



## VOICE OF DISSENT

Singer Sona Mohapatra finds it strange that only actresses are being singled out as alleged drug users in film industry

LEISURE P2



## 'FAKE ENCOUNTER'

Army begins Summary of Evidence in July's encounter in J&K's Shopian district wherein 3 labourers were killed

TWO STATES P7



## GLOBAL COVID DEATHS

The global death count from the new coronavirus has crossed the one million-mark

INTERNATIONAL P10

### IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We are a little behind... seems they have already started preparing for future polls!

### SHORT TAKES

#### HC breather for Deepak Gupta

**Cuttack:** The Orissa High Court Monday granted a three-month interim conditional bail to Deepak Gupta, the prime accused in Uliburu mining scam. The court ordered Gupta's release on interim bail from October 1, 2020 till January 2, 2021. While granting bail, the HC asked him to deposit ₹1 crore in the lower court and two surety bonds of ₹2 crore each. He was also directed to deposit his passport in the lower court. If Gupta does not have a passport, he would submit an affidavit.

#### RBI postpones MPC meeting

**Mumbai:** The Reserve Bank Monday postponed the meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), the all-important interest rate-setting panel, over a possible lack of quorum as the appointment of independent members is delayed. The Reserve Bank in a press release said that the MPC meeting, which was to begin for three days beginning Tuesday for a bi-monthly monetary policy review, has been rescheduled.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	37981.63	▲ 592.97
NIFTY	11227.50	▲ 177.20
DOLLAR	74.09	▼ ₹0.06
EURO	86.16	▲ ₹0.08
GOLD	₹49,860	▲ ₹201
SILVER	₹59,965	▲ ₹938

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	33.9°C	30.8°C
TEMP MIN	26.2°C	25.0°C
Humidity	94%	85%
Rainfall	Trace	Nil
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

# Maha implemented farm laws in August

AGENCIES

**Mumbai, Sept 28:** In a huge embarrassment to the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi, it has now emerged that the Maharashtra government had implemented the contentious farm Ordinances way back in August - even before the bills in it were passed by Parliament last week and protests erupted all over the country.

In a notification August 10, issued by Director of Marketing, Satish Soni, all the Agriculture Produce & Livestock Market Committees (APMCs) and District Agriculture Cooperatives were ordered to "strictly implement" the three Ordinances on the proposed laws, in the state.

These are: The Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion & Facilitation) Ordinance 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment & Protection) Assurance and Farm Service Ordinance 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance 2020, of June 5, 2020 - all now laws.

Despite the MVA allies Shiv Sena-Nationalist Congress Party-Congress strongly opposing the new laws, the state government had gone ahead even before the Centre issued any rules, guidelines or framework on these Ordinances and six weeks before the bills were cleared by Parliament amid a ruckus.

When contacted, Soni confirmed issuing the notification, but declined to comment further in view of the political



### DOUBLE SPEAK

SHIV SENA AND NCP HAD WELCOMED THE PUNJAB-BASED SAD'S DECISION TO QUIT THE NDA AND STAND 'FIRMLY BEHIND THE FARMERS'

OVER SIX WEEKS AFTER THE IMPLEMENTATION IN THE STATE, AJIT PAWAR APPEARED BLISSFULLY UNAWARE OF THE DEVELOPMENTS

Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar's recent statement... Patil told IANS without elaborating.

Surprisingly, over six weeks after the implementation in the state, Ajit Pawar appeared blissfully unaware of the developments when he indicated that the farm bills may not be implemented by the state.

The Deputy CM told mediapersons in Pune September 26 - while farmers all over the state and country protested - that the government would consult experts before taking any 'final decision'. The situation suddenly became mortifying for the Congress as party chief and Revenue Minister Balasaheb Thorat planned to take out a protest march to Raj Bhavan this afternoon (Sep. 28).

cal fracas on it currently which willy nilly makes Maharashtra the first state in the country to implement the new laws.

Marketing Minister Balasaheb Shamra Patil of Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) appeared evasive when asked for his reactions. "The order was issued, but now the situation is different after

## Pak Oppn leader Shahbaz held for money laundering

AGENCIES

**Lahore, Sept 28:** Pakistan's top Opposition leader and PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif was arrested by the country's anti-graft body Monday after a court rejected his bail plea in a money laundering case. The development comes just ahead of the planned protests next month by his party - the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) - to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Imran Khan.

Shahbaz, the Leader of the Opposition and the younger brother of three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, was taken into custody from the Lahore High Court's premises, where a large number of the PML-N workers gathered ahead of the hearing in the ₹700 crores (USD 41.9 million) money laundering case.

The anti-graft body - National Accountability Bureau (NAB) - took him to its Lahore's detention centre and will produce him to the accountability court for his physical remand. Earlier, a two-member LHC bench headed by Sardar Ahmed Naem rejected his bail after hearing the arguments from



the NAB's team and Shahbaz's lawyer.

The Imran Khan government last week filed the money laundering case against 69-year-old Shahbaz, who served as chief minister of Punjab province from 2008 to 2018, and his family. Adviser to the Prime Minister on Interior and Accountability Shahzad Akbar last week alleged that Shahbaz and his sons - Hamza and Salman - were involved in money laundering through fake accounts.

Akbar said the financial monitoring unit had detected 177 suspicious transactions of Shahbaz' family after which NAB started a probe. He alleged that crores of rupees were laundered through employees of the companies owned by Shahbaz and his children.

## Assembly session starts today

GOVT EYES TO PASS 16 BILLS WHILE THE OPPOSITION HAS LINED UP AN ARRAY OF ISSUES TO CORNER THE GOVT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** The short monsoon session of the State Assembly promises to be stormy as Opposition BJP and the Congress have lined up many issues including Covid mismanagement to attack the government. The ruling party is prepared to counter the Opposition and aims to pass 16 bills.

The eight-day session will start at 11 am September 29 and continue till October 7. The legislature party meeting of the BJD, BJP and Congress Monday chalked out the strategy for the monsoon session. Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik said his party will raise issues including Covid mismanagement, university amendment bill, power tariff hike and floods.

Similarly, the Congress has planned to target both the BJD and the BJP over the farm bills. "Both the governments at the Centre and the state don't know what their power is in the new law. They bring new laws to kill the farmers," senior Congress legislator Narasingha Mishra said. The Congress party will also raise some other issues re-

### DGP, CP review security

**BHUBANESWAR:** Director General of Police Abhaya along with several senior police officials Monday reviewed the security arrangements at the state legislative assembly on the eve of the monsoon session. The Commissionerate Police has put in place a three-tier security arrangement for the session. Around 25 platoons of police have been deployed. Speaking to media, Abhaya said the police will decide about granting permission for protests and rallies at Gandhi Marg only after announcement of fresh Covid-19 guidelines by the Center.

lated to Covid management, flood, university bill, power tariff hike and CBI raids on chit fund scam, said Congress MLA Taraprasad Bahinipati. The ruling BJD is all set to give befitting replies to the Opposition in the floor of the house. "We are always open to constructive suggestions and criticisms of the opposition friends," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said.

"With the support of people of Odisha and dedicated hard work of Covid warriors, Odisha is putting

### Dy Speaker, 3 mins +ve

**BHUBANESWAR:** With the Assembly session set to begin Tuesday, a total of 15 MLAs including Deputy Speaker Rajani Kant Singh and three ministers tested positive for Covid-19 during a special testing drive conducted for the session. Singh has developed mild fever and been admitted in a Covid Hospital here. Similarly, Tourism Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash, Handlooms & Textiles Minister Padmini Dian have once again tested positive for Covid-19. Government chief whip Pramila Mallick also was found Covid positive.

a brave fight against Covid. We have one of the highest recovery rates in the country and Odisha saves maximum people in the country with low fatality rates," Naveen said.

The 16 bills scheduled to be passed included the Epidemic Diseases Bill, the Odisha Agriculture Produce & Livestock Contract Farming & Service (Promotion & Facilitation) Bill, the Odisha Agriculture Produce & Livestock Marketing (Promotion & Facilitation) Bill and the Odisha University (Amendment) Bill.

## Deferred loan interest: Govt's call in 2/3 days



AGENCIES

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** The Centre informed the Supreme Court Monday that a decision is likely in 2-3 days over charging of interest by banks on installments which were deferred during the moratorium period in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The top court asked the Centre to bring the decision on record and circulate the affidavit to the parties in a batch of pleas challenging interest on deferred installments. The Centre informed the top court that the matter has received very serious consideration and the decision making process is at advanced stage. A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan said that it would hear the batch of pleas filed by various industries, trade associations and individuals October 5.

"Tushar Mehta, learned Solicitor General, submits that the issues are under active consideration of the Government of India and only after decision is taken, an affidavit along with decision can be filed. "He further submits that the affidavit will be sent by October 1, through email to appearing counsel. List on October 5, 2020," said the bench also comprising Justices R Subhash Reddy and M R Shah. Mehta, appearing for the Centre said the government is looking into several economic issues.

The bench asked Mehta if he will be able to circulate his affidavit in advance to the parties concerned to which he agreed. "We will fix the matter for Monday (October 5). Whatever is your policy, whatever you have, you circulate it. We will take it up on Monday. We don't want any further adjournment," the bench said.

## TRUMP PAID NO TAX AT ALL IN 10 OF THE PREVIOUS 15 YEARS - LARGELY BECAUSE HE REPORTED LOSING MUCH MORE MONEY THAN HE MADE

# Trump paid just \$750 IT in '16, '17: Report; 'fake news': Prez

AGENCIES

**Washington, Sept 28:** Donald Trump paid just USD 750 in federal income taxes in the year he was elected US president and also in his first year in the White House, according to a media report, which also said that he or his companies paid USD 145,400 taxes in India in 2017. Trump entered the 2016 presidential race as a Republican and was elected in a surprise victory over Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton. "Donald J Trump paid USD 750 in federal income taxes the year he won the presidency. In his first year in the White House, he paid another USD 750," the New York Times reported on Sunday, citing tax return data extending over 20 years. The report came just days before

Trump's first presidential debate with Democratic rival Joe Biden on Tuesday and weeks before the November 3 presidential election. Trump paid no income taxes at all in 10 of the previous 15 years - largely because he reported losing much more money than he made, the report said. The US President immediately dismissed the report as "totally fake news".

US Presidents are not required by law to release details of their personal finances, but everyone since Richard Nixon has done so. Trump, who has fiercely guarded his tax filings, is the only President in modern times not to make them public.

He has, in fact, fielded court challenges against those seeking access to his returns, including the US House, which is suing for access to



Trump's tax returns as part of congressional oversight.

According to the NYT investigative report, Trump has long fought to keep private tell a story fundamentally different from the one he has sold to the American public.

"His reports to the IRS (Internal Revenue Service) portray a businessman who takes in hundreds of millions of dollars a year yet racks up chronic losses that he aggressively employs to avoid paying taxes. Now, with his financial challenges

mounting, the records show that he depends more and more on making money from businesses that put him in potential and often direct conflict of interest with his job as president," it said.

The report claimed to have obtained tax-return data extending over two decades for Trump and the hundreds of companies that make up his business organisation, including detailed information from his first two years in office. It does not include his personal returns for 2018 or 2019.

The report revealed that in his first two years in the White House, Trump's revenue from abroad totalled USD 73 million, much of which was from his golf properties in Scotland and Ireland. Some of the revenue came from licensing

deals in countries like Philippines (USD 3 million), India (USD 2.3 million) and Turkey (USD 1 million).

"He reported paying taxes, in turn, on a number of his overseas ventures," it said, adding, "In 2017, the president's USD 750 contribution to the operations of the US government was dwarfed by the USD 15,598 he or his companies paid in Panama, the USD 145,400 in India and the USD 156,824 in the Philippines."

The tax data examined provides a road map of revelations, from write-offs for the cost of a criminal defence lawyer and a mansion used as a family retreat to a full accounting of the millions of dollars the president received from the 2013 Miss Universe pageant in Moscow, the report said.



## K-POP SUPERBAND *BTS* CONFIRMS NEW ALBUM IN NOVEMBER

K-pop superband *BTS* have announced that they will release their new album November 20. According to the band, the new album, *BE* (Deluxe Edition), imparts a message of healing to the world by declaring, 'even in the face of this new normality, our life goes on,' reports *variety.com*.

## PALOMA FAITH OPENS UP ON HER POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Singer Paloma Faith, who is expecting her second child, has opened up about anxiety issues and postpartum depression that she had faced after her first childbirth three years ago. Paloma also shared she had undergone several rounds of IVF for her second pregnancy, reports *metro.co.uk*.



### FORTUNE FORECAST

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

**ARIES**  
You will experience a profound connection with the cosmos today. And you will be very grateful to the almighty for showering his grace on you. Your love for your kith and kin deepens today, says Ganesha, and you will spend extravagantly on them.

**TAURUS**  
Anxiety will keep your nerves swollen for most part of the day, feels Ganesha. On the work front, you will face success later in the day. You will be a role model for business efficiency and people will try to follow in your footsteps.

**GEMINI**  
You will be more inclined towards religious teachings and rituals today. You will probably visit a place of worship and spend some time there and this will bring you mental peace and calm. However, you still need to do justice to your duties, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**  
Today, you will put your heart and soul into whatever task you take up. But the results may not be too forthcoming. However, that should not be a reason for you to get dejected or anxious. You will get your due sooner or later.

**LEO**  
Be it a job or business, you will face severe competition today. You will need to be extra cautious today. You will need to be more serious about whatever it is that you are doing. You will become more influential in your social circle or amongst your colleagues as a result, says Ganesha.

**VIRGO**  
Pay due attention to your innate feelings. A small tour may be in the offing. You will get along famously with people today, says Ganesha. Your loved ones will receive your sincere feelings and emotions. Work your magic to improve relationships more.

**LIBRA**  
All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy! You don't want to be Jack, now, do you? It's high time you took a break from your busy work schedule. Go on a vacation to recharge your batteries. There are chances that evening could bring with it some hurtful remarks from loved ones. Don't be too sensitive to everything that's said, advises Ganesha.

**SCORPIO**  
Focus is the buzzword for you; your eyes should be set on the things you aim, advises Ganesha. You may even indulge into some kind of research work. Today, you may bump into an old pal with whom you relive those good old school days and rejuvenate yourself.

**SAGITTARIUS**  
Wisdom in words and hero in deeds - this may well be your avatar today. Expect good news at work, especially related to a thicker pay package or an increase in office floor area. Accountants and franchisees - expect to crunch good numbers today!

**CAPRICORN**  
Lack of proper planning is probably the reason for you not being able to get your work done in time. You'll realise this mistake and today, you will spend majority of time drawing a plan on paper, says Ganesha. You may hit a jackpot, but think twice before spending the money on anything unnecessary.

**AQUARIUS**  
Some days, you crave to know everything. Today is one such day. You will also prove a worthy opponent. You may upset your adversaries' plans, much to your own advantage. You have it in you to be a scholar. You will also prove the strength of your character, especially when the going gets tough.

**PISCES**  
Today you will feel generous and calm. You will shower those in the family who are younger than you with this generosity and as a result be the object of their fondness. With a clear perspective you will be able to see things for what they are.

## Balika Vadhu director now sells veggies on handcart

Ram Vriksha Gaur was all set to start work on a Bhojpuri film and then a Hindi film when the pandemic set in.

**Azamgarh:** He is just another face in the crowd but when he talks about his background, one realises what time and circumstances have done to this man. Ram Vriksha Gaur, one of the directors of the famous TV serial *Balika Vadhu*, is now selling vegetables in Azamgarh district of Uttar Pradesh. "I had come to Azamgarh for the recce of a film. We were here when the lockdown was announced and then it was not possible to return. The project we were working on was stopped and the producer said it would take another year or more to get back to work. I then decided to take on my



father's business and started selling vegetables on a handcart. I am familiar with the business and have no regrets," he said.

Talking about his journey to Mumbai, Ram Vriksha said, "I went to Mumbai in 2002 with the help of my friend and writer Shahnawaz

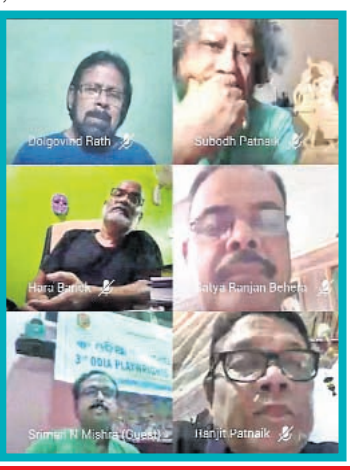
Khan. I worked in the light department and then in the production department of TV serials. I became an assistant director in the production of many serials first, then worked as the episode director and unit director for *Balika Vadhu*." Ram Vriksha has worked as an assistant director with directors of films of Yashpal Sharma, Milind Gunaji, Rajpal Yadav, Randeep Hooda, Sunil Shetty. He was all set to start work on a Bhojpuri film and then a Hindi film when the pandemic set in. "I have my own house in Mumbai and I am confident that I will return one day. Till then, I am here doing what I can," he ended. IANS

## Canmass holds 3rd Odia playwrights' conference

POST NEWS NETWORK

**PARADIP:** Cultural troupe CANMASS, known for organising national theatre festivals for the last 16 years at the Port City here, conducted its 3rd Odia playwrights' conference Sunday in collaboration with Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi. The event, comprising two sessions, was held on digital platform in compliance with the Covid guidelines laid down by the government. Several eminent theatre personalities brainstormed on the topic 'State of existence, movement and progress of contemporary Odia theatre' in the first session. Theatre directors and playwrights Hemendra Mohapatra, Kesa Ranjan Pradhan, Manoj Rath, Nibedita Jena and Shankar Tripathy discussed about the state of theatre in prevailing situation. They suggested a few ways for the survival of theatre. Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi secretary Prabodh Rath was the chief guest on the occasion.

The second session focused on 'Design of scenic structure in contemporary Odia dramatic literature.' Theatre persons of the likes of NSDian Dolgovind Rath, playwrights and directors Dileswar Maharana, Kailash Panigrahi, Satyarjan Behera, Ranjit Pattnaik, Hara Barik and Subodh Pattnaik spoke on the making of dramatic structures. They recommended the approach needed during these difficult times. The sessions were moderated by group's secretary Sriman N Mishra, vice-president Santosh Samal while president Captain Atulya Mahapatra presided over the event. Biswajit Rout, a key member of the troupe delivered the vote of thanks. CANMASS is group dedicated to the cause of state's socio-cultural progress. It has made contributions to Odia literature, art and other forms of social actions organising regular seminars, theatre festivals, theatre workshops and exhibitions, since its inception.



