



CAUTIOUS BIG B

With a face shield, Amitabh Bachchan urges people to 'be in protection' from the sets of KBC

LEISURE P2



'ANTI-FARMER MOVE'

Amarinder Singh says the farm Bills would undo the sacrifices made by Punjab and its farmers over 65 years

TWO STATES P7



TWITTER TIGHTENS SECURITY

Twitter says it is tightening security of high-profile politicians, campaigns and journalists ahead of the US polls

INTERNATIONAL P10

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Hurray! We now have a cure for COVID. It will work for next 50 days. It's called IPL!

SHORT TAKES

Diesel, petrol prices fall in Bhubaneswar

New Delhi: Petrol and diesel prices in the country have fallen sharply again even though global oil prices rebounded and rose over \$43 a barrel, marking its fifth consecutive day of rise. The revised prices of petrol and diesel in Bhubaneswar are ₹81.74 and ₹78.41 respectively. On Friday, the pump prices of petrol and diesel fell by 26 and 35 paise per litre, respectively in the national capital making it one of the sharpest daily fall in last five months. Accordingly, petrol is now at ₹81.14 a litre and diesel ₹72.02 a litre in Delhi.

Army smells a rat in Shopian killings

Srinagar: The Army has found "prima facie" evidence its troops "exceeded" powers under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act during an encounter in Kashmir's Shopian district in which three men were killed in July this year and has initiated disciplinary proceedings, officials said Friday. Committed to ethical conduct during anti-militancy operations, the Army initiated an inquiry after social media reports indicated the three men were from Rajouri district in Jammu and had gone missing at Amshipura, said Col Rajesh Kalia, the defence spokesperson in Srinagar.

Trump to block TikTok, WeChat

Washington: The Trump administration will ban WeChat and video-sharing app TikTok from U.S. app stores starting Sunday night, a move that will block Americans from downloading the Chinese-owned platforms over concerns they pose a national security threat. U.S. Commerce Department officials said they will not bar additional technical transactions for TikTok until Nov. 12, which gives the company time to see if owner ByteDance can clinch an agreement over the fate of its U.S. operations.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	38845.82 ↓ 134.03
NIFTY	11505.00 ↓ 11.10
DOLLAR	73.70 ↓ ₹0.23
EURO	87.12 ↑ ₹0.12
GOLD	₹51,645 ↑ ₹192
SILVER	₹67,930 ↓ ₹212

WEATHER	
	BHUB CTK
MAX	34.6°C 36.6°C
MIN	26.7°C 25.5°C
Humidity	94% 79%
Rainfall	Nil Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky

Sharecroppers yet to get legal status

BISWA BHUSAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Despite formulating a draft of Odisha Agricultural Land Leasing Act, which is aimed at recognising sharecroppers and enabling them to avail various agri schemes, no follow-up action has been taken by the state government to promulgate it since March.

Restrictions under the state laws governing agricultural land leasing compel land owners and lessee cultivators to only enter into informal agreements.

As a result, sharecroppers are deprived of various government benefits meant for farmers. Besides, land owners also feel insecure to lease out agricultural land, thereby reducing the landless poor's access to land by way of leasing.

After a long debate inside and outside the Assembly, the Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare department had, in

A VULNERABLE LOT

■ Restrictions under various state laws governing agricultural land leasing compel land owners and lessee cultivators to only deal in informal agreements

■ Besides, land owners also feel insecure to lease out land, thereby reducing the landless poor's access to land by way of leasing

The government never shows any sympathy for farmers. If they have the will power, it should be enacted in this Assembly session

AKSHAY KUMAR | PEASANT LEADER

The Act is still in the draft stage and will be enacted very soon

SAURABH GARG | AGRICULTURE SECRETARY

March, drafted Odisha Agricultural Land Leasing Act to recognise the farmers cultivating agricultural land on lease so that they can access loans through credit institutions, insurance, disaster relief, marketing facilities, procurement at Minimum Support Price (MSP), subsidies and other sup-



port services provided by the government. However, the draft has remained in pen and paper only.

This is not the first such instance either. Earlier in 2013, the government had decided to amend Orissa Land Reforms Act, 1965 for this purpose. A draft proposal prepared by the departments of

revenue and law is yet to see the light of day.

Meanwhile, peasant leaders expressed anguish over government apathy at a time when they are reeling under the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The government never shows any kind of sympathy towards farmers. We protested for this law from the time when Harekrushna Mahatab was the chief minister. But, it is yet to come up. If the government has the will power, it should enact the law in this upcoming Assembly session without further delay," said Akshay Kumar.

Official sources said that the Law department has given its observations and recommendations for implementation of the Act. However, the issue is pending before the Revenue and Agriculture departments.

The Act is still in the draft stage and will be enacted very soon, said Agriculture Secretary Saurabh Garg.

Ruckus in LS over Nehru-Gandhi dig

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Lok Sabha witnessed three adjournments Friday after its proceedings were disrupted due to a ruckus over Minister of State for Finance and Corporate Affairs Anurag Thakur's remark about first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's National Relief Fund.

Speaking on the Taxation and Other Laws (Relaxation and Amendment of Certain Provisions) Bill, 2020, Thakur raised questions on Nehru's trust which he claimed is not yet registered even though it was set up in 1948 on Nehru's orders.

"In 1948, then Prime Minister Nehru ordered the PM National Relief Fund. Since then, there has been no registration of that fund. How that fund got Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act nod is not known? The trust is not registered. How did you (Congress) give that trust FCRA clearance?" the Minister said.

"You (Congress) made PM National Relief Fund Trust only for



(welfare) of one Gandhi family," Thakur alleged.

He sought a detailed discussion to clear things about that fund. It led to chaos in the House as Congress and Trinamool Congress members objected to his speech.

Congress leader of the House, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, said his party did not raise objections to the PM-CARES Fund by blaming Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and asked why had Thakur made personal remarks against his party chief and Nehru.

"These people are trying to take down the dignity of the Chair and make the House environment worse. Why did you abuse Pandit Nehru and Sonia Gandhi? If you don't want to run the House, you should stop functioning," Chowdhury said.

OPPN 'MISLEADING' FARMERS

In a forceful defence of the farm sector reform bills, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday asserted that they have brought freedom to farmers and given them a protection shield, as he accused the opposition parties dubbing the three bills, passed by Lok Sabha and now to be tabled in Rajya Sabha, as anti-farmers and the BJP ally Shiromani Akali Dal quitting his government to protest them, Modi refuted their criticism, describing these proposed laws as historic and stating that they will unshackle farmers by allowing them to sell their produce anywhere at a better price.



Paytm back on Play Store, hours after being removed

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: Google Friday restored the Paytm app on its Play store after removing it for a few hours for violating its policy on sports betting activities.

The app was back on the Google Play store Friday evening after the Softbank-backed Paytm removed the 'cashback' feature from a recently-launched game on the application.

"Update: And we're back!", Paytm said in a tweet. On Friday morning, Google removed the Paytm app - which facilitates use of wallet and payments bank

Google said it does not allow apps facilitating sports betting

services - from the Play store.

However, users who had already downloaded the app could continue using the services.

"The app was blocked for violation of Play policies - a clarification of our policy was released earlier today ahead of the IPL tournament," Google said in an e-mailed response, adding that only the app availability on Play store was impacted.

Google, in a blog post earlier Friday, had said it does not allow apps facilitating sports betting and will remove such apps from the Play store.

These policies are in place to protect users from potential harm, it added.

70% patients in home isolation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Close to 70 per cent of the active cases of the state are under home isolation, a top official said Friday.

Meanwhile, Health and Family Welfare Department Friday launched a programme to facilitate daily interaction between expert doctors, COVID-19 patients under home isolation and their caregivers.

Odisha Director, National Health Mission, Shalini Pandit Friday held a press conference to make the announcement. She said that the programme would be conducted for the next seven days where patients can raise their concerns to get authentic information and ways to better manage home isolation.

"We have decided that every day for the next seven days our doc-

Govt launched a programme Friday to facilitate daily interaction between doctors and Covid patients under home isolation

Our positivity rate has been low and the recovery rate is quite high. The death rate in the state is as low as 0.4 per cent

SHALINI PANDIT | ODISHA DIRECTOR, NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION



tors will give information on management of COVID-19 under Home Isolation to allay the fears of the patients. These doctors from different fields will try to answer the most common concerns of the patients and their caregivers," she said.

She also said that in Odisha, close

to 70 per cent of the active cases are under home isolation. "In Odisha, 70 per cent of the patients of the pandemic are under home isolation. This also includes ministers, MLAs and higher officials. The recovery rate under isolation has been quite good," she said.

The official said that Odisha is in a very good position in the fight against COVID-19. "If we compare our testing nationally, it is quite high. We are now able to conduct 50,000 tests every day. Our positivity rate has been low and the recovery rate is quite high. The death rate in the state is as low as 0.4 per cent, which is a good sign. We are a state with one of the lowest mortality rate in the world."

The health official said that more researches on the pandemic and its management have helped the state to manage the disease better.

MI-CSK faceoff to kickstart IPL in UAE today

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: After months of uncertainty, the Indian Premier League (IPL) is all set to get underway Saturday, in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

It couldn't get better considering a lung-opener where the defending champions Mumbai Indians (MI) will lock horns with their arch rivals Chennai Super Kings (CSK) in Abu Dhabi. It is only the second time that the Indian T20 extravaganza will be played outside India, after the 2009 edition in South Africa. However in 2014, the first half of the edition was played in the UAE. **MORE P12**

China plant leak infects thousands with bacterial disease

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, China, Sept 18: Several thousand people in northwest China have tested positive for a bacterial disease, authorities said, in an outbreak caused by a leak at a biopharmaceutical company last year. The Health Commission of Lanzhou, the capital city of Gansu province, confirmed that 3,245 people had contracted the disease brucellosis, which is often caused by contact with livestock carrying the bacteria brucella.

Another 1,401 people have tested as preliminarily positive, though there have been no fatalities reported, the city's Health Commission said. In total, authorities have tested 21,847 people out of the city's 2.9 million population.

The disease, also known as Malta



fever or Mediterranean fever, can cause symptoms including headaches, muscle pain, fever and fatigue. While these may subside, some symptoms can become chronic

or never go away, like arthritis or swelling in certain organs, according to the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

MALTA FEVER

■ While producing Brucella vaccines for animal use, the factory used expired disinfectants and sanitizers

■ The disease, also known as Malta fever or Mediterranean fever, can cause symptoms including headaches and muscle pain

Human-to-human transmission is extremely rare, according to the CDC. Instead, most people are infected by eating contaminated food or breathing in the bacteria - which seems to be the case in Lanzhou.

This outbreak stemmed from a leak at the Zhongmu Lanzhou biological pharmaceutical factory, which occurred between late July to late August last year, according to the city's Health Commission.

This contaminated waste gas formed aerosols that contained the bacteria -- and leaked into the air, carried by wind down to the Lanzhou Veterinary Research Institute, where the outbreak first hit.

People at the institute began reporting infections in November, and it quickly accelerated. By the end of December, at least 181 people at the institute had been infected with brucellosis, according to Chinese state-run news agency Xinhua.

Other infected patients included students and faculty members of Lanzhou University; the outbreak even spread to Heilongjiang province, at the very northeastern tip of the country, where 13 positive cases had worked in the veterinarian institute in August,

Xinhua reported at the time.

In the months after the outbreak, provincial and municipal officials launched an investigation into the leak at the factory, according to the Lanzhou Health Commission. By January, authorities had revoked vaccine production licenses for the plant, and withdrew product approval numbers for its two Brucellosis vaccines.

A total of seven veterinary drug product approval numbers were also canceled in the factory.

In February, the factory issued a public apology, and said it had "severely punished" eight people who were determined as responsible for the incident. It added that it would cooperate with local authorities in the response and cleanup efforts, and contribute to a compensation program for those affected.



TATIANA IS SHE-HULK OF MARVEL UNIVERSE

Canadian actor Tatiana Maslany is set to play She-Hulk, the latest superhero of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) to hit the screen. Tatiana, popular for her starring role in the sci-fi thriller series "Orphan Black", will portray She-Hulk in an upcoming series for a streaming platform, reports variety.com

SELENA TO RETURN AS MAVIS

Actor-singer Selena Gomez is set to reprise her role of Mavis in the fourth installment of animated franchise "Hotel Transylvania". According to Variety, the former Disney star is also attached as an executive producer on the project



FORTUNE FORECAST



ARIES



Today, you may receive some kind of material support from family. It is probably for a wise cause, so be sure to use it accordingly, says Ganesha. You may spend the evening with those very loved ones who have supported you.

TAURUS



There is a strong prospect that you will work extremely hard to prove yourself at your workplace today, predicts Ganesha. At times, the returns may not be in proportion to your efforts. You will unwind at the end of the day with a happy and content feeling, expects Ganesha.

GEMINI



Today is an important phase in your life. You will be making a few crucial decisions. At work, you will come up with several fresh ideas, which, along with your willpower, form the winning concoction for your company. In the evening, you may spend a few extra bucks on comforts and entertainment, says Ganesha.

CANCER



You plan a slow but steady strategy to achieve your goals. Your business rivals can come nowhere you in efficiency or expertise. You will win all-out praise for this from all quarters. And, Ganesha is highly delighted.

LEO



You may want to carry some aspirin with you today, suggests Ganesha. For, there are strong indications that you may encounter a plenty of stress and roadblocks at work.

VIRGO



Work like a thrill to have your contribution noticed, says Ganesha. However, do not expect appreciation in the same degree. Unwind at the end of a long day with the solace of putting in your best.

LIBRA



Work is always unrelenting and today, it manages to catch up with you in a big way. Expect to be under some pressure to meet deadlines, says Ganesha. But all it takes is to remain level-headed and shrewd in your ways, and you can turn things around to make it a prosperous and flourishing day.

SCORPIO



Life's not too slow nor too fast: you are going steady and strong, feels Ganesha. On the career front, simply grin and bear it all. Workplace efficiency will improve today. At home, you will be happy and content and more importantly - at peace, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS



You are on a high today, professionally and personally. You have a good convincing power and you will be using it to the optimum level. Seek advice of experienced and seniors for better implementation of ideas on professional front, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN



A couple of fascinating developments on the family front will fill the air with excitement, and will keep you pleasantly occupied throughout the day, says Ganesha. Your outstanding efforts at work will be rewarded adequately, but you will need to be extra careful while executing plans as you may commit mistakes that will do irreparable damage.

AQUARIUS



If you're thinking of doing some soul-searching today, the stars completely back you. And yes, remember to take a break - no one deserves it more.

PISCES



Remaining dispassionate and being cold and clinical is the way to achieve success for you today, says Ganesha. Do not let your sentiments interfere in matters of business, lest you regret it later.



Big B wears face shield on KBC set

MUMBAI: Amitabh Bachchan, who is back at work after recently recovering from COVID-19, is taking no chances on the sets and following due protection norms against the virus.

A new Instagram picture Big B has posted from the sets of *Kaun Banega Crorepati 12*. Has the veteran actor wearing a face shield. "Be safe and be in protection," he captioned the image.

The Hindi film industry icon was hospitalised after testing COVID-19 positive in July, and discharged after testing negative August 2.

Big B recently started shooting for *KBC 12*, and he has been regularly posting pictures from the sets.

Wearing formals, the senior actor is seen clapping in one of the photos. In the other, he sits in the host's chair.

"T 3652 - 20 years; 12th season: KBC: Kaun Banega Crorepati, Begins," he had posted Monday night.

IANS



NIA REPLIES TO TROLLS

MUMBAI: Actor Nia Sharma posted a new video Friday, seemingly as a reply to the widespread trolling she faced after posting videos of her birthday celebration the day before, where she is seeing cutting a cake having a weird shape.

In the new video, Nia is seen grooving by the pool with her back towards the camera.

"Whacky weird or whatever: Keep Calm and Move on. har din Birthday nahi aataaaaa (every day is not a birthday)," she captioned the video.

Earlier, sections of social media trolled Nia all through Friday for pictures and videos of her birthday cake, which many found vulgar.

Nia turned 30 Thursday, and celebrated her special day at a private resort amid friends by cutting the controversial cake.

She had posted pictures and videos of the celebration on Instagram, describing the

birthday as the 'best dirty 30th'.

"Safely the best dirty 30th of my life. Short of words ... overwhelmed, and happiest at the moment. Appreciate the efforts made by you all. @gautam.sharma13 @iam_reyhna @rrahulsudhir @arjunbijlani @amrin15 @shagun08 @shurabhaviofficial @cashmakeupartisty @savantsinghpremi @bhavin.chudasama.98 Thankkk youuu all for making this our first and the most memorable one," she wrote as caption. However, the cake did not go down well with a section of social media.

"Cake is so rubbish," a user commented. "It is looking so vulgar. Besharam," another one wrote.

A user wrote: "Shame on you, cheapster." Actor Arjun Bijlani was also present at Nia's birthday party.

IANS

Sanjay reunites with kids

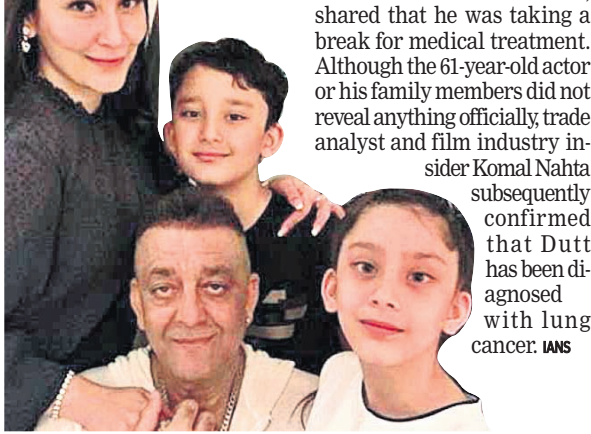
DUBAI: Actor Sanjay Dutt, upon reaching the emirate, is spending time with wife Maanayata and their children Shahraan and Iqra.

