



PANDEMIC FATIGUE

Actor Divyanka Tripathi says she is fatigued by an imposed life and waiting for normal times

LEISURE P2



SAFFRON VANDALISM

A statue of reformist leader EV Ramasamy 'Periyar' was found smeared with saffron dye by miscreants in TN

TWO STATES P7



CLASHES ERUPT

Clashes erupted between Armenia and Azerbaijan Sunday over the volatile Nagorno-Karabakh region

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Don't know about RaGa but thanks to Modi ji his popularity is growing fast!

Woman beats up sarpanch husband

Bhadrak: A Sarpanch was beaten up by his wife for his alleged infidelity at Kuansa area under Town police limits in Bhadrak district Saturday night. After catching her husband red-handed, the woman dragged him out of his paramour's house and thrashed him. According to sources, the woman fell in love with the man, who is presently the Sarpanch of Nuananda panchayat under Tihidi police limits in Bhadrak district and they married in 1997. She was also a member of panchayat samiti. The woman had been suspecting her husband of having an extramarital affair with a woman in the same village. Most nights, he would never come home. Saturday night she was informed that her husband was at his paramour's house. After making up her mind to teach him a lesson, she immediately went there and asked her husband to come out of the house on his own. When he refused to go home, she forcibly entered into the house, dragged him out and rained slaps and kicks on him.

Diesel price down for 3rd straight day

Bhubaneswar: Diesel prices continued to be down for the third straight day Sunday on the back of subdued crude oil prices globally. In the state Capital, diesel price was less by 15 paise. With the deduction, diesel price stood at ₹77.11/litre, while petrol prices remained static, i.e. ₹81.66 per litre. In the national capital, diesel was priced at ₹70.80 per litre, 14 paise down from ₹70.94 a litre Saturday. Similarly, its price fell in the other metros as well. In Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, the fuel was sold at ₹77.22, ₹76.27 and ₹74.32 per litre respectively Sunday, compared to the previous levels of ₹77.36, ₹76.40 and ₹74.46 per litre. Oil marketing companies, however, kept petrol prices unchanged for the fifth consecutive day.

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP	MAX	34.0°C	35.2°C
	MIN	25.4°C	24.0°C
Humidity		78%	73%
Rainfall		Nil	Nil
	Forecast	Light rain likely	

FARM BILL VOTE

RS TV footage 'contradicts' govt claim

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Centre's claims that all rules were followed during the voting on farm Bills in Rajya Sabha September 20 and its version of events, have deep disparity with television footage of the proceedings accessed by NDTV.

The channel claims that while the footage shows that on two counts - extension of timing of the House to ensure voting, and the presence of members on their seats during the call for division of votes - the government's version of events are different from what happened on the ground.

The passage of the Bills has been a matter of huge controversy, with eight members of the Opposition being suspended from the House by Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Hariwansh Singh, following pandemonium during the proceedings. The Opposition parties have alleged the Bills were pushed through voice vote as the government did not have the numbers.

The position would have been clear if a physical vote was taken instead of a voice vote, they said. Singh and the government have justified voice vote, saying the Opposition members weren't in their seats when they demanded physical voting.

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The Opposition parties have said the Bills were pushed through voice vote as the government did not have the numbers



The disruption had started around 1 pm, when the Opposition claims the Deputy Chairman extended the House proceedings on the proposal of Parliamentary Affairs Minister Prahlad Joshi without taking consensus of the House.

The Rajya Sabha footage accessed by the news channel showed that at around 1.03 pm, Leader of the Opposition Ghulam Nabi Azad said, "Opposition parties are saying that time should not be extended today and tomorrow the minister can reply."

DMK MP Trichy Siva, a Member of Parliament for the last two decades, told the TV channel, "Usually, the House is extended after taking consensus of the House". But the extension was made "without even looking at our side, just looking at the Treasury benches... despite members from 12 Opposition par-

ties on their feet asking for adjournment. This is in clear violation of Rajya Sabha Rule 37," he said.

Addressing the media after the proceedings, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had said: "Proceedings were going on peacefully. Parliamentary Affairs Minister wanted the House to be extended till the passing of the Bills. This is a normal practice in the Parliament. The sense of the House is not gathered by majority and minority. After this opposition parties came to the well of the House and started ruckus."

KK Ragesh, CPM MP from Kerala, alleged that the Deputy Chairman had violated another rule that day by declining division of votes on his motion to send the Bill to the select committee. Rajya Sabha footage shows that at

Prez gives assent to farm Bills

NEW DELHI: President Ram Nath Kovind Sunday gave assent to three contentious farm bills that have triggered protests by farmers especially in Punjab and Haryana. According to a gazette notification, the President gave assent to three bills: The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020. The President's assent to these Bills comes amid the Opposition criticising the manner in which they were passed in Parliament.

least two of the three MPs who moved motion to send the Bills to the select committee were in their seats when they demanded a division of votes.

The footage showed at 1.10 pm, when the Deputy Chairman took Trichy Siva's motion for sending the Bills to a select committee, he was seen in his seat when he demanded division of votes but the motion was negated through voice vote.

ASSEMBLY SESSION

136 samples of MLAs, staff test Covid positive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Ahead of the Monsoon Session of the Odisha Assembly, 136 persons, including MLAs and their staff, who were scheduled to visit the Assembly during the session, have tested positive for Covid-19.

A total of 757 samples were collected at the special camp organised on the Assembly premises Saturday, and 136 of these tested positive for the disease. The results came Sunday. These 136 patients include MLAs, their personal and Assembly staff and journalists.

Several other MLAs, staff and journalists are slated to undergo similar tests Sunday and the results are expected to come Monday.

The data related to the Covid testing of MLAs and other stakeholders of the Assembly hinted that a former State Tourism Minister Devi Prasad Mishra and incumbent MLA and Pramila Malik, Chief Whip of BJD in the Assembly, tested positive for the disease.

Malik wrote on her Twitter handle that she has tested positive for the disease and asked others who came in contact with her to isolate themselves. Mishra too declared on his social media platform that he has tested positive for the viral infection.

Sunday another round of testing was held and Close to 20 MLAs,



including Congress leader Tararasad Bahinipati, gave their samples for testing. This comes in the wake of the Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro making it mandatory for the MLAs, their staff, Assembly employees and journalists to get them tested at the special COVID testing camp organised on the Assembly premises.

As per an earlier order the Speaker, the 136 infected persons who have tested positive for the disease will not be allowed to visit the Assembly for the entire session. Another round of testing will be done after five days of the session and those testing positive then would not be allowed to come to the Assembly.

If any MLA falls ill or shows symptoms similar to those of Covid-19, they too would be asked to discontinue from attending the session and isolate themselves.

It is apprehended that with more samples yet to be tested, chances of more number of MLAs and others being Covid positive cannot be ruled out.

Jaswant Singh passes away

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Former Union minister Jaswant Singh, one of the founding members of the BJP and a close associate of ex-Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, died here on Sunday following a long spell of illness. He was 82.

President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union ministers and other top leaders cutting across the political spectrum paid rich tributes to Singh.

Singh, a former Army officer, had a fall at his home in August 2014 and was admitted to the Army Research and Referral Hospital. He was in coma for a long spell and had been in and out of the hospital

since then. He was admitted again in June this year. "It is with profound grief that we inform about the sad demise of Hon'ble Major Jaswant Singh (Retd), former Cabinet Minister at 0655 hours on 27 September 2020. He was admitted on 25 Jun 2020 and being treated for sepsis with Multi-organ Dysfunction Syndrome and effects of Severe Head Injury old (Optd) had a Cardiac arrest this morning," the hospital said in a statement.



Reacting to Singh's death, the President said the demise of the "veteran soldier, outstanding parliamentarian, exceptional leader and intellectual" was distressing. Modi said that Singh served India diligently and will be remembered for his unique perspective on matters of politics and society.

TIME TO REST



Boats anchored on the bank of Kathajodi river near Naraj anicut in Cuttack, Sunday

1800 266 266 1 (tollfree)

Odisha to reopen tourist spots in Oct

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Tourist destinations across Odisha will be reopened for the public in October, said state Tourism Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi Sunday.

He said that the state government will ensure that Covid-19 guidelines are strictly implemented.

"We have already planned to reopen tourist spots in the state. Keeping in view the Covid-19 guidelines, we will take further decision. The tourist spots will be reopened from October," said Panigrahi on the occasion of World Tourism Day.

The tourist destinations remained closed for more than six months due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

On the occasion of World Tourism Day 2020, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, in a message, welcomed all to visit Odisha as all kind of precautionary measures have been taken for the safety and security of visitors.

He highlighted the award-winning initiative of ecotourism nature camps run successfully for five years by the communities and which is in line with this year's World Tourism Day theme of 'Rural Tourism'.

The Chief Minister also emphasised on revival initiatives of the government for tourism in the state.

"Odisha by Road" campaign was launched on this occasion through Kalinga Rides - Superbike Rally.



Reopening of temples across the state will depend on the concerned temple administration and the Law Department will take a decision

JYOTI PRAKASH PANIGRAHI | STATE TOURISM MINISTER

This campaign aims to encourage tourists from within the state as well as from the neighbouring states to travel to various tourist destinations in the state through the excellent network of quality roads.

On reopening of temples across the state, Panigrahi said that the concerned temple administration and the Law Department will take a decision in this regard.

"A total of 358 tourist destinations will be reopened in a phased manner from the first week of October. Apart from this, other tourist places not recognized by the government will also be reopened. To ensure that the tourists will strictly abide by the COVID-19 guidelines, the Health and Family Welfare Department will issue a standard operating procedure (SOP)," Panigrahi added.

Meerut woman gangraped in moving bus

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Meerut (UP), Sept 27: Reviving the horrific memories of Nirbhaya gangrape in New Delhi on the night of December 16, 2012, a woman passenger was allegedly gang-raped inside a running bus for entire night Friday and was later thrown out of the bus.

She was found lying unconscious on Delhi Road in Meerut Saturday and was rushed to the hospital where she later related the traumatic experience.

This is the third such incident in Uttar Pradesh in the last about one month when a woman passenger on way to Delhi was gang-raped on a moving bus and, that too, by the staff.

The victim, according to reports, told the police that she had boarded a bus from Bhaishali bus stand Friday night.

On the bus, she was given cold drink which had apparently been spiked after which she lost consciousness and was gangraped by the driver and the conductor through the entire night.

The victim is a native of Sardhana town of Meerut district. Police have recorded the statement of the woman and sent her for medical examination.

SSP of Meerut, Ajay Sahni, confirmed the incident and said that efforts were on to nab the culprits.

He said that they were also taking the help of the CCTV footage to collect evidence and also to help them in identifying the culprits.

Policy Review: RBI likely to maintain status quo

THE SIX-MEMBER MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE HEADED BY RBI GOVERNOR IS SCHEDULED TO MEET FOR THREE DAYS STARTING SEPTEMBER 29

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Reserve Bank is likely to keep interest rates unchanged in the forthcoming bilateral monetary policy review in view of the rising retail inflation driven mainly by supply side issues, experts say.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das had earlier said although there was headroom for further monetary policy action, it was important to keep "our arsenal dry and use it judiciously."

The six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) headed by RBI Governor is scheduled to meet for

three days starting September 29. The resolution of the MPC would be announced October 1.

In its last MPC meeting in August, RBI kept policy rates unchanged to help tame inflation that in recent times had surged past 6 per cent mark, and said the economy is in an extremely weak condition following the pandemic. The RBI has cut policy rates by 115 basis points since February.

As regards the next policy review, industry body Confederation of India Industry said: "The RBI should maintain its accommodative stance, while avoiding a rate cut for now given the stickiness in CPI

inflation. While supporting growth is critical, the RBI could wait till there is some visible moderation in inflation."

Expressing similar opinion, Assocham secretary general Deepak Sood said the Reserve Bank should continue in a more pronounced way the accommodative stance on the policy interest rates in the wake of serious challenges due to contraction in the economy induced by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Union Bank MD and CEO Rajkiran Rai G feels it's going to be status quo. "With so much of high inflation, I don't think they will cut rate this time".

There is a scope for a rate cut but that will happen around February, he added.

"The food inflation is likely to ease in December and post that due to the good crops and, so, the opportunity may come around February for rate cut," he said.

Retail inflation softened slightly

to 6.69 per cent in August from 6.73 per cent in July. The government has mandated RBI to keep inflation at 4 per cent (+/- 2 per cent).

Aditi Nayar, Principal Economist, ICRA said inflation is expected to harden further in September and ease gradually over the next few months, led by a base effect driven softening in food inflation.

"However, the core inflation is expected to remain stubbornly sticky around current levels. Accordingly, we anticipate an extended pause from the MPC, despite the recession that is currently underway," she said. Care Ratings chief economist Madan Sabnavis too

was of the view that it will be a status quo and there will be no change in the stance, repo rate or CRR.

"I think there has been more of a case of wait and watch because you have seen that inflation has been high," Sabnavis said.

On the other hand, Anuj Puri, Chairman, ANAROCK Property Consultants said the choice between reducing or retaining policy rates is definitely a dilemma for MPC this week.

He said India's economy will probably contract substantially this year due to the pandemic, so there are obviously expectations for a reduction in repo rate.

leisure



ISAIAH TO MAKE DIRECTORIAL DEBUT WITH CORSICANA

Grey's Anatomy actor Isaiah Washington is set to make his feature directorial debut with the Western film Corsicana. Washington portrayed Dr Preston Burke in the first three seasons of the long-running ABC medical drama series.

ROSE LESLIE, KIT HARRINGTON TO BECOME PARENTS SOON

Actors Rose Leslie and Kit Harington of Game of Thrones (GoT) fame are expecting their first child. The actress showed her baby bump in the new issue of Make Magazine. She and Harington played lovers Ygritte and Jon Snow in the hit series GoT.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com accuracy • reliability • trust FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
You love meeting people, says Ganesh, and you are going to have a wonderful time interacting with the most brilliant people today. You remain a perfectionist as ever, and may spend a fortune to buy that 'perfect' gift to please your sweetheart!

TAURUS
Communication may be poignant with your loved ones today, says Ganesh. Your unpretentious character will seek to safeguard the feelings of others from being hurt. You will learn that total agreement is sometimes twice as seductive in love's intimacies, feels Ganesh.

GEMINI
Today, you would want to take your beloved into your embrace and confidence. You will whisper your feelings and secrets into his/her ears as you hold him/her.

CANCER
Today you may behave quite aggressively for most part of the day, predicts Ganesh. You may spend the afternoon with your business associates, and if you can use your aggression in a controlled manner, you can secure a very important deal today.

LEO
Old is gold. This adage holds true for you in that you shall be led by conventional wisdom today. Your ability to stay upbeat is peaking just at the right time, and you shall be supremely confident about your chances of a brilliant future.

VIRGO
Opening up to your beloved about your whims and fancies, as well as your goals, is the key today. Energy levels will hit the sky today. Pay due reverence to higher education and social customs.

LIBRA
When it comes to your children, no pain is too much. Today seems to justify that statement as you may indeed take pains to improve your children's welfare. But it's all worth the effort in the end. Afternoon brings with it the possibility of happiness and success. You may make worthwhile material progress today.

SCORPIO
You will understand the importance of creating a divide between your personal and professional life, feels Ganesh. On the professional front, your diligence and commitment to work will bring praise and benefits. Later in the evening, you will celebrate your success with your sweetheart.

SAGITTARIUS
Matters concerning family bonds will keep you occupied for most part today. Be sure to make all your loved ones feel special. Early in the day, those with whom love's labour has been lost might try to end all connections.

CAPRICORN
Certain distasteful events occurring during the day may spoil your mood, but it won't really show in your work, and you will get over that phase sooner than you may have thought, says Ganesh. An unusual day, indeed.

AQUARIUS
A sunny day and a starry night! Today is for friends, says Ganesh. You chat, sing, yell, and even talk philosophy, values and politics with your pals. You may indulge in a romantic evening with your partner, either in a restaurant or at the beach, or simply on the sofa watching Clark Gable woo Scarlett O' Hara.

PISCES
Your focus today will be on finalising your plans for buying a new house. Purchasing new furniture, or planning on renovating your home will also take up a considerable chunk of your time.

'Irrfan wanted to have a daughter'



Mumbai: On the occasion of Daughters' Day, late actor Irrfan Khan's wife Sutapa Sikdar revealed how the two 'desperately' wanted to have a daughter in their life. "Me and Irrfan wanted to have a daughter so desperately that on my second delivery my doc could not utter the word son and said instead 'congratulations! healthy child!' I was disappointed.... yes, I was. That day for us and today, I feel sad that a girl child got deprived of Irrfan's parenting of a girl. Because just giving freedom is not enough to a girl child," Sutapa wrote on her Facebook account. Along with it, she shared a video of an ad campaign, rooting for a girl child. Irrfan breathed his last on April 29. He is survived by wife Sutapa, and two sons - Babil and Ayan. IANS

Divyanka Tripathi looks for some 'ab-normal' times

Mumbai: Actress Divyanka Tripathi does not want anything too eye-popping, and is searching for normal times. While people are adjusting to the new normal amidst the pandemic, the telly star is looking for 'ab-normal times'. Divyanka posted on Instagram Sunday: "Looking for some abnormal times. Fatigued by current normalcy - Bollywood slip-ups and scathings, political or media moves, pandemic numbers, or anything too eye-popping." But she clarified that she is "not sad!" "Just pondering over the fact that how easily we accept an imposed life. Not choose our own path, daily conversations we indulge in, and pieces of information we gulp in," Divyanka wrote. She concluded her post by writing: "Let's take our soul's reigns in our hands," along with a photo of herself with a mask on. IANS

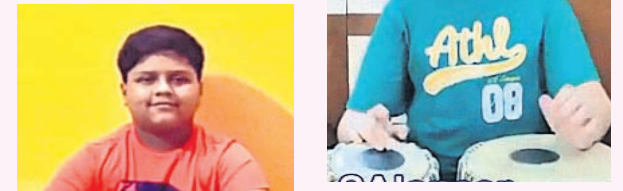


Students depending on music to beat exam blues



Bhubaneswar: Pressure to perform well in examinations always makes students feel a bit worried. A few of them also get depressed which often affects their mental wellbeing. While exam time is not at all easy for the students, remaining cutoff from the friends due to pandemic has only added to their woes. However, it is extremely important for the young minds to stay cool and collected during examinations. In a bid to calm their nerves, the management of city-based SAI International School is encouraging its students to take help of music to overcome the exam stress. Everyone knows that music is a great stress

courage our students to play instruments like flute, violin, keyboard, guitar, tabla and drums. There are some students who prefer to listen to music such as traditional Hindustani classical, Western music or folk songs to relax," said the teacher. Bijay Kumar Sahoo, the founder of the school, said, "Exam stress often affects the creativity of a student adversely. Therefore, it is important to maintain their confidence level." He went to add that this half-yearly exam is

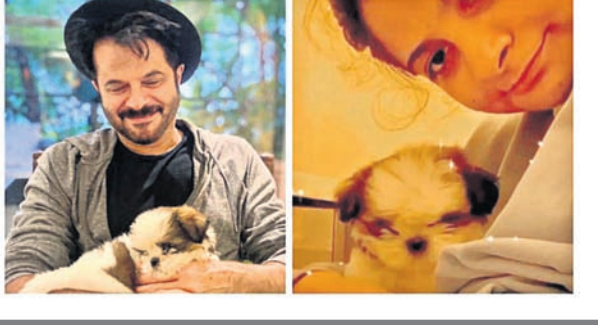


just an assessment which helps students to analyse their level of preparedness so that they can perform better in their finals. So, taking help of music during this period is a great way to overcome anxiety, he said. Saikiran Tripathy, a Class VIII student said, "Playing tabla has helped me bring down my stress level ahead of the examination. Besides, it has made me more disciplined and I am confident of doing well now." The students of SAI International School from Class IV to XII are appearing their half-yearly test online which will be over October 5.

