



CANDID CONFESSION

Actor Sneha Ullal says her performance gets affected if intimate scenes are not choreographed correctly

LEISURE P2



A RAY OF PROSPERITY

There is going to be prosperity at the end of the 9.2-km long Atal Tunnel, one of India's strategic projects

TWO STATES P7



SPLURGING ON LAWYERS

Trump's campaign spends lakhs of dollars on lawyers to litigate voting by mail

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I was not beating up my wife. I was just brushing up my interrogation methods!

SHORT TAKES

UP: Gang-raped Dalit woman dies

Hathras (UP): A 19-year-old Dalit woman from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras died at Safdarjung hospital in Delhi Tuesday morning, days after she was raped by four men here. The family of the woman said she died around 3 am, Hathras SP Vikrant Vir said. The woman was gang-raped September 14 following which she was admitted to the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College and Hospital in Aligarh. She was referred to the Delhi hospital on Monday after her condition showed no signs of improvement. The accused had also tried to strangle her.

Bees kill 2, leave as many injured

Bhawanipatna: In a shocking incident, two brothers died and two others were injured after a swarm of bees attacked them at Kulanal village under Lanji panchayat in Kalahandi district Monday. The deceased siblings were identified as Ghasi Majhi and Dame Majhi of Kulanal village. The injured have been identified as Kabi Majhi and Naran Majhi of the same village. According to sources, like any other day, some youths of the village had gone to nearby forest to collect firewood when a swarm of bees started attacking them. All their efforts to escape from the attack of bees turned futile.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	37973.22 ↓ 8.41
NIFTY	11222.40 ↓ 5.10
DOLLAR	74.23 ↑ ₹0.12
EURO	86.63 ↑ ₹0.48
GOLD	₹50,480 ↑ ₹347
SILVER	₹61,238 ↑ ₹842

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP	33.0°C	34.0°C
MAX	33.0°C	34.0°C
MIN	25.5°C	23.5°C
Humidity	95%	85%
Rainfall	0.6mm	Nil
Forecast	Partly cloudy sky	

Balasore, Tirtol bypolls Nov 3

Code of conduct comes into force with immediate effect: ECI

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 29: The Election Commission of India (ECI) Tuesday announced that bypolls in 54 Assembly constituencies, including Tirtol and Balasore constituencies, across the country will be held November 3. The results will be announced November 10. The ECI has announced the polling schedule following a meeting Tuesday. According to ECI, the gazette notification will be issued October 9 and the last date of nominations will be October 16. The commission has announced that the date for scrutiny of nominations will be October 17 and the last date for withdrawal of candidatures will be October 19. The commission said it has de-

cidated to hold bypolls to fill up these vacancies after taking into consideration various factors like local festivals, weather conditions, movement of forces and the pandemic. Significantly, Balasore and Tirtol Assembly constituencies in the state fell vacant after the demise of MLAs Madan Mohan Dutta and Bishnu Chandra Das respectively. The elections to 54 Assembly constituencies shall be completed by November 12. The ECI has also announced the date of polling for a Lok Sabha constituency in Bihar and two Assembly constituencies in Manipur. The elections to these constituencies will be held November 7 and results will be announced November 10. The ECI has said the model code of conduct shall come into force with immediate effect in the district(s) in

which the whole or any part of the Assembly constituency is going for polls. The commission has also instructed that postal ballot facilities will be available for senior citizen (above 80 years of age) and person with disabilities (PwD) electors. The commission has also instructed the administration to strictly follow the COVID-19 guidelines issued by it during the conduct of election. Chief Electoral Officer of Odisha SK Lohani said there are 2,26,586 voters in Balasore comprising 1,16,884 male voters and 1,09,693 female voters. There will be 346 booths in Balasore. Similarly, there are 2,38,056 voters in Tirtol comprising 1,23,600 male voters and 1,14,428 female voters. Polling will be held on 373 booths in Tirtol constituency.

In movie-like ops, teen girl rescued

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Sept 29: A 17-year-old girl of Kalahandi district was rescued from Kanpur station in Uttar Pradesh and the alleged trafficker, a woman from West Bengal, was arrested in a multi-state operation that was no less than a thriller flick. Sangita Malakar (27), a resident of Nadia in West Bengal, and the girl from Dharamgarh became friends on social media, police said Tuesday. They got emotionally involved over a period of time and subsequently went into a relationship, an officer said. The girl went missing September 17, following which her parents lodged a complaint, said Chandra Sekhar Sabar, the inspector-in-charge of Dharamgarh police station. The cyber cell of the police tracked the mobile phone of the girl and located it to Nadia. A police team from Dharamgarh then went to Nadia but the woman and the girl were already on their way to Jaipur in Rajasthan on a train, the officer said. The team then informed the Railway Protection Force (RPF), which detained them at Kanpur September 27. They were brought back to Dharamgarh Monday, he said. A preliminary investigation suggested that the woman was planning to traffic her, and force her into prostitution, Sabar said. The girl has been sent home, he said, adding that further investigation is underway. Meanwhile, Handapa police in Angul district rescued two minor girls while they were being trafficked to Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh. The survivors are natives of Papsasara village under Kishorenagar block and Handapa police limits. Police also detained three persons and are questioning them.

Boudh dy collector held for beating wife

POST NEWS NETWORK

Lakhanpur, Sept 29: Jharsuguda town police arrested Tuesday deputy collector of Boudh district Sarat Kumar Bag. The official was nabbed after his wife Dalia Debnath lodged a complaint at BTM police station accusing her husband of physical torture and infidelity. The complaint had been lodged Saturday and police have since been investigating the matter.

In her complaint, Dalia alleged that Bag was in an extramarital affair and he assaulted her physically to get rid of her. Sources said, Bag had gone to visit the woman he was allegedly in a relationship with, Saturday in Jharsuguda town. However, Dalia followed him and caught her husband red-handed. A bitter quarrel broke out between the two.

As per allegations, Bag and some others misbehaved with Dalia and assaulted her due to which she suffered injuries. She was rushed to Jharsuguda district headquarters hospital for medical examination and was discharged after treatment. Then she had lodged a complaint at BTM police station. Bag dismissed the allegations as baseless, saying a conspiracy has been hatched against him to tarnish his image.



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Govt tables Varsity Bill amid Oppn's ire

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: The monsoon session of the State Assembly began Tuesday with a stormy note over introduction of the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The house started at 11 am with playing of the National Anthem. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik moved obituary references on the passing away of former President Pranab Mukherjee, sitting MLAs Madan Mohan Dutta & Bishnu Das, four ex-ministers, six former MLAs, five martyrs and all corona fighters who laid down their lives for the service of people. The Speaker adjourned the house till 3 pm. Though there is a tradition to adjourn proceedings for a day in the event of sitting members' demise, this time it was limited to half-a-day due to the pandemic. During the second half, the government introduced seven bills including the controversial Odisha University (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The University Bill was introduced amid strong protests by the BJP and Congress members. When the Speaker allowed Higher Education Minister Arun Sahoo to introduce the bill, Congress member Narasingha Mishra asked why the government is in a hurry to introduce the

bill during the pandemic. He said the state government does n't have power to pass the bill because it is a central subject. "When Covid-19 is there, what is the urgency for bringing an ordinance to amend the University Act," Mishra said. Congress members Santosh Singh Saluja and Taraprasad Bahinipati joined Mishra in this issue. Bahinipati tore a copy of the bill in the house, saying it is a black bill. Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik too slammed the government over the bill and said, "If we pass the bill now, future generations will laugh on us. The state government wants to pour its nose into all affairs of universities." In the bill, the government has made a provision to recruit out of state people as lecturers. "To get recruited in universities, there is no need to pass Class VII Odia language. One can learn it on service. However, other states have made it mandatory," the LoP said. However, Sahoo rejected the allegations. The other bills which were tabled in the house were—the Industrial Disputes (Odisha Amendment) Bill, the Odisha Municipal Laws (Amendment) Bill, the Odisha Advocates' Welfare Fund (Amendment) Bill, the Epidemic Diseases (Odisha Amendment) Bill, the Court Fees (Odisha Amendment) Bill and Odisha GST Bill.

PEOPLE'S ANGER TO FORE



Congress activists protest against the death of Dalit woman in Hathras, who was gang-raped September 14, near GPO in Lucknow

No temple entry for Covid +ve servitors

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 29: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Tuesday said that Srimandir servitors and employees who have been tested positive for Covid-19 should not enter the 12th century shrine. SJTA administrator (development) Ajay Kumar Jena said the shrine administrator will lodge FIR against any servitor or Srimandir employee if they enter the shrine despite being infected with the virus. "There are allegations that some Covid-19 positive servitors and employees entered the shrine. The issue has been taken seriously. We have introduced several measures to check the virus spread among

servitors. Srimandir employees and servitors have been directed to follow all precautionary measures strictly. Stern action will be taken against the violators," Jena said. Jena further said that they have sent a list of Covid-19 positive servitors and employees to the Srimandir commander. The temple commander along with the personnel of Jagannath Temple Police (JTP) will keep tab on virus-infected servitors and employees. "The servitors and employees who have been tested positive for the virus must keep themselves in isolation either in their houses or special covidcare centres for 17 days," Jena added. The SJTA administrator further revealed that penalties will be imposed on servitors and



employees if they chew paan or gutkha inside Srimandir. "The penalties will be imposed as per the Covid-19 norms laid down by the state government. We will collect a fine of ₹1,000 each for first and second offences. But, the penalty would be ₹5,000 from third offence," Jena said. According to Jena, three senior officials of SJTA would inspect

Srimandir premises on rotation basis to ensure strict adherence to Covid-19 norms by the servitors and employees. "The servitors and SJTA employees have been asked to wear face masks properly on Srimandir premises," Jena added. According to sources, at least 400 servitors and 50 employees of Srimandir have been tested positive for COVID-19. A total of 450 persons engaged in the 12th century shrine have tested positive for the virus since August, said a senior SJTA official. He said Jagannath's rituals, however, are continuing as usual despite the absence of so many servitors. The Jagannath temple is closed for devotees since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

NTT to buy out DoCoMo, make it pvt at \$38B

AGENCIES

Mito (Japan), Sept 29: Japanese telecoms giant Nippon Telegraph and Telephone, or NTT, announced Tuesday it will spend 4.3 trillion yen (USD 38 billion) to buy out and take private its mobile unit NTT DoCoMo as it restructures for the 5G era. NTT and NTT DoCoMo executives released details of the plan Tuesday after a meeting of DoCoMo's board. NTT's CEO Jun Sawada said that between September 30-Nov. 16 the company would buy DoCoMo's shares at a price of 3,900 yen. The company's shares were last trading at 3,213 yen. They jumped nearly 16 per cent on Monday. The move is intended to enhance the competitiveness of the NTT group as it consolidates its services, Sawada said. "We want to be a game changer," Sawada said. Local media reports said the restructuring was expected to enable the mobile carrier to offer cheaper rates in competition with rivals such as SoftBank and KDDI. That dovetails with newly installed PM Yoshihide Suga's push for lower telecoms rates and more consumer and business-friendly services. Suga has made expanding digital services part of his policy agenda and has called for reforms of the industry's complex pricing policies and relatively inflexible contract arrangements. Pressures to improve such services have intensified with the push for remote work.

Amnesty halts India ops, says facing witch-hunt

ACTIONS LIKE THIS BOTH UNDERMINE OUR REPUTATION AS A DEMOCRACY & VITIATE OUR SOFT POWER: SHASHI THAROOR

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 29: Human rights group Amnesty International stopped its work in India Tuesday, saying the government had frozen its bank accounts in the latest action against it for speaking out about rights violations. The group said it had laid off staff after facing a crackdown over the past two years over allegations of financial wrongdoing that it said were baseless. "This is latest in the incessant witch-hunt of human rights organizations by the government of India over unfounded

and motivated allegations," Amnesty said in a statement. Its bank accounts were frozen September 10, it said. Amnesty had highlighted rights violations in recent months in the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region as well as what it said was a lack of police accountability during riots in Delhi in February, and the government had sought to punish it, it said. There was no immediate response from government spokesmen to requests for comment. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has faced accusations that it is clamping down on dis-



In this file photo dated October 25, 2018, media personnel outside the Amnesty International office building, where ED conducted raid in Bangalore.

sent, including in Muslim-majority Kashmir, where insurgents have battled government forces for more than 30 years. Critics also say the government is pushing a Hindu-first agenda, undermining the secular foundations of India's democracy and raising fears among its 170 million Muslim minority. The government denies any bias against any community. Opposition politician Shashi Tharoor said Amnesty's exit was a blow. "India's stature as a liberal democracy with free institutions, including media & civil society organisations, accounted for much

of its soft power in the world. Actions like this both undermine our reputation as a democracy & vitiate our soft power," he said on Twitter. Critics of the organization, however, cheered its departure, posting comments on Twitter such as "good riddance" and accusing the group of turning a blind eye to hate crimes against Hindus elsewhere in the region. The group has in the past fallen foul of Indian governments, including one run by the centrist Congress party, and this would be the fifth time it had ceased operations, its former head, Aakar Patel, said.

'FREEZING DISSIDENT' Amnesty said that this time, the federal financial crimes investigation agency, the Enforcement Directorate, had targeted it because of its work on human rights. "The constant harassment by government agencies including the Enforcement Directorate is a result of our unequivocal calls for transparency in the government," said Avinash Kumar, executive director of Amnesty International India. "For a movement that has done nothing but raise its voices against injustice, this latest attack is akin to freezing dissent," he said.

leisure



SANDLER WANTS TO REUNITE WITH BARRYMORE IN A FILM

Actor Adam Sandler who acted with actress Drew Barrymore in films like *The Wedding Singer*, *Blended* and *50 First Dates* would like to do another film with actress Drew Barrymore. "Any time Drew wants to - she's gotta tell me and then I'll do it," he said.

BOSEMAN RAISED MILLER'S SALARY TAKING A PAY CUT

Actress Sienna Miller has recalled how the late Chadwick Boseman graciously gave up a part of his salary so she could get paid the remuneration she demanded when they worked together on a project last year. The film in question is *21 Bridges* which was co-produced by Boseman.



