAIN FURY



Vehicles move through a waterlogged underpass after heavy rain in New Delhi, Wednesday

### BHUSHAN SEEKS TO DEFER HEARING

The apex court August 14 held Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his derogatory tweets against the judiciary saying they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in the public interest

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: A day before the scheduled hearing on quantum of sentence, activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan who has been held guilty of criminal contempt for his two derogatory tweets, moved the Supreme Court seeking deferment of the proceedings till a review petition is filed and considered.

The top court August 14 held Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his derogatory tweets against the judiciary saving they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in the public interest.

The apex court had said it would hear on August 20, the arguments on the quantum of sentence to be awarded to Bhushan in the matter. A contemnor can be punished with simple imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to Rs 2,000 or with both.

Bhushan in his application stated that he intends to file a review petition against the order of August 14 after studying it in detail and seeking appropriate legal counsel as the ramification of the said order is of grave constitutional significance, in particular on the right to free speech.

"The Applicant would file the same within the limitation period of 30 days from date of the judgment, as he is entitled to under Order 47 of the Supreme Court Rules, 2013. Hence, it is prayed that, in view of the same, the hearing on the sentence as fixed on August 20, 2020, vide the order of August 14, 2020, be deferred till the consideration of the review by this Court." he said in the application filed in the contempt case which was taken suo motu cognizance by the top

Bhushan submitted the deferment of the said hearing would



be in the interests of justice in view of the underlying public policy with respect to safeguarding liberty of a citizen under Article 21 till such time as his first appeal (in this case the review petition) is considered

The application said "if this Court proceeds with the hearing on the sentence and imposes any sentence, the same may be directed to be stayed till the remedy of review is exhausted by the Applicant". Bhushan, in his application filed through advocate Kamini Jaiswal, said in criminal contempt proceedings, the top court functions like a trial court and is also the last court.

"Section 19(1) of the Contempt of Court Act gives a statutory right of appeal to a person found guilty of contempt by the High Court. The fact that there is no appeal against an order of this Court makes it doubly necessary that it takes the utmost precaution to ensure that justice is not only done but seen to be done," he said. Bhushan said it would be in consonance with the right guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India.

"Otherwise there would be gross injustice since there would be no occasion to examine the correctness of the findings arrived at in a suo motu criminal contempt proceeding before putting the convicted contemnor's liberty at stake,' he said.

# Gujarat ATS foils murder plot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

the official.

Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad has arrested a 'sharp shooter' who was allegedly sent here by gangster Chhota Shakeel to kill BJP leaders, Gujarat Minister of State for Home Pradeepsinh Jadeja said Wednesday.

Search is underway for an accomplice of the accused, Jadeja said in Gandhinagar.

Since preliminary investigation revealed that BJP leader and former Gujarat Home minister Gordhan Zadafia was one of the targets, Jadeja said he has asked the state director general of police to beef up Zadafia's security.

"Based on a tip-off that Chhota Shakeel sent two men to kill BJP leaders, the ATS team raided a hotel on Relief Road in Ahmedabad late Tuesday night. The accused fired one round at the team when police tried to catch him," Jadeja said in Gandhinagar.

The accused has been identified as Irfan Shaikh, 23, a resident of Chembur in Mumbai, an ATS officer said. "The ATS found Zadafia's information in the mo-



Gujarat Anti-Terrorist Squad arrests a sharpshooter who was allegedly sent by gangster Chhota Shakeel to kill BJP leaders, in Ahmedabad

bile phone of the arrested person. A video of the state BJP headquarters 'Kamalam' was also found in it." Jadeia said

Search is on for his accomplice, who was not present at the spot when the police raided the place, he said. Shaikh, who landed here on Tuesday morning, was staying in a hotel on Relief Road in Ahmedabad. He fired one round at the ATS team during the late night operation following which he was nabbed, a senior ATS official said, adding that two pistols were recovered from his pos-

After checking in the hotel on Tuesday morning, Shaikh first went to Gandhinagar to conduct a recce of the state BJP headquarters, another official said.

"He came back to the hotel after making a video of the BJP office from outside. He was waiting for his accomplice when we raided his room. We have learnt that the accused was in contact with his handler, whose location is unknown," the official added.

Meanwhile, talking to reporters in Gir Somnath district, Zadafia said he was informed in the morning that a man was sent to kill him.

### MP MAN CYCLES 105 **KM FOR SON'S EXAM**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhar (MP), August 19: In absence of public transport, a 38year-old man travelled on a bicycle for 105 km carrying his son to ensure he does not miss Class 10 board supplementary exam here in Madhya Pradesh.

Though Shobhram, who paddled the cycle, is himself unlettered, he said he understands the importance of education and did not want his son to waste one year by missing the supplemen-

tary paper. Therefore, he decided to undertake the arduous journey, with his son on the cycle's rear seat, from his village Baydipur in Dhar districts Manawar tehsil to reach the exam centre on time. With no public transport available due to the COVID-19 lockdown and hardly any money, Shobhram decided to take his son on a bicycle to Dhar town, some 105 km away, so that he can appear in Class 10th boards supplementary exam conducted under the Madhya Pradesh government's Ruk Jana Nahin" scheme.

The scheme gives an opportunity to students to clear those subjects which they were unable to pass in the first attempt. No means of transport, including bus, were available due to the prevailing coronavirus situation. But if I had missed this opportunity, then my sons one year would have gone waste. Therefore, I decided to take him for the examination on a bicycle, Shobhram

said Wednesday. 'Besides, we don't have money or even a motorcycle. Nobody helps. But for improving my son's life, I brought him to Dhar for appearing in the examination on bicycle," he said. "We carried food and other eatables with us for sustaining ourselves in Dhar for two-three days," he added.

#### **THAROOR GIVES** – **PRIVILEGE NOTICE AGAINST BJP MP**

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor, Chairman of Parliament's Standing committee on Information Technology, has given a notice for breach of privilege against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey for his alleged disparaging re-

The Thiruvananthpuram MP alleged that Dubey posted such remarks on social media over his decision to summon the panel's meeting to discuss the alleged "misconduct" of Facebook

Tharoor has written a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, mentioning Dubey's 'strong remarks' on Twitter that "the Chairman of the Standing Committee does not have the authority to do anything without discussion of the agenda with its members"

"I sincerely hope that stringent action is taken in this matter so that it serves as a deterrent to similar incidents in future and restores public trust in Parliament," Tharoor said in the letter.

Tharoor said that he is anguished over the "disparaging" remarks made against his decision to call the meeting of the parliamentary panel.

"The contemptuous words used by Shri Nishikant Dubey have cast aspersions on the intent and integrity with which I fulfill my duties as an elected representative of the people of Thiruvananthapuram in the Lok Sabha, as such words constitute unwarranted vilification of the Committee's name and the manner in which it discharges its functions, and his actions have painted an ignominious picture of the revered institution of Parliament by indicating that its functionaries have circumvented the process," the Congress leader added.

Tharoor said it amounted to "breach of privilege of his position as an MP and the panel Chair".

# Bihar could see mix of virtual, physical campaign

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The state of Bihar, where assembly elections would be held later this year amid the COVID-19 pandemic, is likely to witness a mix of virtual and physical campaigning by political parties.

The Election Commission is learnt to be open to the concept of a combination of virtual and physical campaigning in Bihar and it could also be implemented in other elections if they are held amid the pandemic, sources in the poll panel said. They said certain restrictions on physical campaigning were a must to keep a check on the spread

of coronavirus. The Commission has finalised a set of guidelines for holding the upcoming elections and by-elections during COVID-19 and these



could be announced this week. The guidelines have been framed based on the inputs of political parties and chief electoral officers of various states. On the issue of hold-

ing rallies, the Commission may

leave it to the local authorities to de-

cide the number of people who can participate after keeping in mind the size of the venue and social distancing norms, the sources said.

The EC is likely to restrict to two the number of people who can accompany a candidate while filing

nomination papers. The Commission may also allow online submissions of documents. It may also not allow more than three persons for door-to-door campaign.

To ensure social distancing, the poll panel has restricted the number of voters per polling station in Bihar to 1,000. In view of this compulsion, the state is creating approximately 34,000 additional polling stations which is 45 per cent more than the usual number, and will increase the total number of polling stations to around 1.06.000.

In a memorandum to the Election Commission last month, some opposition parties of Bihar had expressed reservation over virtual meets as a medium of campaigning. saying it disturbs a level playing field. "According to TRAI (Telecom Regulatory Authority of India),

only a little over half the population has a mobile phone. Only 34 per cent has a smartphone," the memorandum had said.

But the EC is learnt to be open to the idea of virtual campaigning and the proposed guidelines could comprise of details on the issue, the sources said. The term of the Bihar legislative assembly comes to an end on November 29 and the polls are likely to he held sometime in October-November.