When Rhea Kapoor cried like a kid



Mumbai: Producer Rhea Kapoor took to her Instagram to introduce her new pet, a dog called Russell Crowe Kapoor. Rhea also shared how she got scared after the little one fell sick. "We have a new family member. His name is Russell Crowe Kapoor. He is @thepriinceofjuhu. He already runs this house. He is 55 days old and a bundle of love. "He got sick the first two days in and scared the shit out of all us, I cried like a baby after months. He is back to top form now. He is everything. #thepriinceofjuhu," Rhea wrote. Along with it, she posted a few pictures of Russell. In one the images, one can see Anil Kapoor holding his new pet in his arms. Social media users are going gaga over Russell's cuteness. IANS



PEANUTS



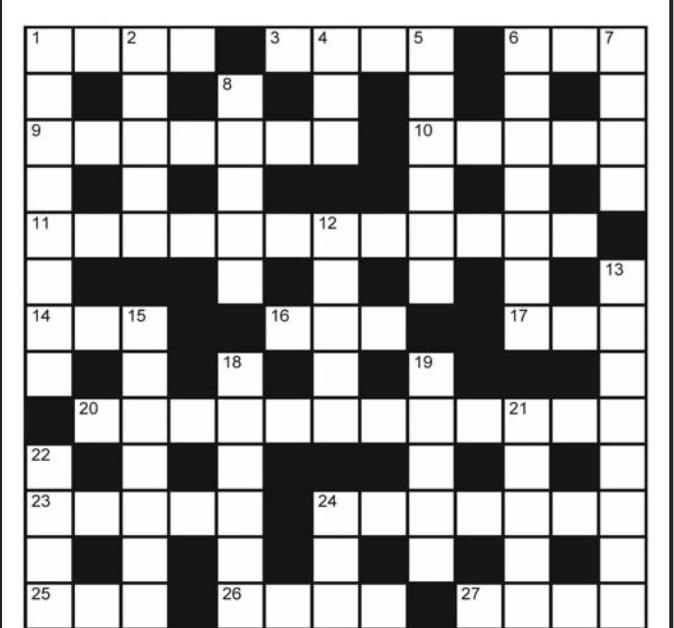
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Pickpockets
 - 3 Music genre
 - 6 Life story, in brief
 - 9 Blabbed
 - 10 Early warning system
 - 11 Certain employee (5,7)
 - 14 Lizard, old-style
 - 16 Pack animal
 - 17 Jamaican pop
 - 20 Sure-footed animal (8,4)
 - 23 Eccentric
 - 24 Seaport
 - 25 Letters of distress
 - 26 Docile
 - 27 Periscope part
- Down**
- 1 Separated
 - 2 Place for a barbecue
 - 4 Do sums
 - 5 Swiss metropolis
 - 6 Carnivorous burrowing mammals
 - 7 Fairy tale villain
 - 8 Stroke of luck
 - 12 Oranjestad's island
 - 13 Snares
 - 15 Torrid Zone
 - 18 Wreath for the head
 - 19 Like helium
 - 21 Thunderstorm product
 - 22 Hole-making tools
 - 24 Cry's partner

SUDOKU

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

			3		6	8						
6		7	8			4		3		5		
	8	B		9	A				7	E		
				E	B	C	1	A		6		
	3	9	5	1	E					D		
			A	D		6	B			4		
		8	5		4	B				E		
	1	D			A					9	0	
	7	6		4	9	5			D	3	2	
9		5	7	C		3		4			1	
	0				D	E	1			A		
			E			5	A	7		6	D	C
5								4				
A	1			3						E	2	
		C	2			8			3	1		

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

H	R	P	A	A	S						
V	E	R	O	N	I						
R	L	R	O	T	N						
B	O	I	L	S	U	N	P	O	R	C	H
E	L	Y	N	T							
S	T	O	R	I	E	D	C	Y	N	I	C
R	Y	T	O								
D	E	P	O	T	M	O	A	N	I	N	G
S	Y	E	P	E							
E	P	I	S	O	D	E	S	C	A	P	E
A	T	E	O	T	O						
E	S	T	E	E	M	I	M	A	G	E	S
S	R	A	L	R	T						

SUDOKU

B	A	7	2	6	9	3	D	4	1	5	8	0	E	C
5	E	3	4	C	B	1	7	8	0	6	9	2	D	A
2	8	6	E	D	A	B	0	9	3	C	7	5	4	1
0	4	1	7	5	8	6	E	C	D	A	2	3	9	B
C	9	D	1	0	3	A	2	5	4	E	B	6	7	8
1	0	8	D	B	7	5	6	E	A	2	3	9	C	4
9	B	E	C	2	5	4	3	1	7	D	0	A	8	6
6	3	2	9	4	1	D	A	7	C	8	E	B	5	0
7	C	4	A	E	0	2	8	8	5	9	6	D	1	3
A	D	5	3	6	C	9	0	8	4	1	E	2	7	0
8	A	5	1	4	9	B	0	8	0	C	1	3	2	7
E	1	9	8	7	2	8	C	A	6	3	D	4	0	5
D	7	0	A	C	A	E	4	3	2	1	5	8	6	9
3	5	0	6	9	E	7	1	2	8	B	4	C	A	D
4	2	C	3	8	D	0	5	6	9	7	A	1	B	E

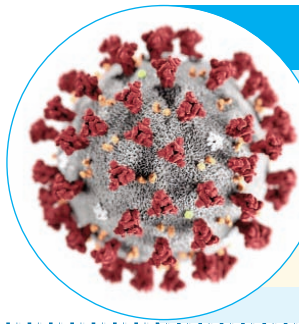
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



NO LENIENCY

Traffic police tow away a car from a no-parking zone at Rajmahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,31,69,393	2,45,04,233	10,00,175
India	59,96,820	49,41,146	94,559
Odisha	2,09,374	1,73,571	797

5 middlemen held from 2 govt hosps

THE POLICE HAD LAUNCHED A CRACKDOWN ON MIDDLEMEN OPERATING AT VARIOUS GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS IN THE SILVER CITY HERE LAST YEAR



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 27: The Commissionerate Police Sunday claimed to have arrested five middlemen from two state-run hospitals in the Silver City here.

"We have arrested five middlemen from two state-run hospitals in Cuttack within last 24 hours. These middlemen were diverting patients from government hospitals to private hospitals," said Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Prateek Singh.

According to police, an ailing minor girl had been shifted to a private hospital from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Postgraduate Institute of Paediatrics (Sishu Bhawan) here at the behest of some middlemen a few days ago. The minor girl had died in the private hospital.

A complaint in this regard was filed with Lalbag police. The incident was also brought to the notice of the Chief Minister and

We have arrested five middlemen from two state-run hospitals in Cuttack within last 24 hours. These middlemen were diverting patients from government hospitals to private hospitals

PRATEEK SINGH | CUTTACK DCP

Health Minister through tweets.

"Taking the incident seriously, Lalbag police kept an eye on the activities of middlemen at Sishu Bhawan. The policemen nabbed four middlemen and produced them in a local court," said a police officer.

The four arrested persons were identified as Bishwabhusan Pani and Haraprakash Das of Chandinichowk area, Milan Ghadei of Alishabazar and Manas Kumar Das of Baramba. "These four ac-

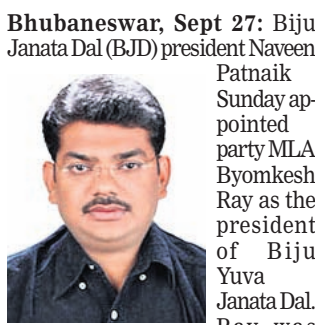
cused were trying to cheat the relatives of a patient by identifying themselves as Sishu Bhawan employees. They have been booked under Sections 419, 420, 120-B and 34 of the IPC," said the police officer.

Similarly, Mangalabag police arrested a middleman while he was diverting a patient from the casualty ward of SCB Medical College and Hospital to a private hospital. "The arrested has been identified as Jitendra Sethi of Banki area. He has been booked under Sections 419 and 420 of the IPC," said an official of Mangalabag police.

Notably, the police had launched a crackdown on middlemen operating at various government hospitals in the Silver City here last year. Several middlemen were arrested during the drive. However, police have failed to keep tab on the activities of middlemen at state-run hospitals since the coronavirus-induced lockdown in March this year, said a source.

Byomkesh Ray is BYJD's new prez

POST NEWS NETWORK



Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president Naveen Patnaik Sunday appointed party MLA Byomkesh Ray as the president of Biju Yuva Janata Dal. Ray was earlier managing the Students' Affairs of the party as General Secretary.

With his new role, Ray has been relieved from his earlier post, BJD General Secretary (Media Affairs) Manas Mangaraj said in a statement.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



CM, Union Ministers mourn Jaswant Singh's death

Singh, a close associate of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, died at a hospital in New Delhi Sunday

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan as well as Pratap Sarangi Sunday condoled the death of former union minister Jaswant Singh, saying he will be remembered for his contribution to Indian polity.

Singh, a close associate of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, died at a hospital in New Delhi Sunday.

"Deeply saddened to learn about the passing away of veteran leader, former Union minister #JaswantSingh ji. His contribution to Indian polity was substantial. My prayers are with his family and friends."



Deeply saddened to learn about the passing away of veteran leader, former Union minister #JaswantSingh ji. His contribution to Indian polity was substantial. My prayers are with his family and friends.

CM Naveen Patnaik mourns the loss

My prayers are with his family and friends," (sic) Patnaik tweeted.

Union Petroleum and Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan also took to the Twitter to mourn the demise of the former union

minister, saying the veteran leader had served the nation diligently in various capacities.

"Saddened by the passing away of former defence minister and veteran BJP leader Shri Jaswant Singh ji. A man of great knowledge and wisdom, he served the nation diligently in several capacities. My deepest condolences to his family in this hour of grief," (sic) Pradhan tweeted.

Union Minister of State for MSME Pratap Sarangi in a message said, Singh's role in strengthening the BJP and work done for the country as a union minister will always be remembered.

Singh was one of India's rare

politicians to have held the portfolios of defence, external affairs, finance and the post of the deputy chairman of planning commission in BJP governments under Vajpayee.

BJP national vice-president and former MP Baijayant Panda also condoled on the death of the veteran leader.

"Very sad to hear of the passing of Shri Jaswant Singh Ji. He served the nation for decades in the forces & in public life & oversaw the transformation of India's military & diplomatic ties by the Vajpayee govt. He was a true patriot. Deepest condolences to the family. Om Shanti," (sic) Panda tweeted.

PAINTED POTS



A vendor paints earthen pots alongside a road in Unit-VIII area of Bhubaneswar, Sunday

PIC: MANORANJAN MISHRA

Min defends Universities (Amend) Ordinance 2020

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: After receiving criticism and opposition over the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Ordinance 2020, Odisha Higher Education minister Arun Sahoo Sunday explained that the ordinance will not affect the independence and autonomy of the universities.

He said this at a webinar on the above mentioned act organised Sunday. Sahoo said that having many acts will lead to disharmony between identical provisions of various acts. "Therefore, it was decided to repeal the Ravenshaw University Act 2005."

Sahoo added that the decision of increasing the tenure of Vice Chancellor from three to four years and increasing of upper age limit from 65 to 67 years will be helpful for Vice Chancellor to work well towards universities' development.



The ordinance won't affect the independence and autonomy of the universities.... Having many acts will lead to disharmony between identical provisions of various acts

ARUN SAHOO | MINISTER, HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

He also said that selection of teachers for the universities will be

done by OPSC to avoid irregularities and delay in selection of teachers.

Sahoo also explained about doing away with the senate, the highest authority of a University. "Over the years, it has become dysfunctional, so the Cabinet decided to abolish it."

He also said that the government does not have any say in the selection of Vice Chancellor. "The three-member committee constituted by the Chancellor will select the VC."

BJD APPRECIATES AKALI'S DECISION OF QUITTING NDA

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) has welcomed the decision of the Akali Dal to quit their old ties with National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over farmers' issue.

BJD MP Pinaki Misra Sunday tweeted that the act of the Akali Dal to sacrifice its old ties with the BJP and the NDA is an appreciable gesture of solidarity with the plight of the farmers.

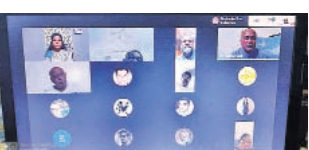
He said that the principled stand in support of the farmers as in the case of BJD is greatly appreciated. The BJD had opposed the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020 and Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Service Bill, 2020 in both the houses of the Parliament. The ruling party of the state had demanded that the government must send these bills to the select committee. However, the bills were passed in the Parliament by voice vote.

Webinar on tourism & rural development

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: On the occasion of World Tourism Day 2020, India Tourism, Bhubaneswar, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India organised a webinar on Tourism and Rural Development Sunday on Google Meet.

Timir Baran Pattnaik, President, Odisha Tour Operator Association was the speaker for the session. He gave a presentation and highlighted the importance of 'Rural



Tourism' and also gave suggestions on how to develop the villages. It was an interactive session where participants gave their inputs and topics involving rural tourism were discussed. Moreover, many ideas were exchanged to make Odisha tourism more popular across the globe.

The webinar was moderated by Rashmi Sonia Tirkey, Manager/Assistant Director, India Tourism, Bhubaneswar, Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India.

STATE GEARING UP FOR POST-COVID TOURISM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The World Tourism Day 2020 was celebrated by the Department of Tourism Sunday here with the launch of 'Odisha by Road' campaign.

The campaign was launched during Kalinga Rides—a superbike rally. The rally, consisting of 80 superbikes of nine bikers' groups, was flagged off at 7:30AM from Infocity Square by Minister Tourism and OLLC Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi.

The campaign aims to encourage tourists from within the state as well as from the neighbouring ones to travel to various tourist destinations in Odisha by road. The rally covered 25 KM to culminate at Dhauli Shanti Stupa. At Dhauli, a concluding ceremony was organised.

CM Naveen Patnaik Sunday announced the opening of Tourism sector in the state by October and welcomed all to visit Odisha, as all kind of precautionary measures have been taken for safety and security of visitors. In his message, he highlighted about the award winning initiative of ecotourism nature camps run successfully for five years by the communities and which is in line with this year's World Tourism Day theme of



Kalinga Rides, a superbike rally, consisting of 80 superbikes of nine bikers' groups, was flagged off at 7:30AM from Infocity Square. The campaign aims to encourage tourists from within the state as well as from the neighbouring ones to travel to various tourist destinations in Odisha by road. The rally covered 25 KM to culminate at Dhauli Shanti Stupa. At Dhauli, a concluding ceremony was organised

'Rural Tourism'.

The CM also emphasised on revival initiatives of the government for Tourism in the state. Visits to the eco-tour nature camps, OTDC properties and spending nights at such destinations is expected to give boost to the tourism sector in the hinterlands of the state and revive the economy.



OTDC has recently announced a day picnic package named 'Bana Bhoji' that is expected to boost tourism among the Odia tourists by arranging visits to nearby nature camps. On this occasion a campaign for promotion and popularisation of Odia cuisine was announced through a chain of authentic Odia cuisine restaurants

named 'Nimantran' by OTDC. Odia cuisine as an aspect of Odia culture has so far been largely unexplored and the need for promotion of a variety of Odia cuisine is being attended to by this initiative, officials said. This chain of restaurants will be managed by OTDC through a dedicated wing and a variety of menu of authentic Odia

cuisine drawn from various districts of Odisha will be catered in these restaurants. In the initial phase, restaurants at Bhubaneswar, Puri and Sambalpur will be launched, and three 'Food-on-Wheel' mobile vans will be deployed in Bhubaneswar and Puri under this initiative.

Minister Jyoti Prakash

Promotion of Odia cuisine is much warranted since this aspect of Odia culture has so far been largely unexplored

JYOTI PRAKASH PANIGRAHI | MINISTER, TOURISM DEPARTMENT

Panigrahi spoke about the recent initiatives of the department and the strategy to promote different tourist destinations. He stressed on the importance of tourists' safety while focusing on revival of the tourism sector in post-pandemic times. The Minister said that the promotion of Odia cuisine is much warranted since this aspect of Odia culture has so far been largely unexplored. He hoped to build informal brand ambassadors of Odisha Tourism through the 'Odisha by Road' campaign. Winners for photography contest organised on this occasion were also announced. The event saw participation by Vishal Kumar Dev, IAS Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Srimayee Mishra, Chairperson, OTDC, Sachin R Jadhav, IAS, Director Tourism and other officials and dignitaries.

COVID-19 TOLL NEARS 800-MARK

Litterateurs urging govt to let them hold events

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The state's COVID-19 tally rose to 2,09,374 Sunday as 3,922 more people tested positive for the disease, while 14 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 797, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

The new cases were reported from all the 30 districts of the state. At least 2,309 cases were registered in quarantine centres, while 1,613 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing.

Khurda district, of which Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of fresh cases at 818, followed by Cuttack 380, Keonjhar 212 and Angul 200.

Three fatalities each were from Khurda and Cuttack, two each from Jajpur and Kendrapara and one each from Bolangir, Dhenkanal, Gajapati and Subarnapur, the official said.

The state has tested over 31.11 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 49,049 Saturday, the official pointed out.

For the first time after almost 13 days, the COVID positive cases on a day reported less than 4,000

	CONFIRMED	ACTIVE	RECOVERED	DECEASED
Odisha	2,09,374 (+3,922)	34,953 (+530)	1,73,571 (+3,378)	797 (+14) Other Than Covid: 53
India	59,96,820 (+1,92,428)	9,60,267 (-1,758)	49,41,146 (+2,02,828)	94,559 (+1,051)
	3.49 % of India case	3.64 % of India case	3.51 % of India case	0.84 % of India case



A roadside vendor puts up face masks for sale in CDA Ring Road area in Cuttack, Sunday

IT EXACERBATES

Of the 3,922 new cases, Khurda reported the maximum of 818 infections, followed by Cuttack 380, Keonjhar 212 and Angul 200

Out of the 14 fresh deaths, three each were from Khurda and Cuttack, two each from Jajpur and Kendrapara and one each from Bolangir, Dhenkanal, Gajapati and Subarnapur

With 818 new cases, Khurda remains in the top of the district tally of infecting 35,898 people while Ganjam occupies the second position with 20,035 cases followed by Cuttack 19,613, Puri 9,625, Rayagada 7,290 and Sundargarh 7,271

Odisha has tested over 31.11 lakh samples for COVID-19 including 49,049, Saturday

marks in the state.

Odisha Saturday touched another high in single day recovery when 4,761 COVID patients were cured and

discharged from the hospital.

The COVID-19 has so far claimed 797 lives while 53 COVID patients have also died but due to reasons other than COVID.

Sources said with 818 new cases, Khordha district remains in the top of the district tally of infecting 35,898 people while Ganjam occupies the second position with 20,035

MONSOON SESSION

CP receives no plea for protest at PMG Sq

The Commissionerate Police receives pleas from around 20 to 30 organisations requesting permission for protests and rallies at the dharna site, during every Assembly session

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The Commissionerate Police Sunday clarified that it has not yet received any application from organisations seeking permission to hold rally or sit-in protests at the Mahatma Gandhi Marg—from Master Canteen to PMG Square during the upcoming Monsoon session of the Odisha Legislative Assembly. The Commissionerate Police usually receives applications from around 20 to 30 organisations requesting permission for various protests and rallies at the Mahatma Gandhi Marg, the designated Dharna site, during each of the session.

However, the twin city CP clarified if any organisation applies for permission then the request will be considered keeping in view the Covid-19 situation. Meanwhile, as many as 136 persons including several MLAs, journalists and Assembly staff were found positive for Covid-19 Sunday.