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ARIES
If you are a gadget freak, today you will have enough opportunity to flaunt your knowledge and impress everyone else. Students with a scientific bent of mind will excel in studies. Ganesh advises housewives to experiment with their own recipes, and not to worry about the oven - it will not burst.

TAURUS
This is not one of those easy and carefree days. You are in for a lot of mental anguish. The mental pressure you feel, you will realise, is of your own making. Unless you make radical changes in your basis outlook, mental tensions are likely to become an everyday affair. You need to face and accept things as they are. Try to be more realistic. Yoga and meditation are sure to help.

GEMINI
You will be busy organising some religious function today or in visiting a place of religious significance. You will encounter expenses in religious and charitable work. However, you should guard against ignoring your daily work in pursuit of all these matters, says Ganesh.

CANCER
You will win over people with the gift of the gab. Your rhetoric will prove beneficial to you. You may get into an argument or have friction with someone in the in-laws' side. But keep your cool and face it bravely, so as to stave off mental depression.

LEO
You will need to keep from being agitated today. Let your spouse or business partner take critical decisions if you aren't in the right frame of mind. Decisions you take today may have to be rethought of later. Important meetings will proceed smoothly, but you will not be able to commit to any final conclusions or contracts. Since it is not an auspicious day for you, postpone all important events, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Appreciate the things that people do and try your best to inspire them to achieve greater success, says Ganesh. Put on your thinking cap and contemplate seriously. Simply criticising others will only hurt you. Be as level-headed as you can and keep pegging on towards your targets.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will try to gain knowledge in new topics today. You will feel enthusiasm and a feeling of positivity today. You will show more interest when talking with friends and this will make you come closer to them. There will be benefits to you from your life partner. You will be happy to be in the company of a close relative today. Ganesh says he will be with you always.

SCORPIO
You are quite vocal about your ambitious plans, says Ganesh. But, being too harsh on yourself or others for that matter may spoil your relationships with many people. Stay away from lengthy discussions to avoid any conflicts.

SAGITTARIUS
You will be your usual self today, frank and precise. You are all ears for what your life partner has to say. This will make them feel special! According to Ganesh, be patient and carry out your work gracefully.

CAPRICORN
You have been waiting to hear some good news for long, and today is the day when the wait will be finally over. With your eyes firmly set on your goal, you will develop likings for your work. This will help you make plans and take decisions for the future, feels Ganesh. You wished to change your current job, but with some good news coming in you may not wish for the same any more.

AQUARIUS
You will remember this day for the rest of life as today you will make some important decisions and give a new direction to your life. You are in for a windfall and cherry on the cake will be all the recognition and rewards you get for your sincerity and hard work, predicts Ganesh. These positive vibes will help you make sure that you are on the right track.

PISCES
You will finally realize the worth of your resources today. You will take a decision to increase your savings and clamp down on unnecessary expenses. Your expenses are likely to invest temporarily. It is a good idea to invest in debt schemes today, says Ganesh.



SRK inspired me to join films: Radhika

MUMBAI: Actress Radhika Madan says she drew inspiration from superstar Shah Rukh Khan to join films. Radhika was a well-known face in the television industry before she won plaudits with her film roles. She was seen in the television show *Meri Aashiqui Tum Se Hi* and also participated in the reality dance contest, *Jhalak Dikhhla*

Jaa 8. In 2018, she made her Bollywood debut with Vishal Bhardwaj's *Pataakha*, and there has been no looking back. "I heard a lot of negative comments about myself. But those remarks did not stop me from moving ahead. I believed in my dreams," Radhika. "I used to say to myself, 'If Shah Rukh (Khan) sir or Vidya (Balan) ma'am or Sushant (Singh Rajput) could do it, I can too. Their journeys inspired me a lot. They all came from television background. I feel the medium does not matter. What truly matters is hard work,'" Radhika shared.



Sneha opens up on doing intimate scenes

MUMBAI: Actress Sneha Ullal, who is best known for starring opposite Salman Khan in the 2005 release, *Lucky: No Time For Love*, opened up about how she deals with intimate scenes.

"There are difficult scenes that I'm sure every actor goes through. For me, if intimate scenes are not organised correctly, or not choreographed correctly, they don't keep the ambience comfortable then that affects me and my performance. Most of the times a lot of people get uncomfortable choreographing such scenes and the discomfort rubs onto me," Sneha shared.

Sneha will be seen in the upcoming thriller show, *Expiry Date*, which revolves around two couples and extra-marital affairs that they are involved in. The show also features Tony Luke, Madhu Shalini and Ali Reza. It will premiere on Zee5 October 2.



Siddhant reveals his life mantra

MUMBAI: Actor Siddhant Chaturvedi, who is currently in Goa shooting for an untitled film directed by Shakun Batra, has revealed a mantra he follows in life. Siddhant took to Instagram and shared a picture of his reflection. In the image, the actor is seen posing in front of a window

with his back towards the camera while the glass catches his reflection. "Earn that Midnight craving," wrote Siddhant with the picture, along with an ice cream emoji, and the tags #PostGameCravings and #Pumped.

Batra's film also stars Deepika Padukone and Ananya Panday. Deepika had to recently cut short her Goa schedule and return to Mumbai for the NCB interrogations as part of the agency's probe into a possible drugs angle in the death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput. Details of Batra's project are under wraps, although Siddhant in a recent interview said the film belongs to a genre that has not been tried in Hindi films before.

How Indian kitchens are adapting to the new normal

Food consumption has become a cautious habit and people are highly conscious of what they are eating and where it is coming from, says veteran chef Prabhakar Nagaraj

NEW DELHI: Owing to the pandemic, food consumption has become a cautious habit and people are highly conscious of what they are eating and where it is coming from. "It has given us an opportunity to explore ways to keep food simple, nutritious and how it can be transported safely from one place to the other with limited human handling," says veteran chef Prabhakar Nagaraj. He shared the changes being seen in kitchens in terms of safety measures, ingredients, collaborative dishes and waste management. **Excerpts:**
No more exotic food
The masses have switched to

basic meals, keeping away from complexity in its preparation and the ingredients used. Food consumption has become a cautious habit and people are highly conscious of what they are eating and where it is coming from. To serve this need, we have switched to pre-packed meals with limited variety as compared to the lavish buffet spreads during the pre-Covid times. **Growing importance of Indian spices**
We are creating menus that are primarily based on local produce rather than being sourced from other states or the country at large. In the near future, we will witness many international dishes being given an Indian twist and vice versa.



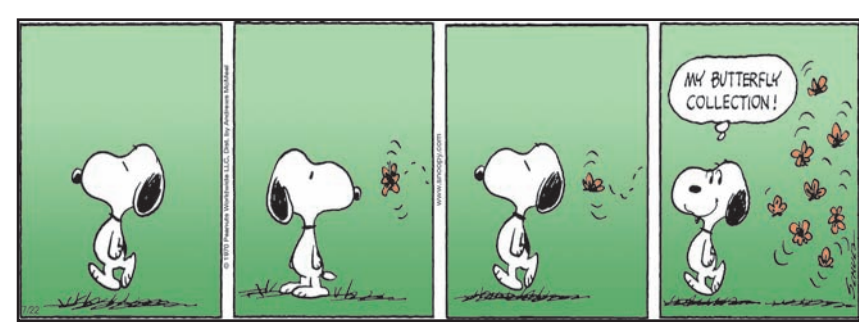
Our chefs are handpicked from the best hotels and we are able to translate global food trends to our food

with ease. **Collaborative cuisine**
Regarding collaborative cuisines,

the type of clients that we cater to need us to be at our innovative best. Their profiles create an opportunity to explore the possibility to innovate. The financial luxury of these clients gives us an advantage to continuously innovate and be ahead of our time when we talk about mundane menus with typical components that we hardly ever think of changing. For example, a regular Aloo Muttar Samosa can be

changed into a chicken Fajita Samosa. Basically, you are using chicken which is mixed with Fajita seasoning and flavor the dough with cumin giving a Mexican twist to the Indian cuisine. **Waste management**
This process is being mapped with our ERP (Enterprise resource planning). Whatever the food requirement for any client-site is, it comes to the ERP. Based on this, the production process is initiated, and the dispensation takes place. By doing this, we have witnessed a tremendous reduction in food-wastage and this is something we follow as a process where ensuring minimal food wastage is concerned.

PEANUTS



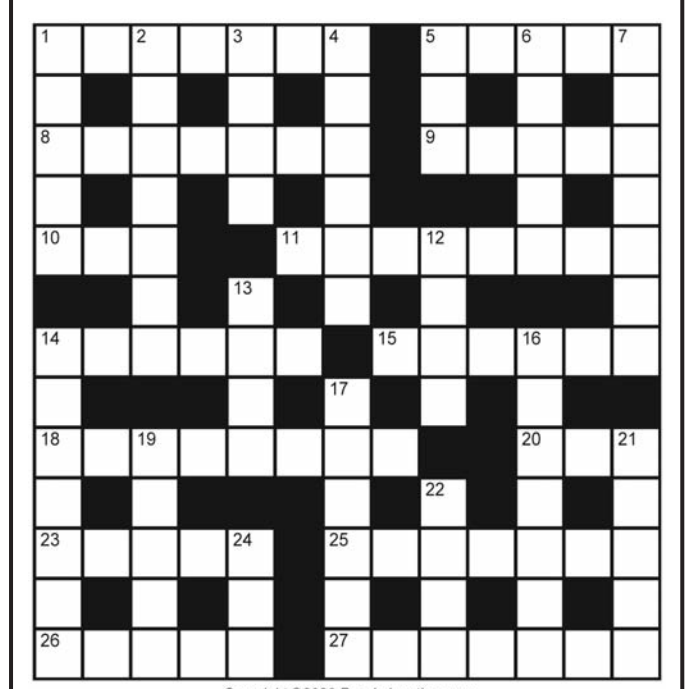
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



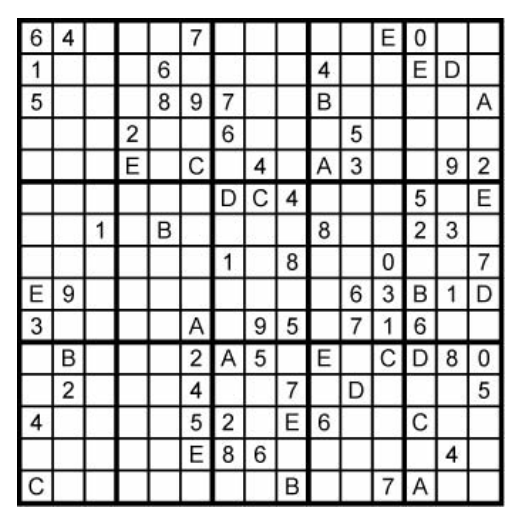
FUN post CROSSWORD



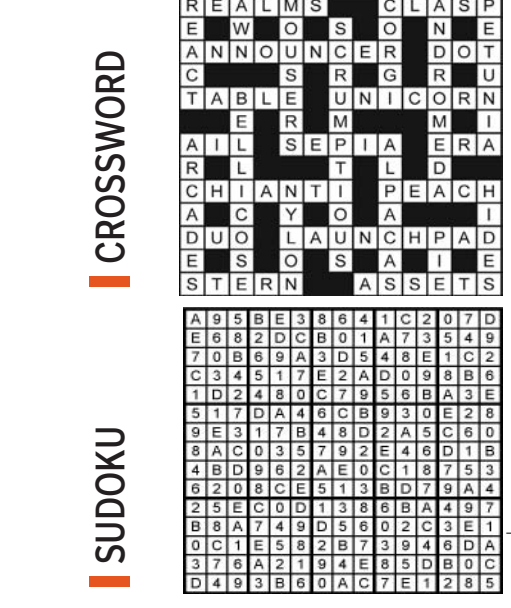
- Across**
- 1 Skyline
 - 5 After-bath dressing gowns
 - 8 Amble
 - 9 Coronet
 - 10 Nay's opposite
 - 11 Ophidians
 - 14 Cottontail
 - 15 Consternation
 - 18 Timetable
 - 20 One-horse carriage
 - 23 Dashboard feature
 - 25 Wash
 - 26 German industrial city
 - 27 Malady
 - 6 Muscle
 - 7 Former chess master
 - 12 Poker holding
 - 13 Intellect
 - 14 Hold back
 - 16 Purplish red
 - 17 Unruffled
 - 19 River Styx locale
- Down**
- 1 Hurried
 - 2 Pastry filler
 - 3 Pasta choice
 - 4 Jim-jams
 - 5 Deteriorate
 - 6 Skein formers
 - 21 Precious stones
 - 22 Possess

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



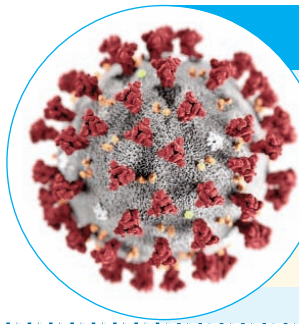
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FOR VARSITY AUTONOMY

Members of Committee for Protection of University Autonomy hold a demonstration at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to protest the Odisha Universities (Amendment) Ordinance 2020



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,36,40,860	2,49,47,931	10,08,001
India	61,45,291	51,01,397	96,318
Odisha	2,15,676	1,81,481	828

CM, 8 others join House through VC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: Perhaps for the first time in the history of Odisha Assembly, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik joined the session via videoconferencing from his residence Naveen Nivas here, Tuesday. Eight legislators participated in the Assembly proceedings through videoconferencing from Lok Seva Bhawan and Collectors' offices in their respective districts. Out of the remaining, 85 MLAs attended the session in the Assembly.



CM Naveen Patnaik participating in the Assembly proceedings through videoconferencing

Prior to the commencement of the monsoon session, all the MLAs, personal security officers (PSOs) and Assembly staffers underwent tests for the novel coronavirus. Altogether 19 MLAs tested positive for COVID-19 during clinical examination on the Assembly premises during the last three days. As of now, 51 leg-

islators, including nine ministers, have contracted the virus in the state, officials said.

Members present in the House wore face masks and face shields and were allotted seats in the Assembly hall, visitor's gallery and other sections in order to maintain social distancing.

The seating arrangements have been changed. While some are allowed to participate in the session through videoconferencing, position of some MLAs has been changed from well of the House to the visitors' gallery on the first floor. The change was made to ensure social distance in the House.