A session underway Sunday evening



## Strange that only actresses are under NCB scanner: SONA

**Mumbai:** Singer Sona Mohapatra finds it strange that only actresses are being singled out as alleged drug users in film industry, while none of their male counterparts have come under the radar of suspicion. In a verified Facebook post Monday, Sona also spoke about the benefits of CBD oil, of which she learnt during her sister's cancer treatment last year. Sona's post comes at a time when top actresses Deepika Padukone, Sara Ali

Khan, Shraddha Kapoor and Rakul Preet Singh are being grilled by the NCB, which is exploring the drugs-related angle in the Sushant Singh Rajput death case. Sona expressed that it feels 'rather strange' that only a few female stars are under the scanner, as if the male actors 'only stick to milk and biscuits'. Sona had recently taken a jibe at Kangana after the latter referred to actress Urmila Matondkar as a 'soft porn star' and Sonam Kapoor as a 'mafia bimbo'. "Calling others Gold digger, mafia bimbo, Sasti copy, Soft porn star doesn't make you the pillar of virtue, or justice," Sona had tweeted taking a dig at Kangana. IANS



Sucheta Trivedi

'Wonder why people make a big deal about bold scenes'

**Mumbai:** Actress Sucheta Trivedi fails to fathom why some people make a big deal about bold content on OTT platforms. "I don't know why people make such a big deal about bold scenes, sex scenes. This is all part of life, you just see it on-screen, so what?" she said. The actress also shared that content is purely based on audience demand. "If there is going to be more viewership because of nudity, then so be it, because that means the audience wants to watch it and they want to enjoy and get entertained by nudity and sex," the actress said. She added that she is surprised to see the amount of talent on display on digital platforms, saying it is the best she has seen so far. "Web is not lenient in taking actors, it has the best talent I have seen so far. I haven't seen one mediocre talent on the web. And it has already increased the competition to a different level," she said. The actress, currently seen on *Indiavaali Maa*, agrees that digital boom is here to stay. IANS

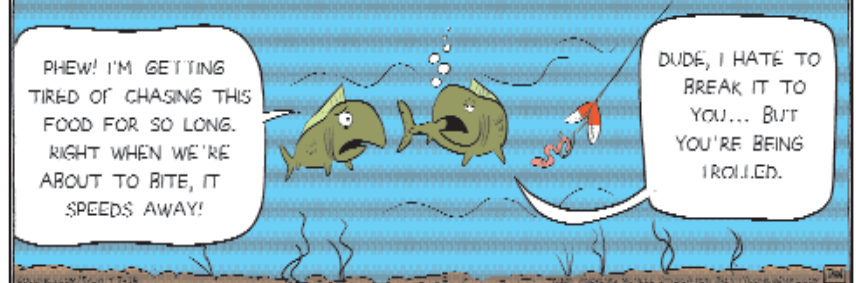
### PEANUTS



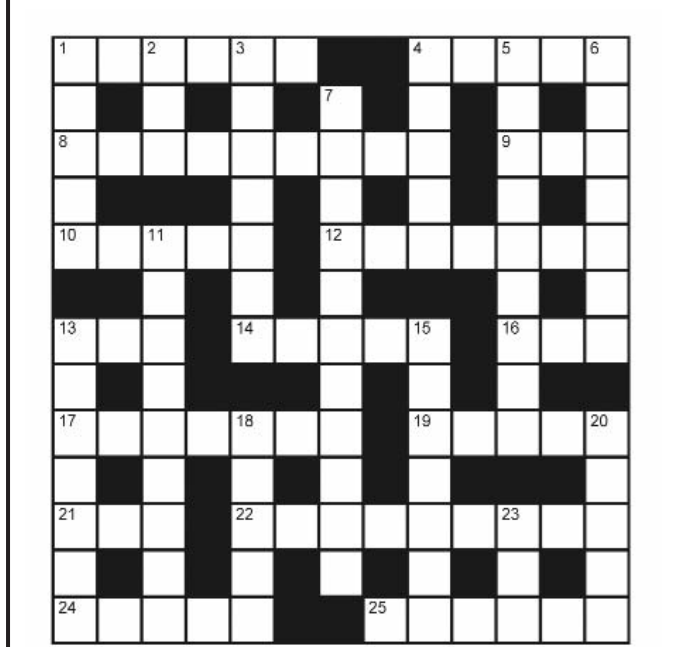
### CALVIN AND HOBBS



### BREVITY



### FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across
- 1 Spheres
  - 4 Manila envelope feature
  - 8 Sportscaster
  - 9 URL part
  - 10 Dining room item
  - 12 Fairytale creature
  - 13 Have a bug
  - 14 Old photo colour
  - 16 Historic period
  - 17 Dry red Italian table wine
  - 19 Fuzzy fruit
  - 21 Twosome
  - 22 Where to place a rocket (6,3)
  - 24 Harsh
  - 25 Stocks and such
  - 5 Cassiopeia's daughter (Gr. myth.)
  - 6 Funnel-shaped flower
  - 7 "Dee-licious!"
  - 11 Combative
  - 13 Amusement park features
  - 15 Andean beasts
  - 18 Parachute material
  - 20 Conceals
  - 23 Bakery offering
- Down
- 1 Strike back
  - 2 Barley bristle
  - 3 Cats
  - 4 Welsh dog

### SUDOKU

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

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

### SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

D	I	P	S	J	A	Z	Z	B	I	O	
E	A	F	D	U	A	G					
T	A	T	T	L	E	D	R	A	D	A	R
A	I	U	I	G	E						
C	L	O	C	K	W	A	T	C	H	E	R
H	E	R	E	R	H	R	C				
E	F	T	C	U	B	S	K	A			
D	R	A	B	I	G	O	A	T			
M	O	U	N	T	A	I	N	G	O	A	
A	P	A	E	Z	U						
W	E	I	R	D	H	A	R	B	O	U	
L	C	E	U	T	I	N	E				
S	O	J	M	E	K	L	E	N	S		

SUDOKU

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

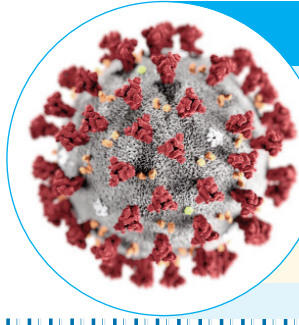
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

# downtown



## ROADBLOCK ON NH

An uprooted iron pole under the railway overbridge at Madhupatna Square in Cuttack brought the traffic to a standstill, Monday



## COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,33,77,409	2,46,87,027	10,03,358
India	60,73,348	50,13,367	95,574
Odisha	2,12,609	1,77,585	813

# BJD TO FORM PANEL TO STUDY FARM BILLS

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** The ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) will form a committee of MLAs, MPs and leading farmer leaders to study the provisions of the controversial farm Bills passed in the Parliament and get the stamp of approval from the President recently.

**I would like to assure the farmers that their welfare will be paramount in any of our interventions**

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CM

Addressing party MLAs here ahead of monsoon session of the Assembly, BJD President and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, "BJD is in favour of an initiative that will bring prosperity to the lives of farmers. We will continue our fight for implementation of MS Swaminathan recommendations for formulating Minimum Support Price. This will really help the farmers at large."

In both houses of the Parliament, the BJD has raised its concerns regarding protection of farmers' interest in the farmers' Bills and suggested for close scrutiny by Parliamentary Committee, he said. "I would like to assure the farmers that their welfare will be paramount in any of our interventions," he added.

Commenting on the New Education Policy (NEP), Patnaik said his party has formed a Committee to go through all aspects and come up with findings after discussing with various stakeholders.

"Odisha is the first state formed on the basis of language in the country and we will protect and promote our mother tongue, Odia, whether in NEP or any other intervention of the Union government," the Chief Minister said, adding, how rural students will be affected will also be an important criterion.

## Bills aim at defeating Green Revolution: Cong



Congress leaders demonstrate near Raj Bhawan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**BHUBANESWAR:** The state unit of Congress Monday staged a demonstration near the Raj Bhawan here demanding repeal of the farm Bills passed in the Parliament recently.

President Ram Nath Kovind had, Sunday, given assent to three farm reform Bills – the Farmer's 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.

As part of the nationwide agitation of the Congress against the farm sector reform measures, a large number of party workers and leaders including former state unit president Jayadev Jena and former MP Pradeep Majhi took part in the demonstration, accusing the Centre

of adopting an 'anti-farmer policy'.

Holding placards and banners, the demonstrators gathered near the Raj Bhawan and raised slogans against the BJP-led government at the Centre, vowing to intensify the agitation to seek withdrawal of the measures.

Maintaining that small and marginal farmers have voluntarily associated themselves with the protests, former PCC chief Jayadev Jena said the party will continue the agitation till the Centre withdraws the Bills.

"The Bills are part of a conspiracy to defeat the Green Revolution and destroy the farmers and agriculture to benefit a handful of crony capitalists," Jena said.

Party leader Pradeep Majhi said the entry of corporate and capitalists in the agricultural sector are bound to cause hardship to the poor farmers and turn them into farm labourers.

# CM lays stone for two bridges over Mahanadi

OPPOSITION BJP AND CONGRESS SMELL POLITICS BEHIND THE MOVE OF THE GOVT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** Ahead of Tirtol bypoll, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday laid the foundation stone for two bridges over river Mahanadi in Tirtol area of Jagatsinghpur district at a cost of ₹200 crore.

While one bridge will be constructed by the Rural Development department at a cost of ₹118.56 crore, another bridge will be built by the Works department at a cost of ₹82.55 crore.

The Rural Development department will construct the Tirtol Posal high level bridge while the Works department will construct the Jaipur-Katikatta high level bridge.

Laying the foundation for the bridges, Patnaik said that the state government has always been giving importance to development of infrastructure in the state.

## 'GANGRAPE' IN CITY HC seeks status report

AGENCIES

**Cuttack, Sept 28:** The Orissa High Court Monday directed the twin city Commissionerate Police (CP) to submit a status report in connection with the investigation into the alleged gangrape of a minor girl in Bhubaneswar.

The HC issued the direction while hearing a petition filed before it seeking transfer of the investigation related to the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

The HC has also issued notices to all concerned parties, directing them to furnish their replies at the earliest. The next hearing in the matter has been fixed September 30.



link Tirtol with Cuttack and 28 gram panchayats (GPs) of Kendrapara district. Around 1.5 lakh people will be benefited by it.

However, Opposition BJP and Congress smell politics behind the move. Both parties alleged that the government is launching projects to woo voters whenever there is an election and said it will not yield result.

## INFRA BOOST

While Tirtol Posal high level bridge will be constructed by the Rural Development department at a cost of ₹118.56 crore, Jaipur Katikatta high level bridge will be built by the Works department at a cost of ₹82.55 crore

Around 1.5 lakh people will be benefited by the new bridges that will link Tirtol with Cuttack and 28 GPs of Kendrapara district

# Original docus not must for Plus III admissions

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** The Higher Education department, in a letter to all the degree colleges in the state, has directed them to permit the students for admission to Plus III courses with downloaded marksheets and undertakings.

Mihir Kumar Das, PTC officer in charge, said that due to COVID-19 pandemic, there is some disruption in supplying original certificates, marksheets and migration certificates to Plus II pass-out students during 2019-20. As a result, they may fail to show the original certificates for verification at the time of admission. Therefore, the government is pleased to consider the following points:

Downloaded marksheets with self attestation will be accepted by the universities and colleges, which should not insist on original certificates. Students shall submit undertaking to the principal of the college to show the original certificates and marksheets within 12

days from date of admission for first selection students and for migration certificates one month from the date of admission, failing which their admission shall be cancelled. Students shall not be debarred from taking admission for lack of any original certificates. Parents or guardians may be allowed to report for admission if any student fails to report for admission.

The Higher Education department Monday announced the first cut-off marks for admission to Plus III courses for academic year 2020-21. The admission process will start from September 29 to October 3.

# Tapang's beautiful-but-deadly site now a prohibited area

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** Ever since several pictures of Hatia Mundia of Nijigarh Tapang in Khurda district went viral on social media, the spot has been a favourite hangout for youths. However, the district administration has declared the spot with spectacular look as a prohibited area.

Nijigarh Tapang gives a feel of being in an exotic foreign location. This is the reason why youths were visiting the spot to click some pictures and take selfies with the location providing a gorgeous backdrop.

The location used to be a stone quarry. But the area is now filled with rain water. The blue water with vertical cliffs surrounding it offers a scene akin to a location abroad. But the place is not free from dangers. There are many dynamites beneath the ground which may go off at any moment and prove fatal for visitors. This is the reason why the



administration has declared the spot as a prohibited area.

People have been made aware of the lurking threat at the spot through public address system.

The district administration has cautioned visitors not to visit the spot from Monday onwards. Stringent action will be taken against those who are found at the prohibited spot, warned the administration.

Recently, the villagers of Nijigarh

## PUJA AMID PANDEMIC



Artisans shape clay idol of Goddess Durga in Puri, Monday. This year, Durga Puja will be a low key affair due to the COVID-19 pandemic which has already taken the sheen off several festivals

## MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE

# PAY ₹3 LAKH TO DECEASED PREGNANT LADY'S KIN: NHRC

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has directed the Chief Secretary of Odisha to pay ₹3 lakh compensation to the relatives of a deceased pregnant woman who succumbed due to grave medical negligence at Jaleswar Community Health Centre (CHC) of Balasore district in 2015.

The commission had earlier asked the chief secretary to compensate the next of kin of the deceased in February 2020, but to no avail.

The rights panel had again directed the state government to pay the amount and submit the compliance report within four weeks else, it said, coercive action will be taken against authorities as per section 13 of the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993.

Notably, the victim, Jharana Dalai, was referred to district headquarters hospital of Balasore by the doctors at CHC Jaleswar November

The commission has asked the chief secretary to submit a report on punitive actions taken against the guilty

11, 2015 as her condition deteriorated due to several complications.

However, the family failed to get any ambulance service despite repeated calls on the emergency services number 102 and 108.

The enquiry report of the additional director (MH) of State Directorate of Family Welfare submitted before the NHRC also confirmed the allegations of gross negligence of the medical staff at the CHC resulting in the death of the pregnant lady.

The commission also asked the chief secretary to submit a detailed report regarding the punitive actions taken against the persons responsible for negligence.

## Brown sugar seized in City; two nabbed

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** The Commissionerate Police Monday arrested two drug peddlers and seized brown sugar weighing around 60 grams on the outskirts of the city here.

Earlier, the Special Task Force (STF) of Crime Branch Sunday seized 262 gram of brown sugar from Tapang crossing in Khurda and arrested two persons.

Following a tip-off, a joint team of Commissionerate Police and Khandagiri police carried out a raid at Moon Mandap in Raghunath Nagar area under Khandagiri police station.

Around 60 gram brown sugar worth ₹6 lakh and two motorcycles were seized from their possession. The accused were identified as Khali Behera, 40, and Krushna Chandra Palei, 32, of Khurda district.

# NAVEEN FLAGS OFF SCHEME TO MAKE STATE SLUM FREE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Monday launched second phase of Jaga Mission – the slum upgradation and de-listing initiative- in an aim to make the state slum-free in three years.

Launching the initiative through videoconferencing, Naveen said his government has always strived to safeguard the rights and improve the quality of life of the poor and the marginalised sections in the state.

"We decided to empower them with the Jaga Mission that laid the foundations of a new humane and inclusive urban development model. This model has received international acclaim as the largest slum titling and upgradation initiative in the world and has been awarded the prestigious World Habitat Award-2019," he said.

He said the slum upgradation and de-listing initiative aims to im-



prove the living conditions of 18 lakh slum dwellers by providing them piped water supply, paved

roads, storm water drains, street lights, sanitation, household electricity,

community spaces and recreational facilities.

The programme will be implemented in 1,000 slums with immediate effect and then scaled up to cover each and every slum in the state within a period of three years to make Odisha a slum-free state, he stated.

The Chief Minister dedicated 116 Parichay – multi-purpose community centres in the slums.

He also started the distribution of land entitlement certificates to 1,05,000 families living in 1,718 slums in 101 towns benefiting 4.5 lakh people. "While Odisha is putting up a brave fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, I

## JAGA MISSION

Jaga Mission aims to improve the living conditions of 18 lakh slum dwellers by providing them piped water supply, paved roads, storm water drains, street lights, sanitation, household electricity, community spaces and recreational facilities

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hope this upgradation initiative will enhance the collective resilience of the slum dwellers by improving their lives and livelihoods," the Chief Minister said.

The Housing and Urban Development department Monday signed an agreement with Centre for Policy Research, Delhi. The Centre for Policy Research will provide as-

sistance as the knowledge partner for the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, Urban Development and Housing Minister Pratap Jena said a list has been prepared for slum upgradation along with other urban areas.

Now, the people of slums will get equal rights and facilities like other urban areas, he said.

# 16 MORE DIE OF COVID-19

# Depts, PSUs not to hire pvt vehicles

ODISHA'S COVID-19 TALLY ROSE TO 2,12,609 AS 3,235 MORE PEOPLE TESTED POSITIVE FOR THE DISEASE

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** State's novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) tally rose to 2,12,609 Monday as 3,235 more people tested positive for the disease, while the death toll due to the infection crossed the 800-mark in Odisha with 16 more fatalities, taking the total COVID-19 deaths to 813, official sources said.

"Regret to inform the demise of sixteen COVID positive patients while under treatment in hospitals," the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said on Twitter.

Of the fresh fatalities, three were reported from Balasore, two each from Khurda, Mayurbhanj and Puri and one each from Bolangir, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Kalahandi and Nawrangpur.

Ganjam accounted for 219 of 813 deaths reported in the state so far, followed by Khurda (128) and Cuttack (66), the H&FW department official said.

The new coronavirus cases were



## FRESH STATS

Out of the fresh cases, Khurda district recorded the highest number of cases at 506, followed by Cuttack at 318 and Angul at 179

Of the new fatalities, three were reported from Balasore, two each from Khurda, Mayurbhanj and Puri and one each from Bolangir, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Kandhamal, Kalahandi and Nawrangpur

Ganjam accounted for 219 of 813 deaths reported in the state so far, followed by Khurda (128) and Cuttack (66)

detected in all the 30 districts of the state. At least 1,915 cases were registered in quarantine centres, while 1,320 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing, said the official.

Khurda district, of which Bhubaneswar is a part, recorded the highest number of fresh cases at 506, followed by Cuttack at 318 and Angul at 179.

Odisha now has 38,172 active

cases, while 1,73,571 people have recovered from the disease.

The state has conducted over 31.59 lakh sample tests, including 47,634 Sunday.

City's tally stands at 21,197. The Capital city reported 342 fresh COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours taking the tally to 21,197. Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said Monday. Among the fresh cases, 111 were

reported from quarantine centres while 231 contracted the virus locally.

The BMC also said that in the last 24 hours 321 patients have recovered and have been discharged from COVID-19 hospitals Monday.

With the addition of new patients, the number of active cases in this city has gone up to 3,595. So far 17,497 patients have recovered from COVID-19 while the death toll due to the disease stands at 88.

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** The State Transport Authority Monday issued a circular asking all government departments, state & Central PSUs, autonomous bodies and industrial houses stop using private vehicles.

Transport Commissioner Sanjeeb Panda in the circular said private passenger carrying vehicles (cars and multi-utility vehicles) are being hired by different entities illegally violating provisions of MV Act, 1988 and rules made there under.

Central and state government departments, PSUs of Central and state government, ULBs, autonomous bodies, industrial houses, individuals etc can hire and use only motor cabs, maxi cabs and omni buses (passenger carrying vehicles) which are registered under transport category, he said.

The transport category of vehicles will display yellow number plates with black registration number.

They can use the transport category vehicles which have valid permit, insurance certificate, fitness

## TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER'S TAKE



They can use the transport category vehicles which have valid permit, insurance certificate, fitness certificate, proof payment of up to date tax and pollution certificate

Central and state government departments, PSUs of Central and state government, ULBs, autonomous bodies, industrial houses, individuals etc can hire and use only motor cabs, maxi cabs and omni buses (passenger carrying vehicles) which are registered under transport category

The transport category of vehicles will display yellow number plates with black registration number

certificate, proof payment of up to date tax and pollution under control certificate. The entities have been instructed to check these statutory documents before hiring for hassle free travel.

The commissioner has instructed concerned officials to detect cases where private passenger carrying vehicles are used for hire during enforcement. E-challan will be issued against the violators

and steps will be taken to convert the private vehicle to transport category, he said.

Panda also warned that FIR will be filed against the hirer of private passenger carrying vehicles u/s 188 of IPC for violating this order.