Several bypolls were recently postponed mainly due to the coronavirus and heavy rains. No fresh schedule has been announced as yet. The authorities have asked people to wear face masks and maintain social distancing, among other norms, to check the spread of the novel coronavirus which has infected over 1 lakh people in Bihar.

# national



I thank the Congress president for the prompt action of forming the threemember panel. The committee will do its work and whatever we have to say and listen, we will do that and will get the actions done according to the roadmap that they have prepared SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

#### **SOREN IN HOME QUARANTINE**

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has guarantined himself after Health Minister Banna Gupta was found coronavirus positive. Banna Gupta had attended a cabinet meeting presided over by the Chief Minister at the state secretariat in Ranchi Tuesday



triumphs! The soul of late actor Sushant Singh Rajput will surely now rest in peace

of a fair investigation by CBI on the FIR filed in Patna by Bihar Police whose request for transfer of case to CBI has been validated by the Supreme Court

RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD UNION LAW MINISTER

In the last 4 months. around 2 crore people have lost their jobs. The future of 2 crore families is in the dark. The truth about unemployment and destruction of the economy cannot be hidden from the country by peddling fake news and hatred on Facebook

RAHUL GANDHI CONGRESS LEADER

Our party is united (in West Bengal). Just like at the Centre and many other states, we are united. There are

no differences in the party. These are all created by a section of the TMC which is not happy with the

arowth of BJP DILIP GHOSH | WEST BENGAL BJP PRESIDENT

#### SHORT TAKES

#### **Navy sailor** found dead

Mumbai: A 29-year-old unmarried Navy sailor was found hanging in the Colaba naval area early on Wednesday, naval officials said. "Prima facie, it appears to be a case of suicide. A statutory board of inquiry is being ordered. A case has also been registered with the police," said an official. Other particulars like the sailor's identity, which part of India he hailed from, his family details, and probable causes of suicide were not immediately available.

#### Militant killed

killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir Wednesday, police said. Based on specific inputs about the presence of militants in Chitragam village of south Kashmir district, security forces launched a cordon and search operation there, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into an encounter after the militants fired on a search party of the forces, who retaliated. In the ensuing exchange of fire, one militant was killed, the official said.

#### Cop arrested

Thane: A police subinspector from Navi Mumbai and one other person have been arrested for allegedly taking bribe from a real estate developer, the Anti-Corruption Bureau said Wednesday. Rohit Bandgar, 30, posted at Kamothe police station in Navi Mumbai, allegedly demanded ₹10 lakh from the real estate developer for not taking action on a cheating complaint against him. The deal was later struck at ₹1.5 lakh, an ACB official said.

#### Man held

Jammu: A man was arrested Wednesday for allegedly hurting religious sentiments of a community in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said. Mohd Zahid has been arrested for posting objectionable comments on Facebook and hurting religious sentiments of a particular community, SSP, Poonch, Ramesh Angral said. A case has been registered.

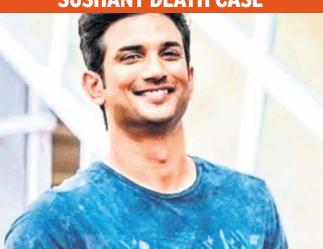
# BJP, ALLIES HAIL SC VERDICT

New Delhi/Mumbai/Patna, August 19: Hailing the Supreme Court order on a CBI probe in actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death case as a "triumph of justice", the BJP and its allies expressed confidence Wednesday that the central agency will bring out the truth.

The ruling Congress and Shiv Sena in Maharashtra defended the Mumbai Police and alleged that the Nitish Kumar-led Bihar government is trying to take political advantage of the issue in view of the upcoming assembly polls. The Maharashtra Government had opposed an FIR by the Bihar police and a CBI probe in the sensational case.

However, JD(U) president and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar asserted that the Supreme Court order has vindicated his government, and asserted that its action had nothing to do with politics or

Congress spokesperson Shaktisinh Gohil said the CBI should now carry out a proper probe into the actor's death, and asserted that justice will not be delivered by the BJP-JD(U), which are in power in Bihar, making statements for "political gains". The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the transfer of the FIR. lodged at Patna against actress Rhea Chakraborty and others for allegedly abetting the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, to the CBI. The apex court said that the Bihar govern-



ment is competent to transfer the case to the CBI for investigation.

Rajput, 34, was found hanging from the ceiling of his apartment in suburban Bandra in Mumbai on June 14. The row over his death has acquired political dimensions in Bihar, his home state, ahead of the assembly polls there with almost all major parties, including the opposition RJD, backing the demand for a CBI probe.

The BJP and its allies have been trying to put their rivals, including the Congress, on the defensive over the issue. "With today's apex court order, it has become amply clear that whatever was done in Bihar was in accordance with the law and

quite hopeful that justice will now be done in the case," Chief Minister Nitish Kumar said.

BJP spokesperson Shahnawaz Hussain alleged that the Maharashtra government had been "stalling" the investigation and expressed confidence that the truth will now be brought out. Congress leader Gohil said the apex court in its ruling has stated that records of the case produced before it do not "prima facie suggest any wrongdoing by the Mumbai Police" and demanded that the BJP leaders apologise to the force."I demand that the CBI should fulfill its duty and an investigation is completed at the earliest," he said at an online media briefing.

Gohil said the Congress has re-

**Nitish Kumar asserted** that the Supreme Court order has vindicated his government, and asserted that its action had nothing to do with politics or elections

peatedly demanded that there should be a proper investigation in the case and the bereaved family should get justice. "Justice will not be delivered by the statements being made by BJP-JDU for political gains in view of the assembly polls. There should be a proper investigation in the case," he said.

Former Maharashtra chief minister and senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis, who had been pushing for a CBI probe, said the Maharashtra government needs to introspect on the way it handled the case.

Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut said that "doubting" the integrity of Mumbai Police was a "conspiracy" and alleged that politicians maligned the force. Lok Janshakti Party president Chirag Paswan, who was an early votary of a CBI probe in the matter, said the SC verdict has "respected" the sentiments of crores of people. In a tweet, he expressed confidence that the CBI will not only bring out the truth but also "expose" those who tried to mislead the probe in the case of alleged suicide.

## Cong says Priyanka's remark is year-old

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: The Congress Wednesday officially commented on Privanka Gandhi Vadra's remark that she had no objection to a non-Gandhi becoming the party president. The party said it was a year-old remark.

'We at INC India appreciate the sudden media interest (egged on by BJP) in a year-old remark (dated July 1, 2019) of Priyanka Gandhi Vadra," Randeep Singh Surjewala, chief spokesperson of Congress, said in a statement.

He said the Nehru-Gandhi family has held together and served the Congress unmindful of the trappings of power. "In 2004, Soniaji set an example by sacrificing power to serve the party, and in 2019. Rahulji showed the courage of conviction and stepped down as the Congress president," added

The party insisted that the context today is to take on the vicious attack on India's polity by the Modi-Shah dispensation and fight it fearlessly on the front foot. "Millions of Congress workers and leaders have seen that Rahul Gandhi has led the fight tirelessly, undaunted by the setbacks and vile attacks by the Modi government on a daily basis.

"It is this fearlessness and uncompromising courage that the Congress requires, which the work-

ers respect and the nation needs. said the statement. The Congress' comments came in the wake of a claim made in a book -- 'India Tomorrow: Conversations with the Next Generation of Political Leaders' -- written by Pradeep Chhibber and Harsh Shah.

In the book, it has been claimed that Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi was ready to work under a non-Gandhi president after Rahul Gandhi's resignation following the defeat in the general elections in 2019.

Rahul Gandhi had also said that the party should elect a president from outside the family, but in August last year, Sonia Gandhi was appointed as the interim president of the Congress. Priyanka Gandhi, in the book, was quoted as saying: "If there were to be another party president, he would be my boss. If he tells me tomorrow that he doesn't want me in Uttar Pradesh but wants me to be in Andaman and Nicobar (Islands), then I would jolly well go to Andaman and Nicobar.'

## UP girl ends life, leaves letter for PM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Sambhal (Uttar Pradesh), August 19: A 16-year-old girl who committed suicide by shooting herself on Independence Day eve, has left family, friends and even the police shocked when her 18-page suicide note was recovered.

In her note, addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the girl has raised concern over issues like pollution, corruption and felling of trees. The suicide note was

recovered on Tuesday, in corruption and which she has written felling of trees that she always wanted to meet the Prime Minister and discuss these issues with him.

She urged the Prime Minister to curb the growing population, implement the ban on firecrackers during Diwali and chemical-based colours on Holi. According to the note, she was also disturbed by the problems faced by the elderly people.

"I don't want to live anymore in

Tablighi Jamaat:

**ED** conducts raids

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

a place where children send their parents to old age homes," she mentioned in her note. The family members said that as their daughter's last wish, they will make sure that the letter reaches the Prime Minister and has appealed to the administration to take cognizance of it.