In an Instagram picture Maanayata posted Friday, the couple and the kids come together for a family portrait. "Today...I want to thank God for the gift of family. No complaints...No requests... just to be together; forever," she captioned the post.

She

tagged the post with Amen#blessedbeyondmeasure, #love, #grace, #positivity, #dutts, #beautifullife, and #thankyoud. Maanayata and the kids were in Dubai during lockdown but she flew down to Mumbai alone a while back after Sanjay's illness. The couple recently returned to Dubai to be with their children. Sanjay reunited with his children after months. On August 11, Sanjay, who was hospitalised a few days before that owing to breathing problem and chest discomfort, shared that he was taking a break for medical treatment. Although the 61-year-old actor or his family members did not reveal anything officially, trade analyst and film industry insider Komal Nahta

subsequently confirmed that Dutt has been diagnosed with lung cancer. IANS



Urmila thanks 'real people of India'

MUMBAI: Actor Urmila Matondkar Friday expressed gratitude to the "real people of India" for supporting her after actor Kangana Ranaut called her a 'soft porn star'.

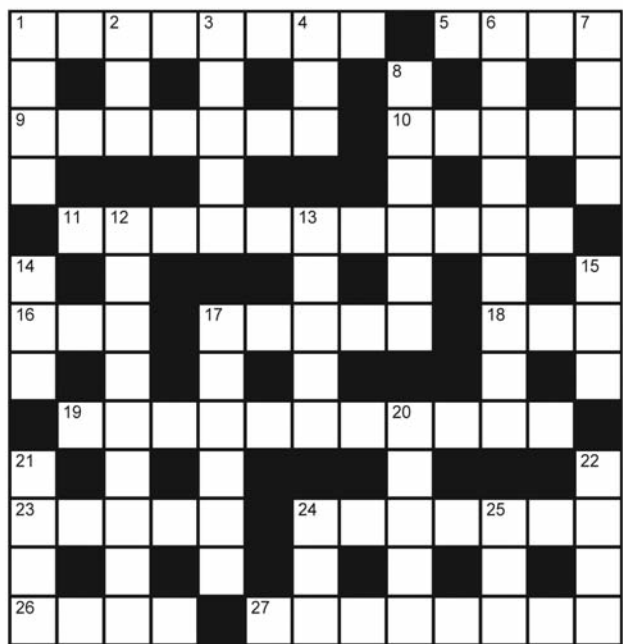
Matondkar had called out Ranaut's claims about nepotism in the industry and Hindi film industry being riddled with a drug problem. In response, Ranaut said Matondkar, who is considered one of the biggest stars of the 90s, was a 'soft porn star' who is not known for her acting during an interview with a private news channel.

Taking to Twitter, Matondkar thanked the "real people of India for standing with her in the face of fake 'propaganda'. Deeply touched, humbled #JaiHind," Matondkar wrote on Twitter. Others from the fraternity who came out in support of Matondkar, included actors Pooja Bhatt, Sayani Gupta and screenwriter Kanika Dhillon. PTI



FUN post

CROSSWORD



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Across

- 1 Gumption
- 5 Clash of clans
- 9 Small crown
- 10 Expire
- 11 Produce section pick
- 16 Away from the bow
- 17 Wrinkly fruit
- 18 Chapel vow
- 19 Skip town (4,1,6)

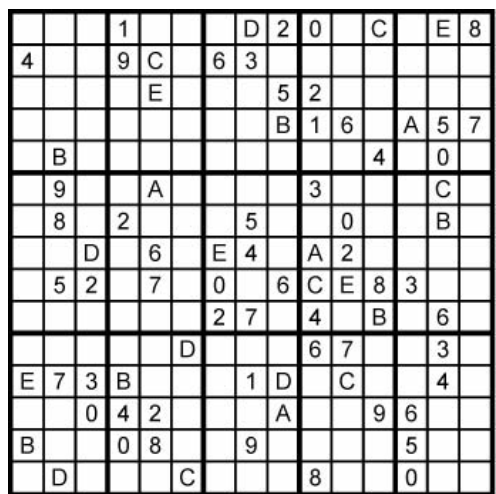
Down

- 1 Go against
- 2 Elevator part
- 3 Tritite
- 4 Butterfly catcher
- 6 Profanity
- 7 Kind of breath
- 23 Board game
- 24 Get ready
- 26 Brewer's kiln
- 27 Kind of view (5-3)

- 8 Nook
- 12 Aardvarks
- 13 Unpleasant woman
- 14 Droop
- 15 Floor cleaner
- 17 "The magic word"
- 20 Brandish
- 21 Canyon effect
- 22 Relinquish
- 24 Samoan staple
- 25 Broke bread

SUDOKU

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

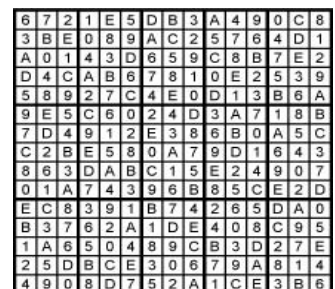


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



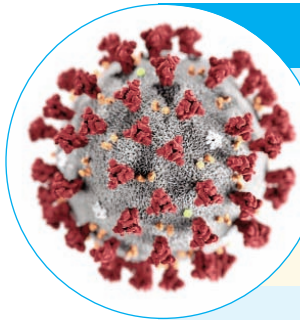
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



INFRA BOOST

Workers install railings along a newly-expanded road connecting Ranihaat and SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, Friday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,04,87,942	2,21,66,753	9,52,209
India	52,14,757	41,11,630	84,415
Odisha	1,71,341	1,37,567	682

HEAVY RAIN FORECAST

SRC puts Collectors on alert

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued orange warning for several districts of Odisha for September 20 and 21.

A low pressure area is likely to form over northeast Bay of Bengal & neighbourhood around September 20. Under its impact, heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places of Malkangiri and Koraput districts Saturday.

Thunderstorm would also occur at a few places of Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Gajapati, Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Nayagarh, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj districts Saturday, the IMD said.

The MeT department has issued orange warning (be prepared) for Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Keonjhar,



Heavy rainfall predicted for Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Nabarangpur districts, September 22

The MeT has issued orange warning for Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Keonjhar, Deogarh, Sambalpur and Cuttack districts

There is also possibility of damage to kutchha houses and roads, land slide in hill areas and traffic congestion

Deogarh, Sambalpur and Cuttack districts as heavy rainfall would occur in these districts September 20.

Similarly, heavy to very heavy rainfall would occur at one or two places in Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Keonjhar, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Sonapur, Angul, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur,

Kendrapara, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Boudh, Kandhamal and Nuapada September 21.

The IMD has also warned that there might be water-logging in low lying areas in the districts which will witness very heavy rainfall. There is also possibility of damage to kutchha houses and roads, land slide in hill areas and traffic con-

gestion.

Besides, heavy rainfall predicted for Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Nabarangpur districts, September 22.

In view of the weather forecast, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), PK Jena issued an advisory to the district Collectors asking them to remain prepared to deal with any flood like situation and landslide in hilly areas.

Asking the district Collectors to closely monitor the situation, the SRC said continuous vigil must be maintained on low-lying areas and steps for dewatering should be taken wherever required. Advice for fishermen should be strictly implemented.

This will be the seventh low pressure area over the Bay of Bengal since the beginning of August. Five back-to-back low pressure systems developed August 4, 9, 13, 19 and 24 had triggered heavy to very heavy rainfall in many parts of the state and created flood situations in several areas last month.

Murder accused booked under NSA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Police have detained Roshan Jena, an accused in 2019 Amaresh Nayak murder case, under National Security Act (NSA), a senior police official said Friday.

Jena was arrested in 2019 in connection with a murder case that took place under Airfield police limits in Bhubaneswar. After getting bail from Orissa High Court, Jena took out a bike and car procession from the Special Jail at Jharpara to Sundarpada September 10, 2020 in blatant violation of COVID-19 guidelines.

Police have also booked Jena and three of his associates identified as Kashinath Barik, 34, Gyana Ranjan Badajena, 37, and Chitta Ranjan Pradhan, 23, under various Sections of IPC, Section 3 of Epidemic Diseases Act and Section 96 of Odisha Urban Police Act.

CBI often raids before polls: BJD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Friday slammed the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for raiding and searching the house of senior BJD leader Debi Prasad Mishra.

The party said that the Central agency often becomes active just before the elections. Party leader Lenin Mohanty in a statement said, "The CBI has been investigating cases in Odisha over the past seven years. However, a pattern is seen that the CBI starts conducting searches, raids and

The BJP, however, said that there was nothing wrong in the raids by the CBI. The Congress party dubbed it a 'drama'

issues notices just before the by-elections, General Elections and Panchayat polls." He also said that the people of Odisha were wondering why such things happen before elections only.

The BJP, however, said that there was nothing wrong in the raids by the

CBI. Party leader Prithiviraj Harichandan said, "Those who have indulged in corruption and irregularities will surely face legal action. There is no connection with elections. Those who are involved in wrongdoings will face action."

The Congress party, however, dubbed it a 'drama'. Congress leader Taraprasad Bahinipati said, "The CBI conducts raids after getting clearance from Naveen Patnaik. This is clear eyewash. Both the parties try to show that they are not together. There is an understanding between the two parties."

Matricide: Siblings sent to correctional home

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Airfield police Friday sent two minor siblings who were accused of killing their mother to a correctional home at Berhampur jail in Ganjam. They were earlier presented before the Juvenile Justice Board here after their medical examination.

The deceased, Binodini Mishra, was beaten to death by her sons at Arcade Apartment in Sundarpada here, late Wednesday night.

The age of the two minor boys are 12 and 15 years. During police interrogation, the two minors revealed that they were staying with their mother Binodini and a dog in an apartment.

The minors alleged that Binodini was a drug addict and used to beat them up regularly. Similarly, Binodini again started beating her sons Wednesday night after returning home intoxicated. Unable to bear the torture by their mother the two minors

with the help of an iron rod attacked her.

Binodini died on the spot due to profuse bleeding. Realising that their mother died on the spot, the two minors left the apartment with their dog after hiding their mother in the bathroom.

However, the duo called the security guard of their apartment Thursday night and said him that some miscreants killed their mother and they left the apartment due to fear. Meanwhile, the security guard called the Airfield Police and informed them of the crime. On being informed, police reached the spot and recovered Binodini's body before taking it to the nearest hospital for post-mortem.

However, police caught the two minors from the local area and took them to the police station for questioning.

The minors' father Nihar Ranjan Pradhan alias Mitu has been undergoing imprisonment for the last 10 years at Puri jail. Pradhan had shot a person to death over some altercation.

Plus II cut-off out

Cuttack: The Directorate of Higher Secondary Education announced Friday the first selection merit list of Plus-II courses for the academic year 2020-21. In the Arts stream, the highest cut-off was declared by Ravenshaw Junior College at 72.5 per cent, followed by Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar (BJB) Junior College and Government Junior College, Rourkela at 67.8 per cent. Similarly, for admissions to Plus II Commerce courses, Ravenshaw Junior college again grabbed the highest cut-off mark at 75.83 per cent, followed by Government Junior College, Rourkela at 75.5 per cent, and BJB Junior College at 74%.

Khan raises doubt over minority population data

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 18: Newly-elected Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Muzibulla Khan aka Munna Khan Friday raised concern over minority population figures in Odisha and emphasised upon the need of revisiting the census.

Speaking during Zero Hour in Rajya Sabha, the BJD MP said he has been hearing that Odisha has only 2.3 per cent of minority population. He suspects that the figure related to the minority population in the state is inaccurate.

"There must be some issues with the census which need to be corrected," he said.

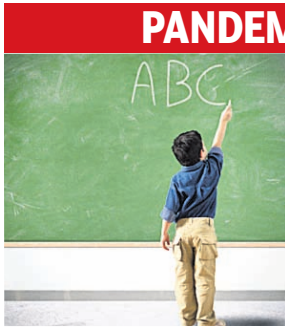
Khan also said that inappropriate data with the state government would impact in launch of beneficiary schemes. With less number on record, the government would launch schemes accordingly and many people will be deprived of these beneficiary schemes. He urged the Union government to conduct a proper census in the state.

Restructure academic calendar, govt urged

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Odisha Parents' Federation (OPF) Friday wrote to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik requesting him to take a decision on reopening of schools in consultation with educationists, parents, teachers and school authorities.

In the letter, OPF chairman Basudev Bhatt said, "Online classes have reached only 34 per cent students – 22 lakh out of 60 lakh students in government schools – due to non-availability of android phone, network and financial constraints. For private schools, online classes reached 50-60 per cent of the students." Thus, around 38 lakh students in government



PANDEMIC TIME

OPF has requested the state govt to start a new academic calendar from November-December or Jan 2021 to July or August 2021

schools and 40-50 per cent in private schools have remained out of the purview of online classes, Bhatt said. "We have seen the satisfaction level of online classes in Odisha. The quality of online classes is very poor. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, in line with his

Maharashtra counterpart, should write to Union Education Minister to restructure the academic calendar else our students will be deprived of quality education," Bhatt stated.

The OPF has requested the state government to start a new academic calendar

from November-December or January 2021 to July or August 2021 and 180 days should be covered in these 7-8 months, without any holidays. Then it will be adjusted in next calendar year.

"We have also discussed with school associations and they are in no mood to accept the reopening of institutions September 21. So, the government should take a firm decision to give a clear message to parents on the new academic calendar," he mentioned.

If the NCERT and ICSE courses are reduced, Classes IX, X, XI and XII students will lose quality study (subjects), Bhatt said, adding, "We should give justice to our students."



Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi – 110003

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities is implementing the umbrella scheme "Scholarships for Students with Disabilities" for their empowerment through education w.e.f. 1st April, 2018. There are six components of this scheme i.e. Pre-matric, Post-matric, Top Class Education, National Overseas Scholarship, National Fellowship and Free Coaching. The brief details of the umbrella scheme are given below:

Sl. No.	Components	Courses Covered	No. of Scholarships per year	Parental income ceiling per annum (Rs.)	Rate of Scholarship	How to apply								
1.	Pre-matric Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	Class IX and X	25,000	2.50 lakh	Scholarship of Rs.500 per month for day scholars and Rs.800 per month for hostellers plus book grant and disability allowance ranging from Rs.2000/- to Rs.4000/- per annum.	These three scholarships scheme are being implemented through National Scholarship Portal (NSP). Apply on-line on National Scholarship Portal (www.scholarships.gov.in). The portal has been opened for registration from 16th August 2020. Last date for submission and verification of applications on NSP is as under:- <table><thead><tr><th>Levels</th><th>Last Dates</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Student Registration</td><td>31.10.2020</td></tr><tr><td>Institute Verification</td><td>15.11.2020</td></tr><tr><td>State Verification</td><td>30.11.2020</td></tr></tbody></table> (*) for latest updates, please visit website: www.scholarships.gov.in	Levels	Last Dates	Student Registration	31.10.2020	Institute Verification	15.11.2020	State Verification	30.11.2020
Levels	Last Dates													
Student Registration	31.10.2020													
Institute Verification	15.11.2020													
State Verification	30.11.2020													
2.	Post-matric Scholarship for Students with Disabilities	Class XI to Master's Degree or Diploma level	17,000	2.50 lakh	There are different rates of maintenance allowance for Post-Graduate, Graduate, Diploma, professional courses leading to degree, diploma etc. in different disciplines. It ranges from Rs.900-1600 p.m. for hosteller and Rs.550-750 p.m. for day scholars plus tuition fee (Maximum ceiling Rs.1.50 lakh per annum), book allowance and disability allowance ranging from Rs.2000/- to Rs.4000/- per annum.	Receipt of application is open throughout the year. The proforma for submission of application is given on the website of this Department i.e. www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in . Application may be submitted in the prescribed proforma to Under Secretary (Scholarships), Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Room No.519, 5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003								
3.	Scholarship for Top Class Education for Students with Disabilities	Graduate/ Post Graduate Degree or Diploma in 241 notified institutions of excellence	300	6.00 lakh	Monthly maintenance allowance of Rs.3000/- for hostellers, Rs.1500/- for day scholars, Rs.2000/- per month disability allowance, book grant Rs.5000/- per annum and tuition fee upto Rs.2.00 lakh per annum.	Selection is done by the University Grants Commission. The candidates may apply online as and when applications are invited by UGC. No application is required to be sent to Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.								
4.	National Overseas Scholarships for Students with Disabilities	Master's degree and Doctorate degree in foreign universities abroad	20	6.00 lakh	Maintenance allowance of 9,900 Pound (Great Britain) per annum for UK and for other countries US \$15,400, plus Tuition fees, Annual Contingency Allowance, cost of air passage, etc.	The Coaching Institute may send their proposals in the prescribed application form with the recommendations of concerned State Govts./UTs and having registration certificate under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 for empanelment of the Coaching Institute.								
5.	National Fellowship for Persons with Disabilities	M.Phil/Ph.D in Indian Universities	200	No Income ceiling	Monthly Rs.31,000/- for JRF (first two years) and Rs.35,000/- for SRF (3rd year onwards up to complete duration of the course) and Contingency Grant, Escort Allowance/ Reader Allowance and House Rent Allowance (at applicable rates).									
6.	Free Coaching	For appearing in competitive examinations for jobs in Government/ Public Sector and admission to technical and professional courses	2000	6.00 lakh	Coaching fee shall be payable to empanelled Institute by this Department. Stipend and Special allowance for Disability @ Rs.7,000/- per month for outstation candidates and Rs.4,500/- per month for local candidates shall be payable.									

All the above scholarships are applicable to students with 40% & above disability and having a valid disability certificate to this effect issued by the competent medical authority. **Disability is as defined in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.** For further details, please visit: www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in.
davp 38117/11/0014/2021

4,180 fresh cases push nCoV tally to 1.7L

13 NEW FATALITIES TAKE ODISHA'S NOVEL CORONAVIRUS DEATH TOLL TO 682

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: State's COVID-19 tally sprinted to 1,71,341 Friday as 4,180 more people tested positive for the infection, while 13 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's novel coronavirus death toll to 682, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

As many as 2,466 new cases were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,714 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing, said the official.