BMC relief for Capital's Gadeswar haat vendors



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The civic authority here, Sunday, agreed to allow vendors of Gadeswar haat to operate within the premises of the market at VSS Nagar which was earlier restricted as traders failed to follow COVID norms.

In a letter to Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), the Gadeswar Haat Banik Sangha requested that owing to sewage works and other construction activities the vendors have been facing tough time. The Sangha pointed out that the works are affecting the business of the vendors and even leading to traffic congestions.

"Our business has been severely affected after the shift from the permanent market. However, daily activities in new market are also getting affected as customers are reluctant to come owing to construction works which is causing them inconvenience. Thus, we request authorities to shift us back to the market within the premises," the letter said.

Considering the Sangha's request, the BMC agreed to shift the vendors inside the haat in at VSS Nagar. It needs to be mentioned that the civic authority had earlier ordered the vendors to operate outside the haat premises after the vendors had failed to promote social distancing and other COVID norms.

However, the BMC also issued specific instructions to the vendors after agreeing for their re-location to the former marketplace. While the vendors were instructed to operate only Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 7 am to 9 pm. While all traders will have to wear masks the Gadeswar Banik Committee will be responsible for sanitising the area," a senior BMC official stated.

CB interrogates Aditya Dash's ex-girlfriend

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Crime Branch officials Sunday interrogated Chinmayee Mohapatra, former girlfriend of deceased social worker Aditya Dash, for over two hours in connection with his mysterious death.

Three senior officials of the premier investigating agency questioned Chinmayee whom the social activist's family has been pointing out as a 'psycho-lady'. Her advocate was also present during the interrogation.

That said little is known about the questions posed to Chinmayee since the agency refrained from issuing a statement. The woman was tight-lipped as well.



It may be mentioned here that Chinmayee had filed a report against the late social activist's wife Bidyashree, relative Bismit Dash and others at Khairia police station in Balasore September 7 accusing them of trying to defame her. Bismit used to telephone her by posing as a Crime Branch officer, the woman had alleged. In her report, the young woman had mentioned that Bismit harassed and maligned her by calling her a 'psycho-lady' following Aditya's death.

Two arrested with 262gm brown sugar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The Special Task Force (STF) of State Crime Branch Sunday arrested two drug peddlers from Tapang Square under Khurda Sadar police limits here. The cops also seized contraband brown sugar weighing 262 gms from the possession of the drug peddlers.

The accused persons were identified as Sk Talim alias Badi and Sk Asif alias Baun of Rautpada under Tangi police station of Khurda.

Following a tip-off, the STF team intercepted the motorcycle of the accused on National Highway 16 near Tapang crossing. Upon search, the sleuths found the seized drugs in possession of the accused. Cops also seized their bike and other incriminating materials from them.

The accused were later handed over to the Khurda Sadar police that arrested the duo by registering a case (163/ 2020) under Section 21 (c) of NDP5 Act in this regard.

INVITING DANGER



People flout the social distancing norms while buying fish at Nayapalli in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

EXAM AMID PANDEMIC



Students undergo thermal screening before appearing the JEE Advanced at a centre in Bhubaneswar, Sunday

As his salary got halved; youth eyed 'Gigolo' biz

The reduction in his salary made it impossible for the youth to pay his room rent and even day-to-day travel expenditures

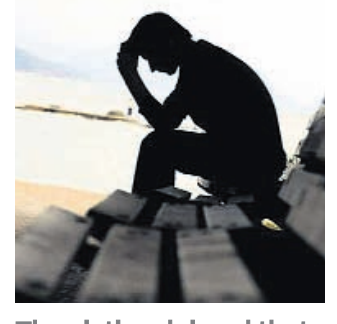
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: A youth, allegedly cheated by cybercrooks on the pretext of making him a 'Gigolo', here Sunday narrated his ordeal which forced him to enter the flesh trade. Media persons Sunday interviewed the victim following the news in this regard published in Orissa POST based on the complaint filed by a prominent city hotel.

The youth said that his salary was almost halved due to the economic fallout of Covid-19 pandemic in the recent past. The contraction in his salary made it impossible for the youth to pay his room rent and even day-to-day travel expenditures.

The victim claimed that recently he came across an advertisement in the internet about an organisation providing job as 'Gigolo' or 'call boy' with a hefty payment of around Rs 30,000 per session. Lured by the amount, he contacted the agency who asked him to deposit Rs 2,000 to get registered in the 'Gigolo' club. Accordingly, he paid the amount in the account given by the crooks. Later, they sent a membership card to the victim youth's Whatsapp number and told him that a lady customer named Sonia had booked a room in a prominent hotel and he had to go there.

The cyber fraudsters again asked him to deposit him Rs 7,000 in the account provided by them as 25 per cent in advance as commission money which he would get



The victim claimed that recently he came across an advertisement in the internet about an organisation providing job as 'Gigolo' or 'call boy' with a payment of ₹30,000

from the lady after the service. He accordingly deposited the same and rushed to the hotel.

Later, a lady called him and enquired about having safety kit with him. Upon refusal, she told him to fetch that kit first from the fraudsters by paying additional Rs 5,000. Smelling a rat, he asked the hotel receptionist about the booking of a room in the name of the lady, Sonia.

Subsequently, the hotel manager took him to police station and lodged a complaint against the racket for smearing the name of the business establishment.

Webinar, anthology on COVID-19 unveiled

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: 'Hatadhua Bela', hand-washing hour, an anthology of Odia short stories written by 24 celebrity authors in the backdrop of coronavirus pandemic was unveiled here and a three-day national webinar be-

The webinar was convened by author and editor Manu Dash and coordinated by Prof Rabindra Das, Vishwa Bharati, Shantiniketan

ginning September 21 was concluded by Dhauli Books, a pan Indian publisher. Authors who contributed to this anthology also participated in the webinar and deliberated on the need for writers' commitment in pandemic times. The theme of discussion was 'Corona and Literature: A writer's perspective on the canvas of Time'.

The participating authors comprised Prof Kailash Patnaik, Chirashree Indrashing, Satyapriya Mahalik, Paresh Patnaik, Bhima Prusty, Rabi Swain, Satya Misra, Dash Benhur, Mamatamayee Chaudhury, Yashodhara Mishra, Ramesh Patnaik, Mihir Kumar Sahu, Nrusingha Prasad Mohapatra, Prabuddha Jagadeb and Malay Mishra.

The webinar was convened by author and editor Manu Dash and coordinated by Prof Rabindra Das, Vishwa Bharati, Shantiniketan.

The anthology received rave reviews and was hailed as a maiden endeavour by any Indian language publishing house.

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Nayagarh's failing law & order raises concerns

IT SEEMS SITUATION IS SPIRALLING OUT OF CONTROL WITH POLICE FAILING TO CRACK DOWN ON LAW BREAKERS AND RESTORE PEACE IN THE DISTRICT



Among the seven murders, the killing of a six-year-old girl has been most gruesome. Police have drawn criticism for their inability to trace the accused

In the latest incident, a 14-year-old boy Suman Behera of Mahatpalli village under Ranpur police limits was killed allegedly by his cousin brother over a property dispute Saturday

The delay in arresting the accused in 6-yr old murder case led to huge outcry among the kin and locals who blocked Nayagarh-Khandapada road demanding CBI probe into it August 12

her decomposed body was recovered in the backyard of their house 10 days later. Police registered a murder case and started an investigation but have failed to trace the accused. The delay in arresting the accused led to huge outcry among the family members and residents as they staged a blockade on the Nayagarh-Khandapada road demanding CBI or CB probe into the incident, August 12.

The blockade was withdrawn after ASP Umakanta Mallick and Nayagarh tehsildar Bhikari Sahu reached the spot and assured the protesters that the accused will be arrested within a fortnight. However, the police have failed to keep their promise.

Later, a farmer Arjun Pradhan, 60, of Bhatasahi village under Town police limits was killed on his farmland over past enmity August 27. Police managed to arrest only three persons while more than five persons are said to be involved in the crime.

A 55-year-old man Khetrabasi Mohapatra of Baunsiapada-Malisahi village under Itamati police limits was killed September 9. The police have arrested only seven persons while over 14 are said to be involved in the crime. A 45-year-old man Kalina Nayak of Mituni village under Fategarh police was killed by miscreants at Sahar Sahi in Balugaon September 19. Two of the accused were arrested while many are still at large. In the latest incident, a 14-year-old boy Suman Behera of Mahatpalli village under Ranpur police limits was killed allegedly by his cousin brother over a property dispute Saturday.

law breakers and restore peace in the district.

Sources said the first reported murder was that of Purna Chandra Lenka whose body was recovered under a culvert under Town police limits June 16. Police registered a murder case and started an investigation based on circumstantial evidence. However, the police have failed to make any headway so far in the murder.

In another incident, 65-year-old Pralhad Jena was brutally murdered when he was guarding his farmland in a forested area near Dianpada July 2. The police arrested his minor son and produced him before the juvenile justice court.

In yet another case, a six-year-old girl Pari, daughter of Ashok Sahu, of Jadupur village under Sadar police limits went missing July 14. As family members were searching for her after informing the police,

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Sept 27: With the murder of seven persons in just four months, the law and order situation has gone to the dogs in Nayagarh district, a report said.

The situation is deteriorating by the day in almost all the police station areas in the district.

Reports said that three murders took place under Town police limits, two in Sadar police limits and one each in Itamati and Ranpur police limits within a short span of four months. The increasing number of murders after the month of June has led to panic among the residents.

Among the seven murders, the killing of a six-year-old girl has been most gruesome. Police have drawn criticism for their inability to trace the accused. The situation is fast going out of hand with the police failing to crack down on the

Man kills cousin over property in Nayagarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Sept 27: Police Sunday claimed that property was the reason behind the murder of a Class-IX student at Mahatpalla village under Ranpur police limits in Nayagarh district Saturday night.

The deceased has been identified as Suman Behera. Police said he was murdered by none other than one of close relatives. Suspecting his cousin brother, they have detained him.

Their preliminary investigation reveals that it has been eight months since the deceased's fa-

ther died. His mother worked as a cook at a school to educate her son and meet the family expenses. The family had received Rs 5 lakh as compensation after the death of Suman's father. The suspect had set his eyes on the money. Assuming Suman being the sole obstacle in getting the money, the accused had decided to eliminate him. He stabbed him to death Saturday night.

On being informed, police had reached the village and recovered the body for post-mortem.

A further investigation is underway, police said.

Deputy collector in soup after wife accuses him of torture

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lakhanpur, Sept 27: Deputy Collector Sarat Kumar Bag posted in Boudh district has landed in the soup after his wife accused him of infidelity and physical torture.

The matter came to the fore after Bag's wife Dolia Debnath lodged a complaint against her husband at the BTM police station in Jharsuguda, Saturday. BTM police registered a case and started an investigation, IO Suchismita Mohanty said.

Debnath has alleged that Bag has been in extramarital affair and has been torturing her physically.

The deputy collector's wife had filed a complaint against him at BTM police station Saturday

She has earlier lodged a complaint against her husband with the police. Reports said that Bag had gone to visit the woman at Jharsuguda during which his wife Debnath followed him. As both reached Jharsuguda, a fight ensued between the couple.

The issue took an ugly turn as Bag and his kin allegedly thrashed the woman. She was then taken to the Jharsuguda district headquarters hospital for medical examination and was discharged after treatment. Later, she lodged a complaint at the BTM police station. While the matter is under investigation, the deputy collector said that it was a conspiracy and that truth will come out after probe.

charged after treatment. Later, she lodged a complaint at the BTM police station. While the matter is under investigation, the deputy collector said that it was a conspiracy and that truth will come out after probe.

'Good boy' jumbo released from solitary confinement

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Sept 27: With 'good boy' remark Rakesh, the rogue tusker which had been spending time in solitary captivity at the Kapilash Zoo in Dhenkanal district, is finally set free.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Prakash Chandra Gugnani said, "The aggressive nature of Rakesh has changed and now he has turned a good boy."

His health condition is better and he will be kept in a spacious enclosure where vegetation and water arrangements have been made for his stay, added Gugnani. The DFO said each movement of Rakesh



FALLING IN LINE
DFO Prakash Chandra Gugnani said, "Rakesh has changed now and turned a 'good boy'"

In June this year, Rakesh had once more turned violent while spending time in a wooden enclosure. However, the jumbo showed good and friendly behaviour towards the zoo members, as a result of which the zoo authorities decided to release the jumbo into an open enclosure. If Rakesh maintains the same behaviour in future he can return to his natural habitat, said DFO said

will be monitored in the enclosure and the next course of action regarding releasing the male jumbo

once more turned violent while spending time in a wooden enclosure with very little space at the zoo. The elephant's sudden change of behaviour had put the wildlife personnel in a quandary. During the month Rakesh tried to break the enclosure.

Rakesh's violent behaviour has been attributed to the prolonged captivity.

However, the jumbo showed good and friendly behaviour towards the zoo members, as a result of which the zoo authorities decided to release the jumbo into an open enclosure. If Rakesh maintains the same behaviour in future he can return to his natural habitat, said

into his natural habitat will be decided in future. In June this year, Rakesh had

CLEAN BEACH



Marking World Tourism Day, officials of the district administration and the Gopalpur NAC carrying out a sanitation drive on the beach, Sunday

Angul admin mulls action against traders

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Sept 27: In its fight against coronavirus, the Angul district administration has started swab testing traders in the town including those on footpaths. That said, the drive seems doomed to fail as some traders are avoiding getting tested.

Angul district has been reporting hundred plus fresh cases every day for the last several days. District Collector Siddharth Shankar Swain has been conducting meetings with officials and asking them to take various measures to stop the spread of the disease.

Many, however, continue to disobey guidelines issued by the district administration. This practice among some traders can well be understood if one observes the traders doing business on the stretch between Sanjibani Market and Laxmi Bazaar Market here.

The collector had issued a guideline that COVID-19 test of traders



will be carried out Wednesday. On the first day, 150 swabs were collected and of them, 18 tested positive for COVID-19. The next day, 167 samples were collected and 25 tested positive.

While there are over one thousand traders doing business on this stretch, only 317 turning up for COVID tests led to discontent among locals.

"The low testing indicates that some traders avoided the test will-

ingly. One thing was noticed Wednesday and Thursday that several shops were closed in the first half of the day. But the same shops were seen open in the second half," a local man said.

After 43 traders and their employees tested positive for the virus, the Angul municipality sealed a total of 71 shops for a week. The civic body officials were seen putting official seals on both sides of the shutters of the shops whose own-

ers or employees had tested positive. "At a time when people are in a state of panic, some traders are so concerned about their own self that they have little remorse for putting many lives at risk. The administration is bringing in measures for the betterment of the people but such offending traders are putting spoke in its wheel," another man said.

When contacted, Angul municipality executive officer Binod Chandra Panda said no leniency would be shown to these habitually offending traders.

"Another day will be fixed soon for their swab collection. On that day, the shopkeepers of the shops found open will be first verified whether they have been tested or not. For those who are found out to have skipped the last two occasions for tests, the test will be mandatory," he said, adding that the administration is mulling action against those willfully skipping test.

Homoeopathic college stares at uncertain future

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 27: Lack of infrastructure has left the Mayurbhanj Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital (MHMCH) paralysed at Baripada.

The Ayush Ministry, citing this reason, has imposed restrictions on admission to this medical college in 2016-17. On the other hand, the 40-year-old college has been functioning without any government aid.

The management of the college sought permission from the Ayush Ministry to start admission in its courses in 2018-19 academic session.

However, the Ayush Ministry had asked the state government to submit an undertaking so that the medical college can be allowed for admission.

However, the health department made it clear to the Ayush Ministry that permission to allow admission to this medical college may be considered without any undertaking.



In such a situation, one of the oldest medical institutes in north Odisha is likely to lose its existence, locals fear.

Reports said the medical college has been a victim of years of mismanagement and official laxity.

The private college is recognised by the state government and is affiliated to the North Orissa University. Notably, the Collector is the president of the college management.

In 1980, Dr Gourachandra Giri,

a homoeopathic doctor, with help of some social activists and homoeopathic doctors founded the college in the form of a private clinic near Baghra Road bus-stand. Later, it functioned for sometime at Pandey ME School and then on the premises of the district headquarters hospital. Now, the college is at Manchabandh.

It used to offer a four-and-a-half-year course in Bachelor in Homoeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS) with 30 seats.

Lack of infrastructure has left the Mayurbhanj Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital (MHMCH) paralysed at Baripada

The Ayush Ministry, citing this reason, has imposed restrictions on admission to this medical college in 2016-17

In 1980, the homoeopathic medical college was started in the form of a private clinic in Baripada

The college has a dozen departments equipped with adequate modern instruments and technical equipment besides a big herbal garden and girls' and boys' hostels.

Locals alleged that even though the institute has the basic infrastructure, the state government has not yet taken it over.

Superintendent of the medical college Dr Deb Kumar Das said that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had assured to consider the demand to accord government status to the medical college ahead of the elections.

Mayurbhanj Citizens' Forum had discussed the issue with the Chief Minister at Naveen Nivas in 2018.

Dr Saroj Kumar Nath, an alumnus, said government takeover of the medical college was one of the main poll agenda. The college can be revived if the state government considers the demand for the takeover, he noted.

Locals protest cremation of Covid victim's body



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 27: Amid the spread of Covid-19 cases in Mayurbhanj district, tension flared up in Baripada over funeral rites of a Covid victim Sunday. Hundred of locals opposed the cremation of the body and

blocked the Baripada-Laxmiposi road for five hours.

Three platoons of police were deployed at the site. According to reports, the administration has allowed the cremation of bodies of Covid victims at Raghunathpur. People of Laxmiposi, Sagunabasa,

Indupai and Raghunathpur had been opposing this for the last four days. The body of a victim was being cremated there Sunday when hundreds of people rushed to the places and opposed it.

Locals said cremation of Covid-affected bodies will only spread the infection as thousands of people go near the place every day. They said that there are several other vacant places away from villages and roads where bodies can be cremated.

The tehsildar, officials of the municipality and the ASP were present on the spot.

Covid tally crosses 6K mark in Bargarh with 154 new cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Sept 27: COVID-19 tally in Bargarh district moved past 6,000 mark Sunday with 154 fresh cases. The district's total cases have increased to 6,098.

Bargarh is reporting over one hundred cases everyday for last couple of days. While this has been a cause of worry for the administration and the people, the COVID-19 tally surpassing 6,000-figure has triggered panic.

Of the fresh 154 cases, 53 are females. According to district information and public relation officer Kalyani Dash, so far 5,041 patients have recovered from the disease and 1,045 patients are undergoing treatment.

The disease has so far claimed 12 lives in the district. The district administration has advised the people to wear face masks, maintain social distancing when they are in markets or at shops, wash hands with soap and not to go out if not absolute necessary.

Curiously, a man from this district, Prahallad Bisi, recently claimed that he has developed COVID-19 vaccine. Meanwhile, Bargarh drugs inspector Sasmata Dehury met the man September 26 and her team seized

all the untested vaccines from a factory. Dehury assured that action would be taken against the man for violating the Drugs Act.

Elephant found dead in Deogaon



POST NEWS NETWORK

Deogaon, Sept 27: Elephant deaths continue to happen in different parts of the state. An elephant was found dead in Deogaon in Bolangir district Sunday. Forest officials Sunday recovered the

carcass in a paddy field of Ratakhandi village under the Sadar block.

While the cause of its death was uncertain, Bolangir Divisional Forest Officer Samir Satpathy conducted an investigation into the incident.

What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion.