The girl's father, who In her note. is a farmer, said, "The addressed to suicide note is my daughthe PM, the girl ter's last wish. We want has raised that the letter must reach concern over the Prime Minister." The girl was a student of a issues like private school in Babrala. pollution.

Gunnaur SHO Devendra Kumar said, "The girl had commit-

ted suicide on the night of August 14 by shooting herself. The revolver was recovered by police and her body was sent for the post-mortem. A probe was also launched. On Tuesday, an 18-page suicide note was found in her notebook at her home. Her parents told us that she was being treated for psychological problems."

### PAYING OBEISANCE



Granth Sahib in Amritsar, Wednesday

### Karnataka among highest Covid-testing states

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

official said Wednesday.

New Delhi, August 19: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted multi-city searches in connection with a money laundering case filed against Tablighi Jamaat leader Maulana Saad Kandhalvi, trusts linked to the Jamaat and others, officials said

They said various premises in Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad and a few other locations are being raided to collect evidence. The action is being carried out under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the ED

The central probe agency had filed a money laundering case in April against Maulana Saad and others after it took cognisance of a Delhi Police complaint against these entities. The Delhi Police crime branch had on March 31 lodged an FIR against seven people, including the cleric, on a complaint by the station house officer (SHO) of Nizamuddin police station for holding a congregation of Tablighi Jamaat followers in alleged violation of the orders against large gatherings to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Maulana Saad was alleged to have organised the religious gathering in March at Nizamuddin Markaz in violation of social distancing protocol imposed by the Centre to curb the spread of coronavirus. Bangalore, August 19: Karnataka has conducted 20 lakh coronavirus tests in less than five months to emerge as one of the highest coronavirus-testing states in India, an

"Karnataka has conducted more than 20 lakh Covid tests from people, considering more than 50,000 tests were being done in 101

March 23 to August 16 (Sunday) and stands as one of the top states conlaboratories daily across the state. ducting maximum number of "From February to May 2020, tests," the health official added. Karnataka took nearly 99 days to Initially, to complete the first one conduct first one lakh tests, howlakh tests, the southern state took ever, at the turnaround time, to nearly 99 days, however, now it conduct one lakh tests takes two takes just two days to test one lakh days with the establishment of 101

labs across Karnataka," he said. Starting with just 2,309 tests in March, the state incrementally raised its testing capability to 55,021 tests in April, followed by 2.4 lakh in May, 3.2 lakh in June, 7.6 lakh in July and 6.8 lakh in the first 16 days of August.

Kidwai Bangalore has emerged as the highest testing government laboratory with 1.05 lakh tests, followed by GIMS Gulbarga (88,323), NIMHANS Bengaluru (81,816), among others. Among private labs, Neuberg Anand has conducted the maximum number of tests which is 69,897, followed by Syngene (42,769), Xcyton (39,989), KMC

Manipal (26,626), among others.

"All private labs have conducted 4.5 lakh tests till August 16," added the official. By Tuesday, Karnataka had tested 21.3 lakh people for Covid, comprising 5.5 lakh rapid-antigen detection tests and 15.8 lakh RT-PCR and other methods of testing.

Though the health official shared information from March 23 to August 16, the first Covid positive case in the state occurred on March 8, when an IT employee returning from overseas tested Covid positive. Covid cases are spiking in Karnataka, rising by 7,000 infections on an average daily to reach 2.4 lakh, of which 79,782 are active.

# **Covid recoveries**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: With a record 60,091 people recuperating from coronavirus infection in a day, the total recoveries Wednesday crossed 2 million pushing the recovery rate to 73.64 per cent, while the COVID-19 case fatality rate hit a new low of 1.91 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said.

The recoveries have surged to 20.37,870 in the country, while there are 6,76,514 active cases of COVID-19, according to the data updated at 8 am.

The record high recoveries have ensured that active cases of coronavirus infection, the "actual caseload" of the country currently comprises less than 1/4th (only 24.45 per cent) of the total cases

Higher number of recoveries and declining fatality has shown that India's graded strategy has worked. India has posted 13,61,356 more recoveries than the active cases, it said.

"With high number of COVID-19 patients recovering and being discharged from hospitals and home isolation, the recovery rate has scaled the peak of reaching 73.64 per cent. This has also led to the declining case fatality rate, which stands at a new low of 1.91 per cent today," the ministry said.

From the beginning of January 2020, Government of India assiduously followed a graded, pre-emptive and proactive response and management strategy for COVID-19 in the country, it said.

"The focussed, collaborative and 'whole of government' approach has yielded success," it underlined.

Building on the continuum of care approach, the policy of testing aggressively, tracking comprehensively and treating efficiently is led by the Centre and implemented in conjunction with the state and UT governments.

# Now, get tribal products at your doorstep

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Consumers will now be able to buy organic, essential natural immunity-boosting products made by tribals at their doorsteps.

Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda Wednesday flagged off 57 mobile vans which will carry tribal products to every household in 31 cities, including Ahmedabad, Allahabad, Bengaluru, Bhopal, Chennai, Coimbatore, Delhi and Guwahati.

"In these trying times, when

COVID-19 has disrupted lives in more ways than one, people are focusing on healthier ways of living and staying as safe as possible.

"This novel initiative ensures that one does not even have to step out to shop for organic, essential natural immunity-boosting products and adopt a sustainable and wholesome way of living," the minister said.

The initiative is a brainchild of the Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED), which functions under the tribal affairs ministry and is



responsible for promoting tribal art and craft, and handlooms.

"These mobile vans will bring the natural and immunity-boost-

ing tribal produce such as organic 'haldi', dry 'amla', wild honey, black pepper, ragi, 'triphala', and lentil mixes such as 'moong dal', 'urad dal' and white beans directly to the doorsteps of customers over the next few months. TRIFED is also tying up with business partners for accelerating the sales of products," TRIFED Managing Director Pravir Krishna said.

Keeping in line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for an 'Aatma-nirbhar Bharat' (selfreliant India). TRIFED is also set to launch an exclusive e-marketplace for tribal producers - forest dwellers and artisans -- to facilitate the purchase of minor forest produce (MFPs), handicrafts and handlooms online soon

The 'Tribes India E-Mart' platform will be an omnichannel facility for tribals to sell their goods to a large national and international audience in an e-marketplace through their own e-shop. TRIFED is in the process of onboarding approximately 5 lakh tribal producers across the country and sourcing their natural produce and handcrafted goods.

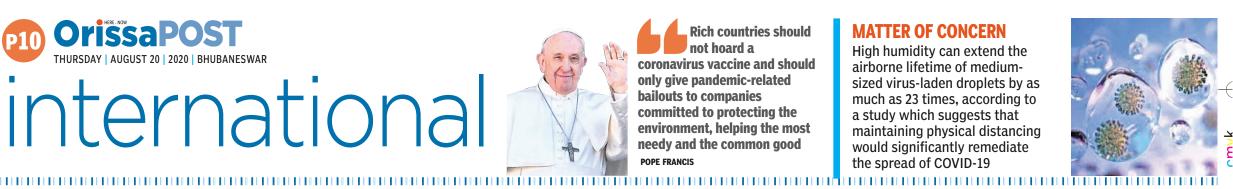
# international



**Rich countries should** not hoard a coronavirus vaccine and should only give pandemic-related bailouts to companies committed to protecting the environment, helping the most needy and the common good

#### MATTER OF CONCERN

High humidity can extend the airborne lifetime of mediumsized virus-laden droplets by as much as 23 times, according to a study which suggests that maintaining physical distancing would significantly remediate the spread of COVID-19





I'm getting work now, and I hope to keep working hard. Thank you



Afghans yearn for peace and soon Afghanowned and Afghanled negotiations should start, a



ZALMAY KHALILZAD US SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

Our position on Israel is very clear. Pakistan can never recognise Israel. We also have to answer to the Almighty



IMRAN KHAN PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER

#### SHORT TAKES

#### Mali soldiers promise election

Bamako: Soldiers who ousted Mali's President and government in a military coup promised Wednesday to oversee elections within a "reasonable" time, as calls from abroad grew for a peaceful resolution to an acute political crisis. President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita resigned and dissolved parliament Tuesday, hours after the mutineers detained him at gunpoint, further destabilising a country already in the grip of a jihadist insurgency and with a recent history of civil unrest.

#### 'B'desh visit very satisfactory'

Dhaka: Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla Wednesday described his Bangladesh trip as "very satisfactory" as he wrapped up a two-day visit here during which he called on Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and held talks with his counterpart on bolstering bilateral ties of COVID-19 vaccine to Dhaka once it is developed.