The transport officials and police were asked to ensure that the genuine non-transport passenger carrying vehicles are not harassed.

## ECOR promotes reuse of waste

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, Sept 28:** In order to increase Railway's share in the transportation, Business Development Unit of Sambalpur Division is now dealing closely with trade and industries to carry freight including non-bulk goods traffic.



One full rake consisting of 59 wagons of Flyash loaded from Aditya Alumina siding at Lapanga, (Hindalco of Aditya Birla Group) and sent to Calcom Cement India Limited, (A unit of Dalmia Bharat Limited) at Lanka in Assam. The freight will be carried for about 1367 kms from loading point at Lapanga to unloading point at Lanka in Assam. Railways have also generated a sum of Rs 43 lakhs revenue for carrying fly-ash.

To promote the reusability of waste product and provide facilities to the traders and industries along with small scale and micro industries, the Business Development Unit of ECoR attracting industries. On regular interaction by ECoR BDUs with the customers and industries, it is now exploring ways to increase miscellaneous non-bulk goods traffic to strengthen Railway's share in traditional commodities being carried at present.

## CLASSIFIED

### LOST

It is notified for the information that my original School Leaving Certificate (For ICSE Class 10th Session 2008-2009 Index No - T/6607/083 from ICSE New Delhi) has been lost while on transit. Sunayana Maheswari, Tulsi Bhawan, Junuspatna, Po - College Square, Cuttack - 753003, Odisha

### AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit & declare that in the ICSE & CBSE Board Examination Certificate and Mark Sheet, the name of father of Kajal Agarwal has been wrongly reflected as Sujit Kumar Agarwal instead of Sujit Kumar Agarwal, such mistake is inadvertent and the correct name of father of Kajal Agarwal is Sujit Kumar Agarwal.

## Nutritional services recovering: UNICEF

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** Experts from various development agencies working with the Odisha government claimed that the institutional nutritional services rendered by the government to the kids in the state have mostly recovered from the COVID 19 effects.

UNICEF Odisha Monday said that the nutritional status as reported through tele-monitoring from Primitive vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) communities from select parts of Odisha revealed that the coverage of such services has increased slowly since March, April 2020 when the pandemic started in the state.

"Data shows that though at the start of the pandemic the services dropped to 68% in April, the services covered more than 95% of children and mothers in September," Sourav Bhattacharya, Nutrition Expert from UNICEF Odisha said. "Despite the provision of eggs and dry ration to families, only around 40% of children were reportedly consuming minimal acceptable diet in June. However, the situation has seen an improvement with intense counselling and September figures show that around 52% of children were consuming the acceptable diet," the international development body said.

Monika Neilsen, Chief of Field Staff, UNICEF Odisha said that COVID 19 posed new nutritional threats towards the tribal societies of Odisha but government outreach programs helped to fight against the double whammy.

The figures were discussed in a webinar organised by UNICEF

The figures were discussed in a webinar organised by UNICEF Odisha and the Community Medicine department of AIIMS Bhubaneswar

Odisha and the Community Medicine department of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar on the issue of tribal health Monday.

Dr Pragya Paramita Giri, Associate Professor from AIIMS, Bhubaneswar said, "The tribal communities are more vulnerable in terms of malnourishment and other nutritional related health indicators. However they have many virtues too. We need to specifically target their welfare with innovative interventions. Incentivizing front-line workers working in such areas and training of tribal community could be some such ways."

Dr Lopamudra Tripathy, Communication for Development Specialist, UNICEF, Odisha said that several tribal groups have some good indigenous nutrition food which needs to be bolstered and mixed in other conventional diets and others to improve the food diversity among the tribal population.

Tribal communities report high levels of malnutrition among children. According to National Family Health Survey 4 (NFHS4), around 48% of tribal children below 5 are malnourished making them vulnerable to stunting and severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and face the risk of diseases and poor growth.

## TIGHT VIGIL



Senior officials, including DGP Abhay, twin-city police commissioner Sudhanshu Sarangi, DIGP (Intelligence) Anup Kumar Sahoo, Bhubaneswar DCP Umashankar Dash and DCP (Traffic) Saumya Mishra, Monday inspect the security arrangements on the premises of Odisha Legislative Assembly ahead of the monsoon session of the Assembly starting Tuesday

OP PHOTOS

## As abattoir lies unused, BMC nixes proposed solution

POTENTIAL OPERATORS REQUESTED BMC TO PASS A LAW MANDATING ALL LIVE GOATS MEANT FOR SLAUGHTERING TO BE REFERRED TO THE SLAUGHTER HOUSE

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** Despite bidders showing interest in operating the unused abattoir at Gadakana here, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) denied the operators to pass a law that will restrict street vendors' open butchering of goats in state capital.

The BMC in August this year had issued an RFP (Request for Proposal) for operation and maintenance of the abattoir: While only few parties turned up, an agency in a pre-bid inquiry requested the civic authority to pass all live goats entering the city to be referred to the slaughter house.

"Only after the full load of the modern abattoir is reached, a vendor can then slaughter the goat by themselves after the reject certificate is issued by the abattoir: The BMC should pass this as a law and



must ensure that it is followed stringently," the bidder requested the BMC.

However, the civic authority disagreed to passing any such law and stated that it will only assist in coordinating with the meat vendors, restaurants and shops. Often criticised for its impracticality, the

Build at a cost of Rs 1.67 crore, the abattoir was ready to be used in 2018 after the Supreme Court had suggested controlling open butchering

While local residents had initially protested against its construction, the butcher house found no takers as bidding parties complained poor enforcement by the local authorities in controlling roadside open butchering

abattoir has been termed as a failed project with the BMC unable to attract bidders despite issuing repeated RFPs.

Build at a cost of Rs. 1.67 crore, the abattoir was ready to be used in 2018 after the Supreme Court had suggested controlling open butchering. While local residents had ini-

tially protested against its construction, the butcher house found no takers as bidding parties complained poor enforcement by the local authorities in controlling roadside open butchering.

Moreover, the street vendors pointed out the added operational costs to their business in terms of

transit as the abattoir remains at the outskirts of the city. "The cost of transportation for about 30 kms will be an unnecessary burden on us. Moreover, customers demand fresh meat which they prefer to be minced in front of their eyes," said Irfan Mohammad Irfan, a meat vendor at Unit 9 market here.

The BMC, however, responding to a query clarified that it will assist the licensee in coordinating with meat vendors for hotels restaurants and shops in notifying about the new abattoir:

"The bidders are advised to make an understanding of the project and free to fix slaughter charges. However, the minimum fees for slaughtering should not exceed Rs. 150 per goat. Moreover, a veterinary doctor will be provided to the slaughter house that will examine the goats before slaughtering," said a notification issued by the BMC.

## NANDANKANAN TO REOPEN OCT 4

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, Sept 28:** In some good news for wildlife lovers excited to meet animals during COVID-19 pandemic on outskirts of Bhubaneswar, the Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) will reopen for visitors from October 4 after more than six-month closure.

The Nandankanan Zoological Park and State Botanical Garden will open from October 4, 2020, informed Deputy Director Jayant Das here Monday.

Keeping the present situation in view, a special SOP adhering to Coronavirus guidelines have been prepared for the visitors after consulting with the State authorities.

The zoo has been closed for public since March 2020 after outbreak of COVID-19 in Odisha.

Source in the NZP said that proper arrangements will be made for tourists as per the COVID-19 guidelines. A fixed number of visitors may enter to maintain social distancing and avoid congregation inside the zoo.

## OHRC to remain shut till Sept 30

**BHUBANESWAR:** The Odisha Human rights Commission will remain closed till September 30 due to stop the spread of Covid-19 infection. The commission took the sudden decision of suspending all activities after one staff was tested positive with coronavirus Monday. The Commission also requested its entire staff to remain under home isolation and undergo test if they encounter any symptom related to Covid-19.

## STUDENT LEADER REMEMBERED AT TEMPLE IN CITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Cuttack, Sept 28:** The 27th death anniversary of late student leader Sriprati Jena was observed at Gadagadeswar temple premises here amid Covid guidelines by Sriprati Smruti Sansad, Monday.

Former student leaders, lawyers and people from various walks of life participated in this function and paid their homage to the departed student leader.

An all religion prayer meeting presided by former secretary of OHBA Satyabrata Mohanty was held on the occasion while food packets were distributed to poor and destitute people.

Asit Kumar Jena, Basudeb Rout, Niranjan Swain, Jagadananda Tripathy, Manas Pani, Niranjan Samantray, Subrat Nayak, Narottam Nayak and Rajkishore Behera participated in the meeting.

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# Stadium construction reeks of irregularities

**WITH A BUDGET OF ₹3.6CR, CONSTRUCTION OF A HOCKEY MINI STADIUM AT JUJUMURA IN SAMBALPUR IS ON**

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, Sept 28:** Sub-standard work and abrupt delays in construction of a hockey mini stadium at Jujumura in the district has sparked furore among the hockey lovers in the region, a report said. The initial euphoria over the construction of a hockey stadium seems to be fading away after allegations of sub-standard works and delay are flying thick and fast. Moreover, delay in the stadium construction has led to the damage of the astro-turf which the state government had provided for laying on the ground.

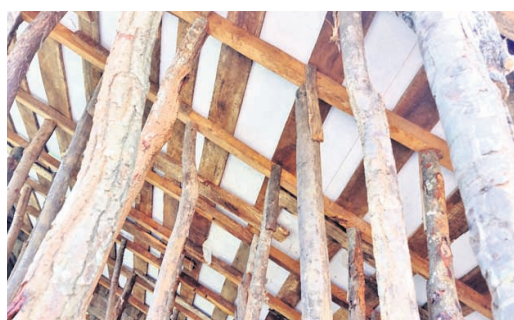
The construction of the stadium aims at hosting national and international level hockey tournaments and training centre for players.

However authorities are yet to act on the complaints and take action against the wrong doers. This has sparked resentment among the residents which is intensifying with each passing day.

Reports said that the state government is constructing mini stadiums in various parts of the state for development of sports. In this context, construction of a hockey mini stadium at Jujumura in this district is underway at an outlay of



Delay in the stadium construction has led to the damage of the astro-turf which the state govt had provided



Rs3.60 cr. Redhakholi MLA Rohit Pujari was instrumental in construction of the stadium in Jujumura which has produced many hockey talents in past. He persuaded the state government to construct the stadium in Jujumura and helped in sanctioning of funds for the project.

The amount was released by the state government and the construction is being carried out by WAPCOS, a PSU unit. However, allegations are being leveled that the state government is not even keeping an eye on the progress.

However, he has now come under flak for delay in completion of the project and sub-standard works. Observers have alleged that the

consultancy agency is using low quality materials in the construction of the mini stadium starting from the foundation to laying of the roof.

The agency is now laying the roof of the gallery for which it is not using the required quantity of cement, sand and iron bars in violation of the guidelines. As per provision, the agency is required to use automatic cement-concrete mixture for laying the roofs. However, the agency was seen using manually operated machine in roof laying works.

Moreover, the agency is using sub-standard materials in roof laying works and not making the right mix of mortar by using cement,

**A**llegations of sub-standard works and delay are flying thick and fast

The construction agency is making a mortar mixture by using one kadai of cement with eight sand and seven to nine kadai of stone chips instead of one kadai cement, one kadai sand and two kadai of chips

sand, water and stone chips in right proportions. It is alleged that the agency is making a mortar mixture by using one kadai cement with eight sand and seven to nine kadai of stone chips instead of one kadai cement, one kadai sand and two kadai of chips.

They apprehend that wrong mixture of mortar might affect the durability of the construction as mortar mix is a critical building component that must be combined thoroughly in proper ratios.

When contacted, Pujari rejected any wrongdoings while engineer PB Baliarsingh said the delay has occurred due to non-availability of labourers which is expected to be addressed by December.

# 3-day shutdown in Karanja

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, Sept 28:** Close on the heels of the Jharsuguda Chamber of Commerce (JCC) which announced a voluntary week-long shutdown to stop the spread of coronavirus, Karanja Businessmen Association has announced a three-day shutdown in the town in Mayurbhanj.

Starting from Monday, the shutdown will continue till September 30.

The Association has taken the decision as the sub-division has been



reporting more and more COVID-19 cases every day. Through public

address system, the residents of the town have been asked not to step out of their houses unless there is an emergency.

All the shops were seen closed Monday. However, shops dealing in medicine and milk and petrol pumps have been allowed to remain open during the shutdown period.

After doctors at Karanja sub-divisional hospital, police personnel of Karanja police station, lecturers of Karanja College, employees of NAC office and many residents tested positive for COVID-19, the people of the town are in a state of panic.

Notably, Mayurbhanj district Monday reported 118 fresh COVID-19 positive cases. Of them, 6,340 patients have recovered from the disease and 1,407 are undergoing treatment. The district Monday also reported two COVID-19 deaths and with this the toll has increased to 23.

# 3 Jharsuguda towns down their shutters

**BRAJRAJNAGAR:** In view of the rising COVID-19 cases in the district, the Jharsuguda Chamber of Commerce (JCC) has decided that industrial and business organisations will observe a week-long shutdown in Brajrajnagar, Belpahar and Jharsuguda town. However, the decision to observe the shutdown will be voluntary. The chamber has requested all its members to close down their units for seven days. A decision to this effect was taken Friday.

The JCC said that the move is aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19 in these localities. All shops and markets were seen closed Saturday and the same situation will

prevail till October 2. With business and office outlets closed the number of people on the roads decreased substantially. Residents of Brajrajnagar, Belpahar and this town have been urged not to step out of their homes unless there is an emergency.

Members of JCC said after the meeting that they are hoping such a move will contain the spread of COVID-19 and in the process save lives.

Notably, 'Corona Niyantana Committee', an outfit formed by the members of several organisations in Bolangir town, has also imposed a similar week-long shutdown starting September 25.

# RISKY AFFAIR



Amid spike in Covid-19 cases, people queue up outside an Aadhaar enrollment centre at the Head Post office in Sambalpur without adhering to Covid guidelines, Monday

# TUSKER TRAMPLES FARMER TO DEATH

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rasol, Sept 28:** A farmer was trampled to death by a tusker on his farmland near Bedapada village under Hindol forest range in Dhenkanal district late Sunday night.

The deceased was identified as Bholeswar Dehuri, 60, in the village. He was guarding his crops on his farmland when a tusker trampled him to death. Another farmer accompanying him managed to escape. Hindol forest ranger Rohit Kumar Rath gave away Rs 40,000 ex-gratia to the bereaved family and assured to pay the rest of the compensation amount after submission of necessary documents. Rasol police registered a case and handed over the body to his family members after a post-mortem.

The incident occurred when Dehuri and a co-farmer Yudhistir Samal had to go to their farmlands to guard their crops Sunday night. They were keeping a watch when a tusker strayed into their farmland and started eating the crops. Dehuri tried to drive away the tusker when the animal picked him up on its tusk and trampled him to death. Samal managed to escape. Farmers have demanded to save them from elephant menace which has become a regular affair in their area.

# Bolangir Ayurvedic College readies 'immunity booster'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bolangir, Sept 28:** Bolangir Government Ayurvedic College and Hospital authorities have claimed that they have achieved success in preparing 'immunity booster' for COVID-19 patients.

The College claims that the booster will go a long way in treating COVID-19 patients.

According to a source, a team of professors, doctors and lecturers led by college Principal Dr Arun Kumar Dash had been on the job of preparing an ayurvedic medicine which would act as an immunity booster.

The team had gone around jungles and forests to collect some specific roots. Using these collected roots, they have prepared this 'immunity booster'.

The medicine will make a difference in treating COVID-19 pa-



The 'immunity booster' kit

tients, the college claims.

It was learnt that district Collector Chanchal Rana allowed the College to go ahead with the preparation of 'immunity booster' and for this, Rs 2.10 lakh was released from Red Cross.

According to a source, the medicine, termed as 'immunity booster', will soon be provided to COVID-19 patients. The medicine will be

handed over to the district administration after successful trials.

It has now become a point of discussion in the Bolangir district and people are looking forward to the availability of this medicine.

"In coming days, the district will create history in Odisha in producing medicine to treat COVID-19 patients," they said.

# IITian from Rayagada digitises Saura script

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Rayagada, Sept 28:** After years of research, an IIT student Soni Salma Priyadarshini has succeeded in digitising the Saura script which will help to disseminate Saura culture, tradition and enable tribal students to pursue studies.

Soni is a native of Rayagada district.

Following digitisation of the script, digitised textbooks will be published for teaching in Anganwadi centres and primary schools. Talking to the media, Soni said that she digitised the Saura script in association with Prof Girish Dalvi of IIT-Mumbai.

Soni had taken admission in IIT-Mumbai in 2014 to pursue her studies in Industrial Design. She had done a project on Typography and then did research on digitisation of the script which was prepared by a tribal scholar Mangei Gamang of

**I was earlier working in Germany and left my job to come back to Rayagada for the research. Publication of textbooks in Saura script will benefit over 30,000 tribal students of Ganjam, Gajapati and Rayagada districts**

SONI SALMA PRIYADARSHINI

Rayagada district.

"I was earlier working in Germany and left my job to come back to Rayagada for the research. Publication of textbooks in Saura script will benefit over 30,000 tribal students of Ganjam, Gajapati and Rayagada districts," the researcher said.

Notably, out of 62 tribal communities in Odisha, the spoken languages of only five communities have been digitised so far.

# CDPO 'CHARGES' SHG ₹2L PC FOR SATTU CONTRACT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Kesinga, Sept 28:** Members of Manikeswari Self Help Group (SHG) have brought serious allegations against Dipti Mayee Dandapal, the CDPO of Narla block in Kalahandi district.

Not given PC (percentage), the CDPO allegedly disengaged the group from making 'sattu' (multi-grain cereal powder) under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme for children and pregnant women.

The group members alleged that the CDPO reportedly demanded Rs 2 lakh from the members to renew their contract. But, when they expressed their inability, the CDPO disengaged them and gave the contract to another SHG who paid her the bribe.

Now, the members have brought the matter to the notice of the district Collector and district welfare officer.

Meanwhile, residents of Narla block in the district have expressed concern over supply of sub-standard 'sattu' to the children by several Anganwadi centres of the block.

According to a member of Manikeswari SHG, Basanti Rana, for the last seven years they have been making 'sattu' and had been sending it to the block Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) department.

Everything was going fine, until one day, the CDPO disengaged the SHG from making 'sattu'. To get their service back the CDPO charged Rs2 lakh from the SHG. With no



Due to the PC culture, the manufacturing cost runs up and the quality gets compromised, SHG members alleged

**FOR THE LAST 7 YRS, MANIKESWARI SHG HAS BEEN MAKING 'SATTU' AND SENDING IT TO THE BLOCK ICDS DEPT**

Everything was going fine, until one day, the CDPO disengaged the SHG from making 'sattu'

The CDPO charged Rs2 lakh from the SHG to keep the contract

**WITH NO OPTION LEFT, THE SHG MEMBERS TOOK LOAN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND DEPOSITED RS2 LAKH TO THE CDPO'S ACCOUNT AT SBI, NARLA, MARCH 20**

option left, the SHG members took loan from various sources and deposited Rs2 lakh to her account at State Bank of India, Narla March 20, 2020.

Meanwhile, a member of another SHG Baidehi Rana alleged that the CDPO disengaged the Manikeswari SHG alleging bad quality of food provided by the SHG, the members said.

The SHG members demanded a strong probe into the matter:

to compromise in the standard of sattu making, clarified Rana.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic the SHG members have been suffering from financial crunches. For this they have expressed their problems to the CDPO. However, instead of helping the SHG members, the CDPO disengaged the Manikeswari SHG alleging bad quality of food provided by the SHG, the members said.