Odisha reported more than 4,000 new cases for the third consecutive day Friday. The state had registered 4,270 infections Wednesday and 4,241 Thursday, the official pointed out.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, continued to register the highest number of new cases at 688, followed by Cuttack (492) and Jajpur (184), added the official.

Three fatalities were reported in Khurda, including one in Bhubaneswar, two each in Kendrapara and Puri districts and one each in Bargarh, Bolangir, Cuttack, Gajapati, Kandhamal and Mayurbhanj districts, the H&FW department official said.

BJP PADAYATRA ON BAGALA LAND OCT 2

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 18: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has decided to intensify its ongoing agitation against the alleged sale of Bagala Dharmashala land to some private individual.

The saffron party has planned to take its agitation over the land sale to the doorsteps of CM Naveen Patnaik. BJP activists will take out a Padayatra (rally) from Puri city to Naveen Niwas, the residence of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in Bhubaneswar, October 2, to submit a memorandum containing people's signatures to oppose the alleged sale of Bagala land.

"The district administration has sold Bagala Dharmashala land to six individuals. The BJP has been agitating on the issue since last 26 days. However, the state government and the Puri administration are yet to hold discussions with the agitators. We've decided to intensify our agitation and take it to the Capital city," said BJP leaders Prabhakaran Mahapatra, Chandni Prasad Singh and others at a press conference here Friday.

BJP will start collecting signatures from people Saturday to solicit their cooperation on the issue.

According to BJP leaders, Kanheyala Bagala, a benevolent person, had set up a shelter house for devotees here by purchasing land from the Bengal government in 1899 and donated it to Puri Collector in 1905. The state government had illegally transferred the land to the ownership of the revenue department. Subsequently, the district administration had sold a portion of the shelter house land to six individuals, they claimed.



A new virology laboratory was inaugurated at the Infectious Disease Hospital in Puri, Friday

Ganjam district has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus deaths at 215, followed by Khurda (103) and Cuttack (56), the official pointed out.

The H&FW department said that as many as 4,101 persons recovered Friday, taking the total recoveries in the state to 37,567. As many as 53 coronavirus patients have died due to the other ailments so far.

Odisha has so far tested over 26.67 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 48,146 Thursday, the official added.

Bhubaneswar Municipal

Corporation (BMC), on the other hand, said that the Capital city reported 305 fresh COVID-19 cases and 517 recoveries, Friday.

Of the fresh cases, 90 were detected in quarantine centres, while 215 were local contact cases.

With this, the COVID-19 tally in the City mounted to 17,925 with 4,212 active cases.

Meanwhile, following detection of several COVID-19 cases in Khurda Civil Court here, the Bhubaneswar Judicial Complex and DLSA have been declared as containment zone to contain the spread of the virus.

INVISIBLE ENEMY

Three fatalities were reported in Khurda, two each in Kendrapara and Puri and one each in Bargarh, Bolangir, Cuttack, Gajapati, Kandhamal and Mayurbhanj

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, continued to register the highest number of new cases at 688, followed by Cuttack (492) and Jajpur (184) districts

Ganjam district has so far reported the highest number of novel coronavirus deaths at 215, followed by Khurda (103) and Cuttack (56) districts

"The area coming within the boundary of Bhubaneswar Judicial Complex and DLSA, Lewis Road, Bhubaneswar is hereby declared as the containment zone for the period from September 19 to September 25. This excludes the office of the Sub Collector Bhubaneswar, office of the tehsildar, Bhubaneswar and District Sub Registrar offices," an order of the BMC read.

No one shall be allowed to move into the containment zone and the inhabitants within the containment zone shall not be allowed to move out, the order pointed out.

'Bhub experiencing COVID plateau'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Even though Bhubaneswar is now the worst affected by novel coronavirus, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Friday, claimed that the Capital city is experiencing a plateau and the cases will soon see a decline.

Briefing the media, BMC Commissioner Prem Chandra Chaudhary said that despite increased testing COVID-19 cases in the city are not rising exponentially. He said that September, which had already been predicted as a critical month, saw detection of 700 cases in the first week but it has now come down to only 300 to 400 a day.

"Against 1,500-2,000 tests a day, 500-700 cases a day were being detected earlier in September. However, we are now seeing only 300-400 cases a day even though testing has been increased to 4,000 to 4,500 in the last one week. Thus a plateau of

BMC not on toes: Niranjana

Bhubaneswar: OPCC President Niranjana Patnaik has written to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik alleging negligence by Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation in their response to COVID-19. He alleged the BMC officials are not responsive to the calls of aggrieved patients and their caregivers. "The Helpline number is often expressing helplessness. BMC is relying too much on antigen test and the number of RT-PCR tests is inadequate," he said.

COVID has begun and city will soon decline in cases too," Chaudhary said.

The commissioner further added that 73.5 per cent COVID-19 positives are in home isolation. He further mentioned that more asymptomatic patients are being shifted home on a rotation basis. "The recovery rate has also gone up to 74 per cent.

We have 54 rapid response teams with 18 in each ward to monitor them. Helpline no 1929 has been working round-the-clock for the last 15 days. Active surveillance is being carried out in 20 non-slum areas by 210 teams," he said.

Claiming that Bhubaneswar still remains one of the best state capitals to have relatively low spread of infection Chaudhary said that the 'BMC is in a comfortable position to handle any crisis.' "A total of 445 ICUs and 2,500 general beds are available in private hospitals. Squads have been formed to monitor treatment of COVID-19 patients in these hospitals," the Commissioner stated.

Meanwhile, commenting on Chief Minister's remark on poor enforcement of COVID in the twin city recently, Chaudhary said that five zonal squads are formed to ensure strict adherence to COVID-19 guideline in market areas every evening and it is being done in coordination with Commissionerate Police.



DCP (Traffic) Saumya Mishra, along with other police officials, inspects enforcement of COVID-19 norms at Bapuji Nagar market in Bhubaneswar, Friday

Dead fishes in Narendra pond rile visitors

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 18: Devotees were baffled Friday morning to see hundreds of dead fish floating on Puri's Narendra pond that has religious connection with the Srimandir.



While the exact reason behind fishes dying in large numbers is yet to be ascertained, locals suspect excessive pollution in the water to be reason behind this.

In spite of the cultural significance of the water body, it languishes under administrative apathy. The surrounding areas of the pond have been producing bad odour, putting commuters in utter inconvenience.

Meanwhile, this incident has triggered resentment among devotees and visitors coming to Puri. Local residents have demanded immediate cleaning of the pond.

Notably, the pond is considered a sacred place for Vaishnavites across the state and beyond. According to Srimandir tradition, water sport (Jalakrida) of the deities during Chandan Jatra and other occasions are conducted here. It is believed that a dip taken here leads to salvation.

Drug peddler Ghunga's arrest bares it all

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 18: With the arrest of Kartik Das alias Ghunga and his subsequent interrogation, the underbelly of the thriving drug trade in this town has been exposed.

Police sources said the brown sugar business in the entire city was operated by Ghunga and his younger brother Sanatan Das alias Budu. The latter would procure the contraband from Jaleswar in Balasore district and bring it to Cuttack for sale.

Ghunga was selling brown sugar to a customer at a place close to Jagatpur market complex Wednesday when he was arrested by the police. A substantial quantity of heroin was also seized from his possession. The same day he was produced in a court which sent him to police custody.

Sources said that from the confessions of Ghunga, the police have got a clear picture of how the drug mafia operated in the Silver city.

Police learnt that Sanatan used to visit Jaleswar to bring heroin from there. The two brothers had also earmarked areas where they would operate.

Sanatan controlled Madhupatna, Kalyaninagar, Nuapada, Badambadi and some other localities while Ghunga operated in Jagatpur, Mahanadi Vihar and some other places. They would sell brown sugar in sachets. One gram of the contraband would be divided into four

331KG CANNABIS SEIZED IN GAJAPATI

BHUBANESWAR: The Special Task Force (STF) of Crime Branch Friday seized huge amount of cannabis and arrested two drug peddlers from Gudripadar under Adava police limits in Gajapati district.

Police arrested Inswabandhu Nayak and Kulamani Nayak of Talarisnha village under Mohana police station in the district. The STF officials raided a spot along a road near Gudripadar village and seized illegal ganja weighing 331 kg from the spot.

The STF arrested the accused duo by registering a case (85/20) with Adava police under various sections of IPC and NDPS Act. Meanwhile, the excise sleuths have also seized ganja weighing around 93 kg by intercepting a Bolero vehicle on Khurda-Cuttack bypass here Friday. The sleuths arrested only one peddler while others managed to give the officials a slip.

sachets with each of them selling for Rs 600. Sharing this information, Cuttack DCP Prateek Singh said Sanatan is absconding. He is an accused in several cases registered at Chauhaliaganj and Tangi police stations. A special squad has been formed to hunt Sanatan down, Singh stated.

ICMR's online course to improve prescription practices

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: In a bid to improve prescription practices among the country's medical graduates, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has launched a free online course on the occasion of World Patient Safety Day, Thursday.

The course on 'Prescribing Skills for Indian Medical Graduates' will be run by the National Institute of Epidemiology (NIE-ICMR), Chennai, the ICMR said in a statement.

Launching the course, Prof Balram Bhargava, secretary,

Department of Health Research (DHR) and director general of ICMR, said, "ICMR is committed to ensuring that the country's medical graduates are at par with their international counterparts. The council, through its institute ICMR-NIE, has successfully completed a basic course in Biomedical Research.

"The course has now been made compulsory for postgraduates by the Medical Council of India. Building on the success, we will ensure that this digital course on Prescribing Skills for Indian Medical Graduates is effective."

Rajni Kaul, course coordinator,



ICMR, said that the course was guided by Technical Advisory Group (TAG) set up by the ICMR.

V P Kamboj, chairman, TAG, said, "The need and importance of

the program were felt by Balram Bhargava."

Subsequently, this was undertaken based on the feedback received from the medical fraternity regarding prescription errors, he said. Expert faculty members in clinical pharmacology and medicine from ICMR-NVCCP (National Virtual Centre of Clinical Pharmacology) network have developed this course for medical graduates covering topics relevant to India's health problems.

Nilima Kshirsagar, a leading expert, stated the course deals with various dos and don'ts of prescribing

medicines and how to administer drugs and communicate instructions to patients, among other things.

It constitutes 40 video lectures of 20 minutes each to be taken online over a period of three months at the learner's pace. It also involves a pre-test to evaluate participants' prior knowledge. A certificate of participation will be given on completion of the course. Interns are expected to register now and appear for the pre-test October 4, or October 11, the statement said.

Medical graduates will have access to the course from October 12 and it closes December 30.

Zoo loses 11 animals in one month

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Nandankanan Zoological Park located on outskirts of Bhubaneswar recorded over 11 animal deaths in past one month, a source said.

A sudden surge in the mortality at the zoo has raised concern among the authorities.

Recently, a female Indian bear succumbed to an infection within 12 hours of death of another bear

A female Indian bear recently succumbed to an infection within 12 hours of death of another bear. The female bear Arati died under



treatment, Nandankanan deputy director Bimal Chandra Acharya said.

The female bear was a member of the zoo since September 13, 2013. It was 20 years old.

Following her death, veterinar-

ian Niranjana Sahoo from OUAT conducted a postmortem which revealed that the bear's intestine was infected with the same kind of virus detected in the body of the latter.

With two fresh deaths, a total of three bears have died at

Nandankanan in past 18 days, the report confirmed.

Meanwhile, another Indian bear 'Lija' (8) is undergoing treatment in ICU of Nandankanan veterinary clinic after being infected with the same species of deadly virus. She was brought here after being rescued from Khallikote area in Ganjam district.

Moreover, two more bears have shown similar symptoms at the zoo. The veterinary doctors have started their treatment. As part of precautionary measure, 15 Indian bears including five females have been vaccinated to protect them from the infection.

Notably, a few rare species of animals including an anaconda and a Himalayan bear died in the last one month which has upset the wildlife lovers here.



CPI(M) workers demonstrate at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Friday, to press for fulfilment of their demands including 10kg rice and Rs 7,500 to each family per month

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MIGRANTS PACK UP RETURN BAGS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Sept 18: Thousands of migrant workers returned homes during lockdowns due to the Covid pandemic in various parts of Kendrapara. For lack of scope for work in the district, most of them, particularly youths are reportedly bracing up for return to their work-places in other states, a report said. Taking advantage of this situation, middle men and labour contractors have started luring the mi-grant workers of this district to other states at this time when the pandemic situation is worsening.

This is evident from the fact that some middlemen had made a bid to take migrant workers at Singiri under Aul block September 11.

Five middlemen had illegally or-ganized a job fair September 11 when police conducted a raid at the place and arrested the five. Over 1,500 youths took part in the fair with hope of getting jobs in other states.

It may be noted here that thou-sands of migrant workers having expertise in plumbing are work-ing in various parts of the country. After pandemic struck, they had to face loss of jobs, money and food and the fear of an uncertain fu-ture due to the lockdown.

Locals alleged that due to erratic rainfall and floods, agriculture has been badly affected while job scope for the youths is thin in the dis-trict. In this situation, there is no way out but go outside in search of jobs, it is said.

Kaillash Mallick of Hatia village said, "Kendrapara district is based

JOB CRUNCH



OVER A LAKH OF MIGRANTS HAVE RETURNED HOME DURING THE LOCKDOWN, BUT ONLY 60,055 OF THEM HAVE REGISTERED THEIR NAMES AT THE ADMINISTRATION

FIVE LABOUR CONTRACTORS HAD ILLEGALLY ORGANIZED A JOB FAIR SEPTEMBER 11 WHEN POLICE CONDUCTED A RAID AT THE PLACE AND ARRESTED THE FIVE. OVER 1,500 YOUTHS TOOK PART IN THE FAIR WITH HOPE OF GETTING JOBS IN OTHER STATES

COLLECTOR SAMARTH BURMA SAID THAT A DATABASE OF THE WORKERS HAS BEEN PREPARED. THE DISTRICT LABOUR DEPARTMENT HAS FORMED A PANCHAYAT LEVEL COMMITTEE TO MAKE A DATABASE

on agrarian economy, but neces-sary infrastructure has not been put in place to carry on farming. The migrants have no hope of availing earning from agriculture sector."

He also added that around half per cent of the farmlands in the dis-trict lacks irrigation and water management system.

"Scores of migrant has come home due to lockdown and had raised paddy with their savings and loans, but floods washed away their hopes. In this situation, sur-vival is important," he lamented.

Mallick has decided to send his 23-year old son to Kerala to earn for the family at this crisis times.

Many others pointed out there are no job opportunities at native places. They had left their work-places because of fear of the coro-navirus. Since March, most of the

migrants have been coping with fi-nancial crunch.

There is shortage of labourers in the textile industry in Surat and other parts. Others observed that given the growing expenses, sur-viving on the agriculture produce is too difficult.

Subhendu Kumar Choudhary, a resident of Aul Gobindapur, said, "Though most youths are educated, they see no future in the district. The district has no industrial and min-ing sector. To supplement the fam-ily income, youths have to go to Kerla and Gujarat."

Pratap Kumar Mohanty, an in-tellectual, said that Collector Samarth Burma had announced a registration of plumbers about a year ago. A database of the plumbers at the panchayat level was to be made. "But the administration has

not shown much interest to carry forward the survey. The pandemic has provided a good chance to iden-tify plumbers who have returned home," he observed.

Over a lakh of migrants have returned home during the lock-down, but only 60,055 of them have registered their names at the ad-ministration. A database can be made from this registration while details of the left out migrants can be done later at the panchayat level.

Mohanty claimed that of 15 lakh people in the district, three lakhs are migrants. Collector Samarth Burma said that a database of the workers has been prepared. The dis-trict labour department has formed a panchayat level committee while vil-lage committees will accelerate the identification of the migrant labour-ers, he added.

2 PLFI men arrested with ammunition

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Sept 18: Police ar-rested two members of the People's Liberation Front of India (PLFI) at Kadobahal under Raibaga po-lice station limits of Sundargarh district Friday.

Sundargarh SP Sagarika Nath said in a press meet Friday that the two accused were in possession of weapons belong to PLFI group leader Jayadhar who was en-counterred by Jharkhand police. The duo was also associated with PLFI, a splinter group of the Communist Party of India-Maoist (CPI-M).

Based on intelligence reports, the district police with the DVF (District Voluntary Force) or-ganised a cordon and search op-eration last night. When the team reached the house of Raju Kindo(38), they found it locked. In a bid to escape, Raju fired at the team but was later overpowered. He then directed to the house of Sanamunu Sahoo (45) of the same village.

Solar power illuminates lives in mining-hit Keonjhar villages

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 18: With active support of the district mineral foundation (DMF), Keonjhar dis-trict administration conceptualised a unique and novel project of in-stalling 11,000 solar-based street-lights in all 473 mining-affected vil-lages of the district Wednesday.

The project is said to have cov-ered seven blocks like Banspal, Champua, Harichandanpur, Hatadihi, Jhumpura, Joda and Sadar.

Implemented at a cost of about Rs 25 crores sanctioned from DMF funds, the solar project benefits over five lakh residents of 473 vil-lages. The project has transformed the way villagers live.

Children in these villages are the immediate beneficiaries of the project as erratic power cuts ad-versely affected their studies. Now, many children in these villages



study together in a group under these streetlights which are inde-pendent of undeclared power-cuts.

The solar-energy based street-lights have extended socio-econ-omic, educational and recreational activities in the mining affected villages.