While preparing for the monsoon session, Speaker Surya Narayan Patro had said for the first time, glasses have been used inside the Assembly premises between seats of legislators and the visitors' gallery will have provision to accommodate 52 MLAs.

Irrespective of party, members welcomed the changes made to prevent spread of coronavirus. "Though many new things have been introduced, it is okay for this time," said Lanjigarh MLA Pradip Kumar Dishari.

Minister Sudam Marndi said, "All arrangements including social distance measures, face shields and gloves have been put in place to control the spread of COVID-19. I pray God that we will overcome the situation soon." The monsoon session of the Assembly is scheduled to conclude October 7.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



HC reserves verdict in school fee case

AGENCIES

Cuttack, Sept 29: The Orissa High Court Tuesday concluded its hearing in connection with the school fee hike case. However, the court has reserved its verdict in the matter. Meanwhile, the state government submitted a committee report before the HC Tuesday.

A common petition has been filed in the HC seeking judicial intervention in what has been termed as 'arbitrary decision' of the private schools in state to increase the fee although the institutions have remained closed since March 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic. The petitioners are also seeking a complete exemption of the tuition fee.

2 migrants died while returning to Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: At least two persons have died while returning to Odisha during lockdown, Labour and Employees' State Insurance Minister Susanta Singh told the Assembly Tuesday.

Due to the sudden announcement of lockdown, train and bus services were suspended March 24. As a result, many Odia migrant workers had started returning to Odisha. During the journey, two lives were lost, he said.

The government is collecting information about the compensa-

tion amount paid to the families of the deceased, the minister said.

In another written reply, Singh said 8,53,777 migrant workers have returned to Odisha during COVID-19 lockdown. The government has paid Rs 9 crore to the East Coast Railway as rent for transportation of migrant workers through 277 Shramik special trains, he said.

However, the government doesn't have any data about how many people have again moved back to other states in search of work. The minister said he doesn't have data on how many of them are skilled and how many are unskilled.

Man wanted in 30 cases of ATM fraud held from City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: Commissionerate Police Tuesday nabbed a most wanted fraudster involved in several interstate ATM fraud cases in Odisha and Maharashtra. The conman has been identified as Sambhav Acharya, 30, a resident of Krushnapur Sasan under Balichandrapur police limits in Jajpur district.

Acharya has been staying in East View Apartment at Kanan Vihar Phase II under Infocity police limits here.

A smart Acharya used to swap the ATM cards of his victims, mostly elderly persons and people lacking knowledge about using ATM cards, on the pretext of helping them in withdrawing money. He used to be present at ATM kiosks and cunningly mark the password of the victim before swapping the card with the original card of the victim.

He would withdraw money or purchase various items from shops at different places by using the ATM card of the victim.

Police sources claimed that a person who had gone to an ATM counter at Patia to withdraw money from his account had fallen prey to the tricks of Acharya who changed a fake card with the genuine ATM card of the complainant August 10.

Later, the complainant returned from counter after making a few more failed attempts to withdraw money. He received several messages on his mobile phone regarding withdrawal of Rs 20,000 from an ATM kiosk at Raghunathpur and Rs 7,000 from Choudhury Bazar



Commissionerate Police Tuesday carried out a raid at his flat in Patia area and arrested the accused. They also seized several ATM cards, ₹42,000 and three mobile phones from his house

ATM kiosk in Cuttack. Upon checking, he was shocked to find out his ATM card had been changed with a fake one.

Later, he lodged a complaint with Infocity police who started investigations after registering a case (108/20) in this regard.

A special squad of Commissionerate Police Tuesday carried out a raid at his flat in Patia area and arrested the accused. They also seized several ATM cards, Rs 42,000 and three mobile phones from his house.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Umashankar Dash said, "The Commissionerate Police has arrested dreaded criminal Sambhav Acharya, who was earlier arrested several times in around

A smart Acharya used to swap the ATM cards of his victims, mostly elderly persons and people lacking knowledge about using ATM cards, on the pretext of helping them in withdrawing money

He used to be present at ATM kiosks and cunningly mark the password of the victim before swapping the card with the original card of the victim

LIONESS DIES IN NANDANKANAN

Bhubaneswar: One of the prime attractions of the Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP), lioness Supriya, died Tuesday due to old age-related ailments. She was 26. The lioness breathed her last at 9:15am. According to the zoo officials the lioness was born in 1994. After Supriya's death, NZP now has two African lioness and eight Asiatic lions and four lionesses. In January 2012, Supriya had created a huge panic among the visitors by escaping from her enclosure. However, staff of NZP captured her quite quickly and brought her back to her enclosure. Supriya's death comes close on the heels of the death of a yellow Anaconda August 28, 2020.

SC asks states to provide free ration to sex workers

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 29: The Supreme Court Tuesday directed the state governments including Odisha to provide dry ration to sex workers without asking for identification proof.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices L. Nageswara Rao and Ajay Rastogi ruled that sex workers identified by the National Aids Control Organisation (NACO) and state committees shall be provided free ration.

"We are concerned with points raised in this application. We are concerned that sex workers can't access dry ration, cash transfers and other facilities due to lack of identity proof," the bench observed.

The bench also asked the state governments to apprise the court in four weeks of the implementation of its order and the number of sex workers who have been provided ration.

Significantly, the SC was hearing an application filed by Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, an NGO, which had highlighted the destitution faced by sex workers on the account of COVID-19 pandemic. The petitioner sought relief measures for over nine lakh female and transgender sex workers across the country.

POST NEWS NETWORK

LABOUR CONTRACTOR RAPES MINOR IN CITY

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: A woman Tuesday accused a contractor of sexually abusing her daughter at a slum under Mancheswar police station here. A complaint has been lodged with the police in this regard by the victim's mother.

According to sources, the complainant along with her husband and minor daughter stays at a slum in Mancheswar area. The victim's parents work as daily wagers in the city under the accused contractor. Tuesday morning, the accused suddenly arrived at their residence and asked the couple that there were some urgent work pending at the construction site and they should immediately go there to complete the pending work. The accused reportedly told the couple that he would be late as he had to arrange some other labourers too and left their house.

However, after a few minutes he came back and raped the minor finding her alone in the house. The victim revealed the whole episode after her parents returned in the afternoon. Mancheswar police started an investigation into the case.

BMC, AMRI organise heart check-up camp

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 28: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) and AMRI Hospital Tuesday organised a healthy heart health check-up camp to assist patients with cardio vascular diseases.

The health check-up camp was organised to mark the World Heart Day September 29, 2020 and provide cardiac care assistance to the patients. Health professionals from the hospital tried to create awareness on the heart care and talked about the impact of sedentary lifestyle. Close to 150 BMC employees attended the camp. Deputy Commissioner of BMC Suvendu Sahu said that heart health check and awareness are the need of the hour. "A number of BMC employees are now so much involved in the fight against COVID-19 that they are ignoring their health. So, this type of health awareness and health check-up camps will help their health needs," he said.

Doctors at AMRI Hospital said that heart health is a major concern in both rural and urban areas.

CUT POWER TARIFF, CONG TELLS GOVT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: The Odisha Congress Tuesday demanded rollback of hiked power tariff and put forth its demand for further reduction in the tariff owing to the loss of income of the people during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking to the media, former minister and Congress leader Panchanan Kanungo Tuesday launched a scathing attack on the government over the decision to increase the electricity tariff.

"During COVID crisis all segments of the consumers have suffered a setback as their incomes reduced. Small shopkeepers, Small and Medium Enterprises and farmers are yet to recover from the financial losses in the light of the crisis and the government is giving them the double whammy," he said.

Kanungo said that the party had earlier demanded reduction in the electricity charges but the Odisha



Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) with the approval of the government increased the rates and left the vulnerable sections of the society on the tenterhooks.

The party also reiterated the demand for CAG audit of funds given in the state for electricity infrastructure development in the last 10 years and its utilisation. The party alleged mismanagement of the funds in the electricity sector.

"Around Rs 2,000 crore of discoms have been pending with the state government. The state Congress and consumer associations have repeatedly demanded that all power related incomes be audited within the last few years. But the government is apathetic towards it," he said. The party attacked the government and warned that the Congress party will call a massive public agitation under the leadership of OPCC president Niranjan Patnaik seeking immediate reduction in power tariff.

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R-5015

NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL
DIGAPAHANDI
GANJAM, ODISHA, PIN-761012

CORRIGENDUM

In continuation to this office e-procurement BID Identification No.DIGNAC-03/2020-21 & NIB No.2266/DIGNAC, dtd.03.09.2020, it is to inform that a New Corrigendum of date titled "CORRIGENDUM-SANITATION WORKS" has been published due to the Time Extensions for Bidding along with Additional terms & conditions for submission of documents has been made regarding Sanitation Works in the e-Procurement Web Portal. You may kindly visit the e-Procurement Web Portal for further details.

Sd./- Executive Officer
N.A.C., Digapahandi

On the Occasion of 12th Day



Late PRAKASH CHANDRA PANDA
Kapalidevi Sahi, Old Town, Bhubaneswar-2

Date of Arrival: 05.02.1951
Date of Demise: 19.09.2020

We offer our prayer to Lord Lingaraj for the salvation of your soul. May you please bless us from the eternal world of celestial bliss.

Bereaved Members of the Family:
Loving Wife: Geetanjali, Brother: Ashok Chandra Panda, Son & Daughter in Law: Siba Prasad Panda, Monalisa Panda, Daughter & Son in Law: Pallabi, Barada Dash, Grand Daughter: Ishika, Family & Relatives.

Differently-abled plasma donor feted

PNN & UNI

Sambalpur, Sept 29: Sambalpur Municipal Corporation (SMC) Tuesday felicitated differently-abled Birendra Rout for donating plasma to treat COVID patients.

A resident of the Hirakud industrial township, Birendra is hard of hearing and speaking. He is the first COVID patient of the place to beat Corona with strong willpower and care of the doctors and medical staff.

"After his recovery from the infection, he came forward voluntarily to donate plasma so that other patients can get the benefit and inspiration too," SMC commissioner Aniruddha Padhan said.

On the instruction of Sambalpur Collector Subham Saxena, the authorities of SMC and Lions' Club of Mahanadi Green organised this felicitation programme in Hirakud.

The SMC commissioner appealed to the people to take Birendra as an example who voluntarily came forward to donate plasma although his physical condition is not normal like others.

Lions' Club of Mahanadi Green president Umashankar Rout handed over Rs 3,000 to Birendra to meet his necessities partially.

Aparna Padhi of SMC and in-charge of Hirakud Township also assured all sorts of help to him to lead a life with dignity without depending on others.

State's COVID-19 fatalities at 828

AS MANY AS 3,896 PATIENTS RECOVERED TUESDAY, TAKING THE TOTAL RECOVERIES IN ODISHA TO 1,81,481

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: State's COVID-19 tally rose to 2,15,676 Tuesday as 3,067 more people tested positive for the infection, while 15 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's coronavirus death toll to 828, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

As many as 1,809 new cases were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,258 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing, said the official. Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, reported the highest number of new cases at 555, followed by Cuttack (230) and Puri (178).

Three fresh fatalities each were reported in Balasore, Cuttack and Khurda, two in Puri and one each in Bolangir, Jharsuguda, Nabarangpur and Sundargarh districts, the official pointed out.

Meanwhile, 3896 patients recovered Tuesday, taking the total recoveries in Odisha to 1,81,481, said the H&FW department official, adding that as many as 53 COVID-19 patients have died due to other ailments so far.

According to sources, the COVID cases which were rising over the



VITAL STATS		
Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, reported the highest number of new infections at 555, followed by Cuttack (230) and Puri (178)	Three fresh fatalities each were reported in Balasore, Cuttack and Khurda, two in Puri and one each in Bolangir, Jharsuguda, Nabarangpur and Sundargarh districts	Khurda district has registered the highest number of 36,959 COVID cases followed by Cuttack (20,161), Ganjam (20,697) and Puri (9882)
Ganjam district has registered the highest death toll of 219 followed by Khurda (131), Cuttack (69) and Puri (54)		

4000-mark daily from September 14 last have started declining from September 26 and for the last three days the positive cases have come

down from 3922 to 3067. Only six districts in the state reported cases more than 100 during the past 24 hours while during the

Implement RBI's security guidelines, CP tells banks

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: Following two separate bank robbery incidents in city within a

few days gap, the Commissionerate police Tuesday urged the banks in the city to make adequate security arrangements at their premises as per the guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Speaking on the issue, Deputy Commissioner of Police Umashankar Dash said, "We observed that the bank authorities are not following the security guidelines like raising of alarm signals in case of any suspicious activities and deployment of security guards during the recent incidents of bank hold-ups . We Tuesday wrote letters to all the branches of different banks in the city asking them to follow the security guidelines issued by RBI properly."

The RBI has directed all the banks to deploy eligible armed guards equipped with mobile phone, lanyard with whistles and properly functioning fire arms at their premises. The Branch Managers and the supervisory officers visiting the branches were directed to check the alarm system in place during their visit to the branches. The RBI also asked the branches to keep the telephone numbers of the local Police Station and Fire Brigade and senior officials of the bank under the glass top on the tables of the Officers and members of the staff.

Meanwhile, DCP Dash also expressed confidence in arresting the accused robbers involved in both the robberies in city during past few days.

The robbers followed same modus operandi during the robberies at the branches of both Indian Overseas Bank and Bank of India under Chandrasekharpur and Mancheswar police limits respectively.

We observed that the bank authorities are not following the security guidelines like raising of alarm signals in case of any suspicious activities and deployment of security guards during the recent incidents of bank hold-ups . We Tuesday wrote letters to all the branches of different banks in the city asking them to follow the security guidelines issued by RBI properly

UMASHANKAR DASH, BHUBANESWAR DCP

Odia helpline for elderly on cards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: The state government has now started work on bringing a new Odia helpline for the senior citizens of the state to cater to their needs during the difficult phase of their lives.

As per the directions of the Ministry of Social Justice, a national helpline would soon be opened for the senior citizens to cater to their concerns and demands. The states have now been asked to host these services in their states in their own language.