The SHG members demanded a strong probe into the matter:

# Kangaroo court's punishment stirs controversy

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Balasure, Sept 28:** In a brazen violation of human rights, a kangaroo court of a village punished a person by hanging a brick from his private parts in Balasure district Monday.

A video of the incident has gone viral on social media.

The youth who belongs to Choumukha village under Baliaipal police limits and this block allegedly lurked into a house in the village when there was no male member present inside its premises.

**A video of the incident has gone viral on social media. The whole episode of punishment was carried out in the absence of police**

He was caught red-handed by other villagers when he trespassed into the house. As the viral video evidences, the youth was relentlessly thrashed by the irked villagers and finally a brick was tied to his private parts with the help of a rope.

The whole episode of punishment was carried out in the absence of police.

On the other hand, the incident was disliked by local intelligentsia who raised voice against such cruelty and abject violation of human rights. Fingers are being pointed at the accused villagers for taking such inhuman action instead of informing the local police.



Daily, we must aspire to conquer all mistakes, all obscurities, and all ignorance.

THE MOTHER



## Snowballing protest

It would now appear that the entire nation has, or would soon, erupt into massive farmer protests over the new agriculture legislation that the Union government has brought about in the brief Monsoon Session of Parliament. What started as protests in Punjab and Haryana a week ago has snowballed into resistance in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka and many more states, and this also raises a question mark on the prospects of the BJP and the JD(U) alliance's attempt to retain power in Bihar. Farmers there too are apprehensive about the new law, and their mood can alter the power equations in the state.

Despite criticism about the way the Bills were rushed through in Parliament, breaking conventions and passing them by voice vote, President Ram Nath Kovind has given his assent to the Bills with amazing alacrity, making them into a new law. On the other hand, a Congress MP has approached the Supreme Court, picking holes in the way the Bills were cleared by Parliament, mainly the Rajya Sabha in a huff.

Fears on the part of protesting farmers are, among other aspects, that the Bill will allow corporates to take control over their farms. It was easier for them to handle the middlemen and money lenders in the existing scenario, unlike the corporates that will have much larger resources to drag matters into disputes, fight the cases and get judgments in their favour. To this extent, farmers see the corporates as bigger evils, even though, perfunctorily, the new law promises to eliminate the evil of middlemen in the sale of farm crops – they standing between the consumer and the producer, and extracting the maximum from both the sides. The corporates will simply replace the independent individual middle man.

The corporates are unpredictable too. They operate at a much wider level, and the farmers, unless they stand united, cannot challenge these city-based wolves approaching them in the garb of sheep. There are also serious apprehensions over the status of the MSP in government-led procurement via FCI, as to what form it would take in the new arrangement. The Opposition parties say this could be disbanded altogether and that the eagle-eyed corporates would take full advantage and put farmers at their mercy. There is no clarity about the APMC, the mandi-based arrangements which oversaw the sale of farm produce. Large segments of the farmers are outside what is touted as a reform. Overall, farmers are caught in a quandary, and the protests are adding to their fears of a gathering gloom in the agriculture sector as a whole in the near future.

While Karnataka observed a state-wide bandh, protest was manifest in the burning of a tractor in a symbolic action by pro-farmer youths at India Gate in New Delhi. Highways have been blocked for traffic in the Haryana-Punjab belt, and the political fallout saw the Shiromani Akali Dal quitting the BJP-led NDA, after its representative quit the Union Cabinet a week ago. Initially, SAD was in a mood to remain with the NDA even as it exited the government to soothe the hurt feelings of the farmers. But, the intensity of anger among the agricultural community forced the party to quit the ruling alliance altogether and chart a new course.

There obviously was an attempt at secrecy about the farm Bills and this is also adding to the worries of the farmers and taking them to the streets. If there were sufficient discussions before the reforms were brought about, even in these Covid times, that would have cleared much of the air and a consensus could have been attempted at, if not evolved. As the reform attempt was rushed through, it has created bitterness.

The implications of this protest are serious. Farmers out in the streets cannot be expected to work in their fields and grow crops. Such a protest, if it gets prolonged, could impact food production. If not immediately, it may have repercussions a little while later, just as Demonetization is being acutely felt now, after nearly four summers. The government bargained for such a situation. Transparency is central to the functioning of a government; but there is a serious deficit of this now.

# NEEDED: PRICE ASSURANCE

FOCUS AGRICULTURE



Ajit Ranade

**THE FEAR THAT WITH THE DILUTION OF THE APMC, EVEN THE MSP REGIME WILL GO AWAY IS CURRENTLY FUELLING THE FARMERS' AGITATION. THIS NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED NOT JUST BY VERBAL ASSURANCES, BUT BY SOME FORM OF CODIFIED, WRITTEN PROMISE BY LAWMAKERS**

One silver lining to the 24 per cent fall in quarterly GDP between April and June was that growth in the agriculture sector was positive at 3.4 per cent. This is the first time in India's history that we are experiencing a steep recession without any adverse shock of drought or a failed monsoon affecting agriculture. Another notable positive was the robust procurement of the spring harvest (Rabi crop), especially of wheat. Not just the frontrunners like Punjab and Haryana, but also states like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh had a good Rabi procurement via the Food Corporation of India. When FCI does procurement, usually through its designated agencies, based in various states, it means that the farmer gets the assured price called the Minimum Support Price (MSP). That was over ₹1,900 per quintal this time.

The MSP is determined as a political decision, based on inputs given by the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP). This commission was set up nearly 60 years ago, and provides a logical and scientific basis to costs, and hence what is a reasonable price to be paid for the crops. Due to input cost escalation for seeds, pesticides, diesel, credit, fertilisers etc, the MSP too needs to go up, so that the farmer receives an adequate return. Otherwise, it is a loss-making proposition. In the past 50 years, the average escalation in MSP has been about 6 per cent per year for wheat and similarly for paddy. But the actual procurement by the government agency has gone up nearly 70 to 80 times during this period.

Procurement by the FCI has three objectives: one, to give an adequate support price to the farmer; two, to ensure food security to the nation by keeping this in buffer storage; and three, to provide this grain to the Public Distribution System (PDS), the ration shops, at cheap prices, to make it available to the poor and the needy. The difference in price paid to the farmer and received from the PDS



**The power of the middleman has been diminished by the new farm Bills. The farmer is now free to sell his produce within or without the APMC. But, for the full import of this reform to be felt, it will take time. There is fear that a new class of middlemen representing corporate interests will emerge. But reform cannot be held hostage to imagined fears**

is the food subsidy budget of the Central government which has crossed ₹2 lakh crore, or, 1 per cent of the GDP.

The procurement process is humongous, with the total collections crossing 90 million tonnes of wheat and paddy. Even though the MSP assurance covers 23 crops, including cereals, oilseeds, pulses and commercial crops like sugarcane and cotton, the de facto position is that the bulk of the spending is on just two crops – wheat and paddy. Moreover, despite being a national policy, the farmers who sell their crop to FCI come from only half a dozen states. And these constitute barely six per cent of all farmers in the country.

The volume of procurement by FCI is huge and constitutes nearly one-third of all grain production in the country. That is a big intervention in the agriculture economy, and something that displeased even the World Trade Organization. But, back in 1994, India convinced the negotiators who were forming the WTO that, on net basis, the Indian farmer was not pampered but in fact had negative support from the government. The terms of trade in fact are tilted against the

farmer vis-à-vis the industry and this has been sought to be compensated with measures like MSP.

However, it is important to note that even if only 6 per cent farmers got paid from the FCI procurement process, the price floor established by the MSP does indirectly benefit a much greater proportion of farmers.

Forty years ago, possibly for the first time, there was mass mobilisation and an agitation of farmers led by a most unlikely and uncharismatic leader called Sharad Joshi. He was a Mathematics graduate who came from a family with no background in farming. Yet he understood the farmers' plight and his slogan was "give us a fair price for our sweat and toil". This was the famous union agitation of 1978-79 in Maharashtra, and then the tobacco farmers' agitation in 1981.

Getting a fair price, or some assurance of this sort, is a basic need of the farmer. Suffering from the vagaries of nature, it is made worse due to the exploitative practices of middlemen who enjoy disproportionate bargaining clout. They can and do resort to deceit and trickery to exploit the small farmer. This is the reason for the genesis

of the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee (APMC), a system introduced nationwide in the early 1960s. The APMCs were supposed to be run democratically, with periodic elections, and a majority representation of farmers.

The APMC was a formalisation of the mandi system, which has existed for centuries. But, over the years, even the APMC system was captured by vested interests with apolitical nexus, and dynastic control. To this day, there are barely 4000 APMC market yards when the need is for 40,000 such yards in the country. The licence raj of the APMC system has a strangle hold on the farmer as well as the buyer, who were compelled to only go through this statutory middleman.

It is this middleman whose power has been diminished by the new farm Bills introduced in Parliament amid a pandemonium. The farmer is now free to sell his produce within or without the APMC. If he has more choice, then that can only be good. But, for the full import of this reform to be felt, it will take time. There is fear that a new class of middlemen representing corporate interests will emerge. But reform cannot be held hostage to imagined fears. However, what is needed is some price assurance scheme, which was administered using the FCI and MSP.

In a fully developed market economy, price assurance is available to the farmer through the futures markets. But this is considered as speculation; and forward futures markets need to be more liquid and price discovery more transparent.

The fear that with the dilution of the APMC, even the MSP regime will go away, is currently fuelling the farmers' agitation. This needs to be addressed not just by verbal assurances, but by some form of codified, written promise by lawmakers. With this important supplement, the farm Bills represent a significant step in economic reforms in agriculture.

*The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.*

THE BILLION PRESS

## WISDOM CORNER

He who is not a good servant will not be a good master. PLATO

Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous. CONFUCIUS

Success is not an accident. Success is not based on chance. Success is not a matter of luck. Success is the result of well-thought-out action. ARTHASASTRA

## WORDSWORTH

### Trivial

Some say this means the "three roads", where the Romans would post notices, gossip etc. Such a perception about posting notices doesn't fit what we know about the Roman period. There is indeed a connection, quite a strong one, but the story's rather more complicated. The word trivium in classical Latin was made up of tri, meaning three, plus via, a road or way, so it literally did mean a place where three roads met. But a frequent sense was of a crossroads, as you suggest would be more appropriate. The word later took on a figurative sense of the street corner, a place where the common people met and passed the time of day. Something trivialis, the adjective from trivium, was commonplace, ordinary or every day. However, the first sense of trivial in English, in the 15th Century, referred to a quite different matter. In the educational system of medieval times, learning was organised in seven aspects, the liberal arts, where liberal meant study suitable for a free man, a gentleman, a person not tied to a trade. It was divided into two groups. The first part – you might call it Liberal Arts 101 – was called the trivium. This comprised grammar, logic and rhetoric; a more advanced set, the quadrivium, consisted of the mathematical sciences – arithmetic, geometry and astronomy – together with music. The Latin names for these two divisions of learning likewise came from via, and you might translate them as the threefold way and the fourfold way. Trivial was the adjective applied to the trivium. Because the quadrivium was thought to be more difficult to learn than the trivium and dealt with matters that were less commonly met with in daily life, the subjects of the trivium came to be thought of as ordinary or of lesser status. Our modern sense of the word was first used by Shakespeare, in the second part of Henry VI, more than a century after it had begun to be applied to the trivium. Those with knowledge of Latin – that was everybody involved in education at the time, of course – also knew what Romans of the classical period meant by trivialis. That must have powerfully influenced the development of the modern sense of trivial but doesn't seem to have been its foundation.

## LOL

### TWO WIVES

Addressing a club party, an economist beautifully explained reasons for having two wives: 1. Monopoly should be broken; 2. Competition improves the quality of service; 3. If you have one wife, she fights with you. But if you have two



wives, they will fight for you. Feel the difference & decide. He ended the

speech with this statement: "Please note I am not responsible for any side-effects."

## SPECTRUM AATMANIRBHAR BHARAT

# Unlock the power sector



Naveen Jindal

**AS INDIA AIMS TO BECOME A MANUFACTURING HUB, IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THE INDUSTRY AND BUSINESSES ARE ASSURED OF UNINTERRUPTED QUALITY POWER SUPPLY AT COMPETITIVE RATES**

The Covid-19 pandemic has affected lives, livelihoods, businesses and economy. Now that the world, including India, is learning to live with the virus until a vaccine is developed, and opening the economy and businesses at the same time, it's useful to look at some of the key indicators that will help us expedite growth and achieve the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Mission.

One of the key sectors is power. During the pandemic-induced lockdown, the power demand had dipped significantly. Now the demand is back to normal levels.

As India aims at becoming a manufacturing hub, and producing world-class products for a global market, it's extremely important that the industry and businesses, apart from the common citizens, are assured of uninterrupted quality power supply at competitive rates.

We all know that the power sector is plagued with systemic problems, and multiple challenges, across the value chain. I would, however, like to highlight two key points which need urgent attention and action.

The first point pertains to cross-subsidies and the impact they have on the industry, businesses, power players, and the overall economy.

While power generators are known to get tariffs around ₹2.5

per unit, discoms sell power to consumers at huge margins, resulting in rates of almost ₹6-9 per unit for industrial and commercial consumers.

There is a simple solution to address this anomaly: We can enable the industry to purchase electricity directly from the exchange over their usual commitment.

This may sound simple, but the problem is complicated by the concept of cross-subsidy – where the discoms charge some customers higher tariffs to subsidise the cost of electricity for other types of end-use customers. This results in inefficiencies in the market for electricity, and in its distribution.

Initially, it was said that cross-subsidy should be eliminated. Now, however, there's a growing view on reducing cross-subsidy. The National Tariff Policy 2016 stipulated that cross-subsidies among electricity consumers be capped at 20 per cent of average cost of supply. A NITI Aayog-sponsored study in 2019 reiterated the point.

However, in reality, states are not known to follow this. In many states, they are in excess of 50 per cent. Industrial and commercial consumers are thus enormously burdened, adversely impacting their competitiveness and productivity. We need to act on this urgently.

This is particularly relevant in the present context when power plants are stressed, and are running at PLF of around 50 to 55 per cent. The MSMEs cannot afford to buy power being offered to them at ₹4-4.5 per unit. Industry is thus shut. Power plants are being forced to back down. The economy suffers.

One practical solution out of this impasse is that the industry should be able to buy power from the exchange over and above their commitment with minimal cross-subsidies, say, around 25 paise per unit. Power would be then available to them at ₹2 to 2.5 per unit. From a zero-sum game, it would then become a win-win game for the industry, power players, and the overall economy.

On the policy front, the government's draft Electricity (Amendment) Bill 2020 proposes to mandate tariff determination on the basis of costs, without factoring subsidies. The new tariff policy, approved by the Group of Ministers, reportedly discusses the blueprint to reduce cross-subsidies. This will create a level-playing field for the industry.

The second major problem is that while generators get different rates at their end selling electricity at different times of the day in spot exchange, consumers have

to pay fixed charges regardless of the time of day. This creates huge inefficiencies in the system; they prevent any type of market-determined price-discrimination between different time bands.

Some customers, for instance, might be willing to reschedule their electricity consumption based on the price being charged at a particular time. Under the present arrangement, they have no such incentive as the price remains fixed. This also disrupts the demand-supply equation. This, then, calls for Time-of-Day (ToD) Metering.

Some states in India do have ToD for industrial and commercial users, while some are said to be experimenting ToD even for non-commercial users. Globally, there exist many examples of dynamic real-time pricing of electricity, like in Sweden, Spain, UK, Denmark and Norway.

The two changes that I suggested will work to unlock the power sector; increase per capita power consumption from 3 KWH per day to 5 KWH and improve the quality of life of millions and add to the growth momentum, leading to a win-win scenario for all stakeholders.

*The writer is Chairman, Jindal Steel & Power Ltd and a former Member of Parliament.*

## Tourism in Odisha

Sir, The Union government has identified 15 top-rated tourism spots across states. The list, sadly, does not include even one spot from Odisha, though the state has an ancient culture, major tourist attractions in the form of temples, the world-famous Konark, Puri the seat of Lord Jagannath, the expansive beach there, and it is also that Odia has received classical language recognition. After protests from the state government and others, the Centre is considering to include Puri and Konark in the list. Even now, the state government has stopped short of suggesting other important tourism spots for inclusion in the list. We have many attractions across the state. Our people and leaders do not protest even when we are ignored or discriminated against. Sambalpur has a tourism stretch running from the second Mahanadi bridge to Ghanteswari/ Debrigarh/ Badrama, all within a radius of 35 km. We have the Ring Road, the Samaleswari Temple, the Raja Rani Complex, the Budharaja Temple, the Gudeswar Temple, other temples, the Ghanteswari, the Planetarium, the Science Park, the Gandhi/ Jawahar Munnar, the Rope Way, Debrigarh, Maneswar, the Huma Leaning Temple, the Badrama, the Hirakud reservoir, top institutes of education and so on. Those staying at Pantha Niwas or anywhere in Sambalpur can move around for sight-seeing and visit monuments for three full enjoyable days. In addition, the Laxmi Dungari itself can be transformed into an exclusive tourism centre. Odisha has verdant forests that are eye-catching for their sweep and greenery. We need spend may be Rs100 crore on Lakshmi Dunguri Hill and another Rs200 crore in other places to improve things. Similarly, Taratarini, Taptapani, the Boudha Center etc can become major tourism attractions near Berhampur.

*Prof Shankar Prasad Pati, SAMBALPUR*

## Adieu Jaswant

Sir, In the demise of former Union minister Jaswant Singh, we lost a veteran leader who finally got sidelined in the BJP. A soldier-turned politician and a founding member of the party, Singh ran the Finance, Defence and External Affairs ministries. BJP is a party of prejudices. Singh underwent the ignominy of being expelled from the party in 2009 as he wrote a book on Pakistan's founder Mohd Ali Jinnah in laudatory terms. This too, in a nation that claims to be the land of free thought and freedom of expression.

*N J Ravi Chander, BANGALORE*

## Letters

### TO THE EDITOR

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

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# Summary of Evidence begins in Shopian encounter

THE COURT OF INQUIRY, WHICH COMPLETED ITS PROBE EARLIER THIS MONTH, HAD FOUND 'PRIMA FACIE' EVIDENCE THAT TROOPS HAD 'EXCEEDED' POWERS UNDER THE AFSPA DURING THE JULY 18 ENCOUNTER IN WHICH THREE LABOURERS WERE KILLED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Srinagar, Sept 28:** After indictment of its own men, the army has begun Summary of Evidence, a step before a possible court martial, in July's Amshipura encounter in South Kashmir's Shopian district during which all civilian witnesses would also be cross examined, officials said here.

The Court of Inquiry, which completed its probe earlier this month, had found 'prima facie' evidence that troops had 'exceeded' powers under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) during the July 18 encounter in which three men were killed. Following this, the army had initiated disciplinary proceedings.

"You see every aspect of this needs to be probed thoroughly. The army is committed to bring the inquiry to its logical conclusion but every angle needs to be probed," a senior army official said on condition of anonymity.

According to the rules, the case details will be examined under various provisions of law during the Summary of Evidence against the erring Army personnel following which Court Martial proceedings will be initiated. The Army has been maintaining high standards of transparency and punishing officials



whenever rules are violated, the officials said. During the Summary of Evidence, the proof in relation to a charge against an accused, taken down in writing including any statement made by the accused and any further statement of evidence, is taken on record. July 18, the Army claimed that three militants were killed in Amshipura village in the higher reaches of south Kashmir's Shopian district.