Notably, each solar-based street-light consists of solar photovoltaic modules (solar panels), energy-ef-ficient LEDs, lithium ferro phos-phate batteries, control electron-

ics, module mounting pole and other installations. The solar pan-els take energy from the sun and charge the battery during day hours, which in turn powers after sunset.

These streetlights use energy-efficient LEDs and state-of-the-art lithium ferro phosphate batteries for high luminance and long life. The streetlights are equipped with mo-tion sensor device. In case of any movement, the sensor senses it and glows to the fullest extent.

Actress Varsha offers help to tribal girl

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Sept 18: Impressed by the melodious voice of a tribal girl from Chintaguda village in Koraput district, actress Varsha Priyadarshini has come forward to help her achieve her dreams.

Teenager Namita Melka has a very sweet voice and it became ap-parent after a video of hers went viral on various social media plat-forms. In the video, she is heard singing a popular song from the film ABCD 2.

Varsha stumbled upon the video and she could not help but ap-preciate the young girl's extraordi-nary talent. She took to Twitter and shared Namita's video on micro-blogging platform.

"What a magical voice she has, god gifted talent... My sincere prayers and blessings to dear little sister Namita for her bright future... Talent should not be hidden... I would like to be a small part in her journey to help and inspire her to achieve



dreams. Be successful and set an example for all other young talents who wish to fulfill their own dreams," Varsha wrote.

"I would like to take an initiative to start Namita's career with a Jagannath Bhajan, with Sangeet Guru's guidance. God bless you dear Namita. Believe in yourself and be unstoppable. We all are with

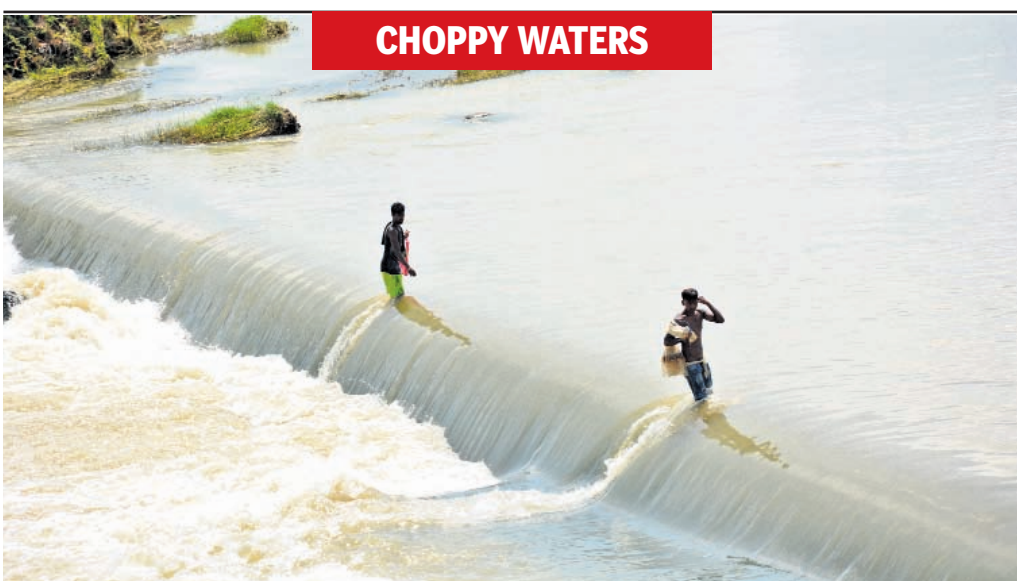
you ... Jay Jagannath," the actress added. Namita hails from a tribal daily-wager's family. She has never had the chance to train properly. In spite of all hindrances, she has managed to impress all with her singing prowess and now after her videos went viral a number of doors are opening up for her.

Apart from singing in her native

Charmed by melodius voice of Namita Melka, the actress took to her Tweeter handle and wanted to arrange musical guidance for the singer to hone her skills

language 'Kui', the youngster is adept at rendering both Odia and Hindi songs as well. It was her teacher Bansidhar Halwa who helped her voice to reach thousands. Now, Melka is getting accolades from all quarters. She is enjoying the adu-lation as it inspires her.

Recently, Koraput District Collector Madhusudan Mishra paid a visit to Namita's house and provided her with some fi-nancial assistance. Namita later disclosed that she would use the amount to purchased a television for her family.



Fishermen about to cast fishing nets in Mahanadi in Sambalpur

OP PHOTO

Poor surveillance: 9 Kendrapara PSes have defunct CCTV systems

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara; Sept 18: CCTV cam-eras at nine police stations in-cluding the SDPO office in Kendrapara district are lying de-funct for months together.

The district police have been giving emphasis on CCTV instal-lation at houses, offices and busi-ness establishments as they im-mensely help solve cases. But when it comes to walk the talk, they fail drastically.

The startling fact that the CCTV cameras of Kendrapara district's nine police stations have been dys-functional for many days now has come to the fore from the infor-mation Manoranjan Jena has re-cently received through RTI.

According to the information, the CCTV camera installed at Pattamundai SDPO office has not been functioning. The other eight police stations having defunct CCTV cameras are Rajkanika police sta-tion, Mahakalpara police station,



Police stations at Rajkanika, Mahakalpara, Pattamundai, Jambu, Tantiapal, Nikirai and Sadar have conked out, but they are not repaired till date

Pattamundai police station, Jambu police station, Tantiapal police station, Bidyut police station, Nikirai police station and Sadar police station. Despite the DGP's directions to get the dysfunctional CCTV cameras repaired or replaced, nothing has been done to fix these out-of-run CCTV cameras.

Manoranjan alleged that

Bike-lifting gang busted with 20 bikes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, Sept 18: In a major breakthrough, Phiringia police busted a bike- lifting gang in Kandhamal district and arrested six persons Thursday evening. Police also seized 20 motorcycles from their possession.

Local police had detained a youth a day before for driving a mo-torbike without registration num-ber, Phiringia police station IIC P Shyamsundar Rao informed.

During interrogation, police found that it was a stolen bike. Further investigations led the po-lice to the bike-lifting gang. After the arrest of the six, police also conducted raids at several places and recovered the stolen bikes.

Those accused were forwarded to a local court. Notably, Barghar town police had also busted a high-way burglary gang and arrested five persons Thursday. Barghar SP said that, many cases are pend-ing against them at different po-lice stations.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR ENERGIZATION OF OVERHEAD TRACTION WIRES AT BALARAM SIDING

Proforma 10.01

Notice is hereby given to all users of railway lines and premises situated on the completed section of the under noted section of the East Coast Railway, Khurda Road Division that the 25000 volt, 50 hz, AC overhead traction wires will be energized on or after the date specified against the section on and from the same date the overhead traction line shall be treated as live at all times and no unauthorized person shall approach or work in the proximity of the said overhead lines.

Proforma 10.02

INTRODUCTION OF AC 25 KV TRACTION "WARNING TO ROAD USERS"

It is notified for information of the public that in connection with introduction of 25 KV AC electric traction over the noted section of East Coast Railway, height gauges have been erected at all the level crossings with clear height between 4.67 m and 4.78 m above road level with a view to prevent loads of excessive height from coming into contact or dangerous proximity to live traction wire (contact wire), which shall be at a height of minimum 5.5 m above the rail level at level crossings.

Public are hereby notified to observe the height specified above for the purpose of loading vehicles and to see that the loads carried in road vehicles do not infringe the height gauges under any circumstances.

The dangers of a load of excessive height are as follows: (i) Danger to the height gauge and consequent obstruction to the road as well as the railway line. (ii) Danger to the materials or equipment carried or the vehicle itself. (iii) Danger of fire and risk of life due to contact with or dangerous proximity to the conductors.

Section : Electrification of OHE in 25KV AC of Spur-10 at Balaram siding, SILO at Balaram siding, other sidings and modifications of MCL at Talcher of Khurda Road Division.

Date of Energization : 03.10.2020

PR-263/L/20-21 **Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD) Khurda Road**

ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

BALMELA A HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT, POST: BALMELA, DIST.: MALKANGIRI (ODISHA), PIN: 764051, Phones: 06861-232581 (O)/ 232641 (R), FAX: 06861-232541, E-mail: unit.head_balmela@yahoo.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER No. 25/2020-21 Dated: 16.09.2020

No. CAD-482: Sealed tenders are invited in Single Part bid basis from Vehicle Owners/Travel Agencies/Individuals fulfilling the eligibility criteria as per the tender specification for the work as mentioned below.

Sl. No.	Description of Services	Cost of Tender Paper (Non-refundable) in Rs.	EMD in shape of DD only (Refundable) in Rs.	Period of availability of tender at OHPC website	Last date & Time of receipt of tender	Date & Time of opening of Bid
1	Hiring/ Deployment of 01 (One) number of Mahindra Bolero Diesel Run (Ambulance) with Driver for a period of Four years under BHEP, Balmela	Rs.6000/- + 1080 (GST @ 18%) = Rs.7080/-	Rs.25,000/-	21.09.2020 to 13.00 hrs. on 05.10.2020	05.10.2020 upto 16.00 hrs.	05.10.2020 at 16.30 hrs.

For details of the tender documents, terms & conditions, please visit our website www.ohpcitd.com.
OIPR-04019/11/0024/2021 **Sd/- C&P Head, BHEP, Balmela**

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA

No. B-269

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER BOLANGIR (R&B) DIVISION, BOLANGIR

Mail ID: eeppwd.bgr@rediffmail.com, eeppwd.bgr@gmail.com
Ph. No. 06652-232374

e-Procurement Notice

Bid Identification No. BGR R&B/07/2020-21

No. 3168 Dtd. 15.09.2020

1. The Executive Engineer, Bolangir (R&B) Division, Bolangir on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Single Cover system in ONLINE MODE for construction of building work detailed in the table below from eligible contractors.

2. Nature of Work	: Building Work
3. No. of Tender	: 2 Nos. Building Work
4. Tender Cost	: Rs.6,000/- (Tender Paper Cost)
5. Class of Contractor	: "D", "C", "B" and "A" Class
6. Date & time of sale & receipt of Bids	: From Dt.24.09.2020, 11.00 A.M. Dt.09.10.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
7. Date of opening bid	: Dt.12.10.2020 at 11.30 A.M.
8. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: http://tendersodisha.gov.in	

Sd/- Executive Engineer Bolangir (R&B) Division OIPR-34028/11/0004/2021

Odia boy in 'America's Got Talent'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Sept 18: Sumanth Maraju – a 21-year-old boy from Rayagada district, along with his dance partner 15-year-old Sonali Majumdar from Kolkata, made it to the finals of the reality programme 'America's Got Talent'. This is the 15th season of the show, Sumanth's family sources said.

Sumanth and Sonali teamed together for the last eight years. Their genre is the popularly dance form



'Salsa' and they have titled their act as 'BAD SALSA'. They have already enthralled audiences in programmes like 'India's Got Talent' or 'Jhalak Dikha Jaa'.

Sumanth is the only son of M Jagdish Rao and M Radhakumari.

MAOISTS, POLICE EXCHANGE FIRE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Sept 18: Maoists and police exchanged fire in Jaraka reserve and Burhani forests on the borders of Kandhamal-Kalahandi borders September 15 and 16.

In the last two months, exchange of fire has taken place on the border areas seven times, said Kalahandi SP Batula Gangadhar at a press meet Friday. Police and security forces carried out a search operation in the area. Maoist material were seized.

NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

Tel. No. 06752-222092, e-mail id: eerwpuri@gmail.com

No. 6251 (Online-03) Date: 16.09.2020

No. O-363: The Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Puri on behalf of Government of Odisha invites percentage rate tenders through e-procurement for 32 Nos. of work for the year 2020-21 in the district of Puri.

1. Total No. of Works	: 32 Nos.
2. Tender Cost of Packages	: Rs.0.89 lakhs to 17.69 lakhs
3. Class of Contractor	: As per DTCN
4. Period of Completion	: 1 (One) Calendar & 2 (Two) Calendar Months
5. Period of availability of tenders Online/Date & time of bidding Online/last date of seeking clarification/Date of opening of tender papers.	

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding	Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date, time & venue of opening of tender
		From To		
1	2	3	4	5
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Puri	Online - 03	23.09.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	07.10.2020 upto 3.00 P.M.	06.10.2020 upto 1.00 P.M.
				08.10.2020 at 11.00 A.M. Office of the E.E., R.W. Division, Puri.

6. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in website "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>".

Sd./- Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Puri OIPR-25065/11/0003/2021



New heft to PMO

The appointment of three IAS officers to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) will add heft to the already most-powerful PMO. The officers are Raghuraj Rajendran of the Madhya Pradesh cadre as director, Amrapali Kata of the Andhra Pradesh cadre as deputy secretary and Mangesh Ghildiyal of the Uttarakhand cadre as under-secretary. Rajendran was earlier serving as private secretary to the Minister of Steel and Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan. Amrapali Kata is an officer of the 2010 batch and was deputy secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat (Intelligence). Ghildiyal was working with the Uttarakhand government. The appointments make these three officers seem like "high-fliers" in babudom. They have clearly been chosen for their better track-record. In the presidential-style Modi PMO, they are now expected to be team players who must focus on tough decisions and be showing results.

ANTI-CORRUPTION DRIVE IN UP

Though public perception belies it, the Uttar Pradesh government claims it has a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption. And the government backs this up with data. According to sources, since coming to power three years ago, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has cracked the whip on around 800 state government officials. Just recently, the state government suspended two IPS officers, Abhishek Dikshit, SSP of Prayagraj, and Manilal Patidar, SP of Mahoba, for their involvement in corrupt practices and "lax policing". The state data claims it has acted against more than 775 officials so far, including some retired officials who were found complicit in malpractices. The government has forcibly retired 325 officials and suspended and demoted over 450 babus. But, sources say, despite the Yogi government's crackdown on corrupt babus, some suspended officers seem to have wiggled back into the administration on plum postings. JB Singh, the Gonda DM, was suspended in June 2018, along with Kumar Prashant, the DM of Fatehpur, and faced disciplinary action over irregularities in the procurement of wheat. But Singh's bureaucratic wilderness was short-lived. In 2019 he was appointed the DM of Etawah. Kumar Prashant, too, found himself back in favour. Last year, he became the DM of Badaun, a more important district than Fatehpur. There are other instances, say sources, where after a brief period of lying low, suspended officials find themselves back in the saddle.

RAILWAYS: REFORM OR DECAY?

The Modi sarkar is pushing ahead with plans for restructuring the Indian Railways and services. The Cabinet recently green-lit the revamping of the powerful Railway Board. The board will now have five members. The present chairman of the board, VK Yadav, will be the first CEO of the board. The board will also have independent members in non-executive roles. The Cabinet also decided to merge all central railway service cadres into a single Indian Railways Management Service (IRMS). While Yadav is now chairman and CEO, Pradeep Kumar has been appointed member, Infrastructure, PC Sharma as member, Traction and Rolling Stock, and PS Mishra as member, Operations and Business Development. Manjula Rangarajan has been appointed as member, Finance. In the new structure, the chairman shall be the cadre controlling officer responsible for Human Resources (HR) with assistance from a Director General level officer. Three apex-level posts shall be surrendered from the Railway Board, and all the remaining posts of the board shall be open to all officers regardless of the service to which they belonged. The government says that the reform will end "inter-departmental rivalries" that many say have been hampering growth and efficiency of the railways for decades. But not all railway babus are pleased with the decision. Their first objection is to the proposed merger of cadres, which they claim is "unscientific and against established norms." The government, they say, is proposing to merge "fundamentally dissimilar" entities. Instead, they argue for two distinct services instead of one - separating the civil services and the engineering wings. According to sources, murmurs of protest are rising, and railway unions are planning a series of protests against the move. *Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let's multiply the effect*

WISDOM CORNER

- ALBERT EINSTEIN**
The world is a dangerous place to live; not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it.
- RABINDRANATH TAGORE**
The flower which is single need not envy the thorns that are numerous.
- OSHO**
The feminine is more powerful than the masculine, the soft is more powerful than the hard; the water is more powerful than the rock.

WORDSWORTH

■ Toe-rag

Another term from that inexhaustible store of rude British slang expressions; though it is also well-known in Australia. It means that the person addressed is contemptible or worthless, a scrounger. Though it can be a relatively mild insult among friends, you should avoid saying it to strangers unless you want a smack in the mush or a punch up the bracket. The original form - in the 19thcentury - was toe rag. It referred to the strips of cloth that convicts or tramps wrapped around their feet as an inadequate substitute for socks. The first recorded use is by JF Mortlock in his Experiences of a Convict of 1864: "Stockings being unknown, some luxurious men wrapped round their feet a piece of old shirting, called, in language more expressive than elegant, a 'toe-rag' ". It didn't take long to become a term of abuse - in 1875 a book on British circus life said that "Toe rags is another expression of contempt ... used ... chiefly by the lower grades of circus men, and the acrobats who stroll about the country, performing at fairs". It seems to have come to wider British knowledge and use from the 1970s on, largely because it was aired in the ITV police series The Sweeney about the London mobile detective force called the flying squad (rhyming slang: flying squad = Sweeney Todd, the demon barber of Fleet Street), a programme that delighted in using London slang. The tow-rag spelling is sometimes seen because people have lost the link to the original sense, long since obsolete.

LOL

BUYING PIZZA

Story goes that a blonde went to buy a pizza. After placing the order, the assistant at the shop asked her whether he should cut it into six

pieces or twelve pieces. She replied, "Do it in six pieces. I can't take all 12 pieces in one go."