The State Social Security and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department in the state which deals with the welfare affairs of the elderly has planned to work out on the modalities to bring one such service in Odia language for the elderly of the state. "The Senior Citizen Helpline

has been envisioned to be run by the State government in local language as per the instructions of the ministry. The helpline can work in offering catering to the grievances of the senior citizens. Talks with the Odisha Computer Application Centre (OCAC) are on to develop the helpline," an official from the department said requesting anonymity.

For starting the helpline, a tripartite contract will be signed among the department, OCAC and the Union government. The government has planned to start the services from October 1, 2020.

According to the Action Plan of the Ministry of Social Justice for 2020, it has planned setting up a National Helpline for Senior Citizens during the Year which would link Centre, State Governments, District Administrations and NGOs for resolving Grievances of the elders.

Police bust fake engine oil unit

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: Commissionerate Police Tuesday busted a fake engine oil manufacturing unit at Samegadia in Mancheswar area here.

The police have seized huge amount of duplicate engine oil and arrested the kingpin of the racket and two others. The prime accused has been identified as Babaji while police are yet to reveal the identities of two of his associates.

Police Tuesday evening conducted a raid at the factory following a tip-off and seized around 15 barrels of fake engine oil. The police also spotted raw material at the godwon during the raid.



Admissions for Plus III Arts and Commerce courses underway at BJB College in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday

LIFE BEYOND PANDEMIC

Village committees in north zone set example

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: BMC's community participation through slum and village Committees under the North Zone of has set an example in a sustained awareness generation and fight against the COVID-19 pandemic situation especially in North Zone of the city.

Though there are more than 400 slums across the city, the COVID-19 positives in these settlements remained low as mentioned by the civic authorities. For the last two months regular awareness, sanitation, home inspection and visits by the Slum and Village Committees have resulted in a marked difference.

According to sources these activities in fact, have helped in lowering the COVID burden. While North Zone has sanctioned Rs.5,000 to each committee as a first-round budget for IEC and awareness.



Involvement of local and community members in different COVID prevention activities has resulted in the active community participation with a tangible reduction of slum cases in North Zone of BMC.

The civic body has released 1 lakh to each ward as a budget to fight against COVID-19. In Number 21 ward of North Zone 110 Slum and village Committees have already been formed to work towards the community-led fight against the

Corona virus. Each of the Slum and Village committee was financed under the Ward budget.

The committees have been engaged in promoting information education communication (IEC) campaigns, family awareness, organising meetings, sanitisation, helping surveillance team, spraying of sodium hypochlorite solution in the affected surroundings, up-to-date information about symptomatic cases and organising meetings to review the status.

Met predicts heavy rain for two days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Tuesday said heavy rainfall is likely to occur at some places of the state during next two days.

One or two places over Ganjam, Gajapati, Puri, Kandhamal and Jagatsinghpur will receive heavy rainfall Wednesday while a few places of Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts will witness heavy downpour the next day, the IMD said.

Thunderstorm with lightning would occur in some areas of Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Gajapati, Ganjam, Khurda, Puri, Nayagarh, Malkangiri, Koraput, Rayagada, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Dhenkanal and Mayurbhanj districts during these two days, the Met said.

WORKERS' CAUSE



Members of construction workers' union affiliated to AITUC demonstrate near BMC office in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, to press for realisation of their demands

Centre urged to frame nat'l policy on rivers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: People and organisations working for conservation and protection of rivers across the country came forward in union to demand a National River Policy here Tuesday.

In a joint statement after a two-day virtual dialogue, organisations like Mahanadi Banchoa Jivika Banchoa Aviyan, Odisha-Chattisgarh, Zilla Banchoa Sangharsha Mircha, Focus Odisha Foundation and several other Organisations from Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttakhand, Chattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and Odisha have urged the government to bring a National Legislation for management, conservation, protection and rejuvenation of river basins in the country. The organisations also demanded



ensuring free flowing of rivers to maintain ecological diversity. While speaking at the virtual event participated by river activists from across the country, convener of SANDRP and eminent scholar Himanshu Thakkar has highlighted how National Water Policy is trivialised as River Policy, where rivers are indispensable for human life and biodiversity.

Thakkar further added that rivers are being encroached, obstructed and polluted, that's why many rivers are dying naturally.

River Activist and Pune based prominent Researcher Shrishtee Bajpai in her presentation spoke while de-commissioning of Dams are happening world over, we in India are opting for more Dams thereby damaging ecological character of our rivers. She stressed on rights of rivers should be ensured rivers can't protect themselves, we need to come forward to protect our source of water.

Former IIM Bangalore Professor and Ganga campaigner Bharat Jhunjhwal stressed the need for

framing River management policy and solution of both Inter-State and Trans-boundary river issues at the earliest.

River scientist Supratim Karmakar highlighted on how frequent natural disasters harming the river-ecosystem in Mahanadi, Sunarnarekha, The Ganges and Sundarban delta, in turn it is threatening livelihoods of millions.

Director of Focus Odisha Foundation Sudarshan Chhotaray spoke on how people in Mahanadi River system especially farmers, fishermen and artisan communities belonging to both Chattisgarh and Odisha are living with uncertainty over construction of barges in upper stream of Hirakud and lifting of Mahanadi waters for Industrial purposes and discharge of both municipal and industrial wastes.

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Govt pulls up 9 Joda mines lease holders

The lease holders are unable to make 80 pc of mineral extraction as approved in environmental clearance



POST NEWS NETWORK

Joda, Sept 29: After lease terms of several mines expired, the state government had leased out those to the highest bidders in Joda mining circle of Keonjhar district. Sources said that the government had wanted to ensure 80 per cent of the mineral extraction as prescribed in the environmental clearance, but this is not happening. As a result, the government is losing huge amount of revenue, a report said.

According to the report, the older lease holder used to extract the amount of mineral as approved in the environmental clearance.

For the new lease holders of the mines, the government had determined that they should extract at least 80 per cent of the minerals as approved in their environmental clearances. But nine of them have failed to achieve the target in the mineral extraction as fixed by the government.

The state government has issued notices to these miners. They are—Thakurani mine owned by Arcellor Mittal India Ltd, Jaribahal and Siliyoda mines owned by Kashi International, Katasahi mine owned by Agression Sponge, Jajanga and Nuagan mines owned by JSW, Roide mine owned by Narvoram Power and the mines owned by Sirajuddin and Jagatjanani.

As mineral extraction and transportation has failed to reach the tar-

As mineral extraction and transportation have failed to reach the target, it has badly impacted the state's revenue

The lease holders are unable to deploy necessary workforce and machines in the mines

Mines experts point out shortcomings in basic infrastructure as a hurdle

get, it has badly impacted the revenue generation as expected by the state government from this sector.

It was learnt that the lease holders are unable to deploy necessary workforce and machines in the mines, as a result of which 80 per cent mineral extraction is not being possible.

On the other hand, mines experts pointed out shortcomings in basic infrastructure as a hurdle.

Though mineral extraction is taking place in the mines, mineral transportation is not being carried out in time, because of poor transportation and bad shape of roads in mineral-bearing areas, they observed. Some pointed out that lease holder have deliberately lowered the mineral extraction and transportation. There is some link between falling revenue for the government and more profitability for the lease holders, they alleged.

Illegal sand mining ailing Budhabalanga riverbank

LOCALS SAY THE ADMIN AND SAND MAFIA HAVE FORMED A NEXUS TO LOOT MINOR MINERAL DAY AND NIGHT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 29: The Budhabalanga riverbed has been a hunting ground for sand mafia at different riparian pockets in Mayurbhanj district. Due to illegal sand mining, the government has been losing lakhs of rupees, a report.

Besides, wanton extraction of sand leads to erosion of river banks in several riverside villages in the district raising concerns among the local residents.

Even transit passes given by tehsil are allegedly being misused

by some lease holders while the Revenue department is allegedly looking the other way.

Locals alleged that local administration and sand mafia have formed a nexus to loot minor mineral day and night. At Arpata sand mine under Badasahi tehsil, sand mafia

has been using swamp pump sets to extract sand from its bed in violation of environment protection norms. This causes massive erosion of banks, causing resentment in riparian villages. Hundreds of trucks



Wanton extraction of sand leads to erosion of riverbanks in several riverside villages in the district raising concerns among the locals

and tractors cart away sand from the river on a daily basis, locals alleged, pointing out that at different places,

mafia has stocked sand. Locals allege that at some places, sand lease holders use pumps and

other equipment to extract the minor minerals in the areas like Arpata, Mahupura, Belapal, Dingira, Tuna Gambharria, and Pratapur. However, Sakua sand mine was not leased out this year.

The administration has been flayed for inaction against the sand looters despite knowing the fact.

"Due to illegal sand mining large chunks of riverbank has been eroded and the river continuously threatens to enter our village. Every year we had to suffer a lot because of flooding in the village," said a local.

Meanwhile, tehsildar Mumtaz Moharana said if sand is being extracted through swamp pump sets, action will be taken against the lease holders. The matter will be investigated, she added.

If sand is being extracted through swamp pump sets, action will be taken against the lease holders. The matter will be investigated

MUMTAZ MOHARANA I
TEHSILDAR, BADASAH I

FOOD NUTRITION



Anganwadi workers lay various fruits and food items for display as part of an awareness drive during National Nutrition Month at Jemadepentha ICDS centre in Rayagada

OP PHOTO

LIGHTNING KILLS 15-YR-OLD BOY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Sept 29: A youth was killed after lightning struck him on a pastureland near Jaripada village under Sadar police limits in the district, Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Chandrasarathi Das, 15, son of Samir Ranjan Das in the village. The inci-



dent occurred when he was grazing his herd of cattle on a pastureland

near his village.

Notably, Chandrasarathi had secured 91 per cent marks in this year's HSC examination and got himself admitted in plus two science course in Kendrapara(Autonomous) College. He was waiting for the college to reopen as it was closed due to Covid-19 pandemic when lightning struck him and cut short his life.

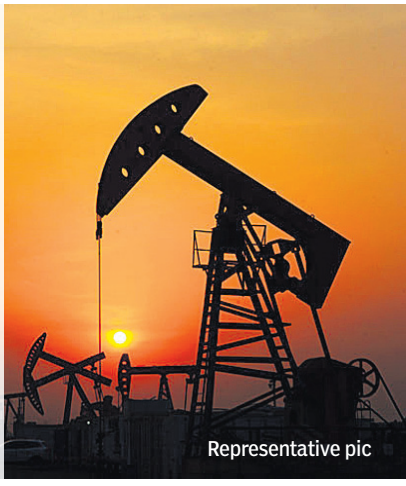
Natural gas exploration resumes in Kendrapara

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Sept 29: The public sector unit Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) re-launched natural gas exploration at Bishoka village under Derabish block Monday after presence of natural gas reserve were reported from the district.

The matter came to fore after workers started drilling ground to trace the presence of natural gas in the village, Monday. Geophysicists KVS Sibaram Krishnan, Prabin Kumar and Ramakrishnan were seen supervising the entire operation. Earlier, scientific studies of the samples drawn have confirmed visible

In Derabish, exploration for natural gas was first launched in 2007 after gas started coming out of ground during digging of tube wells



Representative pic

concentration of methane gas in the village.

The exploration for natural gas was first launched in 2007 after gas started coming out of ground during digging of tube wells at different point of times under the block. The water drawn from a tube well also gave out pungent smell and to the utter surprise of everybody the water caught fire when brought near a flame.

Earlier, ONGC launched natural gas exploration at Mantripada village under the block December 13, 2007 but later abandoned it citing lesser presence of the gas. However, presence of methane gas has been confirmed during drilling of tube wells at various places under the block

since 2016. Presence of natural gas was found at Mathasahi village after digging the ground around 50-ft for a tube well, April 23, 2020. The gas when came in contact with fire burnt for two hours.

Similarly, methane gas was spotted in the same manner at Ghagra village under Kendrapara block, December 21, 2017.

The ONGC launched exploration and found presence of natural gas after drilling for around 200-ft. In 2018, natural gas was found in Kalabuda village under Garadapur block June 16 and in Sobala village under Mahakalapada block September 9 during digging of tube wells of two villagers.

Why Forest dept staff fear this beat house in Dhenkanal dist?

13 YEARS AGO MAOISTS LAID SIEGE TO THIS KANDRA BEAT HOUSE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, Sept 29: The very mention of January 31, 2007 always rings a bell, at least for the Forest department staff here.

On this day, Maoists laid siege to Kandara beat house under tribal dominated Kankadahada block in Dhenkanal district and killed three staff in a barbaric manner.

13 years have passed since this horrifying incident took place. As of now, there is no trace of any Maoists activities in the area.

But, the mute spectator to the barbaric event, the beat house, still instills a kind of fear among the staff. Even today, the employees posted at the beat house have made it a point to leave the office before the fall of night.

Anantapur reserve forest under Kamakhyanagar eastern range comes under this beat house. The employees posted here are supposed to keep a watch on the timber mafias. With the beat house going unmanned at nights, the timber mafias, cashing in on it, are smuggling costly timbers from the Anantapur reserve forest to neigh-



Even today, the employees posted at the beat house have made it a point to leave the office before the fall of night

boursing Jajpur district via Khidkidwar and Kandar.

Since there have been no Maoists activities in the areas bordering Jajpur-Dhenkanal border and Kankadahada block, the Forest department is contemplating on reconstructing the beat house.

When contacted, DFO Prakash Chand Gogineni said the existing beat house is a two-room concrete house. If the beat house gets a new look with all security arrangements, the employees can stay there and do their night duties without any fear.

The work on the beat house will start soon, it was learnt.

Body of missing JE fished out from Safei river

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Sept 29: Police recovered the body of a missing Junior Engineer of Rural Development department, Jharsuguda, from Safei river under Bhasma police limits in Sundargarh district Tuesday afternoon. His belongings were also recovered from the river bridge.

The deceased was identified as Sudhir Kumar Nayak, the junior engineer. He had been missing since Monday night. It was the police officers of Bhasma police station who first spotted a pair of shoes, a helmet, a mobile phone and a motorcycle with its key on the bridge on Safei river Monday night.

Following an investigation, they came to know about the owner of the belongings and immediately informed his family members. On being informed, Nayak's family members launched a frantic search for him. It was when they failed in tracing him out that they lodged a Missing Person's report with the police. Meanwhile, the cops after a hectic search operation fished out the body from Safei river with the help of fire officials. Later, the body was sent for post-mortem.