SRI AUROBINDO



COVID GAMES

The Covid pandemic's sweep in India is widening. It is virtually on a roll, its reach covering the entire nation. From a daily tally of less than a thousand in the beginning of April, the per-day infection rate is currently in the range of nearly a lakh. India is set to climb to the world's number-one position in infections in a matter of days, edging out even the worst-hit US. Yet, a question could be, instead of preparing for this kind of a fall out, why were we all asked to clang dishes, clap hands and burn lamps? Out of 33 million cases of infection worldwide, 22 million have recovered, and most others are on the road to recovery. The mortality rate for Covid in India is less than two per cent; and even in such deaths, the patients, we are being repeatedly told, were suffering from other diseases and Covid alone is not the cause. This means, Covid is like no other disease except, probably, something similar to AIDS. It takes any slight thing already present in the body and grinds it down till death.

Since India does not believe in keeping truthful records in details and there never is any cross referencing of medical data between doctors, hospitals, institutions or even an organization like the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), co-relation can never be done and that will deprive our scientists, technicians and researchers from testing a well entrenched vaccine. That was a reason for many to laugh when PM Modi, addressing the UNGA, talked of India sharing vaccine with the rest of the world. What vaccine, many wondered!

Still, controls were heavy for the past seven months; though they are easing slowly. The worst scenario of a total shutdown effected by PM Modi since March 25 for such a long period was an overkill at that stage. That sent the already weakened economy nose-diving and it is failing to recover even as activities have been resumed at various levels in stages. By now, entire India is hit by the pandemic while two-thirds of China's landmass is free from it. It speaks for the efficacy of the internal controls China and other countries effected. Sadly India failed to do so because the government preferred to go the mumbo jumbo way by clanging pots, clapping hands and lighting lamps.

There are, of course, the No-Masker types across the world who still feel this disease is of very little consequence and is a ploy to sell vaccines by global pharma companies. It may be that this uncaring attitude has larger number of followers in India. That possibly is a major reason for high infection level in this country. Personal experience shows any one, careful or otherwise, can be hit. However, every one taking utmost care could lessen the burden on medical infrastructure. Therefore, it would have been much wiser for the Government of India and PM Modi not to mislead people into old thoughts which claimed lighting lamps on Amavasya would drive Covid-19 away.

Where China handled matters to its advantage in multiple ways, India failed. Studies now say the operation of flights bringing in rich Indian students and business people stuck in Wuhan, Gulf, and places like London led to a major spread of the Covid infection. That too, if observed, the infections started in places like Gujarat, Mumbai, Delhi, Kerala and Bangalore. All these places have rich people residing or travelling abroad. While mother Nature has protected the Indian land mass for centuries, all diseases that have entered this nation have been through people returning from overseas trips. All that our government needed to do was to stop incoming flights from all countries and we would have been much safer. There would have been no need for lockdowns or such pointless yet disastrous reactions.

While the rich were initially flown in free and later charged for tickets when criticism mounted, the migrant labour force remained invisible to our governments. With the situation improving in Mumbai, Pune and Delhi to an extent, the migrant workers are now finding it difficult to return to these cities due to lack of rail transport; something which they did not get even at the beginning stages of the pandemic. Governments' failure to help them with food and other essentials in a season of work-loss was also a major reason why they turned restive and sought return to their homes. A sane handling of the situation could have avoided such mass return, which only led to spread of the virus in the eastern belts which were otherwise not much affected. Now, lakhs of youths are cooling their heels back in their homes, with neither work nor a means of livelihood. Governments cannot feed millions for long periods. Nor can governments in their native states find them work with a magic wand. If that was possible, the need for them to cross boundaries and reach distant cities would not have arisen at all.

While the Union government is now sitting quiet, having handed over the crisis management baton to the state governments, no one is questioning why the Indian Railways is still not operating normally. Unless and until that railway services resume, the economy does not stand a chance of survival.

Notably, some 10 states remain the worst-hit, which are where most deaths have occurred. Mumbai fails to overcome the trauma of a long-drawn lockdown and Delhi is witnessing a second wave of Covid attacks. Elsewhere, the fatalities are not high; and for most of the virus-hit, the effect has been debilitating and future complications cannot be ruled out completely.

An economic recovery, though, is a distant call for India. It is only the IT sector that has somewhat braved the odds and has managed to stay afloat. Work-from-home culture suits its systems, but on the debit side, hi-tech cities like Bangalore are badly hurt as the workforce has been deserting it for months. The nation, as also the world, is into a new normal. Cities like Dubai are back in full functional mode, with social distancing norms relaxed and use of masks strictly put in place. The US has taken the virus spread with ease, lost lives heavily, but is still putting on a brave front. That made Americans salvage the national economy to an extent, unlike the total collapse in India. China is fully normal. Even Pakistan and Bangladesh carried on with limited controls and are able to hold their heads high. Our leadership is still confused because it never did handle the crisis. It helped create both the economic crisis as well as the huge spread of the infection.

WISDOM CORNER

A lady's imagination is very rapid; it jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony in a moment.

JANE AUSTEN

When you are courting a nice girl an hour seems like a second. When you sit on a red-hot cinder a second seems like an hour. That's relativity.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Commit as many mistakes as possible, remembering only one thing: don't commit the same mistake again. And you will be growing.

OSHO

WORDSWORTH

Triskaidekaphobia

Strictly, triskaidekaphobia refers only to fear of the number 13. "People who build hotels and office buildings know all about triskaidekaphobia, even if they do not know its name, since one almost never encounters an elevator that goes to the thirteenth floor!" states Nancy C Andreasen in Brave New Brain, 2001. Many people regard 13 as a marker of bad luck, an ancient superstition that some writers credit to the Last Supper, after which Jesus was betrayed by one of the 13 present; others put the idea much further back, into Hindu mythology. The term is often extended to mean fear of the inauspicious date Friday 13th, a double dose of unluckiness, as in some cultures Fridays have also been regarded as a day of bad luck because Christ was crucified on that day. It was once thought so especially by mariners, for whom it was long considered unlucky to set sail on a Friday. Some wag invented friggatriskaidekaphobia specifically for fear of Friday 13th, where the first element derives from the name of the ancient Scandinavian goddess Frigga, after whom Friday is named. The origins of triskaidekaphobia are all Greek, from tris, three, kai, and, deka, ten (so making thirteen), plus phobia, fear or flight. It's a comparatively modern formation, dating only from 1908. It first appeared in Religion and Medicine: The Moral Control of Nervous Disorders by Elwood Worcester, Samuel McComb, and Isador H Coriat.

SEALING GOBLETS, EMPTY TAVERN

FOCUS NATION



Saeed Naqvi

WILL BREAD TRUMP FAITH? TO FORESTALL ANY TROUBLE ON THAT COUNT, THE REGIME HAS ALREADY UNFURLED A RANGE OF DRACONIAN MEASURES TO PUT AWAY ANYONE WITH A TALENT TO MOBILISE PUBLIC ANGER

The ancient Indian protocol for social distancing is embedded in the lines my yoga guru, from the famous ashram in Monghyr; Bihar, taught me: "Chaar miley, chausath khiley, Miley bees ek saath. Harjan se harijan miley, Bihsain bahattar hazar." (When two plus two i.e. four eyes meet each other; 32 plus 32, 64 teeth smile together, 10 fingers of both palms, greet 10 of the other; a total of 20. Then a person, blessed by the Lord, is in union with another without physical contact. This results in 36,000 vital points in one human body and 36,000 in the other, sending ripples of joy through 72,000 points in the two beings.)

The current etiquette of social distancing possibly has precedent in past practice. Arrival of outsiders may well have wrenched us away. With Freudian prescience, Akbar Allahabadi put his finger on the nub of the matter: "Tifl mein bu aaye kya ma baap ke atwar ki, Doodh to dibbe ka hai taaleem hai Sarkar ki." (How should an infant inherit characteristics of his/her parents on a diet of powdered milk and government education?) The lockdown outlawed any toing and froing, conditions which Ghalib had described with great simplicity about Delhi during 1857: "Koi vaan se na aa sake yaan tak, Aadmi vaan na ja sake yaan ka." (No one from there can come here; Likewise, no one from here can go there.)

This limitation on visiting each other soon began to reveal our instinctive comfort level with social separation. We were quite comfortable within the 'Lakshman rekhas' we sketched around ourselves. More revealing were telephone conversations with neighbours, and members of the Residents Welfare Association. What they expressed was indifference to the migrants who had walked away from the suddenly imposed penury, joblessness, no roof over their heads in the torrid heat – and now it seems, the approaching winter. Were these millions condemned by their "karma," to be judged for



Corona, I suspect, will wipe out lifestyles boosted by 30 years of reform. The new middle class will revert to their first car, the Maruti and mother's vegetarian recipes. This middle class may adjust without too much fuss to the pre-reform austerities, a mood that will dovetail nicely in the march towards Hindu Rashtra

suitable slots only in the next life?

When I visited South Africa to cover Mandela's release, what struck me was not the exclusive white enclaves. I had expected them. After all, that is what Apartheid was all about. What astonished me was Lenasia, the Indian colony outside Johannesburg. Sprawling mansions with two swimming pools was the lot of many Indians. Unlike the joyous "Black" South Africa, much the overwhelming majority, Lenasia was uneasy at the end of White rule. It was possible to meet Manek Patel in his bungalow who thought "apartheid helped keep bloodline pure."

Hierarchies and class are inescapable. A revolutionary like Ho Chi Minh did live in a modest, two-room, oak cottage but it had the nicest view of the lake. The rare visa which enabled me to cover the 1979 China-Vietnam war was arranged by a member of the Bao Dai family, an old Vietnamese aristocracy. The Indian hierarchy, based on caste, is unique. Unlike racism, it is not based on prejudice: it is simply a time-honoured practice which draws red lines, not to be crossed, between occupation-

based caste groups arranged in a vertical hierarchy. Egalitarianism disrupts these red lines. The unease with the Constitution is deep-seated for this reason with the present regime which harks back to a pre-Islamic "golden past."

As we enter the seventh month of the lockdown, it may be worthwhile taking stock. My wife and I (and a live-in help) have been moderately cautious: we have entertained, keeping social distancing and never having more than four guests. Likewise, we have visited friends for meals, and taken the masks off, once seated.

My daily three kilometer walk in the park adjacent to our apartment (I take off the mask; it suffocates me) has been sacrosanct as has been my yoga. The clan in hundreds spread across north India has so far reported no expiry. But there have been three positive cases in Lucknow including an 85-year-old with co-morbidities. They recovered within three days and three children in the same apartment remained untouched by the virus.

The bleakness that I see ahead cannot be extrapolated from our experience in the health arena. It

is the economic sphere, joblessness, abysmal drop in resources, redesigned kitchen budgets, even within cousins where darkness is catching up.

A visit to South Delhi's Select City Mall was scary. Hanuman Chalisa was being chanted in the biggest food mart. The lobby of the five star hotel was as eerie as the empty road in Hitchcock's North by Northwest, where a bi-plane swoops down on a terrified Cary Grant. A five star restaurant without a customer abutting a bar, stocked to the ceiling, but without a soul. Trust Ghalib to invade my mind: "Bhare hain jis qadar jaam o subu, maikhana khali hai." (Goblets and cups are full to the brim, but the tavern is totally empty.)

How long will Indian capitalism survive such tightly sealed goblets? Corona, I suspect, will wipe out lifestyles boosted by 30 years of reform. The new middle class will revert to their first car, the Maruti and mother's vegetarian recipes. This middle class may adjust without too much fuss to the pre-reform austerities, a mood that will dovetail nicely in the march towards Hindu Rashtra. A fly in the ointment may well be mass anger. After all, those who walked, their ranks swelled by the jobless and the hungry, will ask questions.

Will bread trump faith? To forestall any trouble on that count, the regime has already unfurled a range of draconian measures to put away anyone with a talent to mobilise public anger. As a backup there is also the scary virus as a deterrent against public anger bursting onto the streets. This scarecrow can be made scarier. But that might accelerate velocity of the economy's nosedive.

Which economy? What better way to stop the leak than to sink the ship? Salvation shimmers over the sands as silhouettes of the Rashtira appear.

The writer is a senior commentator on political and diplomatic issues.

IANS

SPECTRUM ENVIRONMENT

Ensuring water for all -- the challenges

Clean and adequate water is essential for survival and this has a direct bearing on positive health outcomes and food security of India. Most countries have committed to providing clean water and sanitation to every citizen in alignment with UN's Sustainable Developmental Goal (SDG) – 6. Taking this goal ahead, the Union government started Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) – Har Ghar Nal Se Jal a year ago to provide 55 LPCD safe drinking water to all households by 2024 through functional household tap connections. For this, we need sustainable water sources.

Shoumyakant Joshi

WATER IS TREATED AS A PRIVATE RESOURCE IN INDIA DUE TO LACK OF A STANDARD GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION ACT ACROSS STATES

Though the use of surface water has been given priority under JJM, groundwater is the major source for drinking water in both urban and rural India, and simultaneously an important source of water for agricultural and industrial sectors. India is the highest groundwater user in the world, extracting about 25 per cent of global resources. About 85 per cent of rural water and 45 per cent of urban water supplies here are met using groundwater resources. Groundwater has emerged as the primary water source where access to surface water is limited.

India manages to store only 10 per cent of annual rainfall. Due to increased demand for water for domestic, industrial and agricultural needs and limited surface water resources, coupled with inadequate recharge measures, there is over-exploitation of groundwater resources. As per the water stress index, 11 out of the 20 big cities in India are facing water scarcity. According to the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the availability of per capita water per year has declined from 5,177 to 1,341 cubic metres since Independence. This crisis needs attention on water recharge and harvesting measures in a campaign or mission mode. The Centre has identified 256 water-stressed districts and efforts were channelled for water conservation and rainwater harvesting in the first phase of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan. The existing bottlenecks need to be addressed. First, due to poor community involvement and lack of demand for any water source recharge measure, source sustainability is at stake. People consider water as an infinite resource, and this mind-set doesn't encourage the community to be involved and act on water conservation or recharge practices. Water is treated as a private resource in India due to a lack of a standard groundwater management and regulation act across states. This allows us to extract groundwater at any level without adequate water recharge accountability. This makes groundwater extraction indiscriminate and unscientific. Second, Gram Panchayat is the

key local institution with ample opportunity to take water recharge and conservation activities at the community level through the MGN-REGA and Finance Commission fund. But, due to lack of understanding on groundwater and water security, Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) members are not able to recognise the essence of water recharge and harvesting. So, they never take water recharge action on a priority basis. Implementation of any water recharge and harvesting activity requires technical skills which are rarely found among PRIs. Even though some Gram Panchayats push water recharge action in their mandated Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) through participatory planning process, those plans are often diluted because of misplaced priorities.

Third, to understand area-specific hydrological conditions, aquifers, and its recharge zone for the selection of appropriate technology for groundwater recharge, districts and states should have sufficient skilled resources which include hydrologist, geo-hydrologist, and engineer. Fourth, all concerned departments like minor irrigation and agriculture, housing and urban planning, water resources, rural development, and Panchayati Raj, drinking water and sanitation mission, pollution control board, forest and environment, and other

stakeholders shall maintain co-ordination for planning and implementation of water security projects. But there is a glaring gap in inter-departmental convergence and collaborative action for both planning and implementation. Take, for instance, Nuapada district of Odisha. This is a severely fluoride affected district, where drinking water department is looking for surface water source and putting in efforts to control of groundwater extraction. Unfortunately, through the Deep Borewell Secha Karyakrama scheme, the state has dug 2,711 deep borewells during 2011-2017 for irrigation. Fifth, rainwater harvesting (RWH) is a solution to the drinking water crisis. But, at present, RWH structures are being promoted widely for recharge purposes and not for water harvesting and storage. Multiple stakeholders are developing infrastructure at large scales for water conservation and harvesting. Yet, due to poor operation and maintenance the infrastructure is getting damaged soon.

Sustainable water conservation and recharge measures are needed alongside an efficient implementation framework.

The writer is with the regional planning, monitoring and evaluation cell of Water Aid India, Bhubaneswar.

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

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Water storage mechanism

Sir, Good to know that some new barges or anicuts are to be built in Odisha. This is a good concept to store water during the monsoon for later months. Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan have used this technology and there, it is found, there is no more of any shortage of water in the summer months for many years. Odisha thought about this only now, but better late than never. A wall of 2-metre height is made across the river. During rainy season, water passes above the wall and there is no restriction in the river's flow. After the rainy season, this acts as a water storage mechanism.

Gopal Mittal, BHUBANESWAR

Media losing faith

Sir, We are living in a big democracy, where media houses are one too many. Media plays a vital role in democracy by giving useful information to the public and presenting the viewpoints of those specialised in various fields. But, now, most of the media are working for one or other political party and each has a hidden agenda and political link. The result is, most media entities have lost public faith. People no more care to watch TV news and debates due to the boredom of the agenda-driven approach by those who anchor them. Even the print media has lost public faith due to their political links and slanted news coverage. In a developing country like India, 80 per cent of the media have no interest in promoting public interest. This is a sad scenario and represents the overall degradation of institutions in this country.

Santosh Kumar Mohanty, Safa, CUTTACK

Relaxed pension rules

Sir, The Union government has relaxed the rules for divorced daughters to receive family pension. Now, a daughter can have family pension even if the divorce had not finally taken place, and if the divorce petition had been lodged by her during the lifetime of her deceased parent employee/pensioner. Likewise, orders have also been released for grant of family pension to a differently-abled child or sibling, even if the disability certificate is produced after the death of the pensioner parent but if the disability had occurred before the demise of the parents. This will ensure pension for dependents and empower divorced women and the differently-abled.

Amit Singh Kushwaha, SATNA

Maha first in country to ban sale of loose cigarettes

The tobacco epidemic in India is fuelled by youth who are 16 to 17 years of age. They buy loose cigarettes as they don't have the financial resources to buy a full packet

PANKAJ CHATURVEDI | CANCER SURGEON

AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 27: Maharashtra has become the first state in the country to ban the sale of "loose" cigarettes and beedis.

A notification issued by the state public health department states that, in sync with sub section (2) of section 7 of Cigarette and other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce Production, Supply & Distribution) Act, 2003, the state imposes a complete ban on

sale of single stick loose cigarette and beedis.

The notification is signed by principal secretary (health) Dr Pradeep Vyas. This has been done because loose cigarettes were sold without packet, which carry graphic health warnings meant to educate the public about the harms of smoking. Smoking has been linked to cancers and heart disease.

Tata Memorial Hospital's cancer surgeon Dr Pankaj Chaturvedi said that the new order would help cut down the habit among the

TOBACCO EPIDEMIC

Studies have shown that a 10% rise in taxes results in 8% drop in the number of smokers



But if people are allowed to buy a single cigarette, they don't feel the effect of the higher taxes

the financial resources to buy a full packet," he said.

Also, grown-ups who bought loose cigarettes never felt the pinch of higher taxes imposed on tobacco goods. "Studies have shown that a 10% rise in taxes results in 8% drop in the number of smokers. But if people are allowed to buy a single cigarette, they don't feel the effect of the higher taxes," added Dr Chaturvedi. As per the Global Tobacco Youth Survey 2016, Maharashtra has the lowest smoking rate in the country.

Good that SAD quit NDA: Sena



AGENCIES

Mumbai, Sept 27: The Shiv Sena Sunday said it appreciates the Shiromani Akali Dal's decision to quit the National Democratic

The SAD, which announced its decision to snap ties with the NDA on Saturday night, is the third major party to walk out of the BJP-led coalition in last couple of years after the Shiv Sena and the TDP.

Last year, the Shiv Sena parted ways with the NDA after its tussle with the BJP over the issue of sharing the chief ministerial post in Maharashtra on a rotational basis.