FOCUS WORLD

RECOVERY'S MISSING LINK

Bertrand Badré
and Aurélie Jean

TRUST CAN PREVAIL, BUT ONLY IF WE START WORKING TOWARDS A NEW ECONOMIC AND INSTITUTIONAL PARADIGM. AND THAT MEANS ADDRESSING HEAD-ON THE PUBLIC'S GROWING SKEPTICISM TOWARD MOST MAJOR INSTITUTIONS



Trust, having become scarce, is now in high demand; but it is a volatile good. It's chilling even to think about what a further loss of it would mean for today's crisis-ridden world. A flight from currencies? A widespread refusal to be vaccinated? Denial of global warming in a world that is literally on fire? Restoring trust will not be easy

Never before has so much money been made available to so many so quickly. In the space of just a few months, we have already gone far beyond the post-2008 playbook. Mobilising financial resources (both quantitatively and qualitatively) on an unprecedented scale has demonstrated the sheer power of finance to protect or reorient entire economies. Yet by highlighting the growing disconnect between Wall Street and Main Street, it has also invited political challenges. This can last only as long as there is still sufficient trust in the system. If the public's confidence in central banks were suddenly to evaporate, the financial system would collapse. And if enough people suddenly refused to continue tolerating the continuing enrichment of the few while the many are being impoverished, liberal democracy, too, would be in peril. Similar warnings can be issued with respect to the sciences. Never

before the pandemic have research and data-sharing occurred at such a rapid pace. Never before have so many people from so many countries come together to pursue the same goal: the development of a safe and effective vaccine. This mass mobilisation is exciting to behold, but also is worrying in the current climate. In the immediate term, the growing distrust of medical experts threatens to reduce the efficacy of vaccination against Covid-19. The recent reversal on whether hydroxychloroquine should be used to treat Covid patients (it should not) left many members of the public with even less trust in their leaders. And reports that US President Donald Trump's administration has been interfering with the work of public health agencies has made such doubts justified in some cases. At the global level, there are also questions as to whether vaccines will be distributed equitably and according to genuine

need. And, against the broader backdrop of declining trust in expertise, one wonders if the current levels of research funding in science and medicine will be sustained. Scientific and technological research will be essential to address problems from climate change to inequality, and there is a growing need for smart medical devices, remote-learning systems, and new drugs and antibiotics to avert future public-health crises. Given the risks, we simply cannot afford a further erosion of public trust. For leaders in finance and the sciences, the task now is to develop transparent and robust rules of the road, so that decision-making processes are clear and assessable to policymakers, the media, and the general public. The overall goal should be to empower people and restore their trust. That means explaining what is at stake, developing true accountability, and recognising what is not working. In a media environment that is increasingly prone to misinformation and 280-character thinking, leaders in finance and science must proactively engage the public. But we should not fool ourselves into thinking that the system merely needs to be patched up. A full redesign is in order to ensure that our institutions are serving the common good. No longer should the relationship between experts and the public be predicated on a "take it or leave it" black-box model of self-governance for science and finance. Trust, having become scarce, is now in high demand; but it is a volatile good. It's chilling even to think about what a further loss of it would mean for today's crisis-ridden world. A flight from currencies? A widespread refusal to be vaccinated? Denial of global warming in a world that is literally on fire? Restoring trust will not be easy. But, to overcome today's crises and prevent those we can foresee, it must be done.

Bertrand Badré is a former managing director of the World Bank and Aurélie Jean is a computational scientist.

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SPECTRUM NATION



Bharat Jhunjhunwala

THE ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT WILL SUCCEED ONLY IF THE GOVERNMENT TAKES STEP TO CONTROL THE BUREAUCRACY AT THE GROUND LEVEL. MERE DISTRIBUTION OF LOANS WILL ONLY SINK THE ECONOMY

There is a growing reaction against China in the world today. Multinational companies are quitting China and countries are reluctant to import goods from China. But we will lose the opportunity if we cannot compete with Thailand and Vietnam. Germany will import cheap goods from Thailand instead of expensive goods from India. The challenge is to manufacture goods cheaper than any other country in the world. The massive ₹200-lakh crore *AtmaNirbhar* package is focused on providing loans. These are beneficial when there is demand in the market. The industrialist can borrow from the bank, put up a factory, make the goods and sell them in the market. At present, however, there is no demand in the market. In this situation, more loans will only push the borrowers deeper into debt and trouble. The interest burden will increase and they will not be able to sell their goods in absence of a robust demand; and they will not be able to repay the loans. A suggestion is being made that the government should provide cash transfers to the people so that

demand is generated in the economy. This strategy is correct to the extent that demand will be generated in the economy. However, if we continue to be open to the world market, the demand can go to the purchase of Thai goods instead of Chinese goods. Professor AK Gulati of Indian Council for International Economic Relations has stressed the need to improve the productivity of our workers. He is right. Our workers produce about one-half of the goods produced by their Chinese counterparts. Our worker makes five footballs in a day if the Chinese worker makes 10. Increase in productivity will reduce the cost of footballs made by us and enable our exports. Then we can compete with Thailand. The difficulty here is two-fold. Firstly, productivity cannot be improved in a day. It is a long-drawn process requiring reform of labour laws, installation of modern machines and improvement in managerial skills. This cannot be done in a few months. Secondly, the world economy is not likely to revive anytime soon. We will not be able to export the

goods even if we make them cheap because of the disorderly world economy. A positive indicator amidst these dark clouds is that our electronic exports have doubled in the last few years. Underlying these problems is our bureaucracy. The time taken in obtaining a regulatory approval or environmental clearance is wholly due to the bureaucracy seeking grease money at every step. The price of power in India is more because the officials of the state electricity boards sell the electricity on the sly. Indeed, corruption is rampant in China as well. Deng Xiaoping had given incentives to local officials to establish industries. They were given promotions and higher salaries if they could attract industries. Thus, the officials then went out of their way to facilitate establishment of industries. In India it is the reverse. An honest official is hounded by the corrupt and soon got transferred to an obscure posting. The government should keep doing confidential surveys among the public. The work of an executive engineer of the state electricity board, for example, must be as-

essed by the consumers of his division. Those ranked at lowest 10 percent should be retired prematurely. Kautilya had said that the king should appoint spies to track the corruption among the officials; and another spy to spy on the frontline spies to ensure that they do not get corrupted. Simultaneously we should impose high import duties on consumer goods for the present - until we can improve productivity of our workers and reform our bureaucracy. At the same time, the government has taken the stand that tenders less than ₹200 crore will no longer be required to go global. Chinese apps like TikTok have been banned. As many as 101 defence equipment will now be made within India. These steps are in the right direction but may be like a drop in the ocean. The *AtmaNirbhar Bharat* will succeed only if the government takes step to control the bureaucracy at the ground level. Mere distribution of loans will only sink the economy.

The writer is a former Professor of Economics at IIM Bangalore.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

SAD against farm Bills

Sir, Faced with protests in Punjab against two farm sector reform Bills, Union Food Processing Minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Shiromani Akali Dal's sole representative in the Modi government, has resigned. But SAD says it will review its ties with the BJP and the NDA. Opposition parties say the Bills would hit farmers' interests, do away with MSP, facilitate entry of private companies and lead to contract-farming. SAD is the second ally of the BJP to part ways with the Modi government after the Shiv Sena quit the NDA last year. By 2024, the BJP may lose more allies. *NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE*

LAC standoff

Sir, The India-China border standoff is continuing. The scene resembles the 1962 tensions that led to war. The incursions by the Chinese army are continuing unabated. With the winter only six to eight weeks away, fresh positions have been occupied at LAC, and this is a matter of grave concern. It's high time that the two nations hold talks and solve the bilateral issues on the sideline of the G-20 Summit in November. It is good that India and China held talks to cool down tension along the border after the firing incident. The dispute may spill over to other areas along the long border. Confidence Building Measures have ensured that chances of armaments use such as missiles are less. The weather condition in approaching winter months would make the scenario more difficult for our soldiers. *P Shantarani Jena, GANJAM*

Social distancing

Sir, Covid management in the last six months has gained strength. The warriors have been doing their best, though at times a few of them are hauled up for dereliction of their duties. There have been umpteen appeals from all quarters starting from the PM to the CM to all, to adhere to the health protocol that includes social distancing. This has been criticised by many, who opine that maintaining social distancing is not all that important. They feel that until the vaccine arrives, there is a need only for physical distancing, wearing of masks, washing of hands with soaps etc, so as to check the spread of the virus. By calling upon the general public to observe social distancing, the government may be sending a wrong signal. Our traditions are different. *Sanjib Das, CUTTACK*

‘Farm Bills part of conspiracy to destroy farmers’

CM AMARINDER SINGH SAYS THE LEGISLATIONS WOULD UNDO THE SACRIFICES MADE BY PUNJAB AND ITS FARMERS OVER 65 YEARS TO MAKE INDIA SELF-SUFFICIENT IN FOOD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Sept 18: Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Friday slammed the farm legislations, saying they are “being forced” on the nation by the BJP-led Centre as part of its ‘Kisan maaru, Punjab maaru’ (Destroy Farmers, Destroy Punjab) “conspiracy”.

“I don’t know what enmity the BJP and the Akalis have with Punjab and why they are out to destroy us,” said the CM while launching the ‘Kisan Mela’ of the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana.

The launch was held with virtual connectivity at 100 locations and participated by farmers, farmer representatives and other stakeholders, according to a government release here.

He again warned that the legislations would lead to growing angst among the people in the border state, thus giving Pakistan the opportunity to foment trouble.

Singh said the “anti-farmer”



I don't know what enmity the BJP and the Akalis have with Punjab and why they are out to destroy us
AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CM

move will spoil the environment of Punjab.

Delhi has to rethink on this issue, he stressed, adding that the legis-

lations would undo the sacrifices made by Punjab and its farmers over 65 years to make India self-sufficient in food.

Accusing the Akalis of playing their “own political games” in this entire affair, the CM asked the Badals why the SAD had failed to stand with the Punjab government on these bills and even on the critical water issue.

He pointed out that already due to the Sutlej Yamuna Link (SYL) issue, the situation was perilous and the SAD had only contributed to the crisis by “supporting” the farm ordinances.

The CM said notwithstanding the Centre’s denials these new laws will eventually pave the way for the elimination of the MSP (minimum support price) regime and end of the FCI (food corporation of India), leaving the farmers at the “mercy” of big corporates.

The CM also trashed the Centre’s guarantee of MSP not being tampered with, saying it was a Constitutional guarantee given by Parliament, which, in fact, the incumbent government at the Centre

was trying to “destroy” with their brute majority.

Even the MSP already announced on items like maize is not being given to the farmers, he noted, questioning the sincerity of the government of India.

He categorically rejected the BJP and the SAD claims that Punjab was on board with the farm ordinances.

With only 13 seats in Lok Sabha, the Congress was browbeaten and the “dangerous and vicious” bills were passed by the Centre with brute majority, he pointed out.

Taking a dig at Harsimrat Badal’s remarks of standing with her “farmer brethren” by resigning from the Union Cabinet, Singh asked why she forgot that the farmers were her brothers when the Centre broke in the ordinances.

Had SAD stood with his government from the outset and put pressure on their ally, the BJP, the current situation may not have arisen, he added.

Not providing internet to poor students amounts to digital apartheid: HC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Delhi High Court Friday directed private as well as government schools like KVs to provide gadgets and an internet package to poor students for online classes, saying not doing so amounts to ‘discrimination’ and creates a ‘digital apartheid’.

To separate such students from others in the same class due to non-availability of a gadget or a device would generate “a feeling of inferiority” that may “affect their hearts and minds unlikely ever to be undone,” the court said.

A bench of Justices Manmohan and Sanjeev Narula said if a school decides to voluntarily provide synchronous face-to-face real time online education as a method of teaching, “they will have to ensure that the students belonging to economically weaker section (EWS) or disadvantaged group (DG) category also have access and are able to avail the same.”

The court said: “Segregation in education is a denial of equal protection of the laws under Article 14 of the Constitution and in particular the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009.” By not providing the required equipment to the EWS/DG students, the private schools were putting a financial barrier which prevented them from pursuing and completing their elementary education in the present pandemic, it said. This is a violation of the RTE Act provisions, the bench said, rejected as “misconceived” the argument of the private schools that they are required to provide the

equipment to EWS/DG students only if they are doing so in case of the fee paying students.

The judgment came on a PIL by NGO Justice for All, represented by advocate Khagesh Jha, seeking directions to the Centre and the Delhi government to provide free laptops, tablets or mobile phones to poor kids so that they can access classes online during the COVID-19 lockdown.

While directing the private unaided schools to provide the required equipment and internet pack to the EWS/DG students, the court said they “shall be entitled to claim reimbursement of reasonable cost” from the state for procuring the same under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, “even though the State was not providing the same to its students”.

The bench also directed constitution of a three-member committee, comprising education secretary from the Centre or his nominee, Delhi government’s education secretary or his nominee and a representative of the private schools, to expedite and streamline the process of identifying and supplying the gadgets to poor and disadvantaged students. The court said the committee shall also frame standard operating procedures (SOPs) for identifying the standard of the equipment and internet package to be supplied to the poor and disadvantaged students.

This would ensure uniformity in the gadgets and internet package being used by all the poor and disadvantaged students, the bench said.

Saddened, my voice wasn’t heard: Badal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: A day after resigning from Union Cabinet in protest against farm Bills, senior SAD leader Harsimrat Kaur Badal Friday said she feels ‘saddened’ that her voice in support of farmers was not heard and demanded that the government should pause on these legislations by referring them to a parliamentary panel for wider consultations.

“I left my mother in ICU in the hospital to fulfill my duty to attend Parliament debate on these three legislations and register my protest. Thereafter I resigned in protest against these proposed legislations,” Badal told PTI.

She resigned soon after her husband and SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal strongly opposed the bills in Lok Sabha Thursday night, claiming these proposed legislations will “destroy” the agriculture sector in Punjab, and announced that Harsimrat Kaur Badal will quit the government in protest against these three bills.

SAD voted against the three Bills -- Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, the Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, and the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, which were passed by voice vote in Lok Sabha. Congress and several other opposition parties are also opposing these bills, while SAD is the only NDA member to come out against these proposed legislations that seek to replace the ordinances already promulgated by the government.

“I kept on protesting ever since these ordinances were circulated for comments in the Cabinet. I was

acting like a bridge between farmers and the government to clear all doubts and fears of farmers. I kept on pleading that the government should not bring these bills until all apprehensions and fears of farmers are cleared,” she said.

She said there is no point in bringing these bills while presenting them as being in the interest of farmers when the farmers themselves have apprehensions about these measures.

“I feel very saddened about the fact that my voice was not heard in the Cabinet and the government did not send it to a parliamentary select committee for consultations with all stakeholders including farmers. If my voice had been heard, farmers would not have come out on roads to protest,” she said.

Emphasising that the government should not rush with these bills, Badal said it should be referred to a select committee of Parliament and all stakeholders should be consulted on these proposed legislations. On her resignation, Harsimrat said, “Please don’t see this as a resignation, as this was my duty as a representative of Punjab and of farmers.”

On Punjab Chief Minister and Congress leader Amarinder Singh calling her resignation a “drama”, hitting back at him she said, “He himself is the biggest drama and the biggest liar.” “Amarinder Singh and Congress are doing double-speak. When these ordinances were planned, all chief ministers were consulted and he had concurred. Also, these three bills were part of the Congress party’s manifesto for the 2017 assembly elections manifesto and the 2019 Lok Sabha elections,” she said.

Badal said Singh failed to fulfill all other promises made in the Congress party’s manifesto, barring this one and farmers in Punjab are now on roads and are paying the price for his misdeeds.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar had said Thursday in Lok Sabha that farmers will be free to sell their produce to anyone and these bills will increase competition and promote private investment, which will help in the development of farm infrastructure and generate employment.

However, opposition parties have slammed the bills as “anti-farmers”, claiming that the agriculture sector will be left to the fate of corporate interests.

ON WARPATH



Farmers raise slogans during an ongoing protest outside the residence of former Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal against three agriculture-related Bills at Badal village in Sri Muktsar Sahib, Friday.

Schools in national capital to remain closed till Oct 5

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: All schools in the national capital will continue to remain closed till October 5 in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Delhi government announced Friday.

“All government and private schools will remain closed for all students till October 5. However, on-line teaching and learning activities will continue as usual,” an official order issued by the Directorate of Education (DoE) said.

School principals are authorised to call “staff as per requirement for smooth conduct of online classes or any other work,” it said.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 when the Centre announced a countrywide classroom shutdown as part of measures to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus.

March 25, the central government announced a nationwide lock-



down to prevent the virus from spreading.

While several restrictions have been eased in different phases of ‘Unlock’ since June 8, educational institutions continue to be closed.

As per the latest guidelines under ‘Unlock’, schools have been allowed to call students from class 9 to 12 to schools on voluntary basis from September 21.

SAD part of NDA, Badal’s exit its political decision: Punjab BJP chief

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chandigarh, Sept 18: Punjab BJP chief Ashwani Sharma Friday dubbed the resignation of Harsimrat Kaur Badal from the Union cabinet as the “political decision” of the Shiromani Akali Dal and asserted that it is a part of the National Democratic Alliance.

Food Processing Industries Minister Badal had resigned Thursday in protest against three farm sector bills. Speaking to media personnel, Sharma said the three bills brought by the BJP-led Centre are in the interest of the farming community.

“Akali Dal is a part of the NDA but it is a separate political outfit. They have taken this decision because of some political reasons. We have an alliance (SAD-BJP) but both are different political outfits. They (SAD) have taken a political decision,” said Sharma.

On continuation of alliance be-

SAFFRON PARTY’S STRATEGISTS FAILED

New Delhi: The BJP failed to stop Harsimrat Kaur Badal from exiting the Narendra Modi-led NDA government, even as it had roped in its key strategists to prevent the exit of the lone Akali Dal minister. This is the first resignation in Modi government 2.0. Even as the BJP was constantly trying to convince Harsimrat Kaur and the SAD, it did not succeed. In a press conference Wednesday, BJP president JP Nadra had said that the party had held talks with the SAD over the agriculture-related bills and that confusion is being spread over the bills. He also said that party is in talks with its ally and all the confusion would be cleared. However, Thursday, Harsimrat Kaur walked out of the cabinet as the bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha. The SAD was opposing all three bills related to agricultural reforms right from the beginning. Its Rajya Sabha Chief Whip Naresh Gujral Wednesday had directed the party MPs to vote against them. BJP sources told IANS that talks were on between the party strategists and the SAD over the issue, and that the party had engaged a leader of its Punjab unit for negotiations along with its ally. The BJP hoped through negotiations, it would convince the SAD to vote in favour of the agricultural bills.

tween both the parties, Sharma said they (Akalis) had themselves said they are part of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

SAD chief Sukhbir Singh Badal had said in Delhi Thursday that his party’s future course of action and whether to stay in the BJP-led alliance or not will be decided in a

party meeting later.