Woman alleges daughter 'abducted' by jilted lover

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, Sept 29: A minor girl who has won a National Bravery Award has been abducted in Kendrapara district, it is alleged.



The girl saved several persons' lives during a boat capsizing incident at Mahanadi river confluence in Kendrapara district last year. For this she had received Indian Council for Child Welfare's National Bravery Award-2019.

The girl's mother lodged a report with Jambur police station alleging that her daughter has been abducted.

In her complaint, she has alleged that one Pratap Khada, a resident of Salio village in Jagatsinghpur dis-

trict has abducted her daughter.

The woman has also mentioned it in her complaint that the man has been in a one-sided-love with her daughter and forcing her to marry him.

The police have taken the incident

seriously. On the basis of the complaint, the police have launched an investigation. Their efforts are on to rescue the girl, it was learnt.

Notably, the girl and her sister when saw a boat capsizing in the Mahanadi river confluence near Nipania village under Mahakalapada block, jumped into the river despite knowing it very well that the confluence area is infested with crocodiles. They managed to save at least ten persons, including some children, from drowning.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, MAYURBHANJ (R&B) DIVISION, BARIPADA
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
1st Corridor to Bid Identification No. EE-06/2020-21
E mail- bpd_eerb@rediffmail.com
No.B-307:- Due to unavoidable circumstance tender for the work "Construction of attendant's rest shed at D.H.H., Baripada under Baripada Block for the year 2020-21 (Civil-EI+P.H.)" Vide Sl. No.(4) of Bid Identification No. EE-06/2020-21 is hereby cancelled.
All other terms & conditions are remain unchanged.
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Mayurbhanj (R&B) Division
OIPR-34025/11/0005/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. B-305
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, GANJAM (R&B) DIVISION NO.-I, BERHAMPUR
Phone/Fax: (0680) 2233683, e-mail: eernb1_bam@yahoo.com
"e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. EE R&B Divn. No I Bam 14/2020-21
Lr. No. 6470 Dtd. 25.09.2020

Name of Work	: Electrical Work
No. of Works	: 1 (One) No.
Estimated Cost	: Approximately Rs.29.47 lakhs
Period of Completion	: Two Calendar Months
Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	: From 11.00 A.M. of Dt.01.10.2020 to 16.00 hours of 14.10.2020
Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal	: Upto 16.00 hours of 14.10.2020
Name & address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No. I, Berhampur

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>
Sd./- Executive Engineer
Ganjam (R&B) Division No. I, Berhampur
OIPR-34109/11/0007/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. C-14
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, P.H. DIVISION, SAMBALPUR
Phone No.: (0663) 2412135, Fax No.: (0663) 2412335
E-mail ID: eephsbp@gmail.com, eephsbp@nic.in
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement
Bid Identification No. EEPHSBP-04/2020-21 Dt.23.09.2020

01 Name of the Work	: 1 No. Works
02 Type of Bid	: Two Bid System
03 Estimated Cost	: Rs.50.47 lakhs
04 Period of Completion	: 5 (Five) Calendar Months
05 Date & Time of availability of Bid document in the portal	: From 11.00 A.M. of Dt.01.10.2020 to 5.00 P.M. of 15.10.2020
06 Last date/time of receipt of bids in the portal	: 5.00 P.M. of 15.10.2020
07 Date & time of opening of Technical Bids	: At 11.30 A.M. of 16.10.2020
08 Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid	: Executive Engineer, P.H. Division, Sambalpur, Brooks' Hill, Near Stadium, A/P.O.- Motjihar, Dist.- Sambalpur - 768 001

Further details can be seen from the website <http://tenders.ori.nic.in> or www.tendersorissa.gov.in.
Sd./- Executive Engineer
P.H. Division, Sambalpur
OIPR-13026/11/0005/2021

Love is the keynote, Joy is the music, Knowledge is the performer, the infinite All is the composer and audience.

SRI AUROBINDO



Adverts & media

Running a media establishment is an expensive and difficult proposition, be it print, TV or internet based. Overhead costs are high and unbearable for most, and these establishments somehow make ends meet.



Dr. Santosh Kumar Mohapatra

APART FROM THE RECESSION, INDIA IS SLIDING INTO A DANGEROUS PHASE OF STAGFLATION -- A COMBINATION OF INFLATION AND LOW GROWTH -- AND A DECLINE IN JOB CREATION

Now, news is that some of the top Indian brands that spend a lot for advertisements want to join hands and tell TV channels that they would 'pull the plug' on adverts if they do not stop being toxic in their programmes.

Undoubtedly, adverts keep the media ticking because even business houses with huge wealth learned the hard way in the past that they cannot sustain a media by liberal funding from their own cash chests.

The frenzy of most TV channels to engage in sensationalism with a view to raise their TRP ratings is well-known. The Supreme Court, earlier this month had asked the government to effect checks on such indulgences.

Piate
Tathagata Satpathy

Be it TV or print or even social media, it is extremely difficult to have rules of the game. Who will frame the rules for the media in such a large and divergent country like India?

This is not a circus with a ring. While controls are necessary, those cannot be uniform and there should be no single authority in this system to do it as that is bound to lead to gross misuse of the power in ways as to muzzle media freedom. In fact, the Indian media is already guided by a framework of regulations and the general conduct of the media is not objectionable.

A collective muscle-flexing by the advertising community, the big-budget corporates and such other entities in business, to impress upon the media to behave properly and not destroy the delicate social balance that is holding a country like India together, may be the best way ahead.

At an individual level, each business entity is well within its limit to decide whether to put an advertisement in a particular channel or journal. However, an organised voice gives out a clear message that even if the government has other devious plans, business interests wish to keep the country calm and peaceful by roping in wayward media houses.

Kudos to Indian business houses which, though a bit late, have thought of this country and not just their own profits in taking such a brave stand.

WISDOM CORNER

- What is history? An echo of the past in the future; a reflex from the future on the past. VICTOR HUGO
Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is a slow ripening fruit. ARISTOTLE
A bird does not sing because it has an answer. It sings because it has a song. INDIAN PROVERB

WORDSWORTH

Troop

Its usage has been bugging Americans in recent years, with a lot of comment appearing on language-related sites. The traditional position that you are likely to find in reference books is that troop is a collective term for a group of people of unspecified number.



Melvin Durai

THE MOST IMPORTANT NUMBER THAT MY BRAIN REMEMBERS, OF COURSE, IS MY WIFE'S BIRTHDAY

How long would it take you to multiply 869,463,853 by 73? It takes 20-year-old Neelakantha Bhanu Prakash of Hyderabad just 26 seconds to produce the answer: 63,470,861,269.

It would take me about 26 minutes to do it, most of that time spent searching in the drawers of my home for a calculator.

Well, perhaps I'd do it much faster, but only because my cellphone has a calculator app. If I couldn't use a calculator, I'd have to use a pencil and paper, as well as a quick consultation with my 14-year-old son.

Prakash, of course, does not need a calculator, nor any consultation. Known as the world's fastest human calculator, he has trained his brain to perform calculations at an amazing speed.

Let's say I am doing a multiplication of 8,763 multiplied by eight," he told CNN. "I'll probably multiply 8,000 by eight which is 64,000, 700 by eight which is 5,600, 60 by eight which is 480, three by eight is 24. And I add all of these.

But this requires the human brain to remember all this."

The human brain is capable of remembering a lot of information. For example, I've trained my brain to remember many numbers (numerous numerals). The most important number that my brain remembers, of course, is my wife's birthday.

If you are married, it is extremely important that you remember your spouse's birthday — more important than remembering your own. During the early part of my marriage, I had to write my wife's birthday in a date book to remember it, but eventually it became imprinted on my brain.

Remembering anniversaries is also important, whether it's your wedding anniversary, the anniversary of India's Independence Day, or the anniversary of that amazing day, on August 11, 2008, when Abhinav Bindra won India's first ever individual Olympic gold medal. When I was younger, I would

also pride myself in being able to remember the phone numbers of all my friends. But I eventually got a phone that allowed me to store numbers in it, and this freed up my brain to remember all kinds of other figures, including scores from championship football games, measurements from cooking recipes, and the number of Filmfare Awards that Shahrukh Khan has won.

But Prakash's brain is on a completely different level from mine. His brain is on the 100th floor of a skyscraper, trying to glide off the balcony, while mine is on the ground floor, trying to figure out how to open the elevator door.

Prakash recently became the first Asian (and first non-European) to win gold at the Mental Calculation World Championship at the Mind Sports Olympiad (MSO) in London. The young man has been winning trophies in mathematics competitions since he was 7, but doesn't like to be called a prodigy, even if his

math ability seems prodigious.

The term "prodigy" suggests that he was born with math ability, whereas he has developed it through rigorous mental training and extraordinary perseverance that helped him overcome childhood trauma.

"I couldn't even go to school for a year," he said. "All I had to rely on to get better were numbers and puzzles."

He wants to help fight math phobia — fear of math — and has founded an organisation called Exploring Infinities that aims to help children become more comfortable with math.

Truly an inspirational figure, he has inspired me to challenge my brain a little more. From time to time, I'm going to try to do some arithmetic in my head, perhaps even calculating the number of days until my wife's next birthday.

FOCUS ECONOMY

A DOWNHILL RIDE

The Covid-19 pandemic has unleashed a health disaster, precipitous economic downturn, and humanitarian catastrophe in India as well as the world around.

The much-publicised war against the pandemic is lost despite the stringent lockdown as is corroborated by the Oxford stringent index. As of now, India has more than six million infected people with a death toll nearing a lakh.

In order to camouflage the failures, the government is dubbing the pandemic as an "Act of God". Indian economy, which has grown every year for the past 40 years, was faltering even before the lockdown.

For eight successive quarters in 2018-19 and 2019-20, GDP growth declined every quarter from a high of 8.2 per cent (January-March 2018) to a low of 3.1 per cent (January-March 2020).

In terms of annual growth, the economic growth has declined from 8.2 per cent in 2015-16 to 7.1 per cent in 2016-17; 7 per cent in 2017-18 and 6.1 per cent in 2018-19, finally landing into an 11-year low of 4.2 per cent in 2019-20 against the government's assumption of 8.5 per cent in the 2019-20 budget.



In a V-shaped recession, the economy suffers a sharp but brief period of decline, followed by a strong recovery. But India is witnessing a K-shaped recovery, which means there is a growing gap between the 'rich and poor'

Unemployment had touched a 45-year high of 6.8 per cent in 2017-18, with household consumption tumbling to four-decade lows. Total employment in India had dwindled by 9 million between 2011-12 and 2017-18, a first in the country's history; and five million men lost their jobs between 2016 and 2018 due to demonetisation.

However, the pandemic has exacerbated the already beleaguered economy through supply disruptions, demand compression, and financial repression caused by the countrywide lockdown.

India's economic recovery prospects have gone from bad to worse. Various rating agencies estimate that growth will contract by five to 14.8 per cent in 2020-21. What is more dangerous is that it is not only that the GDP has contracted but also that the economy

is hurtling towards cataclysm.

A decline in growth means a cataclysm of hunger, poverty, unemployment, inequality, multiple diseases and illiteracy threatening our lives. Any little gain made in health, education, innovation and human development will be obliterated.

What is more worrisome is that apart from the recession, India is sliding into a dangerous phase of stagflation — a combination of inflation and low growth — and a decline in job creation. The retail inflation measured by the consumer price index (CPI) remained above the upper band set by the RBI of 6 per cent for nine consecutive months.

As per data from the Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy

(CMIE), due to the lockdown, India's unemployment rate climbed to a staggering 27.1 per cent in the week ended May 3, from 8.4 per cent in the pre-lockdown week that ended March 22. Around 12.15 crore Indians were out of job in April.

Compared to the 40.4 crore people employed, on average in 2019-20, employment had fallen to 28.2 crore in April 2020 due to the lockdown. However, after unlocking the 40-day lockdown, jobs were created again in the informal and unorganised sector, but formal jobs have not been spurred.

What is worrisome is that according to CMIE's latest report, salaried jobs have taken the biggest hit in the Covid-19 induced lockdown. Between April and August, about 2.1 crore salaried people in India lost their jobs.

The pandemic has reshaped India beyond imagination. Krishnamurthy Subramanian, chief economic advisor (CEA), said India's economy was set for a "V-shaped" recovery and should perform better in the coming quarters. In a V-shaped recession, the economy suffers a sharp but brief period of economic decline, followed by a strong recovery.

Three premier public health organisations — IPHA, IAPSM, and IAE — had in their highly critical statements pointed out that the historic and systematic neglect of public health as a discipline and non-involvement of public health experts in policy making and strategy formulation have cost the nation enormously in the current pandemic. However, there was no attempt to strengthen health infrastructure and many patients are dying due to refusal of hospitals to admit and provide them with oxygen, ventilators.

The writer is an Odisha-based economist.

IN JEST THIS

Brain is what we try & make of it

Loss in postal orders

Sir, It was only after a public revelation through RTI application that the Department of Posts discontinued postal orders in outdated denominations like 1, 2, 5 and 7 rupees, because of the extremely low sale figure and high handling cost.

Surge in Covid caseload

Sir, Ever since Covid-19 came on January 30 this year, the surge in its spread is alarming and this is a cause for major concern for both the people and the administration.

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.

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

Subhash Chandra Agarwal, DELHI

Sanjib Das, CUTTACK

A ray of prosperity at end of the tunnel

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Manali, Sept 29: There is going to be prosperity at the end of the 9.2-km long horseshoe-shaped single-tube, two-lane Atal Tunnel - one of India's strategically important infrastructure projects beneath the majestic Rohtang Pass - in the Lahaul Valley of Himachal Pradesh where 20,000 people remain cut off from the rest of the country every winter.

As it brings the landlocked valley close to the rest of the world even during the forlorn winter months when the area is covered under forgetful snow, its people are looking forward to continuous supplies, trade and tourism with the opening of the tunnel, earlier named after Rohtang Pass.

The strategic Atal Tunnel, constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), a wing of the Defence Ministry, in collaboration with Afcons, a joint venture with Strabag AG, under the 3,978 metre Rohtang Pass in the Pir Panjal range, is all set to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi October 3.

The tunnel's north portal lies towards Lahaul and Spiti district, while the south one is towards Dhundi, some 30 km from Manali.