Committed to ethical conduct during anti-militancy operations, the Army initiated a Court of Inquiry after social media reports indicated

that the three men were from Rajouri district in Jammu and had gone missing at Amshipura. The probe was completed in a record four weeks and Summary of Evidence was initiated. The families of the three men from Rajouri who worked as labourers in Shopian had also filed a police complaint.

In a brief statement, the Army had said September 18 that the Shopian operation contravened the dos and don'ts of the Chief of Army Staff approved by the Supreme Court. "The inquiry has brought out certain prima facie evidence indi-

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

The evidence collected indicates the three "unidentified terrorists" killed in Amshipura were Imtiyaz Ahmed, Abrar Ahmed and

Mohammed Ibrar who hailed from Rajouri which was subsequently confirmed through a DNA test.

Taking a serious note of the incident, the army had published a general advertisement in local newspapers, asking people with any "credible information" about the case to step forward and share it with the court of inquiry instituted by the Army. Relatives of the three youths, belonging to Dhar Sakri village in Kotranka of Rajouri area in Poonch, had lodged a written missing persons report in the local police station after they lost contact with them July 17. The three were working as labourers in apple and walnut orchards in Amshipura. The missing report will be closed as now the three youths have been identified. The relatives said in their complaint that they had last spoken to the three July 16 when they informed their families they had got a room to stay in Amshipura.

The room was the site of the encounter two days later, the complaint stated.

Police, meanwhile, are probing the three youths' call details and why they jumped out of a window when an operation was launched at their rented accommodation, besides their presence around strategic places in Shopian since their arrival.

# Mamata slams Centre on 'lack of transparency in giving data'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Kolkata, Sept 28:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday criticised the Centre for not providing any data on the death of migrant labourers during the lockdown drawing sharp retort from the Congress and BJP which said that the state government should be transparent "before lecturing others."

Banerjee said every citizen is entitled to Right to Information, as the government is answerable and accountable to the people. She was supported in this by Leader of Congress party in Lok Sabha Adhir Chowdhury who, however, went on to add that instead of pointing fingers at others "the state government should follow the path of transparency."

The BJP state leadership criticised the TMC government for, what it called, its "double standards." Referring to the Centre's response during the monsoon session of Parliament that it does not have any data on the death of migrants, Banerjee said it is 'shocking' how the Union government got exposed. "Today is International Day for Universal Access to Information. It is shocking how GOI got exposed during the recent Parliament session. Most answers said 'no data available'. Every citizen has a right to information. The government is answerable and



**Today is International Day for Universal Access to Information. It is shocking how GOI got exposed during the recent Parliament session. Most answers said 'no data available'. Every citizen has a right to information. The government is answerable and accountable to the people**

MAMATA BANERJEE | CM

accountable to the people," Banerjee said in a tweet.

Her comments followed Union Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar's statements during the monsoon session of Lok Sabha that the government does not have data on the number of migrants who died or were injured while returning to their native places during the lockdown. The union government had said that many states and union territories had not provided details of farmer suicides.

# Pandemic deals 'crushing blow' to struggling Kashmir tourism



REUTERS

**Srinagar, Sept 28:** When Kashmir went into a coronavirus lockdown in March, tourism in the Union territory had already been hobbled by eight months of tight security restrictions that New Delhi imposed after revoking the region's semi-autonomous status.

Now hoteliers, taxi drivers and others relying on tourism in the region say the pandemic has compounded the financial shock to the industry and they fear it could take years to recover.

The state of tourism in Kashmir is "a typical case of out of the frying pan (and) into the fire," said Faiz Bakhshi, a prominent businessman and former secretary general of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI).

"I don't see any resumption of tourism in Kashmir until there is zero incidence of COVID-19 cases (here)," said Bakhshi, who owns the Shangrila, a hotel in Srinagar. Kashmir has reported about 70,000 cases of COVID-19 and at least 1,084 deaths, according to government figures.

Estimates by the KCCI show that more than 600,000 jobs have been lost since India's decision to scrap the region's special status in August last year.

In that time, Kashmir's economy across all sectors has lost Rs 400 billion, KCCI vice president Majeed Mir told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

While there are no reliable estimates of how many people have been made unemployed since March, Bakhshi said the pandemic has only exacerbated the situation.

India followed its move last year with a security lockdown in

cially started July 15, noted the region's director for tourism Nissar Ahmad Wani.

"But, we have received only 525 tourists in the months since - an average of nine people per day," he said over phone.

Along with horticulture and agriculture, tourism is an important industry for Kashmir, contributing about 7 per cent of the region's GDP, according to government data.

While worries about security have kept many visitors away, others are put off by travel restrictions that have been put in place in the region and in their own countries to slow the spread of the virus, say industry experts.

Tourists can only come into Kashmir by air, and they must adhere to COVID-19 testing at the airport and quarantine for 24 hours upon arrival, as well as keep to general social distancing and mandatory mask wearing, explained Wani.

## MENTAL STRESS

At a tourist taxi stand in the Srinagar locality of Tang Bagh, a line of cars sits parked all day - most of the 200 taxi drivers who use the stand have left their cars there because there are no tourists to drive anywhere.

Two drivers, Nazir Ahmad and Fayaz Bhat, visit the office at the taxi stand a few days a week.

"We don't only come in search of work. We often chat for hours to share our problems and concerns - to alleviate our mental stress," said Bhat, who has three children, including a physically-impaired son. Three years ago, Bhat took out a loan to buy his taxi, which he was paying off in instalments of Rs 10,000 each month before the pandemic struck.

He has not been able to make a single payment since March, he lamented. "The last few months have been very tough. I had to take medicine for two months after I was diagnosed with depression," he said. Earlier this month J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha announced an economic relief package of Rs 13.5 billion to help the region's business sector recover from the financial pain of the pandemic.

Mir at the KCCI said that figure will not be enough. "One can imagine how much is needed if the government is serious about helping the business sector, including tourism, the worst hit sector by COVID-19," he said. "But, nonetheless, we appreciate that the government has started showing interest." Hotel owner Trumboo said he is convinced the only way Kashmir's tourism will restart is with a significant "financial injection."

Right now, he said, "Kashmir's tourism is not only damaged; it is dead."

# TMC govt turned WB into police state: Guv

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

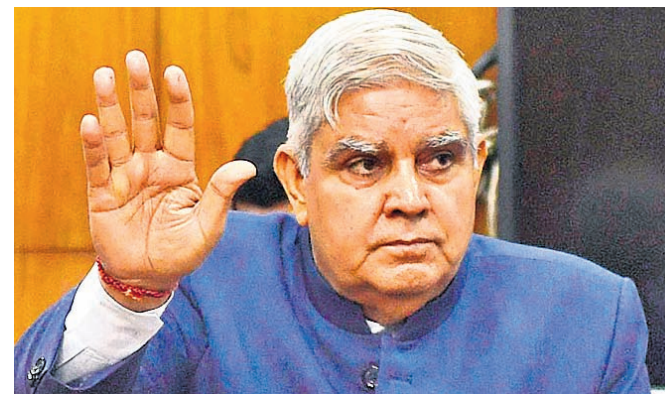
**Kolkata, Sept 28:** Contending that the TMC government has turned West Bengal into a "police state", Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar Monday said he would be forced to "look into" Article 154 of the Constitution, as his office has been ignored for long by the ruling dispensation.

Article 154 of the Constitution mandates that the executive power of the state shall be vested in the Governor and shall be exercised by him either directly or through officers subordinates to him.

Criticising DGP Virendra for "being irresponsible and callous" in his response to a letter, Dhankhar said police personnel are working as "cadres" of the ruling TMC.

"If the Constitution is not protected, I will be forced to look into Article 154 of the Constitution," he said at a press meet here.

The governor also said that "elec-



**If the Constitution is not protected, I have to act. The office of the governor has been ignored for long. I will be forced to look into Article 154 of the Constitution**

JAGDEEP DHANKHAR | WEST BENGAL GOVERNOR

tronic surveillance by the TMC government" has forced him to communicate over WhatsApp voice calls.

"West Bengal has been turned into a police state... A police state is the first enemy of a democracy.

Police state and democracy don't go hand in hand," the governor said.

He also claimed that the police in Bengal are "in servitude of extra-constitutional authorities".

"Law and order has completely collapsed in the state. Maoist in-

urgency is raising its head. Terror modules are also operating from this state," the governor insisted.

Dhankhar, who has been at loggerheads with the TMC government since he assumed office in July 2019, wrote to DGP Virendra earlier this month, expressing concern over the law and order situation in the state.

Following the DGP's one-line reply, stating that the "police adhere to the path laid down by the law", the governor had asked the state police chief to meet him by September 26.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, in a letter to the governor September 26, urged him to "act within the mandates of the Constitution", expressing anguish over his letter to Virendra.

Reminding Banerjee that he was a "stakeholder in matters of governance", Dhankhar said the CM is under the misconception that the post of governor is a mere "post-of-fice or a rubber stamp".

# J&K TO EASE RULES FOR DOMICILE CERTIFICATES

The Union territory government has issued over 18.52 lakh domicile certificates against the 21.99 lakh applications received so far

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, Sept 28:** Union minister Jitendra Singh Monday said the Jammu and Kashmir administration has agreed in principle to amend rules for easy issuance of domicile certificates. This will particularly facilitate issuing domicile certificates to children, on production of a Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC) of either of the parents, he said.

"After discussion with #JammuKashmir LG Sh Manoj Sinha & CS Sh Subrahmanium, the UT Govt has agreed in principle to amend/modify rules for ease in issue of #DomicileCertificate. Formal orders being issued soon," Singh, said in a tweet.

The move comes after it was noticed that applications for issuance of domicile certificates were being rejected by the issuing authorities "due to misinterpretation of the provisions" set out in an order issued in May and also because of the "absence of enabling provisions" for the issuance of the certificate to a woman, who is not a native of Jammu and Kashmir; but is married to a PRC holder, officials said. The PRC of the mother is not acknowledged as a valid document for issuance of domicile certificate to the ward, officials added. The Jammu and Kashmir administration has agreed in principle to amend the necessary rules to ensure that people do not face problems in getting



**According to the new domicile law, non-permanent residents who have residency proof of at least 15 years in Jammu and Kashmir are entitled to get domicile certificates in the Union territory**

domicile certificates, officials said.

The Union territory government has issued over 18.52 lakh domicile certificates against the 21.99 lakh

applications received so far. The government notified the Jammu and Kashmir Grant of Domicile Certificate (Procedure) Rules, 2020, May 18 and allowed different categories of non-locals, including government employees, to register for domicile certificates. According to the new domicile law, non-permanent residents who have residency proof of at least 15 years in Jammu and Kashmir are entitled to get domicile certificates in the Union territory. Prior to the nullification of Article 370 and Article 35A of the Constitution, only state subjects were allowed to buy land and apply for government jobs in J&K.

# Will hug Mamata if infected with Covid, says WB BJP leader



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Baruipur/Siliguri, Sept 28:** Newly-appointed BJP national secretary Anupam Hazra has said that he would hug Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee if he is infected with the coronavirus to make her feel the pain of the families of COVID-19 patients.

A police complaint was filed by the Trinamool Congress in Siliguri for the comments Hazra made at a party programme in Baruipur in South 24 Parganas Sunday evening. "Our workers are fighting a bigger enemy than corona. They are fighting Mamata Banerjee. When they (BJP cadres) have been able to fight it out against Mamata Banerjee without a mask, they think they can also fight against COVID-19 without wearing a mask," Hazra said. "I have decided that if I get infected with the coronavirus, then I will go and hug Mamata Banerjee," he added.

Senior TMC leader Saugato Roy condemned the comments and said such remarks reflect the mindset of the BJP. "Such words and statements can only come from BJP leaders. This reflects the mindset of the party. We condemn such insane statements," he said.

The TMC Siliguri unit lodged a police complaint against him.

## of the day quote

I had invited them (farmer leaders) for talks, which failed due to Congress' machinations. I am not sitting here just to enjoy power, but to help the farmers. These bills will change their lives forever

BS YEDIYURAPPA | KARNATAKA CM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address two public meetings in Himachal Pradesh after opening the strategic Atal Tunnel Rohtang on October 3

JAI RAM THAKUR | HIMACHAL CM

With the present lockdown in Maharashtra coming to end on September 30, the state government has framed standard operating procedures for reopening of restaurants and a decision will be taken once these guidelines are finalized

UDDHAV THACKERAY | MAHARASHTRA CM

## SHORT TAKES

### PD Vaghela new TRAI chairman

New Delhi: Senior bureaucrat PD Vaghela was Monday appointed as chairman of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), according to a Personnel Ministry order. Vaghela, a 1986-batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, is currently Secretary, Department of Pharmaceuticals. He has been appointed as the TRAI chief for three years or till he attains the age of 65, the order said. Vaghela was due to retire Wednesday. He will succeed R S Sharma, who completes his tenure Wednesday. Sharma was in 2015 appointed as the TRAI chairman for three years.

### Retd SI killed

Patna: In poll-bound Bihar, a retired sub-inspector of Government Railway Police (GRP) has been gunned down by unidentified men in Siwan district. This was second such incident in the north Bihar district in the past 24 hours. Earlier, a village head was gunned down by unidentified men within Daraunda police station limits. SI Gorakh Prasad was on his way to his Uttar Pradesh home in his SUV Sunday when the attack took place. According to Siwan SDPO Jitendra Kumar, Prasad came to Augat village and met his relatives. After dinner, he was returning to his native village in Balliya district.

### Soldier injured

Srinagar: A soldier was injured in Pakistani firing with small firearms and long-range mortars in another LoC ceasefire violation in Macchil Sector in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, the Army said Monday. "Pakistan was involved in an unprovoked ceasefire violation along the LoC in Macchil Sector this morning. A befitting response is being given. One soldier was injured and evacuated. His condition is stable," defence spokesperson Rajesh Kalia said.

### Two drown

Indore: Two persons drowned after their motorcycle fell into the Kshipra river in Madhya Pradesh's Indore district, police said Monday. The incident took place Sunday evening when four persons were travelling on the two-wheeler. Khudai police station in-charge Rupesh Dube said. While the motorcycle was crossing a bridge, which did not have any railings, near Semalyachau village, the vehicle fell into the river, he said.



**Congress stands exposed and is misleading the farmers. They are doing drama in the name of farmers and politics on it**  
PRAKASH JAVADEKAR | UNION MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING

## DOG SHOT DEAD

A farmer was arrested Monday in Indore in Madhya Pradesh for allegedly shooting dead a dog after getting enraged over its continuous barking, police said



# Web portal to track vaccine launched

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: The Union Health Ministry Monday launched a web portal that will provide all important information on COVID-19, vaccine development, ongoing clinical trials and progress made in this area locally and globally.

The 'vaccine web portal' and the 'National Clinical Registry for COVID-19' have been developed by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and was launched by Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan, according to a health ministry statement.

The National Clinical Registry for COVID-19 will collect systematic data on clinical signs and symptoms, laboratory investigations, management protocols, the clinical course of COVID-19, disease spectrum and outcomes of patients. "The data will serve as an invaluable tool for formulating appropriate patient management strategies, predicting disease severity, patient outcomes etc," the ICMR said in a statement.

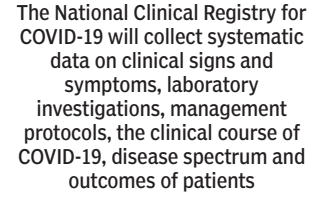
The vaccine portal contains all information regarding Indian efforts towards the development of a vaccine against COVID-19. "Interested people can visit the website on vaccine.icmr.org.in to get the latest information on vaccine development," it said.

Vardhan said, "The portal provides useful and important information related to vaccine development, ongoing clinical trials and progress made in this area locally and globally at regular intervals. Today, in the times of coronavirus pandemic, vaccine development is watched very closely. Thus, it becomes important to showcase the status of vaccine development."

On India's fight against COVID-19, the health minister said the continuously rising recovery rate and progressively falling case fa-



The vaccine portal contains all information regarding Indian efforts towards the development of a vaccine against COVID-19



The National Clinical Registry for COVID-19 will collect systematic data on clinical signs and symptoms, laboratory investigations, management protocols, the clinical course of COVID-19, disease spectrum and outcomes of patients

ality rate in the country have proven the success of the COVID-19 containment strategy followed by all states and Union Territories. "From having one laboratory (for COVID-19 testing) to over 1,800 today, we have come a long way in strengthening our capabilities. We have successfully ramped up our testing capacity which has touched 15 lakh daily tests," he said. He also lauded the healthcare personnel working selflessly to serve the people "even at a time when the resources are limited" due to coronavirus.

Apart from the 'vaccine web portal' and the 'National Clinical Registry for COVID-19', Vardhan also unveiled a timeline depicting the ICMR's historical achievements and inaugurated apex health research body's mobile stroke unit, the statement said. Vardhan unveiled the timeline of the ICMR depicting the 108-year journey of the body since its inception in 1911 when it was known as Indian Research Fund Association, it said.

## SAILING TO SAFETY



Villagers with their belongings shift from a low-lying area after heavy rainfall, near Balurghat in South Dinajpur district, Monday

# MoD nod to arms worth ₹2,290 crore

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: The Defence Ministry Monday approved the procurement of arms and military equipment worth Rs 2,290 crore, including around 72,000 Sig Sauer assault rifles from the US for troops guarding the borders with China and Pakistan, officials said.

The proposals were approved at a meeting of the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC), the defence ministry's highest decision-making body on procurement of arms and other equipment for the country's armed forces.

Besides clearing the proposal to buy assault rifles, the other significant acquisitions approved by the DAC include procurement of smart anti-airfield weapon (SAAW) systems for the Navy and the Indian



Air Force, the officials said. "The DAC headed by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh accorded approval for various arms and equipment worth Rs 2,290 crore," the defence ministry said.

The cost of procurement of the Sig Sauer assault rifles for the front-line troops of the Indian Army will be Rs 780 crore, officials said. The Army is implementing a mega infantry modernisation programme

## India can now take defence assets on lease

New Delhi: India can take defence assets on lease as and when required and operate without owning thereby, substituting huge initial capital outlays, the Defence Ministry said Monday while releasing the new defence acquisition procedure. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh unveiled a new Defence Acquisition Procedure 2020 in New Delhi Monday which took a year to frame after taking all stakeholders on board, including Indian and foreign industries as well as think tanks. It has five new categories and the policy pertaining to leasing has been included for the first time. On what all can be leased, Director General (Acquisition) Apurva Chandra said, "There is no such list and it would be on a case to case basis."

under which a large number of light machine guns, battle carbines and assault rifles are being purchased to replace its ageing and obsolete weapons.

In October, 2017, the Indian Army began the process to acquire around seven lakh rifles, 44,000 light machine guns (LMGs) and nearly 44,600 carbines. The world's second largest standing Army has been pushing

for fast-tracking the procurement of various weapons systems considering the evolving security challenges along India's borders with Pakistan and China.

Officials said the government is fast-tracking procurement of 72,000 Sig Sauer assault rifles from the US, adding the weapons will be used by troops guarding the borders with China and Pakistan.

# Override new farm laws: Sonia

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 28: Amid protests by farmers in a number of states across the country, the Congress said Monday that its chief Sonia Gandhi had directed party governments in different states to "explore" and pass laws to "override" or negate the newly enacted central farm laws.

Congress Rajya Sabha member KC Venugopal said in a statement: "The Congress President has asked party-ruled states to explore the possibilities to pass laws in their respective states under Article 254(2) of the Constitution, which allows the state legislatures to pass laws to override central laws that then go for President's assent."