Sharma said these three bills would “surely play an important role in boosting farm income.”

The Pujab BJP president said Prime Minister Narendra Modi had assured that the minimum support price and government procurement of crops would continue.

UNDER PRESSURE

Large-scale protests by farmers in Punjab against these measures have put the regional party, which draws its support mainly from peasants, under pressure, culminating in the resignation of its only representative in the government

BJP and SAD have been seen as natural allies which date back to the days of Jan Sangh, the precursor of the saffron party. Both parties have been contesting elections in alliance since 1997



RESEARCHERS SAY STUDIES ON YOGA AND MEDITATION IN MANAGING FLU SYMPTOMS DURING AN INFLUENZA SEASON HAVE SHOWN PROMISING RESULTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Clinicians and meditation practitioners have undertaken research in at least three Delhi hospitals to ascertain if yoga can improve the overall condition of COVID-19 patients.

The Department of Science and

Technology under the Ministry of Science and Technology had invited proposals for the study in April. In the national capital, the research is being conducted at the AIIMS, the Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital and the Rajiv Gandhi Super Specialty Hospital (RGSSH).

The study evaluates the effect of yoga - pranayama and relaxation - on stress, mood, sleep quality, symptom severity, quality of life and clinical outcomes in coronavirus patients, Dr Ajit Jain, the nodal officer for COVID-19 at RGSSH, said. Only those diagnosed with COVID-19 through RT-PCR testing, who have mild symptoms and are aged between 18 and 60 years are being included in the research, he said.

Those suffering from severe coronavirus infection, uncontrolled diabetes, hypertension, cancer, autoimmune and neurodegenerative



diseases cannot participate in it.

The research involves a mobile application-based yoga intervention programme and non-obtrusive, non-contact monitoring of the patients’ vitals, using a novel technology - the Dozee sensor mat.

The sensor mat is placed under a patient’s mattress. It can figure how healthy the patient is or if he is developing any disorder like sleep apnea or heart disorders.

It monitors the heart rate, the respiration rate, stress levels and

sleep quality, the doctor said.

“The study will assess if yoga intervention helped reduce stress, improve sleep and vitals in this population,” reads its concept note.

COVID-19 patients remain in isolation during treatment and develop anxiety and stress due to confinement and uncertainty of the disease trajectory.

Psychological distress due to isolation can down-regulate the immune defences of patients and increase the severity of the illness, Jain said. The researchers are using a mobile-based yoga application that can deliver yoga modules and evaluating the response of the patients using the sensor mat.

Researchers say studies on yoga and meditation in managing flu symptoms during an influenza season have shown promising results.

of the day quote

Prime Minister Narendra Modi removed feudal customs and the red beacon culture to transform governance which perturbed those who regarded circumambulation in the corridors of power as their strength

MUKHTAR ABBAS NAQVI | UNION MINISTER

The election in Bihar seems to be becoming one-sided where the NDA will win with a huge margin. We have Narendra Modi and Nitish Kumar on the one hand, who believe in development and an opposition that is in jail

SAMBIT PATRA | BJP SPOKESPERSON

These path-breaking legislations of the Modi government will transform the agriculture sector, set farmers free from the clutches of middlemen and help them overcome other obstacles. These bills will provide farmers with new avenues to sell their produce, which will increase their income

AMIT SHAH | UNION HOME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

German woman found dead

Panaji: A 53-year-old German woman has been found dead in her apartment in the village of Canacona in South Goa district, police said Friday. The remains of Stephanie Hesser were found only after her daughter flew in from Germany, after she failed to get through to her mother over the last few weeks despite several calls. "Victim's daughter Himani Hessar, 20, came down to Goa as her mother was not responding to calls," the Goa Police said in a statement. Hessar had to break down the door of the apartment located in Canacona, a popular beach hub for foreign tourists who stay in Goa for a longer duration.

3 youths arrested

Hyderabad: Police in Hyderabad have arrested three youths for blackmailing a Class 10 girl after befriending her over social media. The accused were arrested by Malkajgiri police under Cyberabad police commissionerate limits after a complaint was lodged by the girl's family. According to police, the girl's parents had recently bought her a smartphone to attend online classes. She started chatting with the three youth on Instagram. The accused, all minors, had also met the girl and taken a few photographs and made some videos. After a few days, they started blackmailing her by threatening to upload the videos and photographs on social media.

Cop suspended

Hyderabad: A birthday party thrown by a police constable led to the spread of COVID-19 among the police personnel in Rachakonda police commissionerate here. Taking serious note of the violation of COVID rules by constable Shiv Kumar, Rachakonda Police Commissioner Mahesh Bhagwat ordered his suspension. Two other Constables were issued charge memo while a show-cause notice served on an inspector.

Girl dies

Hyderabad: A 12-year-old girl died after falling into a drain here following heavy rain, police said Friday. Her mother lodged a complaint when the girl did not return after playing Thursday evening. She could not be found Thursday night and rescue workers conducted searches at the drains.

Day after RS speech, BJP MP tests Covid+ve

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 18: Bharatiya Janata Party's Rajya Sabha member Vinay Sahasrabudde has tested positive for COVID-19 after giving an elaborate speech on Maharashtra's handling of the pandemic Wednesday, and TMC MP Derek O'Brien has raised a red flag.

"He made a 15 min speech in Parliament sitting in the Treasury benches. He would have also spent time in RS lobby & Central Hall. I appeal to all RS colleagues who came into contact with him or were sitting near him, Please Isolate," O'Brien remarked by taking to Twitter.

Sahasrabudde said that after having a headache and mild fever, he got examined following which he tested positive for Covid-19. Interestingly, he tested negative before attending the monsoon session of Parliament.

September 16, Sahasrabudde hit back hard at the Congress over its allegations of a 'sudden lockdown'. He said that the Chief Ministers of the states were consulted many times during the decision-making process.

"None of the Chief Ministers in about 15 meetings with the PM and other ministers ever said the lockdown shouldn't be imposed,"



Vinay Sahasrabudde said that after having a headache and mild fever, he got examined following which he tested positive for Covid-19

he said while speaking in the Upper House. He added, "This double-faced behaviour of the Opposition should be avoided."

He also made numerous references to Mumbai and Maharashtra to corner the Uddhav Thackeray government. Maharashtra has the maximum number of Covid cases in the country. However, he has now contracted the virus and sent alarm bells ringing. The TMC MP's tweet just amplified that.

Army smells a rat in Shopian killings

July 18, the Army claimed three militants were killed in Amshipura village in the higher reaches of south Kashmir's Shopian district

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Sept 18: The Army has found "prima facie" evidence its troops "exceeded" powers under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act during an encounter in Kashmir's Shopian district in which three men were killed in July this year and has initiated disciplinary proceedings, officials said Friday.

July 18, the Army claimed three militants were killed in Amshipura village in the higher reaches of south Kashmir's Shopian district. Committed to ethical conduct during anti-militancy operations, the Army initiated an inquiry after social media reports indicated the three men were from Rajouri district in Jammu and had gone missing at Amshipura, said Col Rajesh Kalra, the defence spokesperson in Srinagar.

The probe was completed in a record four weeks. The families of the three men from Rajouri who worked as labourers in Shopian had also filed a police complaint. In a brief statement, the Army said the Shopian operation contravened the do's and don'ts of the Chief of Army Staff approved by the Supreme Court.

"The inquiry has brought out certain prima facie evidence indicating



that during the operation, powers vested under the AFSPA 1990 were exceeded and the Do's and Don'ts of Chief of Army Staff as approved by the Supreme Court have been contravened." Consequently, the competent disciplinary authority has directed to initiate disciplinary proceedings under the Army Act against those found prima facie answerable," the statement said.

It is not immediately clear how many Army men are being proceeded against. The evidence collected indicates the three "uniden-

formation" about the case to step forward and share it with the court of inquiry instituted by the Army.

Relatives of the three youths, belonging to Dhar Sakri village in Kotranka of Rajouri area in Poonch, had lodged a written missing persons report in the local police station after they lost contact with them July 17. The three were working as labourers in apple and walnut orchards in Amshipura.

The relatives said in their complaint that they had last spoken to the three July 16 when they informed their families they had got a room in Amshipura. The room was the site of the encounter two days later, the complaint stated. Police is also probing the three youths' call details and why they jumped out of a window when an operation was launched at their rented accommodation, a police official said.

He added that their presence in around strategic places in Shopian since their arrival was also being investigated. According to the rules, a Summary of Evidence will now be initiated against the erring Army personnel after which Court Martial proceedings will begin. The Army has been maintaining high standards of transparency and punishing officials whenever rules are violated, officials said.

ARDUOUS JOURNEY



Farmers row a boat loaded with rice sacks on Hooghly river in Nadia district, Friday

PTI PHOTO

SC to hear plea against ART

The plea has alleged that ART performed on livestock/animals are violative of some provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act 1960, the Biological Diversity Act 2002 and the Environment (Protection) Act 1986

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Supreme Court Friday agreed to hear a plea which has sought declaring as "cruel" and "illegal" the use of artificial reproduction technique (ART) performed on animals without any proven bio-medical need.

A bench headed by Chief Justice S A Bobde issued notices to the Centre and others, including Animal Welfare Board of India and National Biodiversity Authority, seeking their responses on the plea against cruelty meted out to animals during the ART claiming it is unconstitutional. "Issue notice," the bench, also comprising Justices A S Bopanna and V Ramasubramanian, said. The plea has



alleged that ART performed on livestock/animals are violative of some provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animal Act 1960, the Biological Diversity Act 2002, the Environment (Protection) Act 1986, and also the Constitution which mandates protection of environment and nature along with animals.

"Reproduction is a basic natural and biological need as well as urge of all living beings, save and except monosexual organisms. No

authority can arbitrarily trample or destroy the rights or needs of any living being including animals by means of policy or practice, which in itself against nature and natural principles," said the plea, filed by Madurai-based S Venkatesh.

"Bypassing and preventing the natural mating and artificially reproducing as a principle/policy is by itself cruel; not to mention the cruelty or pain inflicted by the artificial process and methods of reproduction in animals," it said.

It has also sought an interim direction that ART on livestock/animals, including but not limited to collection and extraction of semen from bulls and male animals, be stayed pending disposal of the petition.

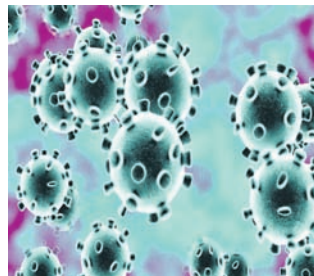
MONSOON SESSION

Daily antigen test now mandatory

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Amid fresh cases of coronavirus among MPs, reporters and parliamentary staff entering the Parliament complex will have to undergo mandatory antigen test on a daily basis, according to a new protocol put in place.

Members of both Houses are undergoing RT-PCR test on regular intervals on a voluntary basis, said a senior Parliament official. A Member of Parliament can undergo RT-PCR test as many times he or she likes.



Journalists covering the Monsoon Session from press galleries of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha also have the option to undergo the RT-PCR test which is valid for 72 hours. Since the report of the much reliable RT-PCR takes time, antigen test has been made mandatory on a daily basis.

Government officials accompanying their respective ministers during bill discussions also have to show a negative report of RT-PCR test taken within the last 72 hours of their visit to the complex. Union ministers Nitin Gadkari and Prahlad Patel have tested positive for Covid-19. Both had attended the ongoing session which began September 14. Several MPs had tested positive for Covid-19 around the time the Session began and they were advised not to attend proceedings.

EYEBALL-TO-EYEBALL DEPLOYMENT

Indian, Chinese troops in rifle range at 4 places at Pangong Lake

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 18: Despite the Indian and Chinese foreign ministers agreeing to reduce tensions along the disputed border, both the countries troops are in rifle range at four locations at Pangong Lake in Eastern Ladakh, a senior official in the security establishment said.

Worryingly, the eyeball-to-eyeball deployment, at least in one place, is at a place where troops had disengaged previously after military-level talks. And the fresh eyeball-to-eyeball deployment comes at a time when China is yet to in-

dicate the date for the next senior military-level talks.

"At these places, troops and materials are just a few hundred meters away," the source said, adding they are at three locations on the southern bank of the lake and one on the northern bank. On the north bank, the troops are facing each other between Finger 3 and Finger 4 where warning shots were fired in the air by both the armies. On the south bank of the lake, the troops are only a few meters apart at Spanggur Gap, Mukhpari and Rezang La. China made the first provoca-



tive military moves, after which India too deployed its troops at these locations. At these two

places, both the countries' troops have fired warning shots to intimidate each other.

The Chinese People's Liberation Army made attempts to occupy the area between Finger 3 and 4 earlier this month which led to the firing of around 200 shots in the air. Thereafter, both the armies are now a few hundred meters apart. The mountain spurs jutting into the lake are referred to as 'Fingers' in military parlance.

The PLA troops armed with spears and guns again tried to start a medieval-style fight similar to the June 14 clash at Galwan Valley, in which 20 Indian soldiers and an unknown number

of Chinese soldiers died. In the confrontation, shots were fired for the first time in 45 years along the Line of Actual Control.

It was after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi reached an agreement in Moscow that the situation has calmed down a bit at the borders. India has asked China to completely withdraw its troops from Pangong Tso. But China has refused to budge.

Both the countries are engaged in the current four-month-long standoff at the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh.

Boy dupes grandpa of ₹15L

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Agra, Sept 18: A 17-year-old boy allegedly transferred Rs 15 lakh from his grandfather's bank account to his e-wallet to pay for his lavish lifestyle.

"An 80-year-old retired Air Force officer Raja Ram reported that illegal online transactions of Rs 15 lakh has been done from his account by an unidentified person within five months, from March to August this year. A case was registered under Section 420 of IPC at Shahganj police station," Agra Senior Superintendent of Police Babloo Kumar said.

The victim claimed that he neither received any call nor had given his OTP to anyone regarding any online transaction. The complaint was transferred to the district cyber-crime cell. Investigations revealed that the money was transferred from Raja Ram's account into

Paytm and Mobikwik wallets, which were created by using a fake SIM card. The amount was later transferred to the account of the victim's daughter-in-law, whose son was involved in it.

According to Cybercrime officer Vijay Tomar, the boy had been regularly withdrawing small amounts of money. He used to delete the SMS alerts from his grandfather's phone after giving OTP to his friend, Mohit Solanki, 21, who was the mastermind.

Two other persons who were involved in the crime were identified as Krishna, 24, who provided a fake SIM card for creating the Paytm and Mobikwik accounts and Aakash Kumar, 20, who converted some online transactions into cash for spending on liquor and buying mobile phones. All the accused have been arrested and the minor has also been apprehended.

BIHAR POLLS

Separate queues for corona patients

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Sept 18: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has asked authorities to prepare a separate voters list for corona-positive patients.

The decision was taken Friday amid campaigning for the Bihar elections, expected to be held in October or November this year.

The idea is to prevent the transmission and spread of the virus, while allowing patients to exercise their right to vote. As per the Commission's strategy, there would

be separate queues for Covid patients at polling stations.

The ECI has also made it mandatory for polling officers, presiding officers and polling agents of different political parties to be equipped with proper safety gear.

In another development, the ECI is expected to raise the limit for expenses which can be incurred by individual candidates on the election campaign. An ECI officer said that different political parties have urged that the expenditure limit be raised to Rs 2 lakh owing to the coronavirus pandemic.

of the day quote

In view of the tremendous success of this scheme (BPO) in Tamil Nadu, I request you to allot 10,000 seats under the India BPO Promotion Scheme to Tamil Nadu. The success rate of the scheme in state in terms of commencement of operation is more than 93 per cent

K PALANISWAMI | TAMIL NADU CHIEF MINISTER

Their (healthcare workers') safety and respect are more important than beating plates or lighting lamps. Modi government, why this insult of corona warriors?

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Some people are trying to create confusion on these farm bills. There is no question of stopping procurement on the basis of MSP from farmers. Neither Prime Minister Narendra Modi nor BJP will ever allow this

SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN | CHIEF MINISTER OF MADHYA PRADESH

SHORT TAKES

PM inaugurates 'Kosi Rail Mahasetu'

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday inaugurated the 'Kosi Rail Mahasetu' and a slew of other rail projects worth about ₹3,000 crore for Bihar and hit out at the previous UPA government for the "slow" progress in the development of railways in the state during its rule. Modi dedicated the 'Kosi Rail Mahasetu' to the nation and inaugurated through video conference new railway lines and electrification projects in the state.

Schools to reopen in Himachal

Shimla: The Himachal Pradesh Cabinet Friday gave its nod to reopen educational institutions outside the containment zones in the state, from September 21 as per the standard operating procedure of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. It was decided that the institutes would open with 50 per cent teaching and non-teaching staff for students from class IX to XII, provided the students are willing to take guidance from the teachers.

Fashion designer found dead

Kolkata: Eminent fashion designer Sharbari Dutta was found dead under mysterious circumstances at her Kolkata residence, prompting the police to register a case of unnatural death and initiate a probe on Friday. Dutta, 63, was found dead in the bathroom of her residence on Broad Street in south Kolkata Thursday midnight, a senior police officer said.

Dharavi's nCoV tally goes up

Mumbai: The COVID-19 infection count in Dharavi, the largest slum in Mumbai, rose to 2,993 with the addition of 18 cases Friday, a senior Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) official said.