"Shivsena appreciates Akali Dal's decision to break its ties with NDA in the interest of farmers," Sena's chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut tweeted.

Earlier, talking to reporters here, Raut said the Shiv Sena and the SAD were "pillars of the NDA".

"Both the parties stood by the BJP through thick and thin, while others joined when they smelt power. The Shiv Sena was forced to quit the NDA last year while the Shiromani Akali Dal quit over farm bills. We felt sad over the development," the Rajya

PAWAR MEETS UDDHAV

NCP president Sharad Pawar met Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray here Sunday. The meeting took place a day after former state chief minister and BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis met Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut here, sparking speculation in political circles. Pawar met Thackeray at the latter's of-

ficial residence and the meeting lasted for about 40 minutes, sources said. What transpired during the meeting could not be known immediately. Sources, however, said the future unlocking process and the COVID-19 situation in the state were some of the issues that were discussed during the meeting.

Sabha member said.

The Shiv Sena and the Shiromani Akali Dal were the "NDA's pillars" which are no longer there," he said.

The present dispensation at the Centre cannot be called NDA. "This is a different alliance," Raut said.

The BJP has a comfortable majority on its own in the Lok Sabha. SAD Saturday said the decision to quit the NDA was taken because of the Centre's stubborn refusal to

give statutory legislative guarantees to protect assured marketing of farmers crops on MSP and its continued insensitivity to Punjabi and Sikh issues like excluding the Punjabi language as the official language in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Narendra Modi government has maintained that the MSP (minimum support price) system will stay, and has accused the opposition of misleading farmers on the issue.

Periyar statue found smeared with saffron



AGENCIES

Tiruchirappalli (TN), Sept 27: A statue of reformist leader E V Ramasamy "Periyar" here was found smeared with saffron dye Sunday by unidentified miscreants, drawing strong responses from political leaders in Tamil Nadu.

protesting against the vandalism and dispersed after police assured them that action would be taken.

Panneerselvam lashed out at the incident, and hailed the leader's struggle for ensuring social justice. "Stringent legal action will be taken against those anti-social elements involved in the incident," he said in a tweet.

Stalin slammed the defacing of the statue of the Dravidian stalwart and said people will "boycott" such persons.

Periyar was not the leader of just a movement---Dravidar Kazhagam -- but that of Tamils, he said.

"When are they going to realise that people will further boycott them if they repeatedly do the same mistake," he said in a Facebook post without naming anyone. There have been repeated instances of Periyar statues being vandalised or desecrated in the recent past in the state.

"Periyar is not the leader of just a movement. He is the leader of the Tamil race. Those who do such things thinking they are insulting him are insulting themselves," he said and strongly condemned the incident.

PMK leader S Ramadoss hit out at the defacing of the statue and demanded "strong action" against those involved.

MDMK founder and Rajya Sabha MP Vaiko, AMMK leader an independent MLA T T V Dhinakaran and VCK leader Thol Thirumavalavan, MP, also criticised the latest episode of targeting Periyar's statue and demanded that such elements be dealt with strictly.

HERITAGE CAR SHOW



Visitors take a selfie near vintage cars displayed during a heritage car show in Chennai, Sunday

Maha sugar factories to focus on ethanol production

AGENCIES

Aurangabad, Sept 27: A top sugar federation in Maharashtra is encouraging factories to cut down on production of the sweetener in view of its surplus stock and instead focus on ethanol production.

This will also help sugar factories in overcoming their losses, Maharashtra State Co-operative Sugar Factories Federation Chairman Jayprakash

Dandegaonkar told PTI.

The country produces about 310 lakh tonnes of sugar every year against the requirement of nearly 250 lakh metric tonnes. Even after a buffer stock for three to four months, there is enough sugar in the country, he said.

There is surplus sugar production even after export. So, even after cutting down on the production of sugar, there will be no shortage and rates will also not differ, he said.

"Maharashtra produces 90 to 100 lakh tonnes of sugar every year. We are moving ahead to cut the production by 10 lakh tonnes every year, and take up ethanol production and provide it to petroleum companies," he said.

The country is aiming to achieve the target of 10 per cent ethanol blending with petrol by 2022 and 20 per cent by 2030. The government has also decided to give incentives to those who switch to ethanol production, which

will help in overcoming the losses of sugar factories, he said.

"We plan to achieve the target of curtailing the sugar production by 2021-22. There is no need of any extra set-up for ethanol production. If a factory needs new infrastructure, the government will provide incentives," Dandegaonkar said.

Maharashtra has around 100 co-operative sugar factories, of which nearly 60 are functional, he added.



No intention of joining hands with Sena: Fadnavis

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 27: Former Maharashtra chief minister Devendra Fadnavis Sunday asserted that the BJP has no intention of joining hands with the Shiv Sena or to bring down the Uddhav Thackeray-led state government.

Talking to reporters here, Fadnavis claimed people of the state are "unhappy" with the performance of the Shiv Sena-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government and it "would collapse due to its own inactions".

The senior BJP leader also said his meeting with Shiv Sena MP Sanjay Raut Saturday, which prompted speculation in political circles, was regarding an interview for the Sena mouthpiece 'Saamana'.



the issue of sharing the chief ministerial post.

The Uddhav Thackeray-led party then joined hands with the NCP and the Congress to form MVA government in the state.

"We have no intention of joining hands with the Shiv Sena or to bring down the government. When

it falls on its own, we will see," said Fadnavis, who is the leader of opposition in the state Assembly.

"My meeting with Raut had no political connotations. He asked me for an interview to 'Saamana', to which I agreed. But, I had put my conditions- like the interview should

be unedited and I should get to put my own camera during the interview. So we met to discuss its nitty-gritties," he said.

Meanwhile, Raut, who also spoke to reporters here separately, said he and Fadnavis are not enemies and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray was aware of the meeting

which was planned to discuss the interview schedule. However, Congress leader Sanjay Nirupam criticised Raut, alleging that he was in a hurry to grab headlines.

"When that happens, political careers end. This is not my ill-wish

for Raut, but a reality," the former Mumbai Congress chief told PTI.

Nirupam, who has been sulking since his removal from the post of Mumbai Congress chief ahead of the Lok Sabha polls last year, said if the party is serious about opposing the new farm bills passed by Parliament, it should first ask the ruling Shiv Sena in Maharashtra to spell out its stand.

The Congress and the NCP say they will not allow implementation of the new laws in Maharashtra, while Chief Minister Thackeray hasn't uttered a word on it, he said.

"The Shiv Sena supported the farm bills in the Lok Sabha, while it staged a walkout from the Rajya Sabha when other opposition parties were demanding a vote on it," Nirupam said, adding that farmers in Maharashtra are confused (over the state government's stand).

Ensure speedy justice: Victims' family

AGENCIES

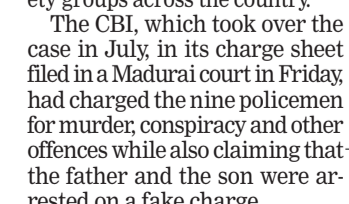
Chennai, Sept 27: With the CBI charge-sheeting nine Tamil Nadu policemen for murder in the death of a father-son duo after alleged torture in Sathankulam in Tuticorin, the family of the victims on Sunday pleaded for early justice, saying stringent punishment alone will act as a deterrent to others from committing such acts.

On the political front, both the ruling AIADMK and its rival DMK claimed credit for the CBI probe into the case and the agency filing the charge sheet, as they stressed on the need for stringent punishment to the culprits behind the death of R P Jeyaraj and his son J Benniks. We need early justice without

any delay, stringent action so that nobody (apparently policemen) repeats such a thing, Jeyaraj's daughter Persis told PTI.

Jeyaraj and Benniks were allegedly tortured at the Sathankulam police station in southern Tamil Nadu on June 19 after being taken there for violating lockdown norms over business hours of their cell phone shop, and died days later at a hospital, triggering a massive outrage from political parties and civil soci-

ety groups across the country. The CBI, which took over the case in July, in its charge sheet filed in a Madurai court in Friday, had charged the nine policemen for murder, conspiracy and other offences while also claiming that the father and the son were arrested on a fake charge.



national



Both the Modi (Prime Minister Narendra Modi) and Yediyurappa governments are anti-farmer governments. They have launched a diabolical attack on the lives and livelihoods of farmers in Karnataka, as also the rest of the country
RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA | CONGRESS LEADER

PREZ GIVES ASSENT

A new law that provides for inclusion of Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi in the list of official languages in Jammu and Kashmir, in addition to Urdu and English, has been notified after President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent



of the day quote

A country that depends on imports for its military equipment can never be strong. Being self-sufficient in the defence sector is linked to self-respect and sovereignty
RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

The COVID-19 fatality rate in the national capital is less than one per cent in the last 10 days and a massive increase in testing for detection of coronavirus infection has led to the rise in cases
SATYENDAR JAIN | DELHI HEALTH MINISTER

I had called leaders of farmers organisations and discussed with them the stand of our government and the desire of the Prime Minister (which is pro-farmer
B S YEDIYURAPPA | KARNATAKA CM

SHORT TAKES

Covid patient commits suicide
Aurangabad: A 42-year-old COVID-19 patient allegedly committed suicide in Government Medical College and Hospital in Aurangabad Sunday morning, police said. The Paithan resident, who was admitted in GMCH on September 25 and had been shifted to the ICU on September 27, jumped off the window beside his bed around 7 am after asking for water and a paan from attendants in the ward, GMCH officials said. He jumped from the fourth floor, GMCH Dean Kanan Yelikar said.

2 militants killed
Srinagar: Two unidentified militants were killed in an encounter with security forces in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district Sunday, police said. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the Sambhoora area of Awantipora in the south Kashmir district after receiving specific information about the presence of militants there, a police official said. He said as the forces were conducting the searches in the area, the militants fired upon them. The security forces retaliated, ensuing an encounter. In the exchange of fire, two militants were killed, the official said, adding the identity and group affiliation of the slain ultras is being ascertained.

Man killed
Ramgarh (Jharkhand): A 32-year-old man has been shot dead allegedly over a monetary dispute in Jharkhand's Ramgarh district, police said Sunday. The incident took place in Chitarpur in Rajrapa police station area on Saturday night, its officer-in-charge, Binod Kumar Murmu said.

Student found dead
Muzaffarnagar (UP): The body of a polytechnic student was found hanging from a tree here, police said Sunday. The deceased has been identified as Ankit, they said. His body was found hanging from a tree on the compound of a hostel on Saturday, SHO, D K Singh said.

Man kills sons
Mahoba (UP): A 32-year-old inebriated man allegedly killed his two children after an argument with his wife in Uttar Pradesh's Mahoba district, police said Sunday. Harnarayan, a resident of Parapantar village in Panwari block, tied a 'gamcha' around the neck of his sons and strangled them around 7.30 pm on Saturday, Superintendent of Police Arun Kumar Srivastava said.

'UK, Dubai top sources of Covid importations'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Travellers from Dubai and the UK were primary sources of COVID-19 importations into India, according to an analytical study done by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mandi.

According to the research, which has been published in the Journal of Travel Medicine, COVID-19 got induced into Indian states mainly due to international travels. The study has also found that infected cases from Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh played less role in spreading the disease outside their communities. Whereas infected people in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir; and Karnataka played a significant role in the local transmission, and some of them caused interstate transfer too.

"We tracked the spread of COVID-19 and its diffusion from the global to national level and identified a few super spreaders who played a central role in the transmission of the disease in India. The COVID-19 spread in phase one was traced using the travelling history of the patients, and it was found that most of the transmissions were local," Sarita Azad, Assistant Professor, IIT Mandi, said.

"The research team has used the travel history of infected patients from January to April as the primary data source and a social network was created depicting the spread in the early phase of the pandemic. The research found that the maximum numbers of connections were established from Dubai (144) and the UK (64)," she added.

Azad explained that statistical metrics calculated from the data revealed that Dubai and the UK played a crucial role in spreading the disease in Indian states and were the primary sources of COVID-19 importations into India.

"Dubai's eigenvector centrality was the highest that made it the most influential node. The statis-



According to the research, which has been published in the Journal of Travel Medicine, COVID-19 got induced into Indian states mainly due to international travels
The study has also found that infected cases from Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh played less role in spreading the disease outside their communities

tistical metrics calculated from the data revealed that Dubai and the UK played a crucial role in spreading the disease in Indian states and were the primary sources of COVID-19 importations into India.

"Based on the modularity class, different clusters were shown to form across Indian states, which demonstrated the formation of a multi-layered social network structure. A significant increase in confirmed cases was reported in states like Tamil Nadu, Delhi and Andhra Pradesh during the first phase of the nationwide lockdown, which spanned from March 25 to April 14," she said.

"The modularity class of states such as Tamil Nadu, Delhi, and Andhra Pradesh was low. Hence, it is likely that infected cases from these states played less of a role in spreading the disease outside their communities. Whereas states like Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Kerala, Jammu and Kashmir; and Karnataka played a significant role in the local transmission, and some of them caused interstate transfer too," she added.

128 Covid deaths in central police forces

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The total number of coronavirus cases in central police forces under the Ministry of Home Affairs has gone over 36,000 with 128 personnel succumbing to the pandemic, according to a latest data.

The cases pertain to the seven forces of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Border Security Force (BSF), Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), National Security Guard (NSG) and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

As per the latest data accessed by PTI, these forces have recorded over 36,000 COVID-19 cases till now, out of which, 6,646 are active while rest of the personnel have recovered. The maximum cases at 10,636 have been recorded in the BSF, the country's largest border guarding force with about 2.5 lakh personnel.

This is followed by 10,602 cases in the largest paramilitary force CRPF and 6,466 cases in the CISF. The BSF guards Indian frontiers with Pakistan and Bangladesh, while CISF is the national civil aviation security force. The ITBP has had 3,845 cases, SSB 3,684, NDRF 514 and NSG 250 coronavirus cases.

The ITBP guards the 3,488 kms long India-China LAC, while the SSB mans open Indian borders with Nepal and Bhutan. The NDRF is the central disaster contingency force and NSG is the federal counter-terrorist and counter-hijack combat commandos force. The data shows that in all these forces, the recoveries are much more than the active cases. A total of 128 personnel of these forces have lost their lives to coronavirus infection. The maximum 52 deaths have been reported in the CRPF, 29 in BSF, 28 in CISF and nine each in ITBP and SSB. One death has taken place in NDRF. These forces are on active duty and hence, the COVID-19 infection numbers are continuing. All those who join duty from leave are being put in mandatory quarantine and the infected are sent for isolation, an officer said.

New trend among terror groups

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Sept 27: A false cavity under an Indian toilet or planting a steel box beneath a seasonal nullah or taking refuge in man-made cavities is a new trend emerging among terror groups in Jammu and Kashmir to play hide-and-seek with security forces after their stay with the local population turned out to be a high risk.

Police and Army officials feel that mounting pressure has forced the terror groups and their sympathisers to look for alternative hiding places after several encounters with security forces led to several casualties in the militant rank and file.

"Underground bunkers and false cavities are not a new phenomenon but of late we have had several such examples in south Kashmir. In one case, terrorists were hiding inside a septic tank of an Indian toilet," says Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbagh Singh.

Giving details about the incident, an official from the Army team, which detected the false



cavity in March this year in the Watrigaam area of Anantnag, said that they noticed fresh white cement around an Indian toilet inside a house where an intelligence input suggested about the presence of terrorists. "The broken tiles and newly applied white cement gave away the secret despite the presence of human excreta on the toilet seat to divert us...we started digging and received a fire from beneath. This resulted in the death of four Lashker-e-Taiba terrorists," the officer recalled about the operation in March this year. A similar incident, according

to Army officials, occurred in the Lassipura area on the Pulwama-Shopinian border in south Kashmir in 2019 when a house was searched at least six times and finally the septic tank was dug only to discover two terrorists hiding beneath.

"We have seen false walls in kitchen, bedrooms, drawing rooms in many hideouts of terrorists especially in south Kashmir," DGP Singh, who was flanked by Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range) Vijay Kumar and Deputy Inspector General (South) A K Goel said recently.

Army officials have also been using drones to locate terrorist hideouts and underground bunkers, which included one below a seasonal stream where the terrorist group led by Zubair Wani had placed a steel box beneath the surface to escape the dragnet of security forces.

While Wani was killed in an encounter in June this year, the tell-tale signs led the Army team to the underground bunker beneath the Rambi Ara.

Army gears up for winter in eastern Ladakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: In its biggest military logistics operation in decades, the Indian Army has rushed tanks, heavy weaponry, ammunition, fuel, food and essential winter supplies to high-altitude areas in eastern Ladakh to maintain its combat readiness through the treacherous winter of around four months, military sources said Sunday.

They said Chief of Army Staff Gen MM Naravane, aided by a group of top commanders, has been personally involved in planning and overseeing the implementation of the mammoth exercise that began in mid-July and is nearing completion.

A significant number of T-90 and T-72 tanks, artillery guns and infantry combat vehicles were flown



into various sensitive areas including Chushul and Demchock sectors as part of the logistics operation, the sources said. Under the operation, the Army transported large quantities of clothes, tents, food items, communication equipment, fuel, heaters and other supplies to army per-

River cruise for just ₹39!

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 27: A river cruise for just ₹39 may sound unbelievable, but the WBTC has come forward to launch a leisure ride on the Ganges for the price to give tourists and local visitors a memorable experience of viewing the heritage of the city, an official said Sunday.

The unique pricing of less than a Dollar for a 90-minute cruise over the Ganges, like the London river cruise or Singapore boat ride or those on River Mandovi in Goa, is aimed at attracting people from all walks of life, West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) managing director Rajanvir Singh Kapur said.

The cruise, traversing many landmarks and hidden gems of the city of joy, will be launched on October one, he said. "The idea is to make heritage river cruise experience affordable and popular among people from all walks of life and all age groups," Kapur said. The cruise will travel past the Armenian ghat, Nimtala ghat,

Chandpal ghat, the Eastern Railway headquarters which came into being in 1952, Binoy Badal Dinesh Bagh, among several landmarks of the city along the river, Kapur said here.

"The guests will enjoy a ride into the history and heritage of Kolkata with light music playing in the background on the vessel, which is being decked up aesthetically to reflect the eclectic spirit of the city," the WBTC managing director said.

He said that the cruise will be operated on a no-profit basis by the West Bengal government-run transport corporation. He said that the cruise will be operated on weekdays from Millennium Park at 4 pm and 6 pm, while on holidays, Saturdays and Sundays it will be operated at noon, 2 pm, 4 pm and 6 pm.

Assuring that proper sanitisation protocols are being followed for safety, Kapur said that a maximum of 150 people will be accommodated in one ride of the cruise for maintaining social distancing norms.

Ex-Bihar police chief takes political plunge

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, Sept 27: Former Bihar DGP Gupteshwar Pandey joined the state's ruling JD(U) Sunday amid indications he would contest the assembly polls beginning next month.

Pandey joined the party in the presence of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who is also the JD(U) president, less than a week after taking voluntary retirement from service. His much-anticipated induction took place a day after he met Kumar and insisted there was nothing political in their conversation.

The 1987 batch IPS officer had strongly defended Kumar on the issue of institution of a CBI probe into the mysterious death of Sushant Singh Rajput, the Patna-born talented film star. The voluble officer had reminded actor Rhea Chakraborty, Rajput's girlfriend



Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar presents the membership slip to former DGP Gupteshwar Pandey as he joins the party, in Patna

and the main accused in the abetment to suicide case being probed by the CBI, of her "auqat" (status) to question Nitish Kumar; when she suggested that there was politics behind the Bihar government's

decision to push for a CBI probe. Pandey's application for VRS was accepted by Governor Fagu Chauhan September 21, five months before the 1987 batch IPS officer was to superannuate, and in a rare

gesture, a three-month cooling off period applicable to bureaucrats was waived in his case.