"We were desperately awaiting the completion of the tunnel that was initially proposed to be completed by 2015," octogenarian farmer Bidhi Chand of Keylong town told IANS. "This will end our miseries forever," he said.

"We are happy that at least in our lifetime, we will be able to see the



A view of the world's longest high-altitude tunnel on Manali-Leh national highway, ahead of its inauguration by PM Narendra Modi October 3, in Manali, Tuesday. The 9-km tunnel built at an altitude of about 10,000 feet above sea level will shorten the distance between Manali and Leh. PTI PHOTO

tunnel that is going to ensure the all-weather connectivity with the rest of the state for the people of Lahaul," said Heera Singh of Sissu village.

Sissu is the venue where Modi will get a warm welcome by locals donning traditional attire. He will be reaching there to address a small gathering after inaugurating the tunnel at its south portal.

The Rs 1,495-crore tunnel's foundation stone was laid by United Progressive Alliance (UPA) chairperson Sonia Gandhi June 28, 2010, in the picturesque Solang Valley near Manali.

The tunnel - a dream of former

Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and named after him posthumously - missed its February 2015 deadline. As per the BRO, despite delays the tunnel is going to finish within Rs 3,200 crore out of the sanctioned Rs 4,083 crore.

Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur, who is leaving no stone unturned to make Modi's visit historic but low-key given Covid times, told IANS the tunnel would also be a boon for the cold deserts of Lahaul Valley, where over 20,000 people remain cut off in winter with the snapping of road links via the Rohtang Pass. The celebrations have been scaled down to ensure

strict physical distancing norms, he said.

Hotelier Nakul Bodh said the construction of the tunnel would ensure round-the-year flow of tourists to the Lahaul Valley, which will boost the local prosperity.

"After Manali, Keylong and its nearby areas will be the preferred tourist destinations. Even tourists staying in Manali can make a round-trip to Lahaul," he added.

For locals, the tunnel is a boon.

"No vegetable other than peas and potatoes that grow locally reach here once the road link via Rohtang Pass snaps in December. For at least four months, we have

GAME CHANGER

THE TUNNEL IS LOCATED AT PICTURESQUE BUT BREATHTAKING ALTITUDES RANGING ABOVE 3,000 METRES IN THE WESTERN HIMALAYAS. IT LIES BENEATH THE SNOW COVERED ROHTANG PASS, 70 PER CENT OF WHICH REMAINS UNDER SNOW EVEN IN SUMMER

BESIDES REDUCING ROAD DISTANCE BY 46 KM AND SAVING TRAVEL TIME BETWEEN MANALI AND KEYLONG, THE TUNNEL HAS THE CAPACITY TO PLY 3,000 VEHICLES PER DAY UNDER ANY WEATHER CONDITION

TILL LAST WINTER, HEAVY SNOWFALL HIGH UP THE ROHTANG PASS WOULD CLOSE THE ROAD CONNECTIVITY TO LAHAUL-SPITI DISTRICT

AP Cong urges Prez to get farm Bills repealed



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Sept 29: The Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee Tuesday urged President Ram Nath Kovind to intervene and get the three agricultural laws, recently enacted by Parliament, repealed forthwith as they would destroy the farmers.

The party organised a protest rally in Vijayawada opposing the Farmers Produce, Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance Farm Services Act and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020. A delegation of Congress leaders, led by state unit president S Sailajanath, later met Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan at the Raj Bhavan and handed over a memorandum addressed to the President. "The Modi government has unleashed a diabolical conspiracy against India's farmers and farming sector. The Union BJP government is conspiring to defeat the

Green Revolution by bringing in the captioned anti-farmer Bills. This is a well-designed conspiracy to destroy the 'Annadata' (farmer) and agriculture at the altar of a handful of crony capitalists," the Congress alleged.

The Central government "subverted India's federal structure, subjugated the constitutional mandate and suppressed the established parliamentary procedure" by using its draconian majority to pass the 'three black laws' without any discussion or prior consultation, it added. The APCC said, through these Acts, there was an intention to reduce the farmers into mere labourers in their own lands and entangle them in the contract system.

It noted that fully lifting stock limit on agriculture produce, consumable items and fruit-flower-vegetables would neither benefit farmers nor consumers. "It will benefit a handful of people indulging in hoarding and black marketing. Farmers and labourers will never forget the conspiracy of the Modi government."

Schools in Andhra to reopen November 2

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Sept 29: Schools in Andhra Pradesh would be re-opened for the 2020-21 academic year November 2, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced here Tuesday.

"We wanted to open the schools October 5, but in view of the prevailing situation, we have now decided to re-open them November 2," the Chief Minister told District Collectors during a video conference.

Schools have remained shut due to the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic in the current academic year. The state government initially announced September 5 as the re-opening day and later deferred it to October 5.

Though the Centre is yet to issue fresh guidelines on opening the schools fully, the Chief Minister set November 2 as the date.

The Chief Minister said the 'Jagannanna Vidya Kanuka' (Jagan's Education Gift) would, however, be distributed October 5 to all students.

A school kit, including uniforms, would be distributed to the students under the freebie scheme.



"If we distribute the kits October 5, students can get them stitched and be ready when the schools re-open November 2," he said.

The Chief Minister, who reviewed the progress of the 'Mana Badi, Naadu-Nedu' scheme, under which school infrastructure is being renovated, directed the District Collectors to step up the works.

Of the 15,715 schools chosen for renovation in the first phase, works were yet to begin in 153 schools, he said.

"Start the works immediately. The district Joint Collectors should monitor the works daily and ensure that they are completed in time," Jagan added.

Focus on Shinku La tunnel amid tension in Himalayas

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Manali, Sept 29: Amid the heightened border tension with both China and Pakistan in the Himalayas, road infrastructure projects have been given a push with completion of a marvel of engineering motorways - the Rohtang Pass highway tunnel.

Officials say the focus now is on constructing the strategic 13.5-km-long Shinku La tunnel, the shortest, safer and the third alternative corridor for the armed forces for forward areas of the Union territory of Ladakh. Experts told IANS the 9.2 km-long horseshoe-shaped single-tube, two-lane motorable tunnel -- the world's longest motorable tunnel at over 3,000 metre above the sea level -- is a key step in the Defence Ministry's attempt to make the 475-km Manali-Keylong-Leh highway, used mainly by the armed forces to reach forward areas in Ladakh bordering China and Pakistan, motorable round-the-year.

"The Rohtang tunnel alone is not enough to provide the Manali-Keylong-Leh axis an all-weather link as the tunnel is going to help only civilians of Keylong," an official of the BRO, which constructs roads along the international border, told IANS.

"Other three high-altitude mountain passes that lie between Keylong and Leh still remain snowbound



STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

The strategic importance of the Manali-Leh link was realised by the government when Pakistan tried to cut off the Srinagar-Leh road during the 1999 Kargil conflict, in a bid to restrict road access to Ladakh

However, the movement of armed forces to the forward areas in Ladakh from Manali side, that doesn't fall in the firing range of Pakistan forces, is feasible only from June to mid-December

With a round-the-year road link to tribal areas, the region will witness a huge influx of tourists not only for nature-based activities but also for visiting ancient Buddhist monasteries, admit state officials

for at least six months in a year that make the highway totally standstill," he said.

According to the official, the all-weather road to forward areas of requires more tunnels like Rohtang Pass, either at Shinku La or at least three passes located on the original 475-km Manali-Leh road for round-the-year connectivity.

From Keylong, the district headquarters of Lahaul-Spiti, the road travels further to Leh via Darcha, some 170 km from Manali.

From Darcha, where the BRO

has just completed the 360-m long longest steel truss bridge, one road bifurcates towards Shinku La (pass), the shortest route that traversing the remote Zaskar region towards Padum, some 30 km from Leh, and another towards the windy Manali-Leh highway.

The 297-km long Darcha-Nimmupadum road has been identified as the third strategic alternative to Ladakh in wake of the threat from Pakistan and China. The double lane road is under construction and likely to be completed by 2023,

officials said.

The BRO is also studying the feasibility of constructing a tunnel beneath the 13.5-km-long snow avalanche-prone Shinku La like the Rohtang tunnel to avoid the majestic pass.

"The tunnel beneath Shinku La will further drastically reduce the distance between Manali and Leh," an official told IANS.

The Manali-Leh route is 475 km, while the Manali-Darcha-Padum-Leh road is 444 km.

Currently the National Highways

and Infrastructure Development Corp Ltd is preparing the detailed project report of the Shinku La tunnel that will link Himachal Pradesh with Ladakh.

Officials admit with the completion of the Rohtang Pass tunnel, the focus of the Indian government now shifts towards the construction of the Shinku La tunnel owing to the strategic significance of the third route to Ladakh, a shorter one.

Currently the troop movement towards Ladakh is by two routes - the 434-km Srinagar-Kargil-Leh via Zojila Pass and the 475-km Manali-Leh that passes through the Rohtang Pass. But they remain cut off from the rest of the country for over six months due to heavy snowfall. For Kargil, the troop movement from Manali is via Leh that is 700-km long. With the construction of the Darcha-Nimmupadum road through the Shinku La tunnel, the distance between Manali and Kargil will be reduced to 522 km.

Officials admit the construction of the Shinku La tunnel alone is more viable in comparison to construction of at least tunnels beneath the Baralacha (16,020 feet), Lachlungla (16,620 feet) and Tanglangla (17,480 feet) passes that lie on the operational Manali-Leh link.

Crops in hundreds of acres inundated

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Sept 29: Standing crops in hundreds of acres were inundated as river Krishna saw a flood of over seven lakh cusecs at Prakasam Barrage in Vijayawada.

Though the flood discharge diminished to 6.46 lakh cusecs by night, the agricultural fields remained under a sheet of water.

The inflow at Prakasam Barrage dropped further to 5.77 lakh cusecs, but the flow is expected to continue as close to six lakh cusecs of water is being discharged from the upstream K L Rao Sagar at Pulichintala.

The flood discharge at Srisaillam was 5.01 lakh cusecs and at Nagarjuna Sagar 4.19 lakh cusecs Monday night, according to the state Water Resources Department data.

The lanka villages on either bank of the river, downstream the Prakasam Barrage, in Krishna and Guntur districts were marooned as the flood peaked to a high of 7.03 lakh cusecs during the day before slightly receding.

Four teams of National Disaster Response Force and one of SDRF were sent to different divisions in the two districts to attend to any eventuality even as several affected families were moved out to relief camps from the flood villages.

State Information Minister Perni



water into the river just behind the Prakasam Barrage. The LIS was meant to prevent flooding of the Amaravati capital region Villages in Kolluru and Kollipara mandals in Tenali revenue division of Guntur district were flooded.

In Krishna district, Thotlavalluru, Nagayalanka, Avaniigadda, Mopidevi, Challapalli and Ghantassala mandals were affected.

Mostly commercial crops and pulses that were widely grown during this time in Krishna and Guntur districts were affected by the flood.

Sugarcane, banana, turmeric, papaya, yam, redgram, Bengal gram were the worst hit.

'Centre's role in AP's 3 capitals issue limited'



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Karamchedu, Sept 29: Newly-appointed BJP general secretary Daggubati Purandeswari has said that the Central government does not have much of a role in Andhra Pradesh's three capitals issue.

"The Central government's role in AP's three capitals issue is very limited," she said.

Elated over finding a place in the Bharatiya Janata Party's new list of office-bearers, Purandeswari, the daughter of late Telugu Desam Party founder and Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister NT Rama Rao, thanked the party leadership for reposing faith in her and said that strengthening BJP is her goal.

"Fighting for people's problems and bringing BJP to power in the southern states is our objective," she said. She said the party is strong in some pockets of south India, which they want to penetrate deeper into with guidance from BJP's top leadership. She also claimed that the new farm Bills will cause no loss to farmers as the government took this decision only to double their income.

Write to me directly, not via media: Andhra DGP to Naidu

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, Sept 29: Andhra Pradesh Director General of Police D. Gautam Sawang has appealed to former Chief Minister and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) supreme N. Chandrababu Naidu to refrain from posting letters to the media addressed to him as the missives may have unverified details.

"Kindly refrain from posting letters addressed to the undersigned (Sawang) in the media since the contents may have unverified and wrong facts which may needlessly arouse suspicion in the minds of the public at large and cast aspersions," said Sawang.

However, he offered Naidu the opportunity of writing to him in private to help police discharge their lawful duties. "You may kindly write to me in a sealed cover and help the police in discharging their lawful duties and protecting the rights of people at large, thereby maintaining and enforcing the rule of law," he said.

The DGP was replying to Naidu's Sunday letter to him, in which the TDP supreme claimed that an attack on a person called Ramachandra in Chittoor district was planned and sponsored by the ruling YSRC,



aimed at curbing the dissent of his brother and suspended Judge Ramakrishna.

Referring to the alleged attack, Sawang said a case was registered and the facts were explained to Naidu.

Sunday, around 4.30 p.m., Ramachandra went to buy fruits at a vegetable market in B. Kothakota. While he was buying fruits, Prapat Reddy from Narayanapalli passed by in a car along with three other persons. "A verbal altercation ensued between a push cart vendor and Reddy over the former blocking the path of his car. It was then that Ramachandra, brother of suspended Judge Ramakrishna, who was in an inebriated condition entered into a verbal duel," said the DGP.

The argument quickly aggravated into a scuffle, prompting the

bystanders to intervene and separate them and later shifting Ramachandra to a community health centre, where the medical officer noted that the judge's brother was inebriated.

As Ramachandra suffered an abrasion on his nose, he was referred to the district hospital in Madanapalle for further treatment. "On the basis of the statement given by Ramachandra, a case under Section 34 IPC and SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act was registered at B. Kothakota. The investigation was immediately taken up by SDPO, Madanapalle," said the DGP.

Based on eyewitness accounts and video footage, Sawang said Ramachandra was injured in the scuffle with Reddy which occurred due to sudden provocation. "It is also established that Reddy is a staunch follower of the TDP. Keeping the above facts, Reddy was arrested earlier Monday," he asserted.

The top cop reiterated that the police department functions in accordance with the law and goes by the facts of the matter and is committed to protecting the constitutional and legal rights of the citizens guaranteed by the Constitution of India and other statutory laws.