The Congress asserted that since agriculture is a State subject, the Union government cannot pass laws on it. "This will enable the states to negate the unacceptable anti-farmers' provisions in the three draconian agricultural laws, that will lead to abolition of MSPs and disruption of APMCs in Congress-ruled states, and save the farmers from grave injustice done by the central govt," Venugopal added.

Congress MP TN Prathapan



has already moved the Supreme Court on the issue.

Congress state units Monday held protests across India against what they called "anti-farmer and anti-worker laws" passed in Parliament by the Modi government and submitted memorandums against them to the Governors of their states.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Monday alleged that the agriculture-related laws are a "death sentence" for farmers whose voice has been crushed

## Congress state units Monday held protests across India against what they called "anti-farmer and anti-worker laws" passed in Parliament

both inside and outside Parliament.

"The agriculture laws are a death sentence to our farmers. Their voice is crushed in Parliament and outside. Here is proof that democracy in India is dead," he said on Twitter.

Rahul Gandhi and his Congress party have been demanding that the farm legislations be withdrawn as they are not beneficial for farmers, who will be enslaved at the hands of private players and big businesses. The Congress party is also protesting against the farm laws across the country.

The government has, however, asserted that the new laws will free farmers from the clutches of middleman and allow them to sell their produce anywhere they want at a remunerative price.

# MP OFFICER SHUNTED FOR THRASHING WIFE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Sept 28: Hours after a video of Purushottam Sharma, a senior IPS officer, went viral on social media, allegedly showing him thrashing his wife, he was removed from the post of the Director at Public Prosecutor's Directorate Monday.

Sharma, who is posted in Bhopal, has described the dispute with his wife as a family feud. The five minutes video shows the senior police officer fighting with his wife, shouting at and thrashing her for almost a minute. The video was shot Sunday at 2:44 p.m. and the clip runs till 2:49 p.m.

Several of their staff can be seen attempting to intervene as does a pet Golden Retriever. Sharma is seen dragging his wife along the ground and then raining blows on her. The reason for the discord as can be understood from the video appears to be one of extra-marital affair by the police officer. It seemed to have been a long running dispute between the husband

and wife.

The video was shot from a gallery position, in all probability a floor above. After this video went viral, the Madhya Pradesh government took serious cognisance of the matter and removed Sharma as Director at Public Prosecutors Directorate. He has been directed to register his attendance at the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).

State Urban Administration Minister Bhupendra Singh said if the video is authentic then the matter is serious and necessary action will be taken. However, Sharma has issued a clarification after the alleged video went viral and described it as a family dispute, saying, "I have not committed any crime. This is a family matter between me and my wife. If she is angry with me then why does she stay with me? Why use my money? Why travel abroad with my money? This is my family matter, I will solve it myself, I am in constant touch with my wife and trying my best to resolve this matter."

# RAJ VIOLENCE: RAF DEPLOYED

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Sept 28: The Rajasthan Police Monday confirmed that two persons have died and another two were injured in police firing used to control violence that rocked Dungarpur in the last four days.

"Two people died and two sustained critical injuries in the violence which erupted on the Udaipur-Ahmedabad national highway in the last four days. Additional police forces and rapid action force has been deputed in Dungarpur since Sunday night," said Director General Police (DGP) Bhupendra Singh here.

Police had to open fire to control the situation Saturday and to protect public property and lives of people, he said. He said a total of 24 cases have been registered and action is being taken against the accused. Two companies of RAF and six companies of Rajasthan Armed Constabulary (RAC) have been deputed. Last week, thousands of applicants who appeared for teachers' examination took to streets, pelted stones and torched vehicles on the NH8. They demanded the filling up of over 1,000 vacant posts reserved for the general category be filled by ST candidates.

# Fitness industry gets stab at revival as people trickle back into gyms

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: Trainer Ravi Shukla rushed to his gym as soon as news came in that gymnasiums and yoga institutes could open, pulled out a chair and sat alone amid the treadmills, cross trainers and weights, a broad smile creasing his face.

The smile has broadened since with people slowly trickling back into gyms, giving the fitness industry a stab at revival after six months of shutters down as COVID-19 spread and people stayed confined to their homes. Business has been hit and may take a while to get back to normal but at least a beginning has been made, say industry insiders.

Though gyms in several states, including Maharashtra, Jharkhand and Bihar, continue to be closed, Delhi and Haryana are among the places where they have been allowed to open, albeit with a host of safeguards in place.

The six months since March, when India went into lockdown to curtail the spread of the novel coronavirus, took its toll on thousands of people who depend on the fitness industry for their livelihoods. Shukla, a Delhi-based strength and conditioning coach, was one of those who faced severe hardship during the long months that saw the industry face crippling losses and layoffs.

The "emotional and financial stress" led to depression and he



was almost at the end of the tether when the Delhi Disaster Management Authority announced that gyms outside containment

zones could open. "I rushed to my gym and sat quietly in the middle of the equipment and machines, smiling ear to ear. That is the first

thing I did when I got to know about the government's order allowing gyms to reopen," Shukla, manager and coach at Anytime Fitness in west Delhi's Patel Nagar, said.

He was alone, happy and relieved. "Being back in the gym worked like medicine for me. Before the pandemic, I would spend nearly 12-15 hours a day there—barring Saturday or Sunday. I have started getting calls from my clients and they are also excited about joining back. Hopefully, life will be back to normal soon," the 32-year-old said.

Anytime Fitness, a franchise with over 80 gyms across the country, including 45 in the Delhi-NCR region, opened its gyms in the capital last week after taking time to sanitise their premises. Government-

instructed protocols, including availability of sanitisers, spaced out equipment and thermal screening of both staff and members, are in place.

"To maintain social distancing, members are asked to book a slot. After every slot, deep sanitation is done. They are asked to carry their own water bottle, yoga mats, towels and extra pair of shoes. We have also placed QR codes at entry/exit points, which notes timing of people coming to the gym and is also a health declaration form," said Chirag Khurana, senior manager, marketing, Anytime Fitness India. Karan Chopra, who owns the Iron Club Gym in Rohini, said the onus is on managements and clients to take preventive measures seriously.





The pandemic showed the risk involved in excessive dependence of the global supply chain on any single source

### 'SHUT SLAUGHTERHOUSES ON OCT 2'

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India Monday wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to close all slaughterhouses and meat shops on Gandhi Jayanti to commemorate the 'Father of the Nation' Mahatma Gandhi who advocated non-violence and vegetarianism



### of the day quote

Congress decided to fight alongside farmers from all over the country. Now, we will take it further, but I believe that the central government has betrayed the farmers in a challenging time

Our state of AP is fortunate for being the birthplace (Nellore) of SP Balasubramanyam. His untimely departure not only caused much distress to fans and celebrities living in India but also has affected the international music fraternity

In the early days of the pandemic, as the kits were imported, the price tended to be high. But now, supplies of testing kits have also stabilised, and domestic production of these kits have also commenced

### SHORT TAKES

#### Manish Sisodia's condition better

New Delhi: The condition of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who is suffering from COVID-19 and dengue, is much better and he is likely to be discharged from hospital in the next few days, officials said Monday.

#### 19 held in Assam Police paper leak

Guwahati: Six more persons were arrested in connection with the police recruitment question paper leak in Assam, taking the total nabbed to 19, said DGP Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta, announcing that bounties will be announced to catch a former police officer and a senior BJP leader for their alleged role.

#### Maoist posters trigger panic

Medininagar: Hand-written posters allegedly issued by Maoists, warning a 'police informer' of action, were found pasted on trees in Jharkhand's Palamu district Monday, sparking panic among local people. The police, on receiving the information, visited Thekhi village and seized the posters, an officer said.

#### Drugs seized

Guwahati/Imphal: A huge quantity of drugs, valued at Rs 25 crore, was seized in central Assam's Karbi Anglong district Sunday night and one person arrested, police said Monday. Assam's Director General of Police Bhaskar Jyoti Mahanta said in a tweet: "The market value of 5.05 kg of heroin is estimated at 25 crore". The operation was part of the ongoing action against the drug smuggling activities in the state, he said.

#### Exams via app

Nagpur: Nearly 78,000 students of the Nagpur University in Maharashtra will appear for their final year exams online through a mobile app from October 1 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, officials said Monday. Students can download the 'RTMNU Pariksha' app from the Google Playstore or website of the Rashttrasant Tukadoji Maharaj Nagpur University on Android-based phones, the university's board of examination director Prafulla Sabale said.

## Tractor set on fire at India Gate

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 28: A day after President Ram Nath Kovind signed the Agriculture Bills and made them laws, the Punjab Youth Congress workers Monday set ablaze a tractor in the high security India Gate area to protest against the contentious legislation. The Delhi Police detained five people involved in the incident.

About 10-15 Punjab Youth Congress activists arrived in the national capital in a truck to protest against the controversial farm laws around 7.15 a.m. on the birth anniversary of revolutionary Bhagat Singh.

The activists offloaded a tractor from the truck and set it on fire. "If the deaf are to hear, the sound has to be very loud: Bhagat Singh," the IYC quoted the martyr in a tweet.

"In honour of the memory of Shaheed Bhagat Singh, Punjab Youth Congress protested against the BJP government's apathetic treatment of farmers by lighting a tractor at India Gate. Wake the sleeping govt. Inquilab Zindabad."

It also attached a video of the act that was carried out metres away from the India Gate and not far from the Rashtrapati Bhawan.

Delhi Police spokesperson in a statement said, "Today at around 7.15 am, 15-20 persons carrying a tractor in Tata 407 vehicle came to

### PROTEST AGAINST FARM LAWS



Rajpath, Man Singh Crossing."

The spokesperson said that they off loaded the tractor and tried to set it ablaze. "They claimed to be members of Youth Congress Punjab. Appropriate legal action has been taken. Five persons have been detained till now and one vehicle impounded. Affiliation of these persons is being verified," he said.

Delhi BJP media cell chief Neelkant Bakshi said that he will be filing an FIR against the Youth Congress workers. He alleged that the Youth Congress workers brought the tractor and set it on fire to spread violence. "They are trying

to spread riots in the country and I will be filing an FIR to stop this conspiracy," Bakshi added. The BJP Monday blasted the Congress over the burning of a tractor near India Gate here, allegedly by opposition party workers, saying it has "shamed" the country with its "drama" aimed at publicity and "misleading" farmers.

Senior party leaders, including Union ministers, hit out at the Congress with Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar condemning the incident and accusing the opposition of misleading farmers.

### Punjab to move SC

Khatkar Kalan (Pb): Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Monday said his government would approach the Supreme Court against the new farm laws and warned that Pakistan's ISI could exploit farmers' anger in the "entire nation". The CM said he did not want Punjab's farmers and the youth to take up arms but the laws will endanger the border state's security as the Pakistani agency is always on the lookout for such opportunities. In an apparent reference to the Khalistani terrorism during the 1980s and early 90s, Singh said Punjab has lost 35,000 lives in senseless violence in the past and with the unrest among the farmers spreading to other states, the "entire nation" would be exposed to the ISI threat. Singh led a dharna against the recently passed agri-marketing bills at SBS Nagar district's Khatkar Kalan, the ancestral village of Bhagat Singh. The Chief Minister, All India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary Harish Rawat and Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jakhar paid tributes there to the freedom fighter on his 113th birth anniversary.

## 678 corruption cases under CBI probe: CVC

THE CBI IS NORMALLY REQUIRED TO COMPLETE INVESTIGATION OF A REGISTERED CASE WITHIN ONE YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: As many as 678 corruption cases were under investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), 25 of them for more than five years, as December 31, 2019, a latest report by the Central Vigilance Commission has said.

"Completion of investigation would imply filing of charge sheets in courts wherever warranted, after receipt of sanction from the competent authority. The Commission has observed that there have been some delays in completing investigations in certain cases," the CVC's annual report for 2019 said.

The report was tabled in Parliament in the recently concluded monsoon session and uploaded by the CVC on its website Sunday. It said out of the total 678 corruption cases under investigation, 25 were pending for over five years, 86 for over three years but less than five years, 122 for more than two years but less than three years, 177 for more than one year but less than two years and 268 were pending for less than one year. The CVC, which exercises superinten-

dence over CBI probe in corruption cases, cited some of the reasons for the pendency including "delay in investigation due to work overload", "inadequacy of manpower" and "delay in obtaining responses to Letters Rogatory (LRs)" among others. It highlighted "delay in receipt of prosecution sanction from competent authorities, etc.", "delay in supply of departmental records by the concerned department", "time taken in scrutiny of voluminous records, specially in economic offences and bank fraud cases" and "time spent in locating and examining witnesses living in distant places" as the other reasons for the pendency.

The Commission also expressed concerns about the slow progress of disposal of the large number of corruption cases pending trial in different courts for long periods, at times for over 20 years. Of the total 6,226 corruption cases pending trials, 182 were pending for more than 20 years, 1,599 for more than ten years and upto 20 years, 1,883 for over five years and upto ten years, 1,177 for over three years and upto five years and 1,385 for less than three years, as December 31, 2019, the report said.



IAF fighter jet flies in the backdrop of Himalayan mountain range, amid the prolonged India-China stand off in eastern Ladakh, in Leh district

### STRICT VIGIL

## Clinical trial of Ayurvedic remedy shows good results

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 28: A groundbreaking interim report on a clinical trial being conducted in three hospitals has shown that Covid patients on natural treatment are resolving most symptoms earlier than those on conventional medicines.

The interim report on combination treatment of an Ayurvedic remedy called 'Immunofree' by Corival Life Sciences, and Nutraceutical called 'Regimmune' by Biogetica have shown exceptional results as against the present government SOP of conventional medicines for coronavirus treatment. Furthermore, numerous tests such as C reactive pro-

### FIGHT AGAINST PANDEMIC

tein, Procalcitonin, D Dimer and RT-PCR for novel coronavirus are also showing 20 to 60 per cent better improvement for the natural treatment, when compared to conventional treatment. Numerous subjective endpoints such as body pain and fatigue are also leaning towards the natural treatment. Both Clinician's Global Assessment of Symptoms and Subject's Global Assessment of Symptoms clearly showed improvements on both arms showing more significant data in the test group. About 86.66 per cent of pa-

tients on the natural protocol have tested corona negative on day 5 vs 60 per cent of patients on the conventional treatments.

Moreover, on the 10th day test, all patients were negative, which could help in keeping the hospitals less occupied.

Immunofree and Regimmune are being studied in a one-of-a-kind pharmaceutical controlled multicentre clinical trial in 3 hospitals, in India.

This CTRI-approved trial is being conducted on moderate COVID-19 positive patients at Government Medical Hospital, Srikrakulam Andhra Pradesh, Parul Sevashram Hospital, Vadodra, Gujarat, and Lokmanya Hospital Pune, Maharashtra.

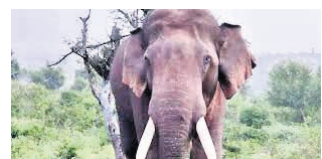
## ANOTHER ELEPHANT ELECTROCUTED; 3RD DEATH IN SIX DAYS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Gariaband, Sept 28: An adult male elephant got electrocuted after it came in contact with a live wire in Chhattisgarh's Gariaband district Monday, an official said.

With this incident, three jumbos have died of electrocution in the last six days in the state. The latest fatality occurred in the wee hours of Monday at a paddy field in Paragaon village under Dhawalpur forest range when a herd of 22 to 25 elephants was passing through the area. Divisional Forest Officer, Gariaband division, Mayank Agrawal said.

After being alerted about it, forest personnel rushed to the spot and the autopsy was done, he said. "In the past, no movement of elephants was reported in the area. This big herd of pachyderms ventured into the area from the ad-



joining Odisha border via Udanti Sitanadi Tiger Reserve," Agrawal said. Preliminary investigation revealed that the tusker came in contact with an 11 KV power transmission line, which was hanging at a low height above the field, and got electrocuted, he said.

Earlier, Friday night, an elephant died of electrocution after coming in contact with a live wire laid by poachers to trap wild boar in Mahasamund district. Another jumbo died after it came in contact with an electric wire laid illegally at a farm by a cultivator in Raigarh district September 23.

In the last four months, 11 elephants have died in separate districts of the state due to various causes, including electrocution.

## Monsoon retreats from parts of north India: IMD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: The southwest monsoon retreated from parts of west Rajasthan and Punjab Monday, 11 days after its normal withdrawal date, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

Conditions are becoming favourable for its further withdrawal from some more parts of Rajasthan and Punjab and some parts of Haryana, Chandigarh, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh during next two to three days, the IMD said. "Because of the establishment of an anti-cyclonic circulation in the lower tropospheric levels over western parts of northwest India and substantial reduction in moisture content and



rainfall, the southwest monsoon has withdrawn from some parts of west Rajasthan and Punjab today, the 28th September 2020, against its normal date of 17th September," the weather department said. Dry weather is likely to prevail over

parts of north India for the next five days, it said. The official rainfall season in the country starts from June 1 and continues till September 30. This year, the monsoon made an onset over Kerala on June 1, its normal date. It covered

the entire country June 26, nearly a fortnight after its normal schedule. According to the revised date, the new normal date for the monsoon to cover the entire country is July 8. The earlier normal date for the monsoon to cover the entire country was July 15. The monsoon has also withdrawn late this year.

Monsoon has been withdrawing late for the last few years. This also prompted the IMD to revise the retreating date from west Rajasthan from September 15 to 17 in 2020. The withdrawal dates of the monsoon from west Rajasthan in 2019 was October 9, in 2018 it was September 29, in 2017 it was September 27, in 2016 September 15 and in 2015 it was September 4.

While the monsoon was retreating from parts of north India, other

parts of the country will continue to receive rainfall. A trough runs from a cyclonic circulation over east Bihar to west-central Bay of Bengal, off Andhra Pradesh coast across Gangetic West Bengal and coastal Odisha.

Under the influence of this system, scattered to fairly widespread rainfall with moderate thunderstorm and lightning are very likely over south peninsular India during the next three days, the weatherman said. Isolated heavy rainfall is very likely over Tamil Nadu during the next two days, the IMD added. According to the weather department, monsoon is set to end on an above-normal note. Until September 27, the country had received 9 per cent more rainfall than the normal.

## Customs seizes 165 MDMA/narcotic tablets

Chennai: Chennai Air Customs Monday said it had seized 165 MDMA/narcotic tablets valued at Rs 5 lakh after intercepting two postal parcels from the Netherlands at the Foreign Post Office, said Commissioner of Customs, Chennai International Airport. In a statement issued here, the Customs said the first parcel of 105 MDMA tablets with "PP" marking commonly known as "Philipp Plein" were recovered. The parcel was addressed to an individual in Chennai city, on search the address was found to be incomplete. These tablets known as "Blue Punisher" embossed with skull marks contain around 300 mg of MDMA which is a very high dose.

## of the day quote

India and Bangladesh are loyal friends and closest neighbours. The journey started from the time of the Liberation War of 1971, now it has reached new heights



ABDUL HAMID | BANGLADESH PRESIDENT

We want to say that the intra-Afghan negotiations should be based on the Doha agreement or part of the agreement which was signed between the Islamic emirate and the US



ABDUL SALAM HANAFI | MEMBER OF TALIBAN NEGOTIATING TEAM

Google employees will work in hybrid work from home models in the future. The hybrid models include rearranging offices and figuring out more long-term remote work options



SUNDAR PICHAI | GOOGLE CEO

## SHORT TAKES

### Aussie park fined for ride deaths

**Brisbane:** The owner of Australia's biggest theme park was fined Aus\$3.6 million (\$2.5 million) Monday for safety failures leading to the deaths of four people on a popular water ride in 2016. Two women and two men died when their rafts collided on the Thunder River Rapids ride at Dreamworld on the Gold Coast, leading prosecutors to file three charges against owner Ardent Leisure in June. A Queensland court found the company had breached the state's workplace health and safety laws but stopped short of the maximum Aus\$4.5 million penalty.