#### **Berlin crashes were** extremist attack

Berlin: A series of crashes caused by a 30-year-old Iragi man on a Berlin highway was an Islamic extremist attack. prosecutors told the . German news agency dpa Wednesday, They did not reveal the man's identity, as is customary in Germany. The suspect is being investigated for attempted murder.

#### **Bomb attacks** in Kabul kill 5

Kabul: Bomb attacks in Kabul and in northern Afghanistan, as well as an ambush in the country's south killed at least five people Wednesday and wounded 15, officials said. Two sticky bombs targeted government employees in the Afghan capital, killing two people, including a police officer, and wounding two others, police said.

#### **Britain to bring in** mass nCoV testing

London: Britain plans to bring in regular, population-wide testing for COVID-19 so it can suppress the spread of the virus and ease restrictions that have crippled its economy without triggering a second wave in one of the worst-hit countries in the world. Health Secretary Matt Hancock said the government was trialling a range of new, faster tests that can give instant results and hoped to roll them out towards the end of the year.

# **Democrats nominate Biden to take on Trump**

New York, August 19: Democrats formally nominated Joe Biden for president Tuesday, vowing his election would repair a pandemic-battered America and put an end to the chaos that has defined Republican President Donald Trump's administration.

The second night of the party's four-night national convention, under the theme "Leadership Matters," featured elder statesmen like former presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter, rising stars of the Democratic Party as well as prominent Republicans, who made the case that Biden would return integrity to the White House and normalcy to American lives.

Biden's wife, Jill, an educator, delivered the headline speech from a Delaware high school where she once taught, offering a deeply personal account of how their love helped him heal after his first wife and infant daughter were killed in a car accident. "I never imagined at the age of 26 I would be asking myself. 'How do you make a broken familv whole?" she said. The answer, she said, is the same for a broken nation: "With love and under-

"If we entrust this nation to Joe, he will do for your family what he

**GAZA RALLY AGAINST** 

Gaza City (Gaza Strip), August

**PALESTINIANS IN** 

**ISRAEL-UAE DEAL** 



Joe Biden, his wife Jill Biden, celebrate after the roll call vote at the DNC Copyright Democratic National Convention via AP

did for ours: bring us together and make us whole," she said.

Throughout the evening, Democratic leaders contrasted Biden's long experience with what they described as Trump's deadly mishandling of the coronavirus outbreak and his willingness to corrupt democratic institutions.

"At a time like this, the Oval Office should be a command center," Clinton said in a prerecorded video. "Instead, it's a storm center. There's only chaos. Just one thing never changes - his determination to deny responsibility and shift the blame.

With the four-day convention largely virtual due to the coronavirus, delegates from around the

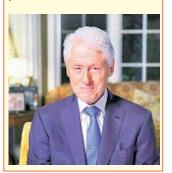
country cast votes remotely to confirm Biden as the nominee in a coast-to-coast roll call that drew instant raves on social media.

In clips that showcased the party's diversity, Democrats explained why they were supporting Biden while putting their own state-specific spin on the proceedings, from a calamari appetizer in Rhode Island to a herd of cattle in Montana.

After hearing from his home state of Delaware, which went last in his honor, Biden appeared live alongside Jill Biden to thank the party for nominating him, more than three decades after his first unsuccessful run for the

#### Clinton mocks Prez

Former US president Bill Clinton has launched a scathing attack on Donald Trump, saying the Oval Office under him is a chaotic "storm centre" instead of being a "command centre" and for him the presidency is about spending hours a day watching TV and "zapping" people on social media and not taking responsibility for his actions. "Donald Trump says we're leading the world. Well, we are the only major industrial economy to have its unemployment rate triple," Clinton said in his address to the 2nd day of the 2020 Democratic National Convention that formally nominated former vice president Joe Biden as the party's presidential candidate.



## EU rejects Belarus Prez election results

AGENCIES

Brussels, August 19: European Union leaders Wednesday said they stand beside the people protesting for democratic rights in Belarus, underlining that the EU rejects the election results that kept the country's leader of 26 vears in power and is preparing a list of Belarusians who face sanctions over vote fraud and a brutal crackdown on protesters.

The message of support came as the leading opposition candidate urged the Europeans to support "the awakening of Belarus," and as authorities in the country began again detaining protesters, who took to the streets of Minsk for an 11th day to demand that President Alexander Lukashenko resign. "The European Union stands in solidarity with the people of Belarus, and we don't accept impunity," European Council President Charles Michel told reporters after chairing an emergency teleconference. "We don't recognise the results presented by the Belarus authorities" Michel said the EU will impose sanctions on "a substantial number" of people linked to elec-

He declined to name any of those who might be listed. He also said that the 27-nation bloc fully supports mediating efforts between the Belarusian government and opposition overseen by the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Belarus security forces detained almost 7,000 people and injured hundreds with rubber bullets, stun grenades and clubs in the first four days of demonstrations. At least two protesters died.

Workers at state-controlled companies have joined strikes this week, as the unprecedented mass protests enter their 11th day and erode the authority of the man once dubbed "Europe's last dictator." The results of the August 9 polls handed Lukashenko his sixth term with 80% of the vote, while the opposition candidate with the most support received 10%

"The elections were neither fair nor free and therefore one cannot recognize the result of the elections," German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Berlin. She condemned the "brutal violence' against peaceful protesters and called on the regime to release all prisoners without conditions.

## 'THREE GORGES DAM' UNDER THREAT AGAIN

#### TENS OF THOUSANDS FORCED FROM HOMES AS DAM FACES THE BIGGEST THREAT IN ITS HISTORY

ASSOCIATED PRESS PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

19: Hundreds of Palestinians in the Gaza Strip Wednesday rallied against the US-brokered deal to normalise ties between Israel and the United Arab Emirates.



Protesters burned Israeli and American flags, trampled on posters of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Donald Trump, and chanted "normalisation is betraval to Jerusalem and Palestine." Unlike Palestinian protesters last Friday near the Al Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City who also burned posters of the Emirati crown prince, the Gaza demonstrators stopped short of burning symbols of the UAE—apparently not to antagonise the Gulf Arab country, where tens of thousands of Palestinians work and live. The demonstrators in Gaza City also voiced support for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas for his rejection of President Donald Trump's Mideast plan, which the Palestinians say unfairly favours Israel. The protest was organised by the militant Hamas group, which rules the Gaza Strip, and other factions.

Khalil al-Hayya, a senior Hamas official, denounced the Israeli-Emirati deal. "Normalisation with the occupation harms us and doesn't serve us," he said. "Instead, it serves and promotes the occupation in its projects that target Palestine and the region.

Beijing, August 19: China's Three Gorges Dam, the world's biggest hydroelectric station, built on the mighty Yangtze River, is set to receive its largest flood peak since it became operational in 2003, testing its strength.

The reservoir is ready to confront the challenge by coordinating with dams at its upper stream to retain the flood water Thursday, Three Gorges Corp said in a statement Wednesday. The Three Gorges project is a multi-functional watercontrol system, consisting of a 2,309metre-long and 185-metre-high dam, a five-tier ship lock on the north and south, and 34 turbo-generators with a combined generating capacity of 22.5 million kilowatts. In every flood season, the dam's

strength comes into focus warranting the dam's officials to assure public about its efficacy and strength. The latest hydrometeorological forecasts estimated the inflow flood peak of the Three Gorges project will reach 73,000 cubic metres per second at 8 am Thursday, the largest volume since it was built in 2003, state-run Global Times quoted the statement.

The dams will sufficiently exert the flood defence function of a cascade reservoir within the basin, and are expected to ease the flood defence pressure for Southwest



China's Sichuan Province and Chongqing Municipality, as well as the Three Gorges project, it said. It is estimated the inflow water

cubic metres per second from 70,000, the Xinhua News Agency reported Wednesday. The upper reaches of the Yangtze

peak will be cut down to 68,000

River have been battered by the largest floods since 1981, according to the ministry. China has a fourtier flood control emergency response system, with level I representing the most severe. About 1,020 people had been stranded in Fengzhou, suffering food and water shortages after floodwaters cut road traffic, state news agency Xinhua said.

More than 100,000 people have been evacuated as the cities of Ya'an and Leshan were hit by floods, \_\_\_

### PUBLIC TOILETS CAN SPREAD COVID

Scientists say masks should be made mandatory in public washrooms

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beijing, August 19: Chinese researchers have recently reported that flushing public restroom toilets or urinals can spew clouds of particles carrying viruses, including Covid-19.

The study, published in the journal 'Physics of Fluids', found that Covid-19 particles from a flushing urinal can rise to two feet in the air in less than six seconds "potentially infecting the unsuspecting urinal user"

The researchers' work shows public restrooms can be dangerous places for potentially becoming infected with a virus, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Other studies have shown that both faeces and urine-based virus



transmission is possible. "To do this, we used a method of computational fluid dynamics to model the particle movement that occurs with the act of flushing.' said study researcher Xiangdong Liu from Yangzhou University in China. "The specific models are the volume-of-fluids model and the discrete-phase model," Liu added.