2 held for taking bribe

Thane: The ACB has arrested two persons, including a junior revenue department official, for allegedly accepting a bribe of ₹20,000 from a local resident here in Maharashtra, the anti-graft agency said Friday.



Uttarakhand to have solar fences, elephant-resistant walls to protect crops from wild animals
TRIVENDRA SINGH RAWAT | UTTARAKHAND CHIEF MINISTER

Pakistan starts anti-India campaign over Kashmir

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 18: To garner international community's attention over the Jammu and Kashmir issue ahead of the 75th session general debate in the UN General Assembly (UNGA), Pakistan has planned an online anti-India and free Kashmir propaganda campaign on social media platforms from Saturday, an intelligence source said.

"Pakistan has conspired and executed a Twitter campaign throughout the world with the hashtag #KashmirWantsFreedom on September 19, 2020," said the source. The source said that the "propaganda seems to be targeting present Indian government" ahead of 75th session general debate of the UN General Assembly and it is based on "completely baseless and fictitious arguments".

The Pakistan Army and Inter-Services Intelligence will be executing the online anti-India campaign from Saturday.

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan will address the 75th session of the UN General Assembly on September 25. A day later, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to address the session.

The UNGA session opened on September 15 against the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic. Representatives of the UN member



states will be delivering virtual addresses during the general debate which will begin on September 22.

They have planned campaigns in Australia and New Zealand at 10 a.m. local time.

In the US, they have planned a campaign in New York at 11 a.m. and California at 8 p.m.

Pakistan will carry out an online campaign in Toronto in Canada at 11 a.m. In the UK, they will start the campaign at 1 p.m. In Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Qatar, Pakistan has planned at 3 p.m. In Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, the campaign started will start at 5.30 p.m., and in Pakistan, they will start at 5 p.m. and at Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia

at 8 p.m. All at local time.

"Pakistan has always been trying to undermine the efforts of India in developing Kashmir by all means possible be it terrorism or use of various platforms to incorrectly portray the situation in Kashmir," a senior IPS officer said.

Pakistan started an anti-India campaign after the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5.

"This year, on the anniversary of the event, Director General (DG) Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) along with the ISI had launched a series of events to portray the situation in Kashmir as alarming and to portray India as an oppressor," he said.

'Bhagwati Van' to be UP's spiritual tourism hub

The Bhagwati Van is a man-made forest which is unique in more ways than one

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 18: The Yogi Adityanath government plans to develop an eco-tourism spot that could provide a perfect place for people looking for a spiritual sojourn.

The government has decided to develop the Bhagwati Van along the Ganga, in Kasganj district, as a centre for spiritual tourism.

The forest has been raised over 316 hectares of land, which has been reclaimed by the state government from encroachers.

A total of 3.5 lakh trees, of more than 250 species, have been planted here. Divisional forest officer (DFO), Kasganj, Diwaker Kumar Vashisht said, "We had been meeting villagers and convincing them since October last year to remove the encroachments. After the villagers agreed to vacate the land, we formed a local 'samiti' of villagers. It was all done without any public agitation."

The forest, which has its base in Puranic scriptures, is at Datlana Khaam village and has been declared as a Ganga 'gram'.

"It has Soronji 'teerth' and devotees from Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and other states come to this shrine," said Vashisht.

The entire reclaimed land is divided into three parts. The forest raised at the spot has trees planted in specific formations to create 'vatikas' (gardens) mentioned in religious scriptures.

"We planted over two lakh trees in Mahavan forest, which is one of the three parts and has species like Sheesham and Khair that are naturally found along the Ganga. The other part is 'Shreevan', which has connection with 'Arth Ganga' under the central government's Namami Gange project. This has species which will



be economically beneficial to farmers. We had promised farmers that we would help them increase their income through this plantation," he said. The third is 'Tapovan' which has 51,000 trees and Vyas and Vidur 'kutirs'. At present, the forest is being managed by the forest department but later local groups of villagers may look after it. The Dhanvantari Vatika has 75 types of medicinal plants and herbs. The 'Nakshatra Vatika' has 27 tree varieties, planted in specific positions to represent 27 'nakshatras' (planets).

AMU HIKES FEES FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

For foreign students, taking admission in Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) is set to become costlier as the varsity has increased the fee for all its courses ranging from 6 to 54 per cent for the next academic session



RAJYA SABHA PASSES HOMOEOPATHY BILLS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 18: The Rajya Sabha Friday passed two Bills -- the Indian Medicine Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and Homoeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

Replying during the discussion on the Bills, Health Minister Harsh Vardhan said, "The Ordinance was necessitated as Parliament was not in session."

The Minister said that Yoga and Naturopathy will also be promoted in due course, as demanded by Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) MP Manoj Jha.

During the discussion, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Prasanna Acharya supported the Bill, but questioned the need for the ordinance. He said only in extraordinary situations the ordinance route should be adopted.

Speaking on the Bill, BJP MP Sudhanshu Trivedi said that new things are always opposed first, but during covid times homeopathy medicine was prescribed as an immunity booster.

Samajwadi Party (SP) member Ram Gopal Yadav asked the government not to delay the constitution of the commission as homeopathy is a necessity for the poor as allopathy is costly and in covid times private hospitals are charging more than Rs one lakh per day.

The DMK MP T. Siva said, "The government is taking away the powers of the states", and alleged that its diluting the federalism.

'30 vaccine candidates under development'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sep 18: Nearly 30 Covid vaccine candidates in pre-clinical and clinical stages are under development by pharmaceutical industry and academia in India. While three of them are in advanced stage of Phase I/II/III trials and 4 are in advanced pre-clinical development stage, union health minister, Dr Harsh Vardhan, told the Parliament Friday.

Vardhan informed the House that the government has extended its support for the development of vaccine associated research resources, establishment of clinical trial sites

and notifying enabling regulatory guidelines. He also informed that the distribution of Covid-19 vaccine, when available, would be done as per the protocols under Universal Immunization Program (UIP).

"A high-level expert group is looking into matters related to vaccine distribution and immunisation. The distribution and immunisation of the Coronavirus vaccine are subject to availability. Once available, the Coronavirus vaccine distribution follows the same route as for the current practice of vaccines distribution under," Vardhan apprised the Lok Sabha Friday through a written reply.

Besides, he also said that genome sequencing of 1000 SARS-CoV-2



RNA has been successfully completed. It was led by National Institute of Biomedical Genomics (NIBMG-Kalyani), an autonomous institute under the department of biotechnology, situated in West Bengal.

Five other national clusters, clinical organizations and other hospitals took part in the process as well. Earlier, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) had announced that three vaccine candidates against Covid-19 are in the clinical stage of trials in India and one of them would soon begin Phase 3 trials after getting clearances.

Covid-19 vaccine candidates being manufactured by Cadila Healthcare and Bharat Biotech have completed the first phase of the trial while the Serum Institute of India (SII) will begin with Phase 3 trial after getting the nod, Baram Bhargava, ICMR director general, had informed during the health ministry's briefing, Tuesday.

MATTER OF FAITH



Devotees (Kanwariyas) carry metal pots filled with holy water after taking a dip in Ganga river at Padilla Mahadev temple, during the Manmas month, amid the Coronavirus pandemic, in Prayagraj

PTI PHOTO

Dubai suspends AI Express flights for a day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Air India Express said its flights were suspended for 24 hours Friday by the Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) for bringing two passengers with COVID-positive certificates August 28 and September 4.

As per the UAE government rules, each passenger travelling from India is required to bring an original COVID-negative certificate from the RT-PCR test done 96 hours prior to the journey.

Earlier during the day, Air India Express said it had received a "notice of suspension" from the DCAA September 17 to suspend its Dubai flights from September 18 to October 2 for carrying two passengers, who had COVID-positive certificates with them, on different flights.

Parliament nod to Bill to cut MPs' salaries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 18: Parliament Friday passed a bill to reduce salaries of MPs by 30 per cent for one year to augment financial resources required to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, with members supporting the move but demanding restoration of the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS). Rajya Sabha passed the bill Friday, while Lok Sabha had cleared it Tuesday. Opposition members in both the House sup-

COST CUTS OVER PANDEMIC

ported the move, but pressed for restoration of MPLADS fund, which has been suspended for two years.

They also said public money should not be spent under such circumstances on projects, including a new Parliament building and bullet train. Lok Sabha has 543 members and Rajya Sabha has a strength of 245. A member of Parliament

draws a salary of Rs one lakh per month and a constituency allowance of Rs 70,000 per month, besides other allowances. The Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2020 will replace a similar ordinance issued in April this year. The consolidated amount of MPLADS funds for two years -- ₹7,900 crore -- will go to the Consolidated Fund of India. The Upper House also passed the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Bill, 2020, which pro-

poses to reduce the salaries and allowances of ministers by 30 per cent for a year.

While supporting the cuts in salaries, most Opposition members who participated in the discussion in Rajya Sabha Friday urged the government to review its decision to suspend the MPLADS fund for two years, saying it was necessary to carry out development works in their respective constituencies. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said this was a temporary suspension.

Govt should provide free smartphones to all school kids: NGO

THE REPORT EXPRESSED CONCERN FOR MANY OF THE CHILDREN WHO HAVE BEEN EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL EDUCATION DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC AND VOICED FEAR THAT THEY MAY NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO SCHOOLS AGAIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 18: To ensure that no children are left behind in education in the COVID pandemic situation, governments should distribute textbooks, free smartphones or tablets to all school children, an NGO has said.

Also, states should provide free data package or reimburse the cost of data, which would also require substantial investment to strengthen digital infrastructure including the regular supply of electricity to all households, child right NGO CRY said in a report.

"A clear roadmap with timelines needs to be developed to ensure inclusive digital infrastructure are some of the key measures required for delivering online classes to the

last mile child," the report released on Tuesday said.

The report expressed concern for many of the children who have been excluded from school education during the COVID pandemic and voiced fear that they may not be able to return to schools again.

The CRY report also dwelt on the pandemic-triggered disruption in school meal services affecting the nutrition of 6-17 years children.

"As schools are closed across the country, the school feeding programme could no longer provide the much-needed free lunch to 115.9 million children who are enrolled under the Mid-Day Meal (MDM) scheme. To cater to the hunger of millions of children who depend on MDM as their source of only nutrition, government needs to de-



velop newer ways of delivering meals till schools are closed, it said.

Also, MDM coverage including the breakfast scheme need to be extended till secondary level, which clearly highlights the need for a significant increase in the MDM budget in the current and forth-

coming financial years by the government, it said. The report calls for developing systems for doorstep delivery of supplementary nutrition in the form of cooked food or take home ration for young children. To discuss some of the critical policy issues and practical challenges re-

lating to public provisioning of education for the children within 3 to 17 years during and beyond the pandemic, CRY and Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA) recently organised a Webinar that brought together academicians, policy experts, civil society leaders and child rights defenders.

Underscoring the need to look into the public provisioning framework for childrens education, Priti Mahara, Director, Policy, Research and Advocacy at CRY said at the webinar; humanitarian crises tend to hit the most vulnerable children the hardest, and COVID-19 is no exception. "It is evident how it has impacted school education, created a digital divide, limited access to social welfare, and compromised

health and nutrition schemes provided through schools. To address the new normal in education sector and to universalise education, adequate public provisioning will play a very crucial role."

It should be taken into account that childrens education, especially secondary education, had been traditionally under-prioritised and suffered further set back during the pandemic, Mahara said.

The suggestions emerging from the discussion will be collated and shared with the union and state governments with reference to the processes of revision of budget allocations for the current fiscal year (2020-21) and preparation of fresh budget estimates for the fiscal year 2021-22, which will be underway very soon, Mahara of CRY said.

of the day quote

I urge all parties to cease hostilities in Yemen. The United Nations will continue to support them in implementing these agreements

ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

The result of the 2020 presidential race could never be accurately determined in a Twitter post that would undermine any winner, including me

DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT

I am deeply concerned about this issue (Indo-China border row), which is why I authored a bipartisan resolution overwhelmingly approved by the House urging China to end its military provocations of India

RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY | INDIAN-AMERICAN CONGRESSMAN

SHORT TAKES

Gunmen kill five in Mexico

Celaya: Gunmen killed five people Thursday during an attack on a wake in central Mexico, sparking a manhunt that left one suspect dead and three under arrest, authorities said. The assailants opened fire at a home in the city of Celaya in Guanajuato state during a vigil for a 19-year-old man killed in an earlier attack at the same location. Police tracked down the suspects and a gun battle broke out in which one of the alleged attackers died.

Arrest warrants for Sharif

Islamabad: The Pakistan government has sent arrest warrants through its mission in London for deposed Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif who has been living in the UK for medical treatment, a media report said Friday. Sharif, 70, has been in London since November last year after the Lahore High Court granted him permission to go abroad for four weeks for treatment. The three-time premier, his daughter Maryam and son-in-law Muhammad Safdar were convicted in the Avenfield properties case July 6, 2018.

Noul makes landfall in Thailand

Bangkok: The Thai Meteorological Department (TMD) Friday issued a warning to 24 provinces to brace for flooding as tropical storm Noul made landfall in the country's north and north-east regions. Noul is as devastating as tropical storm Podul, which caused widespread flooding in the Nakhon Phanom province last August. Noul is currently increasing in strength as it approaches Vietnam and is likely to develop into a typhoon, said the TMD.

Peru Prez faces impeachment vote

Lima: Peruvian President Martín Vizcarra's job is on the line Friday as opposition lawmakers push through an impeachment hearing criticized as a hasty and poorly timed ouster attempt in one of the countries hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic. Lawmakers appeared to be far short of the two-thirds majority vote required to remove Vizcarra from office, but even if he dodged the impeachment attempt analysts warned that he would not escape the ordeal entirely unscathed.



I urge the world's billionaires to step up to help save some 30 million people he said are at risk of dying if they don't receive help from the World Food Programme

DAVID BEASLEY | UN FOOD CHIEF

NASA PLANS PLANETARY MISSION TO VENUS

NASA is considering approving by next April up to two planetary science missions from four proposals under review, including one to Venus that scientists involved in the project said could help determine whether or not that planet harbours life



China blames Uyghur Muslims' faith for their fate

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Beijing, Sept 18: Justifying its internment camps for Uyghur Muslims, the Chinese Communist Party regime has admitted that it has subjected, on an average around 1.3 million people to re-education since 2014.

The Xi Jinping government issued a 'white paper' titled 'Employment and Labour Rights in Xinjiang' published by its State Council Information Office.

Though the paper used euphemisms like "vocational training centers" for concentration camps and "education and employment training" for coercive mind rewiring practices and human rights abuse, it blamed Islamist radicalism for its policies. The CCP regime argued that concentration camps for Uyghurs were necessary because Muslim

XINJIANG CONCENTRATION CAMP



extremists in Xinjiang believe that their religion is superior to the laws of the state.

"For historical and a range of natural reasons, Xinjiang has long lagged behind other parts of the country in development,

and there is a large impoverished population. The four prefectures in southern Xinjiang, namely, Hotan, Kashgar, Aksu and Kizilsu Kirgiz, in particular have a poor eco-environment, weak economic foundations, and a serious short-

fall in employment carrying capacity. They are identified as areas of extreme poverty," the government paper said while contextualising the need for concentration camps.

"In addition, terrorists, separatists and religious extremists have long preached that 'the after-life is fated' and that 'religious teachings are superior to state laws', inciting the public to resist learning the standard spoken and written Chinese language, reject modern science, and refuse to improve their vocational skills, economic conditions, and the ability to better their own lives."

"As a result, some local people have outdated ideas; they suffer from poor education and employability, low employment rates and incomes, and have fallen into long-term poverty. Through vocational

training, Xinjiang has built a large knowledge-based, skilled and innovative workforce that meets the requirements of the new era," the CCP said in its paper.

The CCP admitted that every year from 2014 to 2019 Xinjiang "provided training sessions" to an average of 1.29 million urban and rural workers, of which 4,51,400 were in southern Xinjiang. "The trainees mastered at least one skill with employment potential, and the vast majority of them obtained vocational qualifications, skill level certificates, or specialized skill certificates, allowing them to go on to find stable employment," the government claimed.

From 2014 to 2019, the total number of people employed in Xinjiang rose from 11.35 million to 13.3 million, an increase of 17.2 per cent, the paper said.

IN SEARCH OF SHELTER



A man pulls a baby as refugees and migrants from the destroyed Moria move towards a new temporary camp during a police operation on the island of Lesbos, Greece

REUTERS PHOTO

EU UNVEILS PLAN TO COMBAT RACISM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brussels, Sept 18: The European Commission presented a series of measures Friday aimed at tackling structural racism and discrimination, acknowledging a blatant lack of diversity among the European Union's institutions.

The bloc's executive arm set out its action plan for the next five years, which includes strengthening the current legal framework, recruiting an anti-racism co-ordinator and increasing the diversity of EU staff.

The European Commission's vice-president for values and transparency, Vera Jourová, said that recent anti-racism protests in the US and Europe highlighted the need for action. "We have reached a moment of reckoning. The protests sent a clear message, change must happen now," Jourová said. "It won't be easy, but it must be done."

"We won't shy away from strengthening the legislation, if needed," she said. "The commission itself will adapt its recruiting policy to better reflect European society"

Twitter tightens security for politicians, scribes

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

San Francisco, Sept 18: Twitter Thursday said it is tightening security of high-profile politicians, campaigns and journalists as a "critical preventative step" ahead of the US presidential election.

Twitter will be implementing more sophisticated systems to detect suspicious activity and ramp up defenses intended to thwart hackers from taking over accounts, according to the social media platform popular with US President Donald Trump.

"Implementing these security measures is a critical preventative step," the tech firm's safety team said in a blog post. Twitter maintained that it is "focused on keeping high-profile accounts on Twitter safe and secure during the 2020 US election."