Wonder what Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa and Home Minister B Bommai have to say about their own MP Tejasvi Surya calling Bangalore an epic centre of terror activities
BK HARIPRASAD | CONGRESS LEADER

AT 51 LAKH, INDIA HAS HIGHEST COVID RECOVERIES IN WORLD

India's Covid-19 recoveries have crossed 51 lakh, which is highest in the world, and the last 10 lakh recoveries came about in 11 days, the Union Ministry of Health said Tuesday



of the day quote

When I heard the 10 lakh job promise of Tejasvi Yadav I discussed it with my colleagues. I was informed that he will purchase 10 lakh tamanche and he will distribute them among unemployed youths and RJD members
DEVENDRA FADNAVIS | BJP LEADER

The farm laws will devastate the farmers of the country. It will only help the hoarders. The laws will not serve the interest of the farmers
MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

Nobody wants mid-term polls. But one also cannot figure out a solution to instability. Hence, something may happen one fine morning. All will try to see nothing happens. But if no combination works out, then there will be no option
CHANDRAKANT PATIL | MAHARASHTRA BJP PRESIDENT

India rejects China's stand on LAC in Ladakh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 29: India Tuesday rejected China's position that it abides by its 1959 stand on the perception of the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and asked the neighbouring country to refrain from advancing an "untenable unilateral" interpretation of the de-facto border. The stand by China spelt out by its foreign ministry insisting that it takes the 1959 line on perception of the LAC amid a nearly five-month-long border standoff in eastern Ladakh triggered a strong reaction from India.

"India has never accepted the so-called unilaterally defined 1959 Line of Actual Control (LAC). This position has been consistent and well known, including to the Chinese side," MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said in response to a question by the media on the issue. The spokesperson's comments came after a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman told Hindustan Times that China abides by the LAC as proposed by then Premier Zhou Enlai to Prime



China insists that it takes the 1959 line on perception of the LAC amid a nearly five-month-long border standoff in eastern Ladakh triggered a strong reaction from India

Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in a letter dated November 7, 1959.

Srivastava referred to various bilateral agreements including the 1993 agreement on maintenance of peace and tranquility along the LAC, 1996 pact on confidence building measures (CBMs) and the 2005 agreement on political parameters and guiding principles for settle-

ment of the boundary issue, to emphasise that both sides showed commitment to reach a common understanding of the alignment of the LAC.

"Therefore, the insistence now of the Chinese side that there is only one LAC is contrary to the solemn commitments made by China in these agreements," he said, adding

the Indian side has always respected and abided by the LAC.

Referring to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's recent address to Parliament, Srivastava said it is the Chinese side which by its attempts to transgress the LAC in various parts of the Western Sector has tried to unilaterally alter the status quo.

The MEA spokesperson also talked about repeated affirmation of the Chinese side in the last few months that the current situation in the border areas should be resolved in accordance with the agreements signed between the two countries.

"In the agreement reached between External Affairs Minister and his Chinese counterpart on 10th September also, the Chinese side has reiterated its commitment to abide by all the existing agreements," Srivastava said.

"We therefore expect that the Chinese side will sincerely and faithfully abide by all agreements and understandings in their entirety and refrain from advancing an untenable unilateral interpretation of the LAC," he added.

Farmers decide to intensify agitation



AGENCIES

Amritsar/Ferozepur, Sept 29: Farmers agitating over the three agricultural laws enacted by Parliament recently continued their 'rail roko' stir Tuesday for the sixth day and decided to extend it for an indefinite period.

The farmers under the banner of Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee have been squatting on rail tracks at various places in the state since September 24.

They said they have decided to intensify their protest against the Centre and will continue to block rail tracks at Tanda, Mukerian,

Jalandhar, Amritsar and Ferozepur.

The protesters are demanding the rollback of the three "anti-farmer" legislations.

The train service, meanwhile, continued to remain suspended in Punjab amid the farmers' stir. Under the banner of Kisan Mazdoor Sangharsh Committee, the farmers Tuesday also unanimously resolved to boycott some private companies, alleging that the Centre's farm Bills were intended to benefit some private players.

State general secretary of the committee, Sarwan Singh Pandher, dubbed the farm laws as "anti-farmer" and said the private firms will exploit farmers. Another farmer leader Savinder Singh Chautala said the "rail roko" protest would be further intensified next month and urged people from all sections of the society to come forward and support the farmers' cause.

In Ferozepur district too, the protesting farmers vowed to boycott some private companies.

They continued to block the railway track near Basti Tankan Wali for the sixth consecutive day.

While addressing farmers, union leaders Satnam Singh Pannu, state president of the Sangharsh Committee, said the farmers have pledged to boycott each of the products that come from some of the corporate houses. He claimed that the Central government wants to promote the interests of some corporate houses in the country.

Defence startup challenge launched

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 29: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Tuesday launched a startup contest under which innovators, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and startups have to find new ideas applicable to 11 specific challenges of the Indian defence sector.

Four of the 11 subjects of the Defence India Startup Challenge 4 (DISC4) are autonomous underwater swarm drones, foliage penetration radar, reduction of radar cross-section of naval warships and artificial intelligence based satellite image analysis and reduction, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

If an idea of a startup, an innovator or an MSME is accepted by the ministry in DISC4, the entity would be given innovation grants by the ministry to develop the prototype.

VOICE AGAINST RAPE



Police detain Congress activists during a protest against the death of Dalit woman from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras, who was gangraped September 14, near Vijay Chowk in New Delhi, Tuesday

SHORT TAKES

Delhi's killer cop surrenders

New Delhi: Two days after killing his father-in-law in Haryana's Rohtak and shooting his female friend in Delhi, the 35-year-old Sub-Inspector of Delhi Police Sandeep Dahiya surrendered before the police Tuesday. Before his surrender in the North district of Delhi, he also wrote a WhatsApp note in which he elaborated on the reasons why he shot dead his father-in-law and fired shots at his girlfriend in Delhi. He has been taken into custody and interrogation is on.

Pak violates ceasefire again

Jammu: Pakistan resorted to unprovoked ceasefire violation on the line of control (LoC) on Tuesday targeting Indian positions in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district. Col. Devender Anand, spokesman of Defence Ministry said that at 4.30 a.m., Pakistan initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along the LoC in Mankote sector of Poonch district. Since the beginning of this year, Pakistan has been violating the bilateral ceasefire agreement signed by India and Pakistan in 1999.

Man kills lover, later hangs self

Panaji: A 23-year-old man allegedly killed his girlfriend before committed suicide after their relationship turned foul, the police said. The man identified as Sarvesh (surname name not shared) hung himself at his residence in South Goa's Cavrem on Sunday, while the young woman Anisha Velip (18) was found drowned in a shallow pond in Cuncolim town, also in South Goa. Superintendent of Police (South Goa) Pankaj Kumar Singh told reporters.

Cop shifted over custodial death

Satna (MP): Satna district Superintendent of Police Riaz Iqbal was transferred after a mob attack on a police station following an alleged custodial killing of a theft accused. Family members of Rajpati Kushwaha, 45, alleged the drunk police inspector Vikram Pathak had shot him dead in the Singhpur police station in Narainpur village from point blank range. Villagers gathered outside the police station and pelted stones.

This woman official faces 17th transfer in 13 years

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Meerut (UP), Sept 29: The transfer of a woman official - 17th in a row - has led to a major controversy in the state.

The woman PCS (lower) official posted in Meerut was transferred in 'public interest' after over a year-long tenure which was marked with several spat with controversial Sardhana BJP MLA Sangeet Som.

The officer Amita Varun was transferred for the 17th time in her 13-year career. Varun is a 2007 batch official and had been serving as an Executive Officer (EO) of Meerut's Sardhana municipal corporation since September last year. In the last three years, she was shifted at least 10 times due to her working style that pitted her against local politicians. On Sunday night, she was shifted to Jahangirabad in Bulandshahr.

The Provincial Civil Service (PCS) official troubled by the frequent transfers had moved the

Allahabad High Court in 2018. A two-judge bench of the Court had then set aside her transfer after observing, "Such an exercise is nothing but an exercise of power founded on malice in law."

The Court had also said: "We do not find anything from record that at any point, the petitioner (Varun) has been found indulging in any act of corruption."

Varun's tenure in Sardhana culminated in a bitter row following the death of a contractual employee due to heart attack September 22.

The supporters of MLA Sangeet Som who were later joined by the family members of the deceased Ajay Chabra alleged that he died due to harassment by Varun.

She had termed the charges as "politically motivated". Later MLA Sangeet Som said Amita Varun "used to misbehave with staffers and had been caught taking a bribe." He maintained that she "had a tainted past and has been transferred 17 or 18 times."



DRDO scientist honeytrapped

AGENCIES

Noida, Sept 29: A 35-year-old scientist who, police said, is associated with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) was honeytrapped and held hostage for almost an entire day at an OYO hotel by a gang of five that demanded a ransom of ₹10 lakh.

While such crimes are not uncommon in Noida, what makes this one intriguing is that the woman mastermind's Facebook profile cries for attention. Sunita Gurjar, or Babli, claims to be the head of a local BJP "mandal", had made a brief appearance on Bigg Boss season 10 claiming to be relative of the winner, Manveer Gurjar. She also flaunts her photos with actor Salman Khan, the show's host, on social media.

The Noida BJP unit said she is a former party worker while Manveer's family said she was from their village but not a relative. Sunita was among three taken into custody by police Sunday night from the Sector 41 hotel. Police are looking for two others who managed to give them the slip.

The scientist, a resident of Supertech Capetown in Sector 74,



unwittingly made contact with Sunita and her aides during an online search for massage parlours in the vicinity, police said. When he dialled the number, a man on the other side allegedly asked him to come to Logix City Centre. On Saturday evening, the scientist reached Logix in his Honda City, parked the car, and was taken to Kunal Residency, which is maintained by OYO, in another car by the man he met there.

According to police, the gang of five overpowered him there, locked him up in a room and called his wife, demanding the ransom money. The scientists had left home around 5.30pm and told his wife he was going to buy some household items. It was around 11pm that she got the first ransom call. A series of

calls followed, threatening her against approaching police.

For almost 14 hours, the scientist's wife tried to arrange for the money. She went to the cops only when she failed to do so. Three teams were formed to trace the accused. Police put the scientist's phone on surveillance and the last network location was traced to Agahpur in Sector 41. There they zeroed in on the hotel. The cops laid a trap and sent the scientist's wife to the hotel with a bag containing cash. "Three men were standing outside the hotel and came to take the bag. Two of them managed to flee while the third, Deepak, was caught. He took cops to the room where the scientist had been kept," additional DCP Ranvijay Singh said.

JHEERAM GHATI NAXAL ATTACK

SC dismisses plea on Naxal attack which left 29 dead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 29: The Supreme Court Tuesday dismissed Chhattisgarh government's plea against Judicial Commission's refusal to examine additional witnesses in the 2013 Jheeram Ghati Naxal attack that killed 29 people, including leaders of the state Congress unit.

A bench headed by Justice Ashok Bhushan observed that the state government may have extended the tenure of the commission but its proceedings have closed.



"You wanted the expert witness to be examined but commission did not agree. You may have extended commission's tenure but it has closed the proceedings," said the bench, also comprising Justices RS Reddy and MR Shah.

The state government had challenged the orders of the Chhattisgarh High Court dismissing its plea seeking direction to the Special Judicial Enquiry Commission to examine the additional witnesses in the case.

On May 25, 2013, Naxals had attacked a convoy of Congress leaders in Jheeram valley in Darbha area of Bastar district, killing 29 people, including then state Congress chief Nand Kumar Patel, former Leader of Opposition Mahendra Karma and former Union minister Vidyacharan Shukla.

Faulty ammo leaves one soldier injured every month

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 29: Every month, an Indian soldier is injured or even dies, not at the hands of the enemy, but by his own ammunition that turns out to be faulty.

The ammunition is supplied by the state-run ordnance factories. According to government officials, the forces report an average of one ammunition-related accident every week, resulting in injuries or fatalities, and damage to equipment.

This run of accidents due to the poor quality ammunition from the Ordnance Factory Board-run facilities, the primary suppliers, has led to low levels of confidence among armed force personnel, particu-

larly among the Indian Army, who use more ammunition than the Air Force or the Navy.

In 2020, a total of 13 armed personnel were injured due to faulty ammunition, while 16 accidents were reported in 2019, leaving 28 soldiers injured and three dead. In 2018, at least 43 soldiers were injured and three lost their lives in 78 incidents and in 2017, there were 53 incidents, causing the death of one soldier and injuries to 18 others.

It was, however, 2016 that was the worst, with 19 soldiers killed and 28 others injured in 60 accidents. This has also led to a major loss to the exchequer. As per estimates, ₹658.58 crore worth of ammunition had to be disposed off be-



tween April 2014 and April 2019, during its shelf life.

Sources also said that mines worth ₹303.23 crore had to be dis-

posed off, within their shelf life, post the Pulgaon accident in Maharashtra in May 2016 in which 18 soldiers were killed.

Sources also said that all this led to ₹960 crore loss, with which 100 155mm Medium Artillery guns could have been purchased.

It is obvious that defective ammunition has major implications for the soldiers using them, as accidents lead to loss of life, but also equipment being rendered out of action, resulting in lack of confidence in the equipment itself.

A senior government official said that this also has serious operational ramifications wherein requisite ammunition is not available to optimally utilise the capability of the equipment. Further, it also leads to the need for re-inspections, backloading, reissue and disposal by destruction of ammunition.

national



They (the Opposition) are insulting the farmers by setting fire to the machines and equipment that is worshipped by them
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

GOOGLE PAYS TRIBUTE TO ZOHRA SEHGAL WITH SPECIAL DOODLE

Google Tuesday paid tributes to iconic Indian actress and stage artist Zohra Sehgal. The special Doodle, that showed the legendary actress as dancing, was made by Google guest artist Parvati Pillai



of the day quote

Punjab CM's dharna at Khatkar
Kalaan, known for Shaheed Bhagat Singh memorial, is shameful political naught. Utter disrespect! These were the very people Shaheed-e-Azam opposed when he was alive
SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL | SHIROMANI AKALI DAL CHIEF

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

The Central government's role in AP's three capitals issue is very limited
DAGGUBATI PURANDESWARI | BJP GENERAL SECRETARY

One in 15 people 'exposed' to SARS-CoV2 by Aug: Centre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 29: One in 15 individuals aged 10 years and above were estimated to be exposed to SARS-CoV2 by August 2020, showing that a considerable population is still susceptible to Covid-19, according to the ICMR's second sero-survey findings released Tuesday. Presenting the nationwide sero-survey at a press briefing, ICMR Director General Balram Bhargava said 6.6 per cent of the 29,082 people (aged 10 and above) surveyed from August 17 to September 22 showed evidence of past exposure

to Covid-19 and 7.1 per cent of the adult population (aged 18 and above) also showed evidence of past exposure to it.