Flushing a urinal, much like flushing a toilet, involves an interaction between gas and liquid interfaces. The result of the flushing causes a large spread of aerosol particles to be released from the urinal, which the researchers simulated and tracked.

What the simulations revealed is disturbing. The trajectory of the tiny particles ejected by flushing a urinal "manifests an external-spread type, with more than 57 per cent of the particles travelling away from the urinal," said Liu. But that's not all. When men use urinals within a public restroom, these tiny particles can reach their thigh within 5.5 seconds as compared to the toilet flush, which takes 35 seconds to reach slightly higher, the researchers

## A US WeChat ban could hurt many in America, not just China

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, August 19: For millions of people in the US who use the Chinese app WeChat, it's a lifeline to friends, family, customers and business contacts in China.

That lifeline is now under attack by an executive order from

President Donald Trump that could ban the app in the US as early as mid-September, potentially severing vital relationships. In China, WeChat,

or Weixin as it's known, is critical infrastructure-texting, social media, cab-hail-

ing, payments and more, all wrapped into one app. Many Chinese businesses don't even take credit cards anymore, just WeChat. It has over a billion users, owner Tencent says, mostly in China. Mobile app firms have varying estimates for US downloads - in the range of 19 to 26 million

For people in the US, WeChat has less functionality than it does in China. But it's what connects immigrants and students from China to their pasts and to each other. Chinese restaurants in the US use it to take food orders. Businesspeople in the US that have work in China rely on it as well.

Trump's August 6 order, released after hours without additional explanation, purportedly aims to ban all "transactions related to WeChat." Trump simultaneously issued a nearly identical order aimed at the popular, Chinese-owned video app *TikTok*. Both orders have thrown users into confusion, leading some to begin moving to alternative services. But that's especially difficult

for regular users of WeChat. Executives of more than a dozen US multinationals pushed back against the Trump order on WeChat in a conference call with White House officials, the Wall Street

Journal reported Thursday. Some feared the order might prevent their subsidiaries in China from using the app, which could place them at a competitive dis-

> Some US users are trying to reassure each other that they already have the

advantage.

app, and the US government can't

entirely, because that's their free speech - a right guaranteed to them in the US but not in the country they left behind. WeChat users are censored by the government in China. It's not quite the same for international users who registered their accounts outside China, but the Citizen Lab internet watchdog group in Toronto says WeChat monitors documents and images shared abroad to aid its censorship in China.

The Chinese-American Planning Council, a New York Asian American social services agency that works with 60,000 New Yorkers a year, relies on WeChat to share information with community members, says spokeswoman Carlyn Cowen. This year, for instance, the agency has messaged its members about participating in the US Census, since the government's inperson door-knocking for the Census has been truncated, or where COVID-19 tests are available.

# Brazil fires threaten world's largest wetland

REUTERS

Brasilia, August 19: Flames are ravaging Brazil's Pantanal, the world's largest wetland, approaching the region's main highway and threatening endangered species amid a near-record number of fires.

Brazil's national space research agency Inpe has registered 3,121 fires in the first 15 days of August, nearly five times higher than the same period a year ago. At the current pace, fires could approach the all-time record for any month since records began in 1998.

Firefighters in the area worked to douse smoldering earth that was charred black as clouds of smoke bil-

lowed hundreds of feet into the air. Speaking on a visit to Mato Grosso State to see the fire-fighting efforts in the Pantanal, Environment Minister Ricardo Salles said the challenges loom large.



TO THE NORTH BRAZIL'S NATIONAL SPACE RESEARCH AGENCY *INPE* HAS REGISTERED 3,121 FIRES IN THE FIRST 15 DAYS OF AUGUST, NEARLY FIVE TIMES HIGHER THAN THE SAME PERIOD A YEAR AGO

"The atmosphere is very hot, very dry, with strong winds and high temperatures," Salles said.

'We saw hundreds of fires along the journey throughout the day. Places where the planes and firemen have fought the fires directly without stopping, but still the fires are causing great damage to fauna, flora and to the Pantanal region," he added. Roughly 8,500 square kilometers, or nearly 6% of the Pantanal, burned from January to July, according to government data.

The Pantanal is 10 times the size of the Everglades wetlands in the US state of Florida. The region is one of the most biodiverse places on the planet with more than 4,700 plant and animal species, including threatened ones like the jaguar, according to advocacy group WWF.

THE PANTANAL IS 10

TIMES THE SIZE OF THE

**EVERGLADES WETLANDS** 

IN THE US STATE OF

FLORIDA

THE BLAZES IN BRAZIL'S

PANTANAL COME AMID

RISING CONCERNS ABOUT

FIRES IN THE AMAZON, ITS

MUCH LARGER NEIGHBOR

The region has been suffering from below-average rainfall and higher-than-average temperatures in the past 30 days, according to data provider Refinitiv.

# business

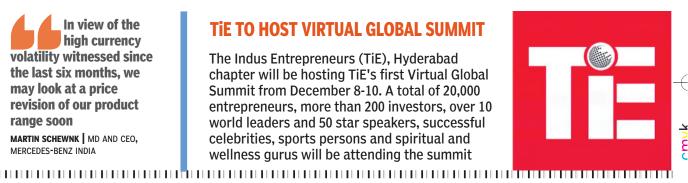


In view of the high currency volatility witnessed since the last six months, we may look at a price revision of our product

MARTIN SCHEWNK | MD AND CEO. MERCEDES-BENZ INDIA

#### TIE TO HOST VIRTUAL GLOBAL SUMMIT

The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), Hyderabad chapter will be hosting TiE's first Virtual Global Summit from December 8-10. A total of 20,000 entrepreneurs, more than 200 investors, over 10 world leaders and 50 star speakers, successful celebrities, sports persons and spiritual and wellness gurus will be attending the summit





Flowbook (Edtech platform) has been designed keeping in mind that it is important to treat every student differently based on his or her capabilities by connecting them with a personal mentor. Our content library is the largest in India for students of classes 6-10

ARJUN REDDY FOUNDER AND CEO

Cotton exports is in G2G (government-togovernment) agreement mode

(with Bangladesh). Some quantity we have sold through tender but under G2G, it will take time because the MoU which is to be signed between both countries is in the vetting stage

PK AGARWAL CHAIRMAN, COTTON CORPORATION OF INDIA

The entire two-wheeler segment will benefit from adopting new financing options and we hope that by easing the buying process, allowing online bookings and home deliveries, the percentage of electric vehicle buyers will improve significantly

SOHINDER GILL | CEO, HERO ELECTRIC

#### SHORT TAKES

#### **Chandra appointed Chairman Emeritus**

New Delhi: Essel Group promoter Subhash Chandra has been appointed 'Chairman Emeritus' of media company Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd, as per a regulatory filing. Zee **Entertainment Enterprises** Ltd (ZEEL) has also appointed former bureaucrat R Gopalan as the chairman of the board with immediate effect. Chandra Tuesday tendered his resignation as the nonexecutive director of the company, which he had founded in 1992. The board has accepted his resignation.

#### DLF-Hines JV takes ₹**2,600 cr Ioan**

New Delhi: Realty major DLF and US-based property player Hines have secured a ₹2,600 crore loan from HDFC to construct a prime office complex in Gurugram. "The second joint venture between Hines and DLF has secured a construction loan of ₹2,600 crore from HDFC Ltd," Hines said. DLF and Hines entered into their first joint venture in 2008 to develop One Horizon Center in DLF-5 Gurugram, Haryana.

#### Pixxel raises ₹37 cr in seed funding

New Delhi: Indian space technology startup Pixxel Wednesday said it has secured ₹37 crore in seed round funding led by Blume. growX and Lightspeed. The company plans to use the fund to develop its first satellite, which is expected to be launched later this year. and accelerate development of the second satellite. Pixxel is planning to make and launch a constellation of 30 satellites between December 2022 and June 2023

#### NTPC to reduce coal supply cost

New Delhi: State-owned power giant NTPC Wednesday said it will soon reduce the cost of coal supplies at Kudgi plant by using a newly constructed rail infrastructure. "NTPC Ltd would be able to reduce the transportation cost of coal to fuel to its NTPC Kudgi Super thermal power station in Karnataka, to around ₹200-500 per metric tonnes (MT) thereby bringing down the cost of electricity generation. The transit time will also be reduced by 8-15 hours," a company statement said.

# 'General govt debt-to-GDP ratio may peak at 89% in FY23'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: India's general government debt-to-GDP ratio is set to surge, with a World Bank report projecting the ratio at rising to its peak of 89% in the financial year 2022-23, before gradually declining.

The report titled 'India Development Update' for July 2020, noted that with the revenue outlook seriously dented, and new expenditure imperatives, the fiscal deficit and debt of the central and state governments are likely to increase sharply over the next two years.