Accounts targeted for heightened security include federal and state politicians; political parties; candidates; presidential campaigns, and journalists who cover



them. Such accounts will be required to use strong passwords, and Twitter will enable a setting that requires confirmation by email or phone number to reset passwords.

Twitter also encouraged people managing those accounts to use two-factor authentication that requires a back-up validation, for example a confirmation code sent by text message, when logging in.

The safety team said it was applying lessons learned from prior incidents. Hackers in July took over dozens of high-profile Twitter accounts with an attack that tricked a handful of employees into giving up their credentials, according to the company.

PLASTIC POLLUTION

Synthetic microfibre creating mountain of 'fluff'

AGENCIES

London, Sept 18: Did you know that an astonishing amount of synthetic microfibres goes into the environment when we wash out clothes every day? According to an estimate by US scientists, 5.6 million tons of synthetic fluff has been produced since we began wearing nylon and polyester garments in the 1950s.

What is worse that more than half of this mass, around 2.9 million tons, has gone into the rivers and seas, polluting the environment. According to researchers, this is equivalent to seven billion fleece jackets.

Even as we worry about water pollution, this synthetic fluff also affects our land. In fact, researchers at the University of California, Santa Barbara, say that presently such emissions have affected the ter-

restrial environment more than it has harmed the water bodies – for instance 176,500 tons are deposited on the land every year compared to 167,000 tons in the water bodies.

Scientists say that the land is polluted more because these days wastewater treatment has advanced so much that it traps fibres and biosolid sludge, which are subsequently dumped as landfills or applied to agricultural fields.

According to industrial ecologist Roland Geyer from UCSB's Bren School of Environmental Science, most people are of the view that the problem of synthetic microfibre from washing apparels will take care of itself since wastewater treatment works are widespread as well as more efficient these days. However, the reality is that we are simply transferring the problem from one environment to another, he added.



Every time you wash your clothes, you are adding to a mountain of plastic fluff that is polluting the environment

Earlier, Ronald had calculated that the total virgin plastic produced ever sums up to 8.3 billion tons, while every year about eight

million tons of plastics are dumped into the oceans.

Roughly 14 percent of the entire plastic produced is used for mak-

ing synthetic fibres, especially apparel. When these garments are washed, they get rid of tiny stands which are much thinner compared to a human hair.

A report published in the journal PLoS One, the UCSB team tried to assess the amount of synthetic clothing produced during the last 65 years, how they have been used and cleaned. The process of this assessment was quite complex keeping in view the detergents used in cleaning clothes, the types of washing machines used and the amount of clothes washed.

According to the researchers the average global stock of clothing was 8kg per capita in 1990, which increased to 26kg per head in 2016.

Washing such large amount of clothes resulted in increasing shedding of fibres, most of which were dumped on the land. With the advancement of wastewater treat-

ment, the situation became even grave.

Lead author of PLoS One article Jenna Gavigan said removing such large-scale microfibers from the environment is neither technically possible nor economically viable. Thus, the focus needs to be on preventing emission, she added.

The possible solutions to this environmental problem is reducing use of washing machines, developing more advanced filters for washing machines and, of course, better wastewater treatment.

Precisely speaking, this highlights the importance of research to understand the ecological impact of microfibres in both terrestrial and aquatic environments better.

Microplastic pollution is a part of modern life and while it is here to stay, we are only beginning to appreciate the consequences.

Map incorporating Indian areas in Nepal text books

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Sept 18: Nepal has introduced new text books in the school curriculum that include the country's revised political map showing three strategically-important Indian areas as part of its territory, amidst a border dispute with New Delhi.

India has already termed as untenable the "artificial enlargement" of the territorial claims by Nepal after its Parliament unanimously approved the new political map of the country featuring Lipulekh, Kalapani and Limpiyadhura areas which India maintains belongs to it.

The curriculum Development Centre, under the Ministry of Education, recently published the books with the revised map, information officer at the centre Ganesh Bhattarai said.

The new books titled "Nepal's territory and reading materials for border issues" for Classes 9 and 12 have a preface written by Education Minister Giriraj Mani Pokharel.

Nepal in May released the revised political and administrative map of the country laying claim over the three strategically important areas in Uttarakhand; more than six months after India published a new map in November 2019.

Following the endorsement of the new map by the Nepal Cabinet, then government spokesperson and Finance Minister Yuvaraj Khatriwada told the media that the government had decided to update the schedule of the Constitution and school curriculum incorporating the new political map. India in its response said that it had already made its position clear on it.

US announces ban on WeChat, TikTok

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, Sept 18: The US will ban the use of WeChat Sunday to "safeguard the national security of the United States."

The Chinese app TikTok will also be banned by November 12, but Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said early Friday on CNBC that access to that app may be possible if certain safeguards are in place.

"At the President's direction, we have taken significant action to combat China's malicious collection of American citizens' personal data, while promoting our national values, democratic rules-based norms, and aggressive enforcement of US laws and regulations," Ross said in a prepared statement.

The government said its order, previously announced by Trump in August, will "combat China's malicious collection of American citizens' personal data."

The government previously said that using and downloading the app to communicate won't be a banned transaction, although messaging on the app "could be directly or indirectly impaired" by the ban, and people who use it for messaging won't be subject to penalties.

of the day quote

The government of India is engaging with ASEAN to review the FTA in accordance with related provisions of the agreement



PIYUSH GOYAL |
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) has taken various measures to ensure the availability of essential drugs at reasonable prices during the COVID-19 pandemic



DR SADANANDA GOWDA |
MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

Exports in August stood at USD 356.15 million and our industry is confident of achieving 90 per cent of last year's exports in September



AQEEL AHMED PANARUNA |
CHAIRMAN, COUNCIL FOR LEATHER EXPORTS

SHORT TAKES

Dr Reddy's zooms

New Delhi: Shares of Dr Reddy's Laboratories jumped over 10 per cent on Friday after the company said it has settled a litigation with a unit of Bristol Myers Squibb related to patents for Revlimid (lenalidomide) capsules, used in the treatment of cancer. Continuing its rally for the fourth consecutive day, the stock gained 10.36 per cent to close at ₹5,326.70 on the BSE. During the day, it rose by 13.88 per cent to ₹5,497 -- its record high level. On the NSE, it zoomed 9.92 per cent to close at ₹5,306. In traded volume terms, 6.37 lakh shares were traded at the BSE and over 2 crore units at the NSE during the day. The Hyderabad-based company has settled litigation with Celgene, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bristol Myers Squibb, Dr Reddy's Laboratories said in a statement on Thursday.

Kia's Sonet

New Delhi: South Korean auto major Kia Motors on Friday launched its compact SUV Sonet in India, priced between ₹6.71 lakh and ₹11.99 lakh (ex-showroom), marking its foray into the highly competitive and fast-growing segment. The sub-four metre model comes in both petrol and diesel engine options and will compete with the likes of Hyundai Venue, Maruti Suzuki Vitara Brezza, Tata Motors Nexon, Honda WR-V and Ford EcoSport, among others. In total, Kia Motors India said, the Sonet will be available across 17 variants, including two petrol engines, two diesel engines (WGT and VGT configurations), five transmissions and two trim levels -- Tech Line and GT-Line. The petrol variant will have a 1-litre GDI delivering power of 120 PS and another 1.2-litre G1 engine with power of 83 PS, available at a price range of ₹6.71 lakh to ₹11.99 lakh.

Angel IPO Sep 22

New Delhi: Angel Broking on Friday said it will launch its initial public offering (IPO) on September 22 to raise an estimated ₹600 crore. The company has fixed a price band of ₹305-306 per share for its IPO, Angel Broking said in a virtual press conference. The initial share-sale will be open for public subscription on September 22 and close on September 24, while the bidding for anchor investors will open on September 21. Angel Broking is aiming to raise ₹600 crore through the IPO, which comprises fresh issuance of shares worth ₹300 crore and offer for sale of ₹300 crore by promoters and other shareholders.



As India aims to become a cloud-first nation and with the government's push for cloud adoption by MSMEs, it will be crucial for SMBs in India to think of themselves as digital enterprises and lead the E-revolution for India

DEBJANI GHOSH | PRESIDENT, NASSCOM

APPLE TO LAUNCH ONLINE STORE IN INDIA SEPT 23

Apple Friday said it will launch its online store in India next week, offering its full range of products to customers across the country for the first time, a move that will help the tech giant cash in on the festive demand.



All about the 3 farm Bills that have kicked up a storm

THREE KEY AGRICULTURE BILLS, APPROVED BY THE LOK SABHA, ARE FACING STAUNCH OPPOSITION FROM WITHIN THE RULING COALITION WITH SENIOR MINISTER HARSMIRAT KAUR BADAL RESIGNING IN PROTEST AND FARMERS HITTING THE STREET. HERE IS AN EXPLAINER ON WHAT THE NEW BILLS ARE ALL ABOUT

AGENCIES

1: The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 seeks to give freedom to farmers to sell their produce outside the notified APMC market yards (mandis). This is aimed at facilitating remunerative prices through competitive alternative trading channels. Farmers will not be charged any cess or levy for sale of their produce under this Act.

Benefits: It will open more choices for farmers, reduce marketing costs, and help them get better prices. It will also help farmers of regions with surplus produce to get better prices and consumers in areas with shortages at lower prices.

Opposition: States will lose revenue as they will not be able to collect 'mandi fees' if farmers sell their

produce outside registered Agricultural Produce Market Committee (APMC) markets. Also, commission agents stand to lose if the entire farm trade moves out of mandis. But, more importantly, farmers and opposition parties fear it may eventually lead to the end of the minimum support price (MSP)-based procurement system and may lead to exploitation by private companies.

2: The Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020: This proposed legislation seeks to give farmers the right to enter into a contract with agribusiness firms, processors, wholesalers, exporters, or large retailers for the sale of future farming produce at a pre-agreed price.

Benefits: It seeks to transfer the



risk of market unpredictability from farmers to sponsors. Besides giving them access to modern tech and better inputs, it also seeks to boost farmer income by reducing the cost of marketing.

Opposition: Farmer bodies and opposition parties say the law is framed to suit 'big corporates who seek to dominate the Indian food and

agriculture business". It will weaken the negotiating power of farmers. Also, big private companies, exporters, wholesalers, and processors may get an edge.

3: The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020: This proposed legislation seeks to remove commodities like cereals, pulses, oilseeds, onion, and potatoes from

the list of essential commodities and will do away with the imposition of stock holding limits on such items except under 'extraordinary circumstances' like war, famine, extraordinary price rise and natural calamity.

Benefits: It is aimed at attracting private investment/ FDI into the farm sector as well as bringing price stability

price stability.

Opposition: Big companies will have the freedom to stock commodities, helping them dictate terms to farmers.

Government stand: Agriculture minister Narendra Singh Tomar has said the MSP mechanism for farmers will continue. Also, the proposed laws would not encroach upon the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) Acts of the states.

These Bills are to ensure that farmers get better prices for their produce without being subject to the regulations of mandis, he has said, adding the Acts will increase competition and promote private investment which will help in the development of farm infrastructure and generate employment.

AUM under NPS, APY nears ₹5Lcr

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: The total assets under management of the National Pension System and the Atal Pension Yojana are approaching towards a corpus of ₹5 lakh crore, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) chairman Supratim Bandyopadhyay said Friday.

"Our total assets under management (AUM) as September 12 was very close to ₹5 lakh crore, it is ₹4.93 lakh crore. Still, about 83 per cent of the total assets are from the central and state government employees," Bandyopadhyay said at the 22nd CII Insurance and Pensions Summit.

The total number of National Pension System (NPS) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY) subscribers is over 3.68 crore, as per the latest data. Of them, 21.25 lakh subscribers are central government employees with contribution of ₹1.61 lakh crore to the AUM, while 48.74 lakh state government employees fur-



nishes more than ₹2.48 lakh crore to the total corpus.

Besides, 10.40 lakh subscribers are from the corporate sector with AUM of ₹50,696 crore. Under the all citizen model, there are 13.45 lakh customers who contribute ₹16,218.81 crore to AUM; while under NPS Lite category, there are as many as 43.19 lakh subscribers with AUM of ₹4,077 crore.

The corpus under the APY, which is mainly targeted to the employees in the unorganised sector, was ₹12,883.73 crore as on September

12, 2020. "APY currently has pension provision of only between ₹1,000 and ₹5,000 per month at the age of 60 years. And most of the customers who are under APY are looking for ₹1,000 pension per month that's why the corpus is of only ₹12,880 crore. It has not gone up much," Bandyopadhyay said.

The PFRDA chairman further said there has been a good growth in new subscribers of the APY even during the lockdown period.

About 2 million new subscribers were added during the April-August

period of this fiscal, and another over 4 lakh during these 15-16 days in September; taking the number of new additions to over 2.4 million so far, he claimed. In India, less than 50 per cent of the working population has formal pension provision, so this is the target group which the PFRDA is also looking at and the APY has been doing quite well, the official said. On the NPS, he said it is a very flexible market-linked pension product.

It may seem to be a single product but actually it is a bouquet of products under the garb of one product, he added. "It is tax efficient, there are exclusive tax benefits which is not given to any other product. It is transparent and one can access it online as well as through the mobile app. One can also look at the charges, get account information online, change the fund managers as well as has the option of changing the instruments where to invest the corpus," Bandyopadhyay said.

State's 2.15L candidates get skill training in FY'20

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) Friday revealed that over 2.15 lakh candidates from Odisha were trained under Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 2.0 (PMKVY) during the financial year of 2019-20 which was subjected to impart short term skill development.

The ministry also claimed that 66,260 candidates were trained under same scheme in 2017-18 and 93,258 candidates in 2018-19.

Also, according to the ministry, about 49,984 candidates from the state received training of long duration vocational courses through Industrial Training Institutes (ITI). The number of trained candidates was 48,508 and 51,337 in 2017 and 2018 respectively.

The Directorate General of Training (DGT) under MSDE has implemented long duration vocational courses through ITI which offer a range of one or two years' of vocational / skill training courses.

Under PMKVY 2.0, in the last three years, as on March 17, 2020, 88.91 lakh candidates have been trained/oriented across the country.

In the wake of COVID-19, MSDE, through National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) is imparting online skilling through 'e-SkillIndia' platform in the midst lockdowns. Further, the Ministry of Home Affairs has permitted the conduct of skill training programmes in physical form from September 21, 2020 onwards. Accordingly, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) has been issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) for restarting the training.

The ministry has also taken various initiatives to enhance placement of the certified candidates. It is asked training providers/ training centres (TPs/TCs) to organize Rozgar Melas with the support of Sector Skill Councils. Also, additional incentives are given to TPs/TCs for placing candidates above the minimum required level.

4.50 lakh job cards to migrant labourers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 18: Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is a demand driven wage employment scheme. Over 4.50 lakh migrant labourers and employed workers from Odisha have received job cards under the scheme, so far, during current financial year.

The figures were revealed by the Union Ministry of Rural Development Friday. The ministry provided almost double fiscal stimulus of previous fiscal. About 2.39 lakh job cards were provided in 2019-20. Moreover, the ministry claimed that about 925.54 lakh man-days were generated in FY 2020-21 from April 1 to September 12 in Odisha. And ₹203730.77 lakh wage expenditure was made in the same period of time in the state. A job card can be issued to a migrant labour/family as per the provision of the Act against a demand by the migrant labour/family. A total of 86,81,928 new job cards have been issued as compared to 36,64,368 new job cards issued during the same period of FY 2019-20.

'e-Tailers poised to clock USD 7 bn festive month sales in 2020'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 18: Festive sales are expected to almost double this year and touch USD 7 billion in gross merchandise value (GMV) as compared to USD 3.8 billion in the same period last year, according to a report by research firm RedSeer.

Based on the strong festive sales performance, e-commerce is expected to reach USD 38 billion in sales in CY20 from USD 27 billion GMV in 2019.

GMV is a term used in online retailing to indicate the gross merchandise value of the products sold through the marketplace over a certain period of time.

"COVID enabled massive growth in new shoppers as consumers now more than ever prefer to shop in a

manner that is convenient, safe and hygienic and the e-commerce space meets these requirements. Despite at least a month to go before the sales, consumers show positive sentiments to purchase during this period as per our survey," RedSeer said.

It added that offline recovery is still weak as consumers are still apprehensive about visiting high human touchpoint areas like malls and retail outlets. The report said new shopping models are expected to come up, owing to changing customer demographics including video-based and WhatsApp-based shopping to be new additions to the festive landscape.

"Strong nationalist sentiment coupled with the government's Atmanirbhar policy is expected to impact the brand mix in categories



like electronics/mobile," it added.

Driven by the massive shopper growth, the festive sales for the first year is expected to grow 50 per cent year-on-year to reach USD 4 billion (as compared to USD 2.7 billion in 2019), the report titled 'The Festival

of Firsts' said.

The report said this year, 'Bharat' and democratisation theme enabled by COVID will see the maximum number of shoppers buy online during festive sales with many coming from tier II cities and beyond.

Based on the strong festive sales performance, e-commerce is expected to reach \$38 bn in sales in CY20 from \$27 bn GMV in 2019

New models will come up, due to changing customer demographics including video-based and WhatsApp-based shopping

Moreover, increasing social gatherings and aggressive discounts from various shopping platforms would boost sales

It estimated that 45-50 million people shopped online last year in the first sale during festive season offered by various players like Flipkart, Amazon, Snapdeal and Shopclues.

Festive season sees players hold-

ing multiple sale events, timed around Dussehra and Diwali.

On the various categories, the report said fashion will do well due to its relatively slow recovery rates post lockdown. Moreover, increasing social gatherings and aggressive discounts from various shopping platforms would boost sales.

"Mobiles and appliances to remain strong but not as large as previous years as demand for these verticals has been somewhat satiated with category specific sales post lockdown," it said.

Long tail categories including Home and Home Furnishings are expected to do better than anytime before, due to high demand for upgrading work-from-home/study-from-home environment, it added.

GAME ON!