"I have a long, loving association with Nitish Kumar. He personally called me and offered party membership. I have a public profile and connect with people...people love me. But I don't know anything about politics. I will do what I am asked to do," he said.

Pandey also turned up at a press conference at the JD(U) headquarters where he was welcomed into the family by Ashok Choudhary, a cabinet minister who was earlier in the day appointed the working president of the state unit. Nitish Kumar's close aide Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh, who has formerly been a state president of the JD(U) and is currently the party's leader in the Lok Sabha, was also present.

HEALTH IS WEALTH



Patients perform yoga at CWG village COVID-19 Care Centre in New Delhi, Sunday

Seven of family killed in mishap

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kalaburagi, Sept 27: Seven persons, including four women, of a family were killed early Sunday morning and one man seriously injured when a multi-utility vehicle they were travelling in hit a truck at high speed and rolled into a ditch on Kalaburagi's outskirts in north Karnataka, police said.

A pregnant woman was among the victims. "The mishap occurred in the wee hours when the ill-fated vehicle hit a truck parked on the roadside and fell into a ditch filled with rainwater, killing all seven on the spot," Kalaburagi Deputy Commissioner of police DK Babu said.

Kalaburagi is 630km north of Bengaluru in the southern state. One male passenger injured in the mishap was rushed to the district hospital for treatment. "The eight of family were travelling to Kalaburagi from their hometown Aland in the northern district to get admitted a pregnant family member in a state-run hospital for delivery," Babu said.



We should not eat for palate alone. Let's remember that we are what we eat and food is for nourishment. Let us replace mindless eating with having nutritious and protein-rich food
M VENKAIAH NAIDU | VICE PRESIDENT

UMA BHARTI COVID POSITIVE

Former Union minister and senior BJP leader Uma Bharti has said that she has tested positive for COVID-19 and has quarantined herself. She requested people who came in her contact to get themselves tested



of the day quote

A Dalit girl in UP's Hathras district was severely beaten up and then she was gangraped, which is extremely-shameful and extremely-condemnable. Even daughters and sisters from other sections of society are not safe in the state. The government must pay attention towards it. This is the demand of the BSP

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

Jaswant Singh was a senior and experienced politician, and he discharged his responsibilities effectively as a Union minister. He also rendered his services for a long time as a Member of Parliament. The loss following the death of Jaswant Singh will be hard to fill

YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CM

As per the World Health Organisation, one doctor is required for every 1,000 people. Accordingly, 1.25 lakh doctors are required for 12 crore people of the state. Besides, around 2 lakh support staff like nurses, lab technicians and Group D employees are needed. As many as 50,000 posts of teachers and 75,000 Junior Engineers will be filled. In Bihar police, over 50,000 posts are vacant

TEJASWI YADAV | RID LEADER

SHORT TAKES

Ex-MP rejoins Congress

New Delhi: Former IPS officer and ex-MP Ajoy Kumar, has rejoined the Congress after leaving the Aam Aadmi Party and said that he was inspired by Rahul Gandhi. "Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly. - Mahatma Gandhi. "Driven by my conscience to speak up against injustice and institutional capture, I was inspired by Rahul Gandhi and decided to come back to the Congress today," he said.

Student held

New Delhi: Delhi Police has arrested a graduation student on charge of sending obscene messages to a woman on Facebook, a senior officer said Sunday. Mobile phones used in the commission of crime have been seized from the accused, he added. Accused Kafil confessed to his crime and told police that he was fond of proposing friendship to young women on the social media and sending them obscene messages.

Smuggler nabbed

Kannauj (Uttar Pradesh): A person found smuggling pangolin carcasses and scales has been arrested during a raid in Kannauj district. Minhaj, a native of Bharuch district of Gujarat, was hiding at his relative's place near Ratanpur check post in Jalalpur Panwara area. "Minhaj and one other of his aide Nasir of Haldwani, Uttarakhand had escaped from Shyamalji town in Aravalli district of Gujarat on September 17, while Nadim, their third aide had been arrested," said a spokesman of the Kannauj police.

Man arrested

Mumbai: The crime branch of Mumbai police Saturday nabbed a 22-year-old man from suburban Malad in connection with the killing of Dalit activist Devjibhai Maheshwari in Kutch in Gujarat, an official said. The accused, Bharat Jayantilal Raval alias Maharaj, is a resident of Tirupatinagar in Kutch, he said. Dalit organisations had given a call for bandh in Gujarat and other states if the accused was not arrested within 24 hours of the incident, which occurred on Friday, the official said.

PM Modi lauds farmers in Mann Ki Baat

Lauding farmers for strengthening the country's agriculture sector, he said the farm sector is playing a major role in efforts to build a self-reliant India and showed its prowess during the COVID-19 pandemic. The stronger it is, the stronger will be the foundation of a self-reliant India, he said



In his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' broadcast, Modi also took a swipe at economic policies pursued by successive Congress governments since Independence.

New Delhi, Sept 27: Amid protests by a section of farmers against farm reform bills, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said Sunday that a large number of peasants have benefited since fruits and vegetables were brought out of the APMC Act in some states a few years ago and asserted that grain-producing farmers will now have the same freedom.

"Had the country followed the essence of Mahatma Gandhi's economic philosophy, there would not have been any need for the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' campaign as India would have become self-reliant much earlier," he said.

Lauding farmers for strengthening the country's agriculture sector, he said the farm sector is playing a major role in efforts to build a self-reliant India and showed its

prowess during the COVID-19 pandemic. The stronger it is, the stronger will be the foundation of a self-reliant India, he said.

The prime minister said he receives many letters from farmers and also interacts with farmer groups, as he spoke of changes taking place in agriculture and new dimensions being added to it. He cited example of a Haryana farmer as to how he and other farmers benefited a lot after fruits and vegetables were in 2014 brought out of the Agricultural Produce Market Committee Act, allowing them to sell their produce outside government-controlled mandis.

He spoke about similar examples of farmers benefitting in Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, and also noted that they formed groups to come out of the clutches of middlemen and received remunerative prices.

"Now they have got freedom to sell not only fruits and vegetables but whatever they produce; paddy, wheat, mustard, sugarcane, anywhere they get a better price," he

asserted. The prime minister made no direct mention of the farm bills brought by his government and passed by Parliament or of the opposition-led protests against them. Critics have called these measures as "anti-farmers".

These bills, the government has asserted, will allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere they want at a better price. He also shared the success story of a Gujarat farmer as to how he did well after adopting innovative methods to grow potatoes. The agriculture sector will benefit immensely with greater use of technology, he said.

Modi also reiterated his request to people to wear a mask and maintain social distancing. These few rules are the weapons in the fight against the novel coronavirus, he said. In his address, he also remembered many noted figures, whose birth and death anniversaries fall in the coming days.

The prime minister began his monthly broadcast by talking about storytelling, saying it has been a part of our nation for centuries.

BSF foils infiltration bid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA



Jammu, Sept 27: A major infiltration bid by a group of five heavily-armed terrorists, under cover fire provided by the Pakistani Rangers, was scuttled along the International Border in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, a spokesman of the Border Security Force (BSF) said Sunday.

All the five terrorists fled back to Pakistan in the face of effective retaliation by the border guarding force, the spokesman said, adding this was the second unsuccessful infiltration attempt from across the border in Samba district in the past fortnight.

On the intervening night of September 26 and 27, the spokesman said BSF troops noticed movement of a group of terrorists who were attempting to infiltrate into this side. The infiltrators opened fire when challenged by the BSF. Officials said the incident took place in Mangu Chak Border Outpost (BOP) area of Ghagwal around 11.45 pm and small arms firing between the India and Pakistani troops lasted

for about 30 minutes. "Taking advantage of darkness and thick Sarkanda (grass variety) growth, the heavily-armed terrorist group tried to enter into Indian Territory and opened fire when challenged by the BSF. Pakistani Rangers also fired on Indian posts to provide fire cover to the infiltrating terrorists who, however, fled back due to coordinated and effective fire by BSF," the spokesman said.

A similar attempt by a group of terrorists was foiled in Samba sector on the intervening night of September 14 and 15. Earlier, a BSF official said a massive search operation was launched early this morning to sanitise the area.

"The search operation is on but no incriminating material has been recovered so far," he said.

Bangalore epicentre of terror activities: Tejasvi

A day after becoming the president of the BJP's youth wing, Tejasvi Surya said many terror modules have been busted in Bangalore, the Silicon Valley of India, in the recent past



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Bangalore has become an epicentre of terror activities, BJP MP Tejasvi Surya claimed Sunday and said he had requested Union Home Minister Amit Shah to set up a permanent division of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in the city.

A day after becoming the president of the BJP's youth wing, Surya said many terror modules have been busted in Bangalore, the Silicon Valley of India, in the recent past. The terrorist groups want to use the city as an "incubation centre" for terror activities.

Surya said he had met Shah at the latter's residence two days ago and emphasised the need to have a well-equipped and sufficiently staffed NIA office to mitigate terror-related activities in Karnataka. "The Home Minister has assured that he will direct officials to establish a permanent station house manned by an officer of the rank of the SP at the earliest," Surya said.

"In last few years, Bangalore, the Silicon Valley of India, has become epicentre of terror activities. It has been proved through many arrests and sleeper terror cells busted by the investigative agency in the city," Surya, who represents Bangalore South in Lok Sabha, said here.

"It is a matter of grave concern that NIA investigations into the

DJ Halli and KG Halli mob violence in August have indicated that many terrorist organisations are using Bengaluru as their incubation centre for carrying out anti-India activities," he said.

Over 3,000 people went on a rampage on August 11 torching the residences of Congress MLA R Akhanda Srinivasa Murthy, his sister Jayanthi and DJ Halli and KG Halli halli police stations in Bangalore. The violence broke out over an alleged inflammatory social media post by the nephew of the Congress MLA.

Surya said there are reports that the NIA does not have sufficient infrastructure and human resources for conducting investigations. The NIA is currently operating with skeletal staff and that too from Hyderabad with only a camp office in Bengaluru.

Bangalore being the financial nerve centre of south India, it is vital to keep the city safe from all terrorist and anti-India organisations and their activity, he added. On his new responsibility as the head of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha (BJYM), Surya said his first visit will be to poll-bound Bihar to interact and meet the party's youth wing volunteers.

"Yuva Morcha will nurture more grassroots leadership across the country. A young karyakarta (worker) like me has been given the responsibility of the national youth wing of the world's largest political party in the world's biggest democracy and in the world's youngest country. This is possible only in the BJP," he said.

Underlining that BJYM will continue to be a platform for all youngsters of the country, Surya said he feels the strongest leaders come from weakest sections of the society. And he wants to ensure that BJYM will be their platform.

FESTIVE FEVER



Women buy jewellery from a roadside stall for Durga Puja in Kolkata, Sunday

PTI PHOTO

NIA arrests another al-Qaeda terrorist

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 27: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested another person from West Bengal's Murshidabad district for his alleged involvement with a Pakistan-sponsored module of the al-Qaeda, a senior officer said Sunday.

The NIA apprehended Shamim Ansari from his residence at Jalangi Saturday, he said.

"We have found his involvement with those arrested earlier. We have seized his mobile phone. He is being interrogated," the official said.

The agency had earlier arrested nine people - six from West Bengal and three from Kerala for their association with the Pakistan-sponsored module of the al-Qaeda.

A preliminary investigation suggested that Ansari had earlier gone to Kerala for work and returned to his home town.

RAINY SEASON TO END ON ABOVE-NORMAL NOTE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The southwest monsoon is set to retreat from parts of north India in the next two days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Sunday, while data suggests that the rainy season is most likely to end on an above-normal note.

Overall, the country has received 9 per cent more rainfall than normal until September 26, according to data. "Conditions are becoming favourable for withdrawal of monsoon from west Rajasthan and adjoining areas from September 28," the weather department said.

Mahesh Palawat, the vice president of private forecaster Skymet Weather, said rainfall has reduced considerably. "The withdrawal of monsoon from west Rajasthan is likely to start from tomorrow (Monday). It looks like monsoon will withdraw on an



above-normal note," Palawat said.

Rainfall in the range of 96 to 104 per cent of the Long Period Average (LPA) is considered as 'normal', while precipitation in the range of 104 to 110 per cent of the LPA is 'excess'. Nine states have received excess rainfall, while 20 states have recorded normal precipitation, the data shows.

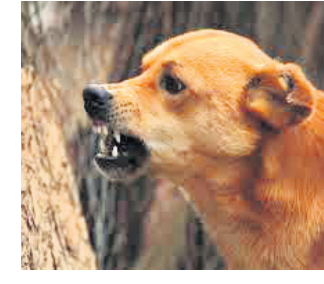
The official rainfall season in India is from June 1 to September 30. Monsoon arrived over Kerala on June 1, its normal onset date. June recorded 17 per cent more rainfall, while July saw 10 per cent deficiency.

3 BOOKED FOR KILLING DOG

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Hathras (Uttar Pradesh), Sept 27: Three persons have been booked by the Hathras police for allegedly beating a stray dog to death and then dragging its carcass in the area to "scare away the other canines".

A video of the incident that took place three days ago, was also shared on social media platforms in which a group of people can be seen gathering around the sleeping dog, armed with sticks. When the dog woke up and started barking, the group attacked it till it fell silent.



Later, two persons tied the dog's legs with a rope and dragged it around the locality. According to the complainant, Mukesh Chaturvedi, when some people tried to intervene, the group warned them against reporting the incident.

The police initially did not register an FIR and Chaturvedi then approached Lok Sabha MP Maneka Gandhi. "Since police had not registered an FIR, I wrote about the incident to UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and BJP MP Maneka Gandhi, who is an animal welfare activist," Chaturvedi said.

In response to Chaturvedi's mail, Maneka's office informed him that the Superintendent of Police of Hathras had been alerted and an FIR was being filed. Later, Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Prakash Kumar said that the FIR has been registered against three persons, including two unidentified ones, under section 429 (mischief by killing or maiming cattle) and other sections of IPC at Hathras Gate police station on the basis of Chaturvedi's complaint.



Rising stock of Adhir

Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, the Leader of Congress in Lok Sabha, never had it so good in his entire political career. Though he is a fifth term Lok Sabha MP, he was never a front bench leader. But the windfall gain came when Sonia Gandhi chose him to lead the party in Lok Sabha after the shock defeat of Mallikarjun Kharge in 2019 polls. Soon, he became chairman of the

powerful Public Accounts Committee though he was not designated as Leader of the Opposition. He even presided over the full meeting of the CPP in the absence of Sonia Gandhi though Ghulam Nabi Azad is far more senior to him and holds the position of Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha. This was another signal of dwindling stock of Azad in the party. As if this was not enough, Adhir Ranjan has got a new bungalow at South Avenue Lane this month just opposite Azad's residence.

BJP IT cell goes after MPs

The BJP's IT department is extremely worried over steep fall in 'likes' & 'hits' of top party leaders. The department is approaching party MPs with a

request to re-tweet whatever is dished out by the media and IT Department and by top leaders. The BJP has more than 400 MPs in both the houses of Parliament. However, not many MPs use twitter and other social media tools. They gladly gave their passwords of their social media accounts to the IT cell. They said they would tweet on their own of the PM and party chief JP Nadda and senior ministers. But they were politely told to provide passwords of their twitter account so that message could be sent whatever is released by party spokespersons howsoever junior they may be. Obviously, the IT cell will re-tweet on their behalf to jack up numbers. The new strategy is being deceived as social media following the party and its party leaders is falling rapidly in the recent past. The IT cell has also launched a fresh recruitment drive to enhance BJP's reach.

How Pawar plays his games

Maharashtra strongman Sharan Pawar swung into action to resolve the political crisis that erupted after the Sushant Singh Rajput and Kangana Ranaut controversies. But a close scrutiny revealed that the list of players involved in the making of these crises were close to Pawar only. Be it Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh who termed SSR's death as suicide on the first day or senior Sena leader Sanjay Raut who called Kangana by names. If Mumbai Police messed up SSR's case, it functions under the NCP leader only. The Bihar NDA leaders jumped into the game and fully exploited the situation given on a platter by Mumbai Police and Home Minister. In Kangana's case, the blame is laid at the doorstep of Raut. Insiders say that he may be a Sena leader but he is more

close to Pawar than his own Boss Uddhav Thackeray. Raut has been unhappy with Uddhav for a variety of reasons. Thackeray can neither rein in Raut nor can he change the portfolio of Anil Deshmukh. It's a different matter that Uddhav's own silence and mishandling of the case by the BMC is equally to be blamed for the current mess.

CVC cracks the whip

The Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) has come down heavily on the ministries and departments for delay in punishing the corrupt babus. The CVC discovered that no action is being taken against a large number of babus on some technical grounds and files pushed for reconsideration again and again. Tired of file pusher babus over delays, the CVC decided that action once recommended against the

guilty officers will not be reconsidered for again. In CVC parlance, it is called a "second stage" review. The babus were taking advantage of this "second stage" consideration and resending plea to CVC again and again. In a significant order, the CVC plugged second stage advice and capped the time limit for even first stage by one month. In the process, the action against the corrupt and those involved in misconduct was delayed for a long time. The CVC has decided that there will be no second stage advice for such cases. The ministries and departments must adhere to a timeline finalised for action. The CVC directed that no proposal for reconsideration would be entertained in future. They amended the manual to make it clear that the first stage advice would be final unless fresh material/evidence is brought before the CVC for a review.

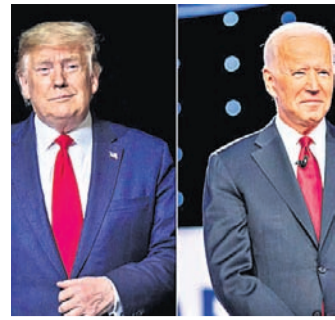
international



Whoever finds the vaccine must share it. This is a global responsibility, and it's a moral responsibility, for a vaccine to be shared far and wide
SCOTT MORRISON | AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

TRUMP, BIDEN WON'T SHAKE HANDS

US President Donald Trump and Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden will neither shake hands or do an elbow bump due to the pandemic when the two rivals come face-to-face during their first debate Tuesday, according to informed sources



of the day quote

All those who have invested in the Afghan peace process should resist the temptation for setting unrealistic timelines. A hasty international withdrawal from Afghanistan would be unwise
IMRAN KHAN | PAKISTAN PRIME MINISTER

The Taliban will not accept a ceasefire, comprehensive and permanent, until there is a political settlement. And that is not unprecedented in similar conflicts elsewhere, I think they can do a reduction of violence, they have said they will consider it depending on what the proposal is. The government is supportive of it too
ZALMAY KHALILZAD | US SPECIAL ENVOY FOR AFGHAN RECONCILIATION

Thank you for your commitment to solidarity, Prime Minister @narendramodi. Only together, by mobilising our forces and resources jointly for the common good, we can end the #COVID-19 pandemic
TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS | WHO CHIEF

How NASA is preparing astronauts for next moonwalks

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, Sept 27: As NASA plans to return humans to the Moon in 2024 as part of the Artemis programme, the agency has already started preparing astronauts for the challenges that they will face on the lunar surface.

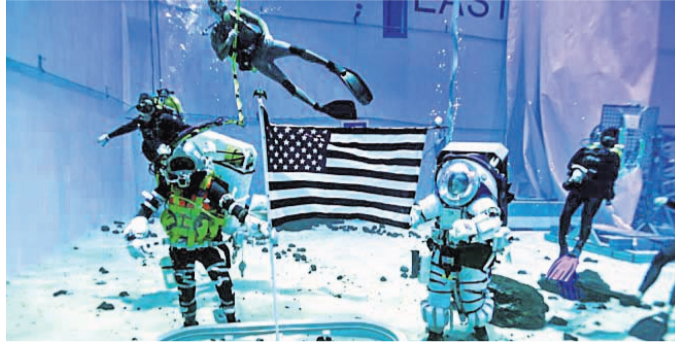
The training includes performing tasks underwater in especially built giant pools and using different analog environments to simulate lunar conditions.