"India's debt-to-GDP ratio is projected to increase significantly in the short term, reflecting the expected

contraction in GDP growth and increase in the primary deficit. While there is a significant level of uncertainty around the projections, the general government debt-to-GDP ratio is projected to peak at around 89% in FY22/23 before gradually declining thereafter." it said.

General government debt refers to the overall liabilities of both the Union government and states. It, however, noted that the country's public debt is expected to remain sustainable because it is mostly denominated in domestic currency, of long or medium-term maturity, and is predominantly held by residents.

In a baseline scenario, which takes into account revised growth

projections, lower-than-expected divestment proceeds, and new ex-

cal deficit of the central government is projected to increase to

6.6% of GDP in FY 2020-21 and re-

The report titled 'India

the revenue outlook

seriously dented, the

the central and state

increase sharply over

the next two years

fiscal deficit and debt of

governments are likely to

**Development Update' for** 

July 2020, noted that with

main at a high of 5.5% in the following year.

"Assuming that, the states' deficit is contained within 3.5-4.5% of GDP. the deficit of the general government may rise to around 11% in FY 2020-21," it said.

Further, the report also said that the World Bank may project a steeper contraction of the Indian economy for the current financial year, revised from the previous es-

timate of 3.2%. It said that amid rapidly evolving conditions, projections made in May are likely to be revised as new information is incorporated, especially as the daily number of cases continues to increase resulting in several states and districts re-imposing lockdowns, and available high frequency indicators show that the economy has not yet reverted to baseline

In May, the World Bank had projected the Indian economy to contract by 3.2 per cent in FY 2020-21, and predicted rebound slowly in the next fiscal.

According to the report, India needs to continue to implement critical reforms in key areas such as health, labour, land, skills and finance to come out stronger from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

These reforms should aim at enhancing productivity of the Indian economy and spur private investments and exports, it said.

# **Up to ₹8.4 lakh cr loan** restructuring on cards

OVER 60% OF THE LOANS WAS SUSCEPTIBLE TO SLIP INTO THE NPAS **CATEGORY IF NOT FOR THE RECAST MOVE** 

Mumbai, August 19: Banks are set to restructure up to ₹8.4 lakh crore of loans, or 7.7% of the overall system's credit, under the newly announced recast package, a domestic ratings agency said Wednesday.

Over 60% of this ₹8.4 lakh crore was susceptible to slip into the nonperforming assets (NPAs) category if not for the recast move, and the restructuring will help banks' bottom lines as the money to be set aside as provisions will be lower. India Ratings and Research said.

Earlier this month, the RBI had announced a recast package which focused on a case-by-case approach for restructuring rather than a blanket or sectoral approach. The central bank had also allowed small value non-corporate loans to be recast.

Unlike the earlier experience post the global financial crisis, where nearly 90 per cent of the restructuring happened in the corporate loans, the non-corporate segment, which includes small businesses, agricultural loans and retail lending, will account for a higher share this time, the agency said.



It estimated the total amount of non-corporate loans to be recast at ₹2.1 lakh crore.

It further said the non-corporate segment was showing signs of stress even before the start of the pandemic, when things seemed to be normalising in the corporate space.

In the corporate segment, ₹4 lakh crore of loans were already stressed before COVID-19 struck and the same have gone up by over ₹2.5 lakh crore. The jump in the non-corporate segment is more pronounced, as the stressed portion was only ₹70,000 crore, which is now slated to go up to ₹2.1 lakh crore, it said. Within the corporate segment, the

restructuring may range from ₹3.3 lakh crore to ₹6.3 lakh crore, depending on the strategies the banks adopt, the agency said, adding the range is so wide because it feels 53 per cent of the pool is at high risk, while 47 per cent is at moderate

A high proportion of debt from real estate, airlines, hotels and other consumer discretionary sectors is likely to be restructured, but the largest contribution by quantum will be from infrastructure, power and construction sectors, it said.

In the non-corporate segment, the micro, small and medium enterprises will account for half of the loans which will be restructured, while the rest will be split evenly between agro and retail advances,

Banks will start working on the restructuring as soon as the moratorium gets over by the end of this month and provide money accordingly, the agency said, adding the KV Kamath committee will look at advances of over ₹1,500 crore and even in the case of large loans, the banks will do the groundwork in advance.

### RIL acquires majority stake in Netmeds

aligned with our

New Delhi, August 19: Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd has acquired a majority equity stake in digital pharma market place Netmeds for a cash consideration of around ₹620 crore, Reliance investment is Industries said

in a late night commitment to provide statement digital access for all in India. Tuesday. The addition of Netmeds This inenhances Reliance Retail's vestment ability to provide good quality represents and affordable health care around 60 products and services per cent holding in the eq-ISHA AMBANI I DIRECTOR, uity share capital

of Vitalic and 100% direct equity ownership of its subsidiaries --Tresara Health Private Limited, Netmeds Market Place Limited and Dadha Pharma Distribution Pvt Limited, the statement said. Vitalic Health and its subsidiaries

are collectively known as Netmeds. "This investment is aligned with our commitment to provide digital access for everyone in India. The addition of Netmeds enhances Reliance Retail's ability to provide good quality and affordable health care products and services, and also broadens its digital commerce proposition to include most daily essential needs of consumers.

Reliance Retail Ventures Limited director Isha Ambani said. Incorporated in 2015, Vitalic and its sub-

sidiaries are in

the business of pharma distribution, sales. and business support services. Its subsidiary

also runs an online pharmacy platform - Netmeds - to connect customers to pharmacists and enable door step delivery of medicines, nutritional health and wellness products.

'It is indeed a proud moment for 'Netmeds' to join the Reliance family and work together to make quality healthcare affordable and accessible to every Indian. "With the combined strength of the group's digital, retail and tech platforms, we will strive to create more value for all in the ecosystem," Netmeds founder Pradeep Daddha said.

### **CCI dismisses** antitrust complaint



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has set aside an antitrust complaint against WhatsApp, over the alleged use of its dominant position to expand in the UPI-enabled digital payments segment.

The complainant had alleged that Facebook-backed WhatsApp, by using its dominance in the Internet-based instant messaging space, is bundling its messaging app with the payments option --WhatsApp Pay -- thereby using such dominance to penetrate into the UPI-enabled digital payments app market.

Further, by enabling automatic installation of WhatsApp Payments App in the WhatsApp Messaging App, WhatsApp is alleged to be taking advantage of its vast user base to popularise its newly launched WhatsApp Pay App, the complainant alleged. As per the allegation, WhatsApp violated Section 4 of the Competition Act.

The antitrust body dismissed the complaint, saying that it did not find any contravention of the said Act.

#### 'NGIS IS A FUTURISTIC SCHEME FOR STARTUPS'

Bhubaneswar, August 19: Next Generation Incubation Scheme (NGIS) is a futuristic incubation scheme which offers comprehensive support and services to technology startups from various STPI incubation facilities on a pan-India level under one common umbrella, said Omkar Rai, DG of STPI. He attended NGIS' outreach webinar that was held at STPI-Bhubaneswar, Wednesday. Rai stated that both soft and hard features of NGIS & STPI COEs will be instrumental in shaping India as a 'Software Product Nation'.

The basis objective of the NGIS scheme is to support up to 300 startups/entrepreneurs with incubation, finance/seed funding, mentorship support through pan-India mentor pool and entrepreneurs' platforms



to enable networking, knowledge sharing and co-learning and internship grants to promising startups

Chief Mentor, NGIS, Bhubaneswar Rajesh R Mishra pointed out niche areas in EduTech, social media platforms where there is immense scope for research, innovation and product creation.

Evangelist of Startup Odisha. Prasanta Biswal said that the startup community and innovators of the state and particularly in Bhubaneswar is well-positioned to create technologyaided solutions catering to the local as well global needs.

#### **SBIOA** celebrates Foundation Day

Bhubaneswar: State Bank of India Officer's Association, Bhubaneswar (SBIOA) celebrated its 42nd Foundation Day, Wednesday, at the Circle Association Office.



within the Covid guide lines issued by the state government. Association

Arun Ku. Bshoyi inaugurated the event, General Secretary Sabyasachi Swain was also present. Apart from the Circle Association Office, the celebration was also held across the state in all the four Zonal Offices at BBSR Zone-I, BBSR Zone-II, Sambalpur and Berhampur Zone, and all the 17 Regional Offices. The office bearers of SBIOA also distributed food packets to the needy.

#### BTZ BUZZ

#### ECoR sets up 'Biz Development Unit'

Bhubaneswar: Khurda Road division of East Coast Railway (ECoR) established a Business Development Unit (BDU) to cater to the transportation of various sectors, including bulk, non-bulk goods traffic, namely raw materials, finished products, manufactured products and agriculture produce. The BDU facilitates seamless interaction between the Railways and industry, trade representatives and Rail freight customers at divisional level. The object of BDU is to work towards increasing the volume of freight being carried by Railways by attracting new schemes of traffic and also help to expeditious clearance of proposals for freight movement from the customers.