### Taliban attacks 24 Afghan provinces

**Kabul:** The Afghan Ministry of Defence has said the Taliban staged attacks in 24 provinces of the country in the past 24 hours. The provinces are Nangarhar, Kunar, Laghman, Nuristan, Kapisa, Maidan Wardak, Ghazni, Logar, Paktia, Paktika, Khost, Kandahar, Zabul, Herat, Farah, Badghis, Ghor, Faryab, Sar-e-Pul, Balkh, Helmand, Kunduz, Badakhshan and Baghlan.

### 11 killed in Mexico bar shooting

**Guanajuato (Mexico):** At least 11 people, including four women, were killed in a bar in the central Mexico state of Guanajuato early Sunday in a suspected drug gang killing. The bullet-ridden bodies were found at a bar near Jaral del Progreso town, state prosecutors said Monday. The area is near the border with Michoacán state, which has been a point of incursion for the Jalisco cartel, which wants to move into Guanajuato. According to local media reports, the four dead women killed by gunmen may have been employed as dancers at the bar.

### Israeli troops' leaves cancelled

**Tel Aviv:** The Israel Defense Forces have cancelled all leaves for combat troops and soldiers in training for at least the next month due to an increase in the number of Covid-19 cases in the military, the media reported. The decision taken by IDF Chief of Staff Aviv Kohavi Sunday came after more than 1,190 soldiers, officers, non-commissioned officers and civilian employees of the military have tested positive so far, while 13,038 service members were currently in quarantine.



I am extremely concerned over the fresh resumption of hostilities between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Armenia-backed breakaway region of Nagorny Karabakh

ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

## JUDGE TEMPORARILY BLOCKS TRUMP ADMIN'S TIKTOK BAN

District Judge Carl Nichols issued a temporary injunction at the request of TikTok, which the White House has called a national security threat alleging that its Chinese parent firm is tied to the Beijing government



# After Uyghurs, China targets Utsuls of Hainan



Utsuls of Hainan province protest against depriving them of their cultural rights

### AGENCIES

**Beijing, Sept 28:** While the attention of the world is increasingly focused on China's treatment of Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, Beijing's restrictions on religion are spreading to other areas of the country - including a small community of Muslims thousands of kilometres to the south.

The latest moves banning traditional dress in schools and government offices targeted the Utsuls, a little-known population of around 10,000 people based in Sanya, a city on the island province of Hainan, almost 12,000km from Xinjiang. Communist Party documents also suggest the authorities will increase their surveillance of residents in Muslim neighbourhoods to "resolve problems" and tighter restrictions on religious and "Arabic" architecture will be imposed.

An order banning the hijab from schools prompted protests from schools in Utsul neighbourhoods earlier this month, and pictures and videos circulating on Chinese social media showed a group of girls wearing headscarves reading from text books outside Tianya Utsul pri-

The Utsuls of Hainan island are only around 10,000 strong, but are now facing increasing surveillance and a crackdown on traditional clothing

China's treatment of Uyghurs in Xinjiang is the main focus of international alarm, but Sinicisation policies have targeted a wide range of minorities

mary school while surrounded by police officers.

"The official line is that no ethnic minority can wear traditional garments on school grounds but other ethnic minorities [in Sanya] don't wear traditional garments in their daily life so it's makes no difference to them but to us the hijab is an integral part of our culture, if we take it off it's like stripping off our clothes," said an Utsul community worker, who requested anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter.

The Chinese government has frequently justified its treatment of Muslims in Xinjiang - where a UN report estimated that up to a million Uyghurs and other minority

groups are being held in detention centres - by pointing to previous terrorist attacks.

In 2015 the regional legislature passed a law banning the veil and "any other clothing that promotes extremist religious thought" in Urumqi, wording that could easily be applied to the hijab, and extended it across Xinjiang two years later.

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However, no reason was given for the ban on traditional dress for Sanya's Utsuls. The community worker said that Utsul women working in the Sanya municipal government or the city's local Communist Party branch were also banned from wearing the hijab to the office late last year.

Utsuls working in the government or Communist Party bodies have only been told the hijab is "disorderly".

But a Communist Party document from last year that the ban is the latest manifestation of a concerted campaign to Sinicise the handful of neighbourhoods where Utsuls live, eat, and pray.

The four-page report, entitled "Working Document regarding the strengthening of overall governance over Huixin and Huihui Neighbourhood," is aimed at the only two neighbourhoods in Sanya where most residents are Utsuls.

Mosques will have to shrink in size when being rebuilt and buildings with "Arabic tendencies" will be banned. Arabic script must also be removed from shopfronts, along with Chinese characters such as "halal" and "Islamic".

Monitoring of Utsul residents was also deemed to be a key priority for upholding "social order" and "resolving the problems" in these two neighbourhoods.

## THE NORTHERN LIGHTS



The Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) is seen over the sky near Rovaniemi in Lapland, Finland

REUTERS PHOTO

# Armenia, Azerbaijan clashes kill 19 soldiers, 2 civilians

### ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Yerevan (Armenia), Sept 28:** Fighting between Armenian and Azerbaijani forces has erupted again over the disputed separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the territory's defence ministry said 19 soldiers and two civilians have been killed and more than 100 others wounded.

Azerbaijan's President, meanwhile, says his military has suffered losses, but gave no details.

Armenia also claimed that four Azerbaijani helicopters were shot down and 33 Azerbaijani tanks and fighting vehicles were hit by artillery.

Azerbaijan's defence ministry rejected an earlier claim that two helicopters were shot down.

The 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 Armenia since 1994 at the end of a separatist war.

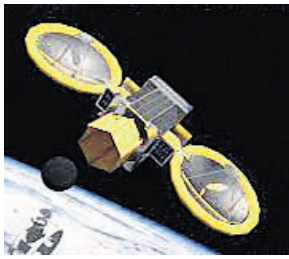
It was not immediately clear what sparked the fighting, the heaviest since clashes in July killed 16 people from both sides.

Nagorno-Karabakh authorities reported that shelling hit the region's capital of Stepanakert and the towns of Martakert and Martuni. Armenian Defense Ministry spokesman Artrun Hovhannisyan also said Azerbaijani shelling hit within Armenian territory near the town of Vardenis.

The territorial defense ministry said late Sunday that 18 people were killed, including a woman and her grandson and more than 100 wounded.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev ordered martial law to be imposed in some regions of the country and called for a curfew in major cities.

# China to send 'asteroid mining robot' into space



### AGENCIES

**Beijing, Sept 28:** China will send out the world's first mining robot into space by November this year. A private Beijing company, Origin Space, will send out the world's first mining robot - termed as an 'asteroid mining robot' - into space by November 2020, according to the IEEE Spectrum report.

The robot will, however, not do any actual mining. The mission will be a preliminary assessment of the asteroid mining robot's capabilities of identifying and extracting valuable resources, aimed at the eventual mining of asteroids.

The 30-gram spacecraft, NEO-1, is likely to be launched as a secondary payload on a Chinese Long March rocket, which will enter at an orbit around the earth at 500-kilometre altitude.

In an interview, Origin Space co-founder Yu Tianhong told the US magazine, "The goal is to verify and demonstrate multiple functions such as spacecraft orbital manoeuvre, simulated small celestial body capture, intelligent spacecraft identification and control."

The actual progress that can be made by the NEO-1 mission is subject to speculations, as it has never been attempted before. The project, if successful, can open up a trillion-dollar industry.

The mission will be a milestone for the space resources industry, the firm added.

The Chinese company has another mission 'Yuanwang-1', nicknamed 'Little Hubble', which is slated to be launched by late 2021 or early 2022.

# Global Covid deaths cross 1 million-mark: Report

In total, 1,000,009 deaths have been officially recorded around the world out of 33,018,877 cases

### AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Paris, Sept 28:** The global death count from the new coronavirus, which emerged less than a year ago in China and has swept across the world, passed one million.

The pandemic has ravaged the global economy, inflamed geopolitical tensions and upended lives, from Indian slums and Brazil's jungles to America's biggest city New York. World sports, live entertainment and international travel ground to a halt as fans, audiences and tourists were forced to stay at home, kept inside by strict measures imposed to curb the virus spread.

Drastic controls that put half of humanity - more than four billion people - under some form of lockdown by April at first slowed its pace, but since restrictions were eased cases have soared again.

On Sunday 2230 GMT the disease had claimed 1,000,009 victims from 33,018,877 recorded infections, according to an AFP tally using of-



ficial sources. The United States has the highest death count with more than 200,000 fatalities followed by Brazil, India, Mexico and Britain.

For Italian truck driver Carlo Chiodi those grim figures include both his parents, who he says he lost within days of each other. "What I have a hard time accepting is that I saw my father walking out of the house, getting into the ambulance, and all I could say to him was 'goodbye,'" said Chiodi, 50. With scientists still racing to find a working vaccine, governments are again forced into an uneasy balancing act.

# Heatwave, gusty winds heighten risk of wildfires

### INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**San Francisco, Sept 28:** The US National Weather Service (NWS) has issued a red flag warning for nearly all of Northern California as a heatwave combined with gusty, dry winds have heightened the risk of wildfires in the already highly-devastated region.

On Sunday, new wildfires erupted in the region, including the fast-moving Zogg Fire that burned through 7,000 acres in less than five hours near Redding, USA Today reported citing California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection's (Cal Fire) latest update.

Meanwhile, the Glass Fire, which erupted earlier in the day in the Napa Valley wine country north of San Francisco, had scorched over 2,500 acres by Sunday evening, the Cal Fire update added.

In its forecast Sunday, the NWS said both Northern and Southern California would be exposed to



Embers fly from a tree as the Glass Fire burns in St. Helena, California

"critical risks for fire weather" until Monday.

As a preventive measure, California's biggest utility, PG&E, said it planned to cut off power to some 65,000 customers through Monday morning, mostly in the Northern and Central Sierra but also extending to parts of the San Francisco Bay Area. Northern California is also the location of the enormous August Complex Fire, which continues to burn about 130 miles north of San Francisco.

The largest wildfire in state history has charred more than 873,000 acres so far since it erupted last month, USA Today reported.

Neither the August Complex nor the Creek Fire, which has incinerated more than 302,000 acres of a forest 60 miles northeast of Fresno, were even 50 per cent contained until now. According to Cal Fire, crews continue to battle 25 major wildfires with gusty winds and low humidity. Since the beginning of the year, there have been over 8,100 wildfires that have burned well over 3.7 million acres in California and killed a total of 26 people.

Since August 15, when California's fire activity elevated, there have been 26 fatalities and over 7,000 structures destroyed.

A Fire Weather Watch is in effect Monday across the Los Angeles, Ventura and San Diego Mountains, Santa Clarita Valley and San Diego Valley due to gusty Santa Ana winds and low humidity.

## US ELECTION 2020 CALENDAR

# Trump, Biden set for first presidential debate today

On November 3, US voters will decide whether to give Republican President Donald Trump a second term or replace him with Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden

With almost one month to go before the US presidential election, Trump and Biden have aggressively ramped up efforts to reach out to as many voters as they can before polling day.

Ahead of the first debate-stage matchup between Trump and his Democratic challenger Tuesday, each campaign is promising a stark contrast in policy, personality and preparation.

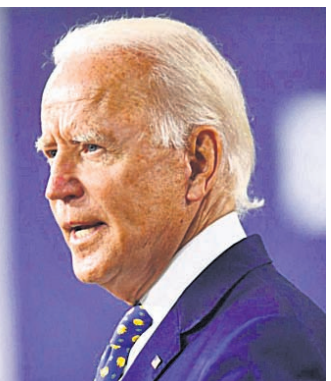
While Trump has decided to skip any formal preparation, Biden's team believes the significance of the debate may be exaggerated; the Democratic nominee has been aggressively preparing to take on the US President.

Here are the important dates in the US Election 2020 calendar:

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**SEPTEMBER 29:** First presidential debate will be held at the Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Clinic, Cleveland, Ohio.

**OCTOBER 7:** Vice presidential debate between Republican Vice President Mike Pence and Democratic vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris at the University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah.

**OCTOBER 15:** Second presidential debate at the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts, Miami.

**OCTOBER 22:** Third presidential debate at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee.

For some, the debates represent the most important moments in the 2020 campaign's closing days, a rare opportunity for millions of voters to compare the candidates' policies and personalities side-by-side on prime-time television.

**NOVEMBER 3:** Election Day. Due to an expected widespread use of mail-in voting, it is possible a winner will not be known for days as states tally ballots.

**DECEMBER 14:** Members of the

Electoral College will cast their ballots for President. Under the US system, the winner of each state's popular vote earns that state's electoral votes, which are apportioned by population. The candidate who receives a majority of the 538 electoral votes available, or 270, wins the presidency.

**JANUARY 6, 2021:** Congress meets at 1 pm in Washington, to count the electoral votes and declare a winner.

**JANUARY 20:** Inauguration Day. The winner and his running mate will be sworn in as President and Vice President at the US Capitol in Washington.

The US will welcome its new commander-in-chief January 20, next year.

# business



The domestic ecosystem is primed for a renewed phase of growth. E-commerce and tech startups have shown resilience during the pandemic fundamentally altering their unit economics to become more sustainable

MADHUR SINGHAL | MD, PRAXIS GLOBAL ALLIANCE

## ARCELORMITTAL TO SELL US OPS

ArcelorMittal has signed a definitive agreement to sell 100% stake in ArcelorMittal USA to Cleveland-Cliffs Inc for around \$1.4bn in both cash and stock. The company has said that around 1/3rd of the consideration is in upfront cash i.e. \$505mn and the remaining 2/3rd is in form of equity



## of the day quote

Globally, we are the tenth largest fund house with over \$1.4 trillion in assets under management. But with just around ₹4,300 crore of AUM, we are ranked only 29th (among the fund houses). So, our objective is to be among the top ten and be relevant



AJIT MENON | CEO, PGIM INDIA MF

Overall, the response indicates that (public) sentiments remain cautiously optimistic with most dealerships expecting flattish to moderate growth trend in the upcoming festive season



ASHISH MODANI | VP & CO-HEAD, ICRA

We are feeling cautiously optimistic about the residential market, driven by sales volumes in Mumbai and Delhi. A combination of favourable factors such as low mortgage rates, attractive prices combined with developers' lucrative payment plans together reinforce the longer-term potential of the sector



RAMESH NAIR | CEO AND COUNTRY HEAD, INDIA, JLL

## SHORT TAKES

### NCLAT likely to reconsider ruling

New Delhi: Appellate tribunal NCLAT may reconsider its own judgement passed by a five-member bench on the acceptability of debt entered in the balance sheet of a company for deciding the time frame for initiating insolvency proceedings. The issue pertains to whether entries in the balance sheet can be treated as an acknowledgement of debt for the purpose of calculating the three-year period limitation in terms of applicability of Section 18 of the Limitation Act, 1963.

### Vedantu ropes in Aamir Khan

New Delhi: Online live tutoring company Vedantu Monday said it has onboarded Bollywood actor Aamir Khan as its brand ambassador. Vedantu with its new ad campaign aims to make quality LIVE online learning accessible to every child, every home with India's best curated teachers, a statement said. The edutech space has seen strong growth globally with the COVID-19 pandemic serving as an inflection point.

### LVB shares jump over 5%

New Delhi: Shares of Lakshmi Vilas Bank (LVB) Monday pared early losses to close higher by 5 per cent after the Reserve Bank of India approved appointment of three-member Committee of Directors (CoD) to run the daily affairs of the debt-ridden firm. The stock bounced back during the fog-end of the trade and gained 5.21 per cent to close at ₹20.20 on the BSE. During the day, it declined 5.72% to ₹18.10.

### AXA XL to plant 30,000 trees

New Delhi: Insurance and risk management firm AXA XL in partnership with Give Me Trees Trust has embarked on a three-year project to plant 30,000 trees and create a biodiversity park here. AXA XL will play its part in delivering on this through this project, by helping to develop and monitor the land with the Give Me Trees Trust and also by assisting with fundraising for raw materials like seeds, soil and gardening equipment, a company release said.

# 'Top Apple suppliers to commit \$900 mn in India'

FOXCONN, WISTRON AND PEGATRON ALL PLAN TO MAKE INVESTMENTS UNDER THE SCHEME

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 28: Three of Apple Inc's top contract manufacturers plan to invest a total of almost \$900 million in India in the next five years to tap into a new production-linked incentive plan, according to two sources familiar with the matter.

Foxconn, Wistron and Pegatron all plan to make investments under the scheme, said the sources, who asked not to be named as the discussions are private.

India's new \$6.65 billion production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme offers companies cash incentives on any increase in sales of locally-made smartphones over the next five years, compared with 2019-

20 levels. The scheme aims to help transform India into an export manufacturing hub.

Foxconn has applied to invest about ₹40 billion (\$542 million), while Wistron and Pegatron have committed to invest close to ₹13 billion and ₹12 billion, respectively, under the PLI plan, the sources said.

It is unclear whether all of the investment will be targeted at boosting manufacturing of Apple devices in India, but the sources and industry insiders said the vast majority would be focused on expanding iPhone manufacturing in the country.

Foxconn said that as a matter of policy it did not comment on specific operations or work for any cus-

## SMARTPHONE INCENTIVE PLAN



tomer: Apple, Wistron, Pegatron and India's technology ministry, which formulated the PLI scheme, did not respond to emails seeking

# ₹3L cr PLI scheme to boost domestic manufacturing

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 28: In a major push to domestic manufacturing in the country, the government proposes to pump in over ₹3 lakh crore through an umbrella production linked incentive (PLI) scheme that will run simultaneously in 10 identified sectors for a period of five years.

Sources privy to the development said that the Niti Aayog has been entrusted with the task to finalise a cabinet note proposing extension of the PLI scheme with separate budgetary allocation for each identified sector for the next five years starting FY22.

The allocation will have to be worked out within the confines of the suggestions given by the expenditure department based on expected savings from the withdrawal of the existing Merchandise Exports India Scheme (MEIS) introduced in April 2015 to promote manufacturing and exports of specified goods from India.

"A plan for a mega ₹3 lakh crore PLI scheme has been finalised by an empowered group of secretaries chaired by the cabinet secretary



Niti Aayog has been entrusted with the task to finalise a cabinet note proposing extension of the PLI scheme

The allocation will have to be worked out within the confines of the suggestions given by the expenditure department

early this month. The allocation under the expanded PLI has been worked out on the basis of savings made by withdrawal of the MEIS scheme and liabilities on account of the new export incentive scheme, Remission of Duties or Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP). This will ensure that there is no imbalance on account of introduction of PLI," said the source quoted above.

Under the proposed PLI scheme, the government will incentivise domestic production in 10 areas to begin with. These include battery storage, solar PV modules, electronics (laptop, server, IoT devices, specified computer hardware), automobile and auto components, telecom and networking products,

textiles, food processing, speciality steel and white goods (air conditioners and LED).

Apart from these, large scale electronic manufacturing (mobile phones), pharmaceutical drugs and medical devices, which already have an approved PLI scheme, would be provided full budgetary allocation for next five years.

In the discussions by the EGoS, the highest allocation of close to ₹60,000 crore (over the next five years) has been proposed for automobile and auto component sectors. This is with the belief that this sector could help India become a global hub of manufacturing and source house for global industries.

# Economy to contract 11% in FY21: Icra

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 28: Domestic rating agency Icra further revised down its GDP estimate for the country Monday and now expects the Indian economy to contract by 11% in FY21. The agency, which was earlier estimating a contraction of 9.5%, said the revision has been done as the rate of new COVID-19 infections remains elevated.