As part of a test series occurring in the Neutral Buoyancy Lab

(NBL) at Johnson Space Center in Houston, astronauts in a demonstration version of the exploration spacesuit and engineers in "hard hat" dive equipment are simulating several different tasks crew could do on the surface of the Moon, NASA said.

The NBL is 202 ft in length, 102 ft in width and 40 ft in depth (20 ft above ground level and 20 ft below) and holds 6.2 million gallons of water.

Astronauts are practicing a variety of tasks, including picking up samples of lunar regolith, ex-



amining a lunar lander, and planting an American flag. There are

many fundamentals that the teams have to consider and work through,

such as how crew might get up and down a ladder safely, how to swing a chisel safely, and how to conduct successful moonwalks in different lighting conditions than the Apollo-era moonwalks.

The tests will inform future mission planning, including how many spacewalks to conduct during a mission, how long they will be, and how far away from a lander the crew will travel.

While NASA has extensive experience preparing astronauts for spacewalks in microgravity like those to construct and maintain

the International Space Station over the past 20 years, preparing for Moon missions comes with different challenges.

In addition to testing in the NBL, teams also are using different analog environments to simulate lunar conditions.

Tests are occurring at Johnson's rock yard, a large, outdoor test area which simulates general features of the lunar surface terrain, NASA said, adding that the rock yard testing is a critical analog environment for spacewalk tool development and operations.

Trump nominates Judge Barrett for Supreme Court



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 27: US President Donald Trump has nominated Judge Amy Coney Barrett for the Supreme Court to fill up the vacancy following the death of Judge Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

Barrett, 48, is currently a judge on the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals, for which she was nominated by Trump in 2017. "Today it is my honour to nominate one of our nation's most brilliant and gifted legal minds to the Supreme Court. She is a woman of unparalleled achievement, towering intellect, sterling credentials and unyielding loyalty to the Constitution, Judge Amy Coney Barrett," Trump announced in the Rose Garden of the White House Saturday.

Barrett, who lives in Indiana with her husband and their seven children, needs to be confirmed by the Senate. Justifying the nomination, less than 40 days before the crucial presidential election on November 3, Trump said this is his highest and most important duties under the United States Constitution.

With Judge Barrett, Trump has nominated three judges on the nine-member bench of the US Supreme Court. The other two being justices Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh. A graduate of Rhodes College and the University of Notre Dame Law School, Professor Barrett is a woman of remarkable intellect and character, Trump said.

"She is eminently qualified for the job and I can tell you I did that too. I looked and I studied and you are very eminently qualified for this job; you are going to be fantastic," he said. Trump said Barrett will decide cases based on the text of the Constitution as written.

"As Amy has said being a judge takes courage, you are not there to decide cases as you may prefer, you are there to do your duty and to follow the law wherever it may take you. That is exactly what Judge Barrett will do on the US Supreme Court," he said. Noting that Barrett was confirmed to the Circuit Court three years ago by a bipartisan vote, Trump said her qualifications are unsurpassed and her record is beyond reproach.

"This should be a straightforward and prompt confirmation, should be very easy. Good luck. It's going to be very quick. I'm sure it will be extremely non-controversial," he said. In her brief address, Judge Barrett said that she is truly humbled by the prospect of serving on the Supreme Court.

"I fully understand that this is a momentous decision for a president. And if the Senate does the honour of confirming me, I pledge to discharge the responsibilities of this job to the very best of my ability. I love the United States, and I love the United States Constitution," she said. "Should I be confirmed, I will be mindful of who came before me. The flag of the United States is still flying at half-staff in memory of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, to mark the end of a great American life. Justice Ginsburg began her career at a time when women were not welcome in the legal profession. But she not only broke glass ceilings, she smashed them. For that, she has won the admiration of women across the country and, indeed, all over the world," Barrett said.

Democratic presidential candidate and former vice president Joe Biden has urged the Senate not to act on the vacancy until the American people select their next president and the next Congress.

Fighting erupts between Armenia, Azerbaijan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

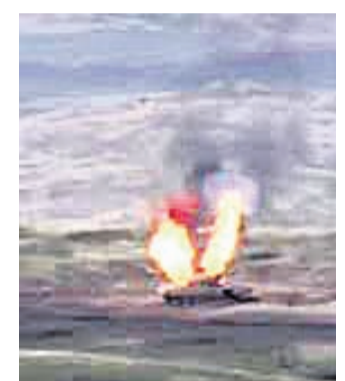
Yerevan (Armenia), Sept 27: Fighting erupted Sunday between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces over the disputed separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh and a top territorial official said 16 people were killed and more than 100 wounded, while Azerbaijan's president said his military has suffered losses.

Armenia also claimed that two Azerbaijani helicopters were shot down and three Azerbaijani tanks were hit by artillery, but Azerbaijan's defense ministry rejected that claim. Heavy fighting broke out in the morning in the region that lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by

ing, the heaviest since clashes in July killed 16 people from both sides.

Nagorno-Karabakh authorities reported that shelling hit the region's capital of Stepanakert and the towns of Martakert and Martuni. Armenian Defense Ministry spokesman Artsrun Hovhannisyan also said Azerbaijani shelling hit within Armenian territory near the town of Vardenis. Artur Sarkisian, deputy head of the Nagorno-Karabakh army, said that 16 people were killed and more than 100 wounded. It wasn't immediately clear if the figure included both soldiers and civilians. Earlier, the Armenian human rights ombudsman said a woman and child had been killed in the shelling.

Another Armenian Defense Ministry spokeswoman, Shushan Stepanyan, said "the Armenian side" shot down two helicopters



and hit three tanks. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev ordered martial law be imposed in some regions of the country and called for a curfew in major cities. In a televised address to the nation, Aliyev said that "there are losses among the Azerbaijani forces and the civilian population as a result of the

Armenian bombardment," but didn't give further details. He also claimed that "many units of the enemy's military equipment have been destroyed."

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov "is conducting intensive contacts in order to induce the parties to cease fire and start negotiations to stabilize the situation," Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said. Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama, chairman of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, called on the sides to stop fighting. The long-unsuccessful negotiations for resolving the territory's status has been conducted under OSCE auspices. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian Sunday said the country could reexamine whether to recognise Nagorno-Karabakh as independent.

SHORT TAKES

Pyongyang warns S Korea

Seoul: Pyongyang Sunday warned Seoul against violating its western sea border as search continued for the body of a South Korean official who was shot and killed in North Korean waters. South Korea has continued to locate the body of the 47-year-old fisheries official who was shot and killed by North Korean troops September 22 after he drifted into their waters near the Yellow Sea border between the two sides, reports said.

Queen to honour UK health workers

London: Britain's Queen Elizabeth will recognise the work of hundreds of doctors, nurses, fundraisers and volunteers during the COVID-19 pandemic when her annual birthday honours list is published next month. The list, which was due to be published in June, was postponed in order to add nominations for people playing key roles in the early months of the outbreak.

16 killed in China coal mine mishap

Beijing: Sixteen people trapped in a coal mine in southwest China's Chongqing Municipality Sunday were killed due to the presence of excessive levels of carbon monoxide, official media reported. The incident happened when the burning belts in the mine caused the carbon monoxide to exceed safety limit, trapping 17 people inside.

Boris hails India's vaccine efforts

London: British Prime Minister Boris Johnson made a special reference to India's role in the manufacture and access to one of the most promising coronavirus vaccine candidates currently undergoing trials during his address to the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.

Indian expat jailed

Dubai: An Indian expat has been sentenced to six months in prison for sexually molesting a jogger in Dubai, the media report. On Saturday, the Dubai Court of First Instance heard that the 40-year-old defendant claimed that he touched the woman inappropriately while she was exercising near her residence in Bur Dubai in June, reports Gulf News.

NEW FASHION



A person smiles as he wears a creative face mask amid the pandemic during the Diversity parade in Montevideo, Uruguay

Latest nCoV wave could 'overwhelm' France

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, Sept 27: The latest coronavirus wave in France could 'overwhelm' the country amid exhaustion of the frontline workers battling the pandemic, a senior health official has warned.

"The second wave is arriving faster than we thought," the Guardian reported Sunday citing Patrick Bouet, head of the National Council of the Order of Doctors, as

saying to the weekly Journal du Dimanche. Bouet added that last week's warnings by Health Minister Olivier Veran had not been taken seriously.

On September 23, Veran had warned that restrictions in the 'red zones' across the country will be tightened due to a spike in the number of confirmed cases. Since September 19, 53 departments in the country, where the COVID-19 incidence or the number of positive

cases per 100,000 inhabitants over a week is greater than 50, have been classified as "zone of alert" or "red zone". In "zone of enhanced alert" where the incidence is above 150, now including Paris and eight other cities, starting from Saturday, bars started to close at 10 p.m., limit of attendance to public events was cut from 5,000 to 1,000 and gatherings of more than 10 people were prohibited in public spaces such as beaches and parks.

Facing IS, last embattled Sikhs, Hindus leave Afghan

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, Sept 27: Afghanistan's dwindling community of Sikhs and Hindus is shrinking to its lowest levels. With growing threats from the local Islamic State affiliate, many are choosing to leave the country of their birth to escape the insecurity and a once-thriving community of as many as 250,000 members now counts fewer than 700.

The community's numbers have been declining for years because of deep-rooted discrimination in the majority Muslim country. But, without what they say is adequate protection from the government, the attacks by the Islamic State group may complete the exodus. "We are no longer able to stay here," said a member of the tiny community, who asked to be identified

only by his last name, Hamdard, out of fear he may be targeted for speaking out. Hamdard said seven relatives of his, including his sister, nephews, and son-in-law were killed by Islamic State gunmen in an attack on the community's temple in March, which killed 25 Sikhs.

Hamdard said that fleeing his homeland is as difficult as leaving a mother behind. Still, he joined a group of Sikhs and Hindus who left Afghanistan last month for India, from where they will eventually move on to a third country.

Although Sikhism and Hinduism are two distinct religions with their own holy books and temples, in Afghanistan the communities are interwoven, having been driven into a kinship by their tiny size, and they both gather under one



roof or a single temple to worship, each following their own faith.

The community has suffered widespread discrimination in the conservative Muslim country, with each government "threatening us their own way," said Hamdard, whose home was seized by war-

lords after the U.S. invasion in 2001, forcing him to live in one of two Sikh temples in the Afghan capital of Kabul.

Under Taliban rule in the late 1990s, Sikhs and Hindus were asked to identify themselves by wearing yellow armbands, but after a global

outray, the rule was not enforced. Also driving the exodus is the inability to reclaim Sikh homes, businesses and houses of worship that were illegally seized years ago.

Hindu temples in Kabul's old city were destroyed during brutal fighting between rival warlords from 1992-96. The fighting drove out scores of Hindu and Sikh Afghans.

Aside from the March attack by IS gunmen, a 2018 Islamic State suicide attack in the city of Jalalabad killed 19 people, most of them Sikhs, including a longtime leader who had nominated himself for the Afghan parliament.

"Suffering big fatalities for a small community is not tolerable," said Charan Singh Khalsa, a leader of the Sikh community living abroad, who declined to say where he was living out of fear for his

safety. He left Afghanistan after his brother was kidnapped and killed in an attack by gunmen in Kabul two years ago.

He said the last three years have been the worst period for all Afghans, but especially so for Sikhs and Hindus. Community leaders have slammed recent governments for failing to step up security in the face of the IS threat.

Afghanistan's government in 2010 decided to dedicate a chair in the national assembly to religious minorities, and there have since been two Sikh representatives. But Khalsa called these posts "symbolic". He criticized the government for taking too long to grant political representation powers to the community and for failing to "provide security to our places of worship."

business



Inflation is expected to harden further in September and ease gradually over the next few months, led by a base effect driven softening in food inflation. However, the core inflation is expected to remain stubbornly sticky around current levels
ADITI NAYYAR | PRINCIPAL ECONOMIST, ICRA

Vi BEGINS UPGRADING 3G USERS
Telecom operator Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) has started upgrading its 3G users to 4G in key markets. Further, the company said it is in the best position to upgrade 2G customers also to 4G, but it will continue with basic voice based services to its 2G subscribers



of the day quote

With convenience foods increasingly becoming a way of the new lifestyle, we as a company are carefully strategising a holistic business approach to capitalise on this trend and thereafter eye a larger slice of the market in India
VARUN CHAUDHARY | EXEC DIR, CG CORP GLOBAL

We need to open up more products, participants and provide a level-playing field, which is at par with other global IFSCs so that international player will get attracted
TAPAN RAY | MD, GIFT CITY

We have seen the maximum gains with organic traffic up by 60% from the pre-COVID numbers. Conversion rates, from traffic to enquiries, on all our platforms are also higher than what they were in March, which suggests that prospective buyers are beginning to come back into the market to search for homes
DHRUV AGARWALA | CEO, HOUSING.COM

Govt plans non-tariff barriers on toy imports

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 27: In line with its ambitious plan to make India a toy hub and self-reliant in the segment, the Union government is likely to go a step forward and impose further non-tariff barriers on toy imports.

Official sources told IANS that the licence regime for toy imports may start in a phased manner, starting March next year or early FY'22. This will be a follow up of quality control order issued for the industry recently.

The first priority for the government in its bid to make India "Aatmanirbhar" or self-reliant in the toy sector, however, is to make the domestic industry achieve high quality standards, people in the know said.

So, although further non-tariff barriers are on the anvil, the Centre does not want to rush in before the quality control order of the government comes into effect in January and the industry is well in compliance with the norms. Earlier this month, the timeline was extended for the domestic toy manufacturers to comply with the new standards till January 1.

In a recent meeting, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal took stock of developments on this front along with the required action plan for the future, sources said.

The ministry has identified toys among several categories of non-essential imports, where restrictions



The first priority for the government in its bid to make India self-reliant in the toy sector, however, is to make the domestic industry achieve high quality standards people in the know said

could be considered. In recent months, the Commerce Ministry has resorted to the use of import restrictions instead of free imports to boost domestic manufacturing.

In December, the government raised the import duty on toys by 200% to 60% from earlier 20%. This, however, had limited impact on putting a check on unrestricted imports. India has been importing toys of an average value of about

\$285 million for last three years. But total imports in the category including electronic parts, is to the tune of over \$650 million.

Noting that the global toy industry is worth over Rs 7 lakh crore but that India's share is very small in the sector, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his monthly radio broadcast 'Mann Ki Baat' last month gave a clarion call to be 'vocal for local toys', stressing on the need for making the country a toy hub.

The Prime Minister said that the toy industry is very diverse and some of the regions in India are being developed as toy clusters to make the nation a toy hub.

This is a fresh push for the industry after Modi in one of his addresses to the nation during the nationwide lockdown stressed on 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' or a self-reliant India and asked Indians to be 'vocal for local' products.

RBI ropes in Amitabh Bachchan for customer awareness campaign

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 27: After sport stars, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has roped in Bollywood megastar Amitabh Bachchan for the customer awareness campaign to prevent gullible account holders from being duped by fraudsters.

As part of the public awareness initiative of RBI, the regulator keeps informing about dos and don'ts that have to be followed by customers to transact safely and securely.

Besides its main twitter handle, RBI has another twitter account called 'RBI Says'. Here, Big B shared a message on Sunday saying "the cost of awareness is hardly a penny, but ignorance can cost you hard earned money."

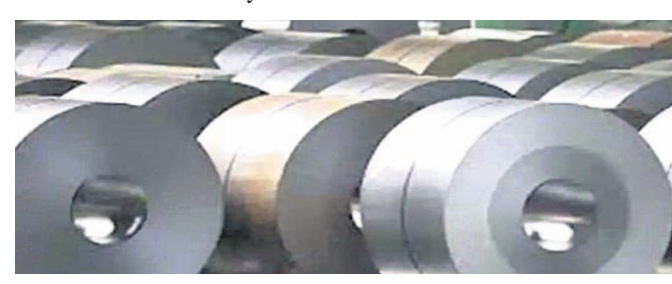


The regulator has been running the campaign for more than a year not only in English and Hindi but in various regional languages for maximum reach. It keeps on repeating the message so that people don't forget their rights and responsibilities.

It also started a Facebook page with the same name in early April.

Crude steel output falls over 4% in Aug

India had produced 8,869 MT of crude steel during the same month last year, World Steel Association said



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: India's crude steel production fell over 4% to 8.478 million tonnes (MT) in August 2020, according to the World Steel Association (worldsteel). The country had produced 8,869 MT of crude steel during the same month last year, the global industry body said in its latest report.

However, global steel output has started showing a positive trend, the data showed.

"World crude steel production for 64 countries reporting to the worldsteel was 156.244 MT in August 2020, registering a rise of 0.6% compared to August 2019," the worldsteel said.

"Due to the ongoing difficulties presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, many of this month's figures are estimates that may be revised with next month's production update," it added.

Global steel production was at 155.374 MT in August 2019. China registered a 8.4% year-on-year growth in steel output at 94.845 MT

during August 2020 as compared to 87.499 MT in August 2019.

The US produced 5,588 MT of crude steel in August 2020, registering a fall of 24.4 per cent as compared to 7,396 MT output in August 2019.

Japan produced 6,446 MT of crude steel in August 2020, down 20.6% from 8,120 MT a year ago. South Korea's steel production for the month stood at 5,800 MT, down 1.8% as compared to 5,905 MT in August 2019, the data showed.

Germany produced 2,830 MT of crude steel in August 2020, down 13.4% from August 2019, while Italy produced 0,939 MT of crude steel in the month, up 9.7% from a year ago.

France produced 0,722 MT of crude steel in August 2020, down 31.2% over August 2019. Spain's steel production for August 2020 stood at 0,696 MT, down 32.5% year-on-year.

"Brazil produced 2.7 MT of crude steel in August 2020, up by 6.5% from August 2019. Turkey's crude steel production for August 2020 was at 3.2 MT, up 22.9% from August 2019," worldsteel said.

SHORT TAKES

Gati-KWE to double capacity

Mumbai: Express logistics firm Gati-KWE is doubling its capacity to cater to the enhanced demand during the festive season, which is expected to drive its volume growth by 50% despite the COVID-19 pandemic, a top company executive has said. Besides, the company is also building and hiring capacity with added trucks, to leverage its varied offerings and cater to customers' diverse requirements.

NTPC invites bids for biomass pellets

New Delhi: State-owned NTPC has invited bids for the procurement of biomass pellets which would be used to co-fire its thermal plants. The pellets made out of stubble and husk would be utilised at its 17 thermal coal-fired power plants across the country as part of measures to reduce stubble burning. In January, the power giant had announced that it would procure and use 6 MT of biomass pellets to co-fire its power plants along with coal.

HDFC Bank aims 10-fold growth

Mumbai: HDFC Bank is targeting a ten-time increase in the number of small merchants it serves to 20 million in the next three years, sources at the largest private sector lender have said. The bank started targeting merchants about 18 months ago with solutions on accepting payments, providing value-added services like creating a simple website for them, taking care of their inventory and lending based on cash flows, through a single app.

Qatar Airways logs \$1.9 bn loss

Doha: Qatar Airways Group Sunday reported loss of \$1.9 billion during the year ended March 2020. The company attributed the performance to a number of issues including the boycott of Qatar by four Arab countries - Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, the Covid-19 pandemic and liquidation of Air Italy in which Qatar Airways had 49% stake. In a statement, the company, said, 2019-20 has been one of the most difficult years in the airline's history.