#### Panasonic Life Solutions launches Ziva switches

Bhubaneswar: Panasonic Life Solutions India, one of the largest manufacturers of electrical construction materials Wednesday launched Ziva, a range of affordable modular switches targetted at consumers looking to upgrade to a new and defining



lifestyle. The company's MD Vivek Sharma said, "The launch of Ziva is a significant milestone in our quest towards building a complete product portfolio. Our target with this range will be to focus on enhanced extrac tion from the tiers 3, 4, and 5 markets further expanding our presence

and market shares in these smaller and uncharted territories". The current pandemic has brought businesses to a halt, however, with this launch Panasonic looks forward to resume the growth journey, fostering a speedy recovery across India.

#### using digital payments POST NEWS NETWORK Bhubaneswar, August 19: TP

TPCODL announces

contest for customers

Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), a joint venture between Tata Power and the Government of Odisha, announced the Pay & Win contest between July to September of 2020 for consumers who use digital payment methods to pay their monthly

power bills with zero arrears. Besides this, a special Lucky Draw will be hosted by TPCODL to identify the winners of this contest from a list of customers who made three consecutive digital bill payments within the defined time period.



#### TPCODL serves a population of 1.36 crore with a customer base of 26 lakh, of which around 1.5 lakh customers use the digital payment method. The idea is to improve the customer experience and encourage them to pay their electricity bills on time. For this, the company has launched a host of digital payment options in order to ensure continuous, seamless

CEO of TPCODL Shenbagam Manthiram said "We focus on the adoption of various digital technologies in order to offer a seamless customer experience. The arrival of digital evolution amid the ongoing COVID-19 challenges, has offered a great opportunity for our valued customers in the form of con-

# Restaurants reimagining ops to allay nCoV impact

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: The COVID-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on the restaurant industry but despite the tough macroeconomic environment, the restaurants are reimagining their operations rapidly to accommodate new social engagement constructs, according to a report by food ordering platform Zomato said.

Out of the two key components of the restaurant industry — delivery, and dining out — food delivery in India has largely recovered from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, it added.

"Recovery trends are strong and we estimate the industry to hit pre-COVID-19 levels of business in the next 2-3 months," Zomato said Wednesday in the report titled 'Indian Restaurant Industry- Mid COVID-19 Report'.



Zomato has delivered seven crore cases of COVID-19 transmission food orders since lockdown started due to food delivery," Zomato said. March 25, the online restaurant

The number of restaurants offering food delivery are at 70% of pre-COVID-19 levels. Out of this, about five per cent restaurants did not offer food delivery services before COVID-19. Most of these are dining out-centric places, which have shown agility to pivot to food delivery, it

THE NUMBER OF RESTAURANTS OFFERING FOOD DELIVERY ARE AT 70% OF

**7**OMATO HAS DELIVERED SEVEN CRORE FOOD ORDERS SINCE LOCKDOWN STARTED MARCH 25

OWEVER, 'DINING OUT' IN INDIA IS YET TO BOUNCE BACK AND IS OPERATING AT 8-10% OF THE PRE-COVID-19 LEVELS

> added. However, the other component of the restaurant industry — dining out — in India is yet to bounce back and is operating at 8-10% of the

pre-COVID-19 levels, the report said. "Slump in the industry is largely driven by markets being in lockdown, consumers not stepping out due to fear of transmission and restaurants not opening up, even if the city is not in lockdown," it added. Even in cities where restrictions

have been lifted, only 17% dining out restaurants are open for business at the moment which are also running at low capacity, the report said.

"Out of the 83% restaurants that are not open for business, 10% restaurants have already shut down permanently and we anticipate an additional 30% restaurants to not reopen at all," it added.

Remaining 43% are closed right now but likely to open, as the situation becomes better, the report said. Safety and hygiene have now become a permanent addition to the customer's decision-making model, it added.

Despite the tough situation due to the impact of the pandemic, it is heartening to see restaurants reimagining operations rapidly to meet the challenges, the report said.

### and uninterrupted power supply to every home, hospital, laboratory and other essential service providers working and living in its operational areas in the state.

tactless monetary transactions.'





guide and food ordering platform

food aggregators and direct restau-

rant channels. Indians have or-

dered 20 crore times since the lock-

down. There have been zero reported

'We estimate that between other

# FINALLY, A FINAL

Di Maria scores one and sets up two as PSG reach Champions



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, August 19: The wait is finally over for Paris Saint-Germain. After 110 Champions League matches, the French powerhouse have made it to the final of Europe's top club competition.

No other club to reach the final had to wait longer, with Arsenal holding the previous record by going 90 matches from 1971-2006 before being able to play for the title.

And there was no need for late drama for PSG this time as Angel Di Maria scored a goal and set up two others in a comfortable 3-0 win over Leipzig in the semifinals Tuesday. PSG had needed two late goals to come back against Atalanta in the quarterfinals last week.

PSG will face either five-time champion Bayern Munich or fellow French club Lyon. They meet Wednesday in the other semifinal of the mini-tournament being played in Lisbon because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Marquinhos and Juan Bernat also scored as the Qatari-owned French club moved a win away from finally capturing an elusive European crown.

Neymar, who set up one of the goals with a neat backheel flick inside the area, is also a step closer to fulfilling his goal of winning the Champions League away from former club Barcelona.

He and his teammates celebrated at midfield after the match, chanting and dancing for a few moments. Back home, PSG supporters poured onto the famed Champs-Elysees Avenue, the traditional site for victory celebrations, lighting it up with hurrahs and smoke torches.

French Prime Minister Jean Castex praised the team on Twitter, citing PSG's "experience, talent and team spirit" for the victory.

run for the Red Bull-backed Leipzig, the young German club that was making only their second Champions League appearance.

is well deserved," said Leipzig coach Julian Nagelsmann, the youngest ever in a Champions League semifinal at 33.

start at Benfica's Stadium of Light, with Marquinhos and Di Maria scoring in the first half and Bernat adding to the lead in the second.

but the main goal for its Qatari owner has been to win the Champions League title and earn its place among Europe's elite. The club was eliminated in the tournament's round of 16 in the last three seasons, and in the quarterfinals four straight times before that. Their last semifinal appearance had been in 1995, when they lost

president Nasser Al-Khelaifi said. it one day. I don't know if this

Leipzig, who eliminated Atletico Madrid in the quarterfinals, was trying to make their mark in Europe under energy drink company Red Bull, which in 2009 bought the license rights from fifth-tier club SSV new team's steady promotion Germany.

attack with Kylian Mbappe and Di

"Paris is magic!" he tweeted.

PSG has been dominant in France to AC Milan.

"It's a dream come true," PSG 'We want to be in the final of the Champions League, we want to win the Champions League. We know that we are going to achieve year, but every year we fight for it, so thank God that we are here in the final.'

Markranstaedt and financed the through the lower leagues in

PSG was back at full strength in

The result ended a surprising

The ticket for the final for Paris

PSG looked in control from the

36 ARRESTED FOR VIOLENCE Paris: Euphoria mixed with tension as France celebrated PSG's historic victory in the Champions League semifinal, lighting up the Champs-Elysees with cheers and flares and drawing tear gas. Police arrested 36 people here after throngs

scored in

their last 34

Champions

League

games,

matching

the record

set by Real

from 2011

Madrid

at the foot of the Arc de

Triomphe degenerated into scattered violence, but no serious damage was reported and the mood was overwhelmingly celebratory.

**PSG** became

French club to

Champions League

in 2004, and they

can become the

team to win the

title after Marseille

second French

the first

Maria returning to the starting lineup. Mbape didn't play from the start in the quarterfinals as he recovered from injury, while Di Maria was suspended on accumulation of yellow cards.

Di Maria delivered a perfect freekick into the area for Marquinhos to open the scoring in the 13th minute with a header into the far corner. The Brazilian midfielder also scored the crucial 90th-minute equaliser against Atalanta.

Di Maria added the second from inside the area in the 42nd after a nice flick by Neymar in a buildup that began with Leipzig goalkeeper Peter Gulacsi making a bad pass. Di Maria's second assist set up Juan Bernat close-range goal in the 56th.

PSG were denied by the woodwork three times in the first half alone, with Neymar, Mbappe and Di Maria coming close to scoring. It also had a goal disallowed for a handball.

The French club didn't have Kevlor Navas in goal because of a muscle injury, but substitute Sergio Rico was hardly threatened by the Leipzig attack.

# Koeman new Barca coach



like tonight

to make our

come true

dream

Barcelona, August 19: Barcelona have appointed Ronald Koeman as their next coach, the club said in a statement Wednesday, as the Catalans look to rebuild after their 2-8 thrashing by Bayern Munich in the Champions League last week.