It can be noted that some analysts have pegged the economy to contract by up to 14% after the release of the official GDP data for Q1FY21 which showed a 23.9% decline.

The RBI is yet to give its estimate on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and has been maintaining that it will be contracting.

The rating agency added that if the number for Q1FY21 gets revised down after data for the small businesses and less formal sectors becomes available, the overall GDP outcome for FY21 "could be even worse" than estimated by the 11% contraction.

For the ongoing second quarter, it is maintaining its earlier estimate of a contraction of 12.4%.

"With the pandemic continuing in India for over six months, we sense that economic agents are



Analysts have pegged the economy to contract by up to 14% after the release of the official GDP data for Q1FY21 which showed a 23.9% decline

now adapting to the crisis, resulting in a graduated recovery to a new post-COVID normal. Nevertheless, with rampant COVID-19 infections, we expect behaviours to remain altered for longer than what we had earlier presumed," its principal economist Aditi Nayar said.

The agency has revised its projections for Q3FY21 and Q4FY21 and now expects contractions of 5.4% and 2.5%, respectively, in the two quarters which will imply a full year contraction of 11%.

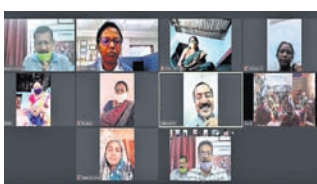
# Vedantu rolls out literacy training

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: Vedanta Jharsuguda, country's largest aluminium producer, began a series of training sessions on financial literacy for women members of its flagship sustainable livelihood project, Subhalaxmi Co-operative.

With a membership base of 4,000, Subhalaxmi is one of the largest rural co-operatives in the state, engaged in promoting sustainable livelihood opportunities among women, creating avenues for entrepreneurship through skill development and providing financial assistance to the members for furthering their enterprises.

Every year, Vedanta and Subhalaxmi Co-op collaborate to conduct a slew of training sessions and capability building exercises



for the members. Given the importance of financial literacy in enabling and sustaining inclusion of rural women in the forefront of economic activities, the company has roped in personnel from 'Mission Shakti' to train these women in savings, micro-finance services, insurance, fund management, financial decision making, etc. The September sessions witnessed participation of nearly 90 women associated with 26 Self-Help Groups across remote villages in Jharsuguda.

# Khimji launches 'Unlock Sale'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: Odisha's most trusted jewellery brand Khimji Jewellers continued to create waves in the market by launching a unique sale for customers named, "The Unlock Sale". The sale aims at strongly connecting with customer sentiments and inspiring them to unlock themselves and their potential by exploring new journeys, experiences and by investing on gold.

The sale has been rolled out across all the stores viz. Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Berhampur and Rourkela starting from September 25 and will last till mid-October.

Khimji's 'Unlock Sale' is an exclusive offer for all age group. It includes up to 70% off on the making charges of gold jewellery (all items), up to 50% off on luxury watches and flat 20% off on silver jewellery making charges.

Company's director Mitesh



Khimji said, "Particularly, now when there is no imminent end to the Covid-19 pandemic, the spotlight will continue to remain on the precious metal. Gold as an asset usually shares negative correlation with other assets (like equity, debt and real estate), and tends to perform better during risk-off periods."

"It protects the investors' capital against tail risks and other events that have an adverse impact on capital or wealth. Smart investors are rightly buying gold, recognising it to be a hedge and/or a store of value during uncertainty.

While demand for jewellery and physical gold has taken a hit, the focus is on the investment forms of gold. Even the central banks of the world, recognising the risk involved, are adding to their gold reserves," he added.

"Gold, as you may know, plays an important role in central banks' reserve management. Invest in Gold from Khimji with Buy Back Guarantee," Khimji concluded.

With a legacy of 84 years, Khimji Jewellers is a name that is synonymous with trust. It enjoys immense loyalty in Odisha with generations of loyal customers.

The first jewellery house in Odisha to sell 100% BIS certified gold jewellery and 100% IGI certified diamond jewellery, Khimji today has grand showrooms in four cities in the state. It offers a vast range of jewellery and fashion items in gold, diamond, platinum, silver and other precious metals and stones, along with an impressive collection of luxury watches.

# India will be 2nd largest economy by 2050: Adani

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: Billionaire Gautam Adani has debunked the narrow fixation on GDP numbers, saying fundamentals are intact and India will be the second-largest economy by 2050 and has an edge over global peers in terms of business opportunities.

Speaking at the JP Morgan India Summit - Future in Focus, the Adani Group chairman said the AatmaNirbhar Bharat programme will be a game-changer.

"I will state without any hesitation that in my view over the next three decades, India is the world's greatest business opportunity," he said.

India's geostrategic position and massive market size give it an edge over its global peers amid the fun-

damental political realignment of nations taking shape, he said adding opportunities for India are likely to accelerate on the other side of the pandemic.

"For the sake of the fans of the GDP metric, let's look at some statistics. The global GDP in 1990 was \$38 trillion. Today, 30 years later, this number is \$90 trillion. Projecting for another 30 years, in 2050 the global GDP is expected to be about \$170 trillion with India becoming the second-largest economy in the world," he said.



The Indian economy shrank by a record 23.9% in the April-June quarter because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown that followed. The economy is projected to contract for the first time in four decades, in the full year to March 2021.

But Adani said short-term setbacks due to a global crisis cannot be used to write off the country as its fundamentals remain intact.

"The current focus on standardised GDP predictions as against truly understanding what a nation could look like over a decade has un-

fortunately become one of the primary elements for measuring the health of an economy.

In my view, patience and long-term planning and most importantly, an alignment with the government's business agenda are what creates the greatest value," he said.

Speaking of challenges holding back India, Adani said that India needs \$1.5 to 2 trillion of capital over the next decade but despite key structural reforms such as the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund and Credit Enhancement Fund, capital structure challenges, and lack of empowered and independent regulators remain bottlenecks to nation-building and investment opportunities.

The first generation entrepre-

# Labour Ministry allays fears about Labour Codes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: The Ministry of Labour and Employment Monday allayed apprehensions about the Labour Codes passed last week by Parliament, saying the "criticisms being aired are misfounded". The ministry in a statement termed the bills as historical game changer reform bills. "The criticisms being aired are misfounded", it asserted.



In a pointed clarification on raising employee limit of smaller units for closure to 300, the ministry has underlined that the department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee had also recommended increase in threshold from 100 workers to 300 workers for seeking prior permission for retrenchment, lay-off and closure.

It is only the aspect of prior permission of the appropriate Government which has been removed and other benefits and workers' rights have been kept intact, it added.

The workers' rights such as notice before retrenchment, compensation at the rate of 15 days wages per completed year of service and pay in lieu of notice period has not been compromised.

Further, the IR (industrial relations) Code envisages an additional monetary benefit equivalent to 15 days of wages under newly created Reskilling Fund.

There has been no empirical evidence to suggest that higher threshold promotes hire and fire, it pointed out. The ministry also said that the Economic Survey, 2019 has analysed about the pain of dwarfism prevalent in Indian firms.

# BSE joins hands with Yes Bank to empower SMEs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 28: Leading stock exchange BSE Monday said it has signed a pact with private sector lender Yes Bank to empower the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) listed on the platform.

The pact aims at empowering the SME segment through awareness and knowledge-sharing programmes, BSE said in a statement.

As per the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), BSE and Yes Bank will conduct knowledge events for SMEs, export promotion of SMEs, in addition to providing banking and financial solutions.

The bank will also offer customised services and products to the listed SME members of the platform.

"We are happy to associate with Yes Bank and jointly work towards helping SMEs scale and develop themselves. BSE is the largest SME Platform which will provide the SME clients of Yes Bank," said Ajay Thakur, head BSE SME and startups.

# RCB WIN SUPER OVER THRILLER



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Abu Dhabi, Sept 28:** Off to the best possible start with two wins on the trot, a confident Delhi Capitals will hope to keep the juggernaut rolling when they take on the winless Sunrisers Hyderabad in an IPL match here Tuesday.

Both sides have endured contrasting campaigns so far. Delhi head in to the game after two morale-boosting victories. The Shreyas Iyer-led side edged past Kings XI Punjab in a thrilling Super Over before thrashing Chennai Super Kings comprehensively to jump to the top of the points table.

On the other hand, Sunrisers are the only side yet to register a win in the tournament, having lost both their games and David Warner and his men will be desperate to turn things around.

In their opening encounter, despite opener Jonny Bairstow (61) and Manish Pandey (34) putting Sunrisers in a winning position in a chase of 164, the team failed to cross the line.

Against Kolkata Knight Riders, the middle order failed to fire and the team settled for a below-par total which the bowling unit couldn't defend.

For Delhi, the South African pace duo of Kagiso Rabada and Anrich Nortje has looked sharp with the new ball while spinners Axar Patel and Amit Mishra have performed splendidly in the absence of Ravichandran Ashwin, who suffered an injury in the team's first outing and is likely to miss the match against Sunrisers.

In batting, the onus will be on sen-

iors such as Shikhar Dhawan to lay the foundation, and he will have the talented Prithvi Shaw at the top of the order for company.

Rishabh Pant and Iyer have also looked in good nick, after rescuing the team from a spot of bother in the first game, the two pitched in with valuable runs against CSK.

Australian all-rounder Marcus Stoinis has proved he is handy with the willow while Shimron Hetmyer can also compliment the strong batting line up.

For Sunrisers to do well, they would need to look beyond Warner and Bairstow. The side must click as a batting unit to post its first win of the season Tuesday.

The 2016 champions replaced the injured Mitchell Marsh with Afghanistan off-spinner Mohammad Nabi, who played a quick cameo with the bat and also bowled an economical spell later.

However, with the batting unit letting them down in both outings, Sunrisers might consider bringing in Kane Williamson, who has recovered from his injury, to provide stability to the line-up. He would be coming in place of Nabi.

Sunrisers spinners led by Rashid Khan continue to impress but the side is lacking an in and out pace bowler who can hit the deck and push the batsman back off a good length.



AB de Villiers (L), Ishan Kishan (R) and Kieron Pollard (right inset) in action during their innings for their respective teams in Dubai, Monday



Virat Kohli and AB de Villiers are pumped up after winning the Super Over; (inset) Navdeep Saini reacts after dismissing Kieron Pollard in the Super Over

with his magnificent hitting after Finch and Padikkal's stroke-filled half centuries. It was De Villiers, who used all his might during the death overs to smash his way to an unbeaten 55 taking the score past 200-run mark.

His swift yet brutal assault of Jasprit Bumrah (0/42) will be remembered for a long time. Even James Pattinson (0/51) received a lot of stick as two speed merchants accounted for eight off the 10 sixes in the RCB innings. Trent Boult (2/34) was the most successful bowler for MI.

The last five overs produced 78

runs with Shivam Dube also hitting out. He smashed three sixes in his short duration at the crease. Finch and Padikkal put on 81 runs for the first wicket and even though RCB lost Kohli quickly they had enough firepower to fall back on.

**BRIEF SCORES**  
**Royal Challengers Bangalore 201/3** (AB de Villiers 55 n o, Devdutt Padikkal 54, Aaron Finch 52; Trent Boult 2/34) **tied with MI 201/5** (Ishan Kishan 99, Kieron Pollard 60 n; Isuru Udana 2/44). **RCB won the match in Super Over.**

**SANJU SAMSON:** I have been hitting it (ball) well for the past one year. So I was just sticking to my routine and feeling confident. I am happy to win a few games. I was trying hard but things were not happening. I did a lot of soul searching after being frustrated at trying stuff. Then I worked hard

**STEVE SMITH:** That was something else, wasn't it? What we have seen from Tewatia in the nets is what we saw in that Cottrell over. I told someone as long as he gets one, floodgates will open. He showed heart. He told me during the timeout we still believe, 3 sixes of Shami, 3 off Cottrell. Looked like we could be chasing over 250 at one point, credit to the bowlers for pulling things back

**MAYANK AGARWAL:** Look, this is T20 cricket, we have seen it so many years now, we did a lot of things right, we have to keep our chin up and come back stronger. A lot of positives tonight, we did a lot of things right, but such things do happen, great game of cricket, we have to give it to them (RR)

**KL RAHUL:** The game keeps you humble all the time. I honestly did think we had the game in our pocket. Towards the end they batted well and put pressure on our bowlers which led to mistakes. I back them to do the job, they have done well in the last two games, it's ok to have one bad game. It's good that this came early in the tournament, they will only learn from this and come back strongly

**RAHUL TEWATIA:** The dugout knows I can hit the ball long. I knew I had to believe in myself. It was a matter of one six. Five (sixes) in the over, that is amazing. I tried to hit the leg-spinner, but unfortunately I couldn't. So I had to hit other bowlers. (Speaking of the early phase of my innings) The worst 20 balls I have ever played. After then I began to hit so I kept going. I will never forget this knock

## Comments on RR-KXIP match

## Fati, Messi score as Barca rout Villarreal



**THE 3 MUSKETEERS:** (From L) Philippe Coutinho, Ansu Fati and Lionel Messi rejoice after the teenager's goal against Villarreal, Sunday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Madrid, Sept 28:** Teenager Ansu Fati made the most of his opportunity as a starter scoring twice, while Lionel Messi converted a penalty as Barcelona made a flying start to their La Liga campaign with a 4-0 win over Villarreal at Camp Nou, Sunday.

It was Messi's first official game with Barcelona since the club denied his request to leave in the offseason. He was outspoken against the club but had promised to give his best in what could be his final season at Barcelona.

Messi celebrated as usual after scoring from the penalty spot in the 35th minute at the Camp Nou Stadium. He later also played a role in the own-goal by Pau Torres before halftime, as the Villarreal defender tried to intercept a cross by the Argentina great.

Messi missed a few other chances to score in the comfortable opening win for Ronald Koeman. The 17-year-old Fati, one of the players helping to make up for Luis Suarez's absence in attack, put Barcelona on their way to victory with goals in the 15th and 19th minutes.

## SUAREZ THRIVES IN ATLETICO DEBUT

**MADRID:** Luis Suarez quickly showed he will be a good fit in Diego Simeone's team — and that Barcelona may end up regretting their decision to let him go. Four days after arriving, Suarez came off the bench in the 71st and scored with a header in the 85th and with a left-foot shot in stoppage time. He also set up Marcos Llorente's goal with his first touch after entering the match. Diego Costa, Angel Correa and Joao Felix also scored for Atletico.



## Vardy hat-trick out-Foxes Man City

ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Manchester, Sept 28:** Jamie Vardy scored a hat-trick containing two penalties as Leicester came from behind to stun hosts Manchester City in a wild 5-2 win and collect a third straight victory to open the Premier League season.

City's defense couldn't handle the pace and movement of Vardy, who converted two penalties either side of a brilliant finish that saw him flick the ball home at the near post with a deft backheel.

Vardy added to the two goals he scored against West Bromwich Albion on the opening weekend as he looks to back up a 2019-20 season which he ended as the league's top scorer with 23 goals.

James Maddison added a fourth for the Foxes at Etihad Stadium by



**ON A ROLL:** Jamie Vardy wheels away in celebration after scoring against Man City, Sunday

curling a shot into the top corner from 25 meters (yards) as City backed off the substitute, and Yuri Tielemans converted a third penalty

for his team in the 87th — by which time Vardy had been substituted. Leicester became the first team to score three penalties in a single

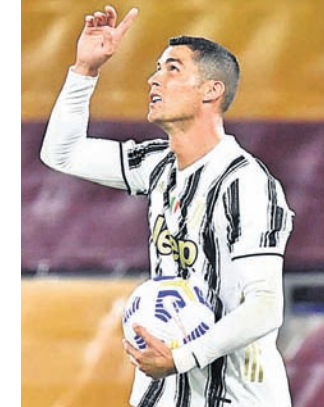
Premier League game, according to the league's official statistics supplier, Opta.

Riyad Mahrez, a former Leicester player, gave City the lead in the fourth minute with an impressive strike and Nathan Ake pulled a goal back in the 84th for City, who lacked a presence up front with Sergio Aguero and Gabriel Jesus missing.

It was a concerning display by Pep Guardiola's side, who were without a slew of other key players through injury and issues related to COVID-19, including Aymeric Laporte, Bernardo Silva and Ilkay Gundogan.

It came six days after City looked so assured in beating Wolverhampton 3-1 in their first match of the season, but Guardiola's team was picked off repeatedly Sunday.

## Ronaldo header saves Juve's day



ASSOCIATED PRESS

**Rome, Sept 28:** Even on a night when Juventus was outplayed for long stretches, the nine-time defending Serie A champion managed to salvage a point in a 2-2 draw at Roma.

Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice, including a second-half equaliser with a towering header after Juventus had been reduced to 10 men, while Jordan Veretout had a brace for Roma.

Veretout put Roma ahead in the 31st with a penalty following a handball from Adrien Rabiot, who was trying to block a shot from Veretout.

Ronaldo then equalised from the spot after Lorenzo Pellegrini used his arm to block the five-time Ballon d'Or winner.

Veretout scored his second in first-half added time as Roma tore past Juventus' veteran but aging center-backs Leonardo Bonucci and Giorgio Chiellini. Henrikh Mkhitaryan escaped down the left flank and crossed for Veretout, who used one touch to get away from a defender before shooting past goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny.

Juventus were reduced to 10 men in the 62nd when Rabiot picked up his second yellow card for sticking his boot into the left thigh of Mkhitaryan.

Ronaldo then found the target again in the 69th when he rose to head in a cross from Danilo — giving him three goals in Juve's opening two matches.

Juventus, who beat Sampdoria 3-0 in their opener, trail early Serie A leaders Napoli, Verona and AC Milan by two points.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### THIEM ADVANCES



**PARIS:** US Open champion Dominic Thiem advanced to the second round of the French Open by beating former US Open champion Marin Cilic 6-4, 6-3, 6-3. The third-seeded Austrian won his first major tournament at Flushing Meadows two weeks ago and is among the favorites again at Roland Garros after losing the past two finals to Rafa Nadal. Thiem broke the imposing Croatian's serve six times in cool conditions on Court Philippe Chatrier. Cilic led 2-0 in the third set but Thiem reeled off the next five games before Cilic held again. Thiem will next face American qualifier Jack Sock, who defeated Reilly Opelka 6-4, 6-4, 6-3.

### KVITOVA TOPS DODIN



**PARIS:** Petra Kvitova is through to the French Open second round after a 6-3, 7-5 win against Oceane Dodin under the new roof on Court Philippe Chatrier. Kvitova, a two-time Wimbledon winner, advanced from the first round for the 10th time in 11 appearances at Roland Garros. The Czech player's only first-round loss was in 2010. She was a semifinalist in 2012. Ranked 11th, she is the No.7 seed at Roland Garros. On outside courts that aren't protected by a roof like Chatrier, the rain that thwarted the start of play Monday morning has stopped and players have been called for their matches.

### HOFFENHEIM END BAYERN'S 32-MATCH UNBEATEN RUN

**DUSSELDORF:** Bayern Munich's 32-game unbeaten run ended in a 1-4 defeat to Hoffenheim Sunday, after playing 120 minutes in a 2-1 win over Sevilla in the UEFA Super Cup three days earlier, the traditional match between the Champions League and Europa League winners. Ermin Bicakcic put the hosts in lead in the 16th minute before Munas Dabbur doubling the advantage eight minutes later. However, Bayern fought back, reducing the deficit to one goal in the 36th minute through Joshua Kimmich. This was their last laugh. In the second half, Andrej Kramaric struck twice, including a penalty in the added-on time to end a miserable night for the Bavarians.