Jio, BSNL only cos to add subscribers in H1

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Country's leading telecom service providers Reliance Jio and BSNL are the only two telecom firms that added significant number of new subscribers in the first six months of 2020 in Odisha. Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) released a report regarding the subscriptions.

The report says, "Jio added nearly 12 lakh mobile subscribers in the first six months of 2020 while the state-owned BSNL is the only other service provider which added 3.3 lakh subscribers during the same period."

Meanwhile, other telecom majors like Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea (Vi) lost huge number of subscribers during this period. Bharti Airtel lost around 10 lakh subscribers followed by Vi, which lost nearly six lakh subscribers in these six months, revealed the data published by TRAI.

Jio added nearly 12 lakh mobile subscribers in the first six months of 2020 while the state-owned BSNL is the only other service provider which added 3.3 lakh subscribers during the same period

In June, this year, Jio added 2.21 lakh mobile subscribers in Odisha, followed by BSNL which added 53,904 subscribers. Airtel lost over 2.17 lakh subscribers followed by Vi which lost 1.19 lakh subscribers in the state in June.

Nationally also, Jio added of nearly 45 lakh subscribers in June 2020 while Vi lost over 48 lakh subscribers followed by BSNL which lost over 17 lakh subscribers while Airtel lost over 11 lakh subscribers in the month.



China's industrial profits grow for 4th straight month

REUTERS

Shanghai, Sept 27: Profits at China's industrial firms grew for the fourth straight month in August, buoyed in part by a rebound in commodities prices and equipment manufacturing, the statistics bureau said Sunday.

China's recovery has been gaining momentum as pent-up demand, government stimulus and surprisingly resilient exports propel a rebound.

Industrial firm profits grew 19.1% year-on-year in August to 612.81 billion yuan (\$89.8 billion), the statistics bureau said.

That compares with a 19.6% increase in July and is the fourth straight month of profit growth.

However, industrial firms' profits still face external pressures as rising tensions between Washington and Beijing cloud the global trade outlook.



Raw material manufacturing profits increased by 32.5% in August, up from 14.7% in July, according to Zhu Hong, an official at the statistics bureau. This was driven in part by a rebound in the prices of international commodities such as crude oil and iron ore, he added.

Real estate sector seeks Centre's help in revival

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The real estate sector in the country has been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and is going through distress at present. In a bid to rejuvenate it, CREDAI Bhubaneswar office bearers have submitted the representation to Amar Pattnaik, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) to raise this issue to the Centre. Pattnaik met Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and handed over the proposal to de-stress the construction and real estate sector.

He urged the Union Government to consider the proposal for rejuvenation of these sectors to generate employment opportunities. In the proposal, Pattnaik pointed out to consider the overdue with RBI up to 60 days and repayment tenure to 3-4 years.

He also urged for the reduction in interest rates (below 7%) and stimulus to create Workforce Support Fund and Ministry for Migrant Labour to extend validity period of NOC/government approvals for a period of one year across all sectors among other briefings.

Prior to the current Parliament session, the office bearers of CREDAI Bhubaneswar, Kantilal Patel, Umesh Pattnaik, Subhash Chandra Vora, met Pattnaik at his



Bhubaneswar office to discuss their concern for the industry.

Patel said, during the pandemic, the (recent) GDP figures for the quarter have clearly revealed the extent of damage caused to the Indian industry, thereby inflicting a big dent in the government's revenue and loss of employment to the public in general.

"The Central Government has come to the rescue of the beleaguered industry by extending financial support to the MSME/SME sector. But the scheme is poorly drafted, without any special thrust to the most affected sector. Critical

sectors like Real Estate are languishing due to lack of cash flow. So we requested Dr Pattnaik to raise the issue before the Central government and to take up our issue," said Patel.

According to a report, the Indian economy witnessed its worst contraction in decades with the GDP shrinking by a record 23.9% in the first quarter of FY20-21, with the contribution of real estate sector being (-5.3%), hotel industry (-47%) and construction sector (-50.3%). The statistic is based on the period of the COVID-induced lockdown(s).

'Neutrality must for platforms, app stores and devices'

In the realm of telecom networks, net neutrality principles prohibit service providers from discriminating against internet content and services by blocking, throttling or according preferential higher speeds

Trai recently mooted that the telecom department should establish a multi-stakeholder body to ensure that internet access providers adhere to the provisions of net neutrality

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Just as principles of net neutrality have been applied to telecom networks, neutrality of platforms, app stores, operating systems, and devices are crucial aspects that will need to be examined and ensured in the digital era, outgoing Trai chief RS Sharma has said.

Sharma termed this as a "new frontier" that merits attention, and emphasised that 'neutrality' is important to ensure that devices, operating systems and digital platforms don't emerge as "new gatekeepers" or exercise arbitrary controls.

"Who will get into that area...I am not saying whether Trai should do it, or who someone else...I am saying neutrality of devices, operating systems and platforms is something that should be examined and ensured," he said.

Sharma, whose tenure at the helm of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) is slated to end September 30, further said that at a time when internet has become all-pervasive, smartphones and devices are the medium to access software, operating system, and app stores.



Platforms, Operating Systems, devices...if they are not neutral they can become new gatekeepers...telecom service providers will not exhibit this behaviour because of net neutrality principles

RS SHARMA, OUTGOING CHIEF, TRAI

Earlier, the government had accepted Trai's recommendations on net neutrality in telecom networks with slight modifications to the regulator's suggestion, and had then approached it for additional views on nuances like traffic management

practices (TMPs) and multi-stakeholder body. Trai recently mooted that the telecom department should establish a multi-stakeholder body to ensure that internet access providers adhere to the provisions of net neutrality, as it spelt out the broad contours of the proposed panel.

The role of the proposed panel - comprising telecom service providers and internet providers and other stakeholders such as the content providers, researcher, academic and technical community, civil society organisations, consumers, and the government - would be to provide advice and support to Department of Telecom in monitoring and enforcement of net neutrality principles, Trai had said in its latest recommendations on the issue.

SAMSON, TEWATIA KNOCKS SINK KXIP AS MAYANK'S MAIDEN IPL TON GOES IN VAIN

MATCH-WINNING KNOCK BY KKR OPENER

Morgan hails Gill's attitude

AGENCIES

Abu Dhabi, Sept 27: England limited-overs skipper Eoin Morgan hailed rising India batsman Shubman Gill after the young opener's unbeaten 70 helped Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) beat Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) here Saturday. The innings by Gill enabled KKR register their first win in IPL-13. KKR had lost the first game against Mumbai Indians (MI). However, Gill (70 not out) and Morgan (42 not out) put on 92 runs for the fourth wicket to help KKR beat SRH by seven wickets. "I didn't have to tell him a great deal. He's beautiful to watch, lovely

Morgan added. The 21-year-old Gill also received praise from Australian pace bowler Pat Cummins, who conceded 19 runs and claimed one wicket in his quota of four overs. "This guy (Gill) batted beautifully. He showed that even in T20 cricket you don't always have to slog, you can also plan an innings keeping in mind the situation," Cummins said. Gill on the other hand also had words of praise for Cummins who in the first game against MI had gone for 49 runs in three overs. "Pat showed today (Saturday) why he is the best bowler of the world. He altered his length beautifully and the

He's quite hungry to learn throughout the tournament regardless of his successes. It is this trait that makes him so special

EOIN MORGAN

long languid swing of the bat so I look forward to batting with him again because it was magnificent," Morgan said after the game. England's World Cup-winning (50 overs) captain also stressed that he was pleased with Gill's ability to remain focused after scoring his fifth half century for Kolkata and 10th overall in the IPL, to help them cross the finish line chasing 143. "I think he's a good kid," Morgan said. "He's quite hungry to learn throughout the tournament regardless of his successes. It was a really good day for him,"



result is there for everyone to see," Gill stated.



EFFORT IN VAIN: Mayank Agrwal's century failed to win the game for KXIP

mid-wicket fence off the bowling of Tom Curran. Some bold hitting then by Nicholas Pooran (25 n o, 8b, 1x4, 3x6) and Glenn Maxwell (13 n o, 9b, 2x4) then propelled KXIP to this edition's highest total in the games played so far.

Brief scores: KXIP 223 for 2 in 20 overs (Mayank Agarwal 106, KL Rahul 69, Nicholas Pooran 25 n o) lost to RR 226 for 6 in 19.3 overs (Sanju Samson 85, Rahul Tewatia 53, Steve Smith 50, Mohammed Shami 3/53) by four wickets.

Royals win a thriller against Kings

AGENCIES

Sharjah, Sept 27: Rajasthan Royals (RR) found an unlikely hero in Rahul Tewatia (53, 31b, 7x6) here Sunday in their game IPL-13 game against Kings XI Punjab (KXIP). Unheard of before this game, Tewatia smashed sixes at will to win the game for the Royals. Five of the sixes came in the 18th over of the game bowled by Sheldon Cottrell and then two more in the next bowled by Mohammed Shami. Even though the pacer got him next ball, the damage had been done. In the end RR crossed the line with three balls to spare. Incidentally this was the highest successful run chase in IPL history.

Earlier riding on the knocks of Agarwal and Rahul KXIP posted an imposing 223 for two in their 20 overs. This is the second time in the tournament they posted more than 200 runs in 20 overs. However, in the end it did not help. After losing their opener against Delhi Capitals in the Super Over, it seems that now KXIP are on a mission. In their last game against Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) it was Rahul who had come to the party scoring a brilliant unbeaten 132. Even though, he was a bit circumspect today, it did not matter as Agarwal put the RR bowlers to sword. Their misery finally ended when Agarwal holed out to Sanju Samson running in from the deep

Before that Sanju Samson (85, 42b, 4x4, 7x6) and RR skipper Steve Smith (50, 27b, 7x4, 2x6) started the chase in right earnest. KXIP had posted a mammoth 223 for two riding on Mayank Agarwal's (106, 50b, 10x4, 7x6) maiden IPL century and his 183-run opening stand with skipper KL Rahul (69, 54b, 7x4, 1x6). At that point of time even the greatest RR fans would not have thought of a victory. However, Samson, Smith and Tewatia changed all that. It was not just wild clogging. All the seven sixes that Tewatia hit were clean. It was hit in the arc of mid-wicket to mid-off and all were big ones indeed. The blitzkrieg helped RR cross the line with three balls to spare.



BELLIGERENT: RR's Sanju Samson shapes to play a paddle sweep

SHORT TAKES

New Healy feat

Brisbane: Australia's Alyssa Healy went past former India captain MS Dhoni to register the most dismissals by a wicket-keeper in T20 format, both in men's and women's cricket here Sunday. The 30-year-old achieved the feat during the second T20I of the ongoing three-match series against New Zealand at the Allan Border Field. Healy now has 92 dismissals to her name in 99 T20I innings, one more than Dhoni who made 91 dismissals in 97 innings.

Lahiri shines

Punta Cana (Dominican Republic): Golfer Anirban Lahiri shot Saturday his best round on the PGA Tour since 2018, producing a bogey-free eight-under 64 that catapulted him into the top-10 after 54 holes in the Corales Puntacana Resort and Club Championships. A chat with his coach, Vijay Divecha on iron and wedge play helped him, Lahiri informed. Lahiri added a 64 to his earlier rounds of 69-72 to get to 11-under and rose from overnight tied-54 to tied-2nd but with others finishing later he was tied-7th by the end of the day. Adam Long (64) was 17-under and a clear leader among the players.

'Greatest driver'

New Delhi: Twenty three-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams has heaped praise on Lewis Hamilton. She said that the reigning Formula 1 (F1) World Champion is the "greatest driver of our generation" and that he would break German legend Michael Schumacher's records. "Lewis Hamilton and I have been super close, we have known each other for years, I love that guy, he has such a champion mindset. He is for me, the greatest driver our generation has seen and I am confident that he will break the records of Michael Schumacher," Serena said on a video posted on the official Twitter handle of F1.

Afridi unhappy

Karachi: Pakistan's former captain Shahid Afridi rued the absence of top Pakistani from in a 'big platform' like the IPL. In a report published in the Pakistani media, Afridi said: "The IPL is a big brand and I know that if our players like Babar Azam and others get a chance to play in it they would learn to play under pressure situations."

FOLLOWING ARCH RIVALS MOHUN BAGAN

East Bengal in ISL roster for 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 27: It's official. Riding a wave of emotions and last-ditch efforts, East Bengal got the chance Sunday to play in the Indian Super League (ISL) in 2020. Incidentally it is the iconic club's centenary year also. East Bengal thus joined arch rivals Mohun Bagan in the top tier league of India



Among others, the club's journey to the ISL involved a serious intervention by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The latest announcement by Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL) chairperson Nita Ambani came less than a month after Banerjee personally announced city-based Shree Cement as the club's major stakeholders following negotiations in the state secretariat.

"It is a happy and proud moment for ISL as we welcome East Bengal FC and their millions of fans into the league," FSDL supremo Ambani said in a statement.

The yet-to-be-christened consortium of East Bengal and Shree Cement, who holds a 76 per cent stake, becomes the 11th team to enter the ISL.

The announcement will pave the way for the FSDL to finalise

Don't expect too much: Bhaichung

Kolkata: East Bengal have realised their dream to play in the top-tier ISL but fans should not expect too much this season, the legendary Bhaichung Bhutia said Sunday, keeping in mind the club's late entry. "From the fans point of view, everyone was looking at playing the ISL this year. That has been achieved," Bhutia said. "Obviously there is going to be a challenge in terms of building the team. We should not really judge East Bengal's performance this year," he added.

the detailed fixtures of the event that is set to start in November.

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the three-month long tournament will be played at three venues in Goa from the second half of November. In the current scenario, the matches will be closed-door affairs, but the inclusion of the 'Big Two' of Indian football will still take the league to another level.

"The inclusion of both legacy clubs - East Bengal and Mohun Bagan (now ATK Mohun Bagan) - opens limitless possibilities for Indian football, especially for talent development," Ambani stated.

The real challenge, however, will begin now on the field, as the club will have to finalise the squad. The coach is yet to be announced with the tournament less than three months away.

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE FACE MUMBAI INDIANS IN CRUCIAL ENCOUNTER

Fast bowling concerns plague Kohli

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 27: Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) would be looking to address their pace-bowling concerns when they face defending champions Mumbai Indians (MI) in their third IPL game here Monday. So far MI have played two games winning one and losing the other. RCB also have the same success rate.

However, what is worrying for Kohli is his own form with the bat as he has managed just 14 and one in the two knocks he has played. Also

his fast bowlers have not been able to deliver so far.

Opener Devdutt Padikkal, who started his IPL career with a classy half century, did not do much against KXIP and will be aiming for consistency. His partner Australian limited overs captain Aaron Finch would be hoping to convert starts into match-winning



performances. AB de Villers, who has looked in god touch, will be expected to provide the late fireworks again with the lower-order not inspiring a lot of hope.

Kohli's lack of form is a worrying factor for RCB

Pacers Dale Steyn and Umesh Yadav have gone for plenty of runs

Rohit Sharma's return to form will be an advantage for MI

It is still not clear whether RCB will have the services of South African all-rounder Chris Morris, who sat out of the first two games due to a side strain.

Pacers Dale Steyn and Umesh Yadav have proved expensive so

far: The South African great is likely to retain his place in the playing XI but the same can't be said about Yadav, who could make way for Mohammad Siraj.

MI ticked all the boxes in their comfortable win against KKR. Hence they are unlikely to tinker with their team composition. The biggest positive is that skipper Rohit Sharma is back among the runs and looked in ominous touch against KKR, and so did Suryakumar Yadav.

Another positive for the defending champions is that pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah roared back to form after a rare failure against Chennai Super Kings.

Chelsea snatch dramatic draw

AGENCIES

London, Sept 27: Chelsea managed to snatch a 3-3 draw Saturday after being 0-3 down against West Bromwich. Midfielder Tammy Abraham got the equaliser for the Blues in the third minute of added on time. It was only a single point for Chelsea, but then at half time it did not look they would manage that also after conceding three goals.

Thiago Silva had a Premier League debut to forget for Chelsea. The Brazil centre-back coughed up a simple pass to let Callum Robinson run through and score his and West Brom's second goal on its way to an unlikely three-goal lead at "The Hawthorns" with less than a half-hour played. Robinson had also scored the first early on latching on to a lapse by Marcos Alonso. Kyle Bartley was left unmarked to add a third in the 27th minute with a close-range finish to send Chelsea



CRUCIAL STRIKE: Tammy Abraham (right) celebrates after getting the equaliser for Chelsea against West Bromwich, Saturday

in three down at the break,

Second half goals by Mason Mount, substitute Callum Hudson-Odoi and then Abraham earned a point for Chelsea, but it was a worrying display by a team that have been tipped to possibly challenge for

the title after spending nearly USD 300 million on new players.

"We're still finding our way with new players and a lack of preseason," Chelsea manager Frank Lampard said. "Today is part of the process of getting better," he added.

Bottas triumphs in Russian Grand Prix

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sochi, Sept 27: Valtteri Bottas won the Formula One (F1) Russian Grand Prix here Sunday after his Mercedes teammate Lewis Hamilton's race was ruined by penalties, in front of the largest crowd of the pandemic-hit season.

Hamilton had been looking to match Michael Schumacher's record of 91 wins in F1 but had to settle for third behind Bottas and Max Verstappen. Bottas built a sizeable lead over Verstappen with ease and cruised to his first win since the season-opening Austrian Grand Prix.

Hamilton was already under investigation by the stewards when he started the race from pole position. Before the race he twice stopped to perform practice starts at the exit of the pit lane, rather than in the designated area. That eventually earned him two five-second penalties, dropping him as low as 11th at one stage. "Where's that in the rule book?" Hamilton asked the team, and called the situation "ridiculous".

Hamilton had asked Mercedes over the radio if he could perform the starts there, and was told he could. It was the second time in three races that a team blunder cost the British driver a shot at victory.

However, in spite of finishing third, Hamilton maintained a 44 points lead over Bottas. He should easily win the world championship crown with seven races left in the season. This year the F1 calendar has been modified due to the pandemic coronavirus.

Bottas, who also claimed the bonus point for fastest lap, said he wanted to "thank my critics" after ending a run of eight races without a win despite having, with Hamilton, by far the fastest car.

ANDY MURRAY BITES THE DUST ON RETURN TO GRAND SLAM ACTION IN SINGLES

Teenager Sinner sends 11th-seeded Goffin packing



DELIGHTED Jannik Sinner is all pumped up after beating David Goffin at the Roland Garros, Sunday

AGENCIES

Paris, Sept 27: Top-seeded Simona Halep won 10 straight games in beating Sara Sorribes Tormo 6-4, 6-0 to reach the second round of the French Open here Sunday and extend her winning streak to 15 matches on the courts of Roland Garros. It was Halep's 29th birthday, but she celebrated the win with minimal celebrations.

The day also saw 11th-seeded David Goffin knocked out by teenager Jannik

Sinner. Goffin lost Jannik Sinner 5-7, 0-6, 3-6 and became the first seeded player to bow out. Former World No. 1 Andy Murray's return to Grand Slam lasted just one round as he went down 1-6, 3-6, 2-6 to Swiss Stan Wawrinka.

"It was really special day playing on Roland Garros on my birthday," Halep said after the match. "I cannot celebrate much because I have to stay in the room, so I will have a bottle of water," she added.

Over on Court Suzanne

Langlen, U.S. Open runner-up Victoria Azarenka experienced a vastly different temperature to Flushing Meadows only two weeks ago.

The 10th-seeded Azarenka, who beat Danka Kovinic 6-1, 6-2, fumed when match officials didn't immediately send them back to the locker room during a rain interruption.

"I am going to get frozen," she complained. "No. I'm not waiting here a couple of minutes because I'm cold. It's eight degrees, eight degrees,