Koeman, who has left his role as manager of the Netherlands, has signed a two-year-deal with Barcelona, who sacked Quique Setien Monday after he presided over the club's worst defeat ever in European competition and a first trophy-less season for the club since the 2007-08 campaign.

Koeman is dearly loved at Barca for his role in Johan Cruyff's hugely successful side known as the 'Dream Team' and for scoring the goal that delivered the club's first ever European Cup in 1992.

The defender later became the club's assistant coach before embarking on a career as a head coach, managing Dutch sides Ajax Amsterdam, PSV Eindhoven and Feyenoord plus Premier League sides Southampton and Everton and La Liga's Valencia.

"Barcelona and Ronald Koeman have come to an agreement for him to be the team's coach until 30 June 2022," said Barca's statement.

'A club legend and Barca's hero at Wembley who gave fans their first European Cup, Koeman is coming back to the Camp Nou. But this time he will be in the dugout to lead the team.

Koeman has frequently been linked with the Barcelona job in the past, despite somewhat patchy club record which included disappointing stints at Valencia and Everton.

But he worked wonders with the Dutch national team, leading them to 2019 UEFA Nations League final as well as earning qualification to the

# Club braced for high-profile exits

BARCELONA: New Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman is expected to oversee a massive overhaul of the squad as he leads them into a new era after their weaknesses were exposed in the 2-8 thrashing by Bayern Munich, president Josep Maria Bartomeu has said.

Koeman, one of Barca's greatest ever players who was confirmed as the club's new coach Wednesday, will oversee the transition alongside Ramon Planes, the new chief technical secretary after Eric Abidal left the club.

"The technical secretary and new coach will take drastic measures and they will affect certain players, who we should give a proper farewell to," Bartomeu said in an interview with the club's official television channel Tuesday.

Bartomeu did not sav which players would depart but referred to seven players who were not for sale: captain Lionel Messi, goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen, defenders Clement Lenglet and Nelson Semedo, plus recent signings Antoine Griezmann, Frenkie de Jong and French winger Ousmane Dembele.

Gerard Pique and Sergio

postponed European Championships. "Over the past two and a half years, I have done everything I can to achieve success with the team,' Koeman told the website of the Netherlands' football body (KNVB). "I look back with pride on what Busquets, who have been at the club since 2008 and are the longestserving players after Messi, were omitted from Bartomeu's list, meaning they could face an exit after 12 trophy-laden years in the first team.

Jordi Alba, Ivan Rakitic and Luis Suarez, crucial members of the team that won the treble in 2015 as well as the La Liga titles in 2016, 2018 and 2019, were also absent.

These are players who have given their best days to the club and been part of the club's best years. They have won a lot of trophies and had a lot of success, added Bartomeu.

'Some of those decisions have already been taken by others and some will be taken soon by different people. The players will not be consulted on these decisions. It's very important to listen to opinions but the coach and technical secretary will take the decision together.

Bartomeu added that the club are still trying to sign Argentina forward Lautaro Martinez from Inter Milan but said it was now 'impossible' to bring Neymar back to the club as PSG no longer wish to sell the Brazilian.

we have achieved together in that period. The Dutch national team have a bright future, I am convinced of that. Everyone knows that Barcelona is my dream club. It feels very special to me to be able to become a coach there.

### Ter Stegen out for two-and-a-half months-

AGENCIES

Barcelona, August 19: Goalkeeper cessfully undergone a surgery on a knee problem, Barcelona have confirmed, Tuesday.

The 28-year-old, who has made more than 200 appearances for the club since joining from Borussia Monchengladbach in 2014, went under the knife as a preventative measure after he complained of irritation on his right patellar tendon earlier this season.

Ter Stegen played through the discomfort in order to finish the extended season, but will use the short break before the new campaign to clear up the issue once and for all



'Based upon the exchange with the medical team, the first-team player Marc ter Stegen will do a voluntary medical intervention tomorrow (Tuesday) on his right patellar tendon conducted by the expert Dr. Ramon Cugat," read a statement on the club's website, Monday. "It is a proactive measure which

is now done in order to prevent and prepare for the future, since the player had some irritations on the tendon earlier in the season." Barca confirmed the surgery was

a success, releasing a statement which reads: "First team player Marc ter Stegen has had a successful operation on the right knee of the knee by Dr. Ramon Cugat. The approximate time off will be two and a half months.

# A farewell match for MSD on cards!



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 19: The BCCI is willing to host a farewell match for former India captain MS Dhoni, who recently announced his retirement from international cricket. Speaking to this agency, a senior

BCCI official said the board will speak to Dhoni, during the upcoming edition of the IPL, and plan accordingly.

"There is no international series right now, maybe after IPL we will see what can be done because Dhoni has done a lot for the nation and he deserves all the respect. We always wanted to have a

farewell match for him but Dhoni is a different player. He announced his retirement when nobody was thinking of it," the official said.

Asked if they had any word with Dhoni as of yet, the official said, "No, but surely we will speak to him during the IPL and that would be the right place to get his opinion about a match or series. Well, there will be a proper felicitation ceremony for him no matter if he agrees on it or not. That will be our honour to felicitate him.

Former Indian cricketer Madan Lal, too, agreed on holding a proper farewell match for the veteran wicketkeeper-batsman.

"I would be really happy if the BCCI hosts a match for Dhoni. He is a legendary player and you can't let him go just like that. His fans would want to see him again in

action," Lal told this agency. Earlier, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren had also sought a farewell match for the former Indian captain. Soren had made an appeal to the BCCI, saying that Jharkhand would be the host

# 'No Mankading' for Ashwin



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Melbourne, August 19: Delhi Capitals head coach Ricky Ponting says he will not allow senior India off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin to employ the controversial 'Mankading' dismissal during the upcoming IPL as 'it's not within the spirit of the game'.

Last IPL, Rajasthan Royals batsman Jos Buttler was run out on 69 while backing up at the non-striker's end, with Ashwin, then captaining Kings XI Punjab, whipping off the bails after the batsman stepped out of the crease before the ball



was bowled. Ashwin will play for Delhi Capitals this year.

The dismissal, named after former India spinner Vinoo Mankad who ran out Australia's Bill Brown in similar fashion in 1947, is permitted under cricket's laws but viewed by some as going against the spirit of the game.

"I'll be having a chat with him about (Mankading), that's the first thing I'll do. That is going to be a hard conversation I will have with him. I think, even him, looking back now, probably he'd say it was within the rules and he's right to do it," Ponting said while speaking

If the umpires make a stance and do something to warn the batsman that they might be cheating, then that's better than having the ugly incident of a Mankading

on 'The Grade Cricketer' Podcast. "...watching that last season, as soon as it happened, I actually sat our boys down and said 'Look, I know he's done it, there'll be others around the tournament who'll think about doing this well but that's not going to be the way that we play our cricket. We won't be doing that'.'

But Ponting feels the controversial mode of dismissal is against the spirit of the game. He said there are other ways to stop batsmen from gaining unfair advantage at the non-striker's end than 'having

the ugly incident of a Mankad'. "I think there are ways that you can actually stop batsmen cheating like that. If the bowler was to stop, and the batsman was a foot out of his crease for instance, why don't you just penalise him some runs or some-

thing? Then they won't do it again. 'You've only got to do that once at the start of a tournament, and then all the players see it, and you can guarantee the players won't be fudging any ground from then on.

### **CAIT** raises objection over IPL title sponsor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 19: Traders' body CAIT Wednesday wrote to the BCCI raising objections over the IPL's title sponsor reportedly having stakeholders from China. In a letter to BCCI president

Saurav Ganguly, Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) said: "We are deeply pained to

note that now Dream11 has been chosen as sponsor of IPL 2020

which has Chinese company 'Tencent Global' as one of the major stakeholders'.

'We are of the considered opinion that awarding sponsorship to Dream11 is nothing but a bye pass route to neglect the sentiments and feelings prevailing among the people of India against China for its regular attempts to invade the interests of India," said CAIT, which is spearheading the campaign to boycott Chinese goods.

Fantasy gaming platform Dream11 Tuesday won the IPL title sponsorship rights with a bid of ₹222 crore, replacing Chinese mobile phone company Vivo for a four and a half month deal. Dream11 has been one of the IPL sponsors for a couple of years now. Vivo and the BCCI suspended a

₹440 croreper-vear deal for this season owing to the border stand-off

India and China. The IPL, moved out of India due to the COVID-19 pandemic this year, starts September 19 in the

between

There are certain questions about Chinese company Tencent's investment in Dream11, but one of the BCCI insiders privy to the development said that it is less than 10 per cent. Dream11 is an Indian company founded by Harsh Jain ( and Bhavit Sheth.

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