He said lockdown, containment and behavioral change at population level have effectively checked the potential spread of SARS-CoV2, however, the survey findings show that a considerable population is still vulnerable and susceptible to coronavirus. He further said that the risk in urban slums was twice than that in non-slum urban areas and four times the risk in rural setting.

"Urban slums (15.6 per cent) and non-slum (8.2 per cent) areas had

ICMR SERO SURVEY



higher SARS-COV2 infection prevalence than that in rural areas (4.4 per cent)," he said quoting the second sero-survey.

"One in 15 individuals aged 10 years and above were estimated to

be exposed to SARS-CoV2 by August 2020," Bhargava said.

The second sero-survey was conducted in the same 700 villages and wards from 70 districts from 21 states which were covered during the first survey.

The first sero-survey of May 2020 revealed that the nationwide prevalence of novel coronavirus infection was only 0.73 per cent.

The second survey further showed that there is a lower infection to case ratio in August compared to May which reflects a substantial increase in testing and detection across India. Health Secretary

Rajesh Bhushan said India has 4,453 COVID-19 cases and 70 deaths per million population which is among the lowest in the world. NITI Aayog member VK Paul urged people to keep following COVID appropriate behaviour, saying there is no reason to get lax if stability in coronavirus cases is observed.

"We need to have Puja, Chhath, Diwali and Eid with masks, it is very important to keep that in mind. We have seen a second peak in Delhi, Kerala and Punjab so we should not get lax and keep following Covid-appropriate behaviour," he said.

EC sets Nov 3, 7 for by-polls to one LS, 56 Assembly seats

WHILE BY-POLLS TO 54 ASSEMBLY SEATS WOULD BE HELD NOVEMBER 3, THOSE FOR ONE LOK SABHA SEAT IN BIHAR AND TWO ASSEMBLY SEATS IN MANIPUR WOULD BE HELD NOVEMBER 7

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 29: By-polls to one Lok Sabha and 56 Assembly seats spread across 12 states will be held November 3 and 7, the Election Commission said Tuesday, but did not announce "at this stage" by-elections to seven Assembly constituencies in four other states.

While by-polls to 54 Assembly seats would be held November 3, those for one Lok Sabha seat in Bihar and two assembly seats in Manipur would be held November 7.

The votes for all the by-polls will be counted November 10, alongside the counting of votes for the general Assembly elections in Bihar.

Before announcing the schedule, the poll panel issued a separate statement Tuesday to say that it has decided not to hold "at this stage" Assembly by-polls in seven states across Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Assam and West Bengal.

The decision has been taken based on inputs received from the chief secretaries and poll officials in these states, the poll panel said in the release.

While there are two vacancies each in the assemblies of Assam, Kerala and Tamil Nadu, one seat is vacant in the West Bengal



BY-POLLS TO ONE LOK SABHA AND 56 ASSEMBLY SEATS SPREAD ACROSS 12 STATES WILL BE HELD NOVEMBER 3 AND 7, THE ELECTION COMMISSION SAID TUESDAY

THE EC, HOWEVER, DID NOT ANNOUNCE "AT THIS STAGE" BY-ELECTIONS TO SEVEN ASSEMBLY CONSTITUENCIES ACROSS KERALA, TAMIL NADU, ASSAM AND WEST BENGAL

legislature. The term of the legislative assemblies of the four states would end on different dates between May and June next year.

Besides the Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha bypoll in Bihar, by-elections are being held to 28 seats in Madhya Pradesh.

Most of these 28 seats fell vacant when rebel Congress members resigned from the party and the Assembly to join the BJP.

After the resignations of the Congress members, the Kamal Nath-led government lost majority and the BJP returned to power.

Earlier, the EC had said that by-polls are pending in 64 Assembly

seats. But the figure now stands at 63, including the seven seats in four states where the schedule was not announced Tuesday.

The reason is that the number of vacant seats in some states has changed due to various reasons, including court cases.

"The figures are not static. We go by the number of clear vacancies on a given date," a senior official explained.

Eight Assembly seats are going for by-polls in Gujarat, followed by seven in Uttar Pradesh, two each in Odisha, Nagaland, Manipur, Karnataka and Jharkhand, and one each in Chhattisgarh, Telangana and Haryana.

SHORT TAKES

3 labourers killed in bldg collapse

Ahmedabad: Three labourers were killed after a three-storey under-construction building collapsed in Gujarat's Vadodra city in the early hours of Tuesday, an official said. Besides, one labourer was rescued from the debris, fire officer Amit Chaudhary said. The under-construction building collapsed around 12.30 am in Bavamanapura area of Vadodra, located around 110 km from Ahmedabad, he said.

Girl killed in 'leopard attack'

Bareilly (UP): A 10-year-old girl was killed in a suspected leopard attack in a village here, an official said Tuesday. Upasana had gone to purchase a notebook from a shop in Bhujia village late Monday evening. When she did not return home, a hunt was launched to trace her, Sub District Magistrate Rajesh Chandra said. Her body drenched in blood was found in a field early Tuesday morning, he said. Bhujia village head Om Prakash said a leopard has been active in neighbouring villages for the past few days and had also attacked some domestic animals.

Naxal with ₹8L bounty surrenders

Raipur: A 22-year-old Naxal carrying a reward of ₹8 lakh on his head has surrendered in Chhattisgarh's Dantewada district, police said Tuesday. Kosa Markam turned himself in before Dantewada Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava Monday, citing disappointment with the hollow Maoist ideology, they said. Markam joined the outlawed outfit in 2014 as a member of its Bal Sangham, a children's wing, in Dantewada and he was later shifted to north Bastar division of Maoists.

IPL betting racket busted

Sambhal (UP): Three members of a gang betting on Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket matches were arrested from Chandausi area here, police said Tuesday. The arrests were made from a house in Kayasthan locality under Chandausi Kotwali police station area on Monday night, SP Yamuna Prasad said. Those arrested have been identified as Rohit, Jishan and Lakhansingh, he said, adding 12 mobile phones, three calculators, diary, register and ₹1,875 were recovered from them.

Babri verdict today



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 29: BJP veterans LK Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi will not be present when a court in Uttar Pradesh announces its judgment in the Babri mosque case Wednesday.

Nearly 28 years after the 16th century mosque was demolished in Uttar Pradesh's Ayodhya, December 6, 1992, a special CBI court in Lucknow will pronounce its verdict. BJP leaders LK Advani, MM Joshi, Uma Bharti and Kalyan Singh are among the accused facing charges of criminal conspiracy and promoting enmity.

The court had asked all accused to be present for the judgment but not everyone can make it because of the Covid pandemic and health concerns. LK Advani, 92 and MM Joshi, 86, have reportedly sought an exemption. Uma Bharti is in hospital with the coronavirus and Kalyan Singh is recovering from Covid. So is another high profile accused, Mahant Nitya Gopal Das, the chief of the Ram temple trust.

The court will rule whether the BJP leaders and the others accused instigated thousands of Hindu activists or "Kar Sewaks" to bring down the Babri mosque, believing it was built on the ruins of an an-

BJP veterans LK Advani and Murli Manohar Joshi will not be present when a court in Uttar Pradesh announces its judgment in the Babri mosque case Wednesday

cient temple marking the birthplace of Lord Ram.

Uma Bharti, a former Union minister, wrote to BJP Chief JP Nadda that she would not seek bail even if she was convicted. Some time back, she had said, "It does not matter to me what the judgement will be. If I am sent to the gallows, I will be blessed. The place where I was born will be happy."

Over nearly three decades, there have been many twists and turns in the case. The CBI first filed conspiracy charges against the top BJP leaders and then dropped it.

In 2017, the Supreme Court asked special CBI judge SK Yadav to conduct day-to-day hearings. He was supposed to announce his verdict by 2019 but it was delayed.

BILKIS DADI



Bilkis Dadi, who became the face of the Shaheen Bagh's women-led protests, being felicitated by women's rights activist Syeda Hamid and Annie Raja in New Delhi, Tuesday. 82-year old Bilkis, fondly known as Bilkis Dadi of Shaheen Bagh, has featured as one of world's 100 Most Influential People Of 2020 according to a list released by TIME. PTI PHOTO

SC to Centre on Mehbooba: Can detention be forever?

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 29: The Supreme Court Tuesday said detention cannot be forever and asked the Centre whether former J&K Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's detention be extended beyond a year.

The remarks were made by a bench headed by Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul during the hearing of Iltija Mufti's plea challenging her mother's and People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader's detention order under Public Safety Act (PSA) and its subsequent extensions.

Justice Kaul queried Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, "How long Mufti has been in detention and what were the grounds?"

The bench specifically wanted to know could the detention be extended beyond one year.



Mehta, justifying the detention, said it has been done on "public order grounds".

Justice Kaul said the court wanted to know for how long such detention can be extended. "Can it be prolonged for so long?"

Mehta urged the court not to record any observations. Justice Kaul replied these observations were questions of the court. Mehta said: "I will address my

lords on questions on facts and law." The Solicitor General cited the statements made by Mufti as having an impact on public order.

Justice Kaul replied that sometimes one could say a lot of things, which are not supposed to be said.

Mehta submitted that such things should not have been said in a state which has a history of militancy. The top court allowed the Centre to file a reply in the matter addressing the maximum period of detention, and whether detention is proposed to be continued.

The bench noted that one of the prayers in Iltija's plea was to grant permission for the family to meet her. Iltija's counsel argued that even in prisons people are allowed to meet kin.

The top court has scheduled the matter for further hearing October 15.

BJP's troubles soar with Paswans' ultimatum on Bihar polls

AGENCIES

Patna, Sept 29: The ruling BJP, steeped in ally trouble, has been served an ultimatum by key Bihar ally Chirag Paswan just weeks before the October-November Assembly elections in the state.

Chirag Paswan, whose father Ram Vilas Paswan is the Food Supply Minister in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reportedly met BJP president JP Nadda Monday and demanded a decision on seat-sharing at the earliest.

If the decision was not in the regional party's favour, Chirag has reportedly told Nadda, the Lok

Janshakti Party (LJP) will field candidates in 143 of Bihar's 243 Assembly seats.

According to sources, Chirag has also made it clear that he will not hesitate to put up candidates against Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's Janata Dal (United). He reportedly reminded the BJP president that recently, the JD(U) said it had no alliance with the LJP. "So LJP can field candidates against JD(U) candidates," he reportedly told Nadda.

Chirag Paswan's warning intensifies the NDA vs NDA scenario in these polls after days of seat-sharing talks failed to yield results.

Bihar will vote October 28, November 3 and 7 for a new government and the results will be an-



NDA vs NDA

nounced November 10. The BJP's relationship status with the Paswans has been complicated over the past few months because of a feud between Nitish Kumar and Chirag Paswan.

The Chief Minister, who has been under attack from the Opposition over a range of issues including the fight against coronavirus and the migrant jobs crisis, has not been spared by the LJP, technically

his allies in the NDA.

In May, Chirag had commented that he would support the BJP "whether it goes with Nitish Kumar's leadership or changes its mind". Since then, his attacks on the Chief Minister have been open and progressively sharper. Now LJP leaders are also openly pitching for Chirag for Chief Minister though Nitish Kumar has already been endorsed by PM Modi as well as Union Home Minister Amit Shah. "He is definitely the Chief Ministerial candidate of our party; there is no doubt about it," Shah Nawaz Ahmad Kaifi, LJP national general secretary, said.

Nitish Kumar's move to bring rival-turned-ally Jitan Ram Manjhi

to the NDA has fueled more anger in the Paswan camp, which has a similar vote-bank. Adding insult to injury, Nitish Kumar recently unveiled his "Seven Nischay (seven resolves)", doubling down after Paswan's complaint about the Chief Minister working on the agenda of his previous alliance with the RJD and the Congress despite switching alliances.

If the Paswans do decide to quit the BJP-led coalition, they will be the third allies to do so. The BJP recently lost one of its oldest partners, the Akali Dal, over the farm laws. Another long-time ally, Shiv Sena, had split with the BJP last year over power-sharing in Maharashtra.



China has not recognised Ladakh Union Territory illegally set up by the Indian side
WANG WENBIN | CHINESE FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN

SMART SOLUTIONS

Scientists have developed a new smartphone app that can analyse the genome of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, that causes COVID-19, within minutes



of the day quote

Hospitals should be ready to treat at least 1,500 seriously ill coronavirus-infected patients by October 1, as the infection rate in the country has continued to increase unabated



BENJAMIN NETANYAHU | ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER

I don't have a grain of doubt that Shehbaz Sharif was not arrested for corruption or accountability. A reference against him was ongoing and he was arrested in the middle



MARYAM NAWAZ | PML-N VICE PRESIDENT

Today I'm in Crete to showcase one of America's strongest military relationships throughout all of Europe



MIKE POMPEO | US SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Protesters clash with police; 24 held

Portland (US): Protesters and Portland police clashed again in Oregon's largest city late Monday, with demonstrators hurling rocks, punching a police sergeant in the face and spraying a chemical irritant at officers, police said in a statement. Twenty four people were arrested. The demonstration with about 150 protesters took place outside a police union building that has turned into a frequent protest site.

40 UK universities report nCoV cases

London: At least 40 universities across the UK have reported coronavirus cases, resulting in thousands of students self-isolating as the new term begins, it was reported Tuesday. While there were no official figures on the university coronavirus outbreaks, a tracking of local reports suggests more than 40 universities have had Covid cases so far, out of about 130 in total, the BBC said in a report.

Suga urges Putin to solve island dispute

Tokyo: Newly elected Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga told Russian President Vladimir Putin Tuesday that he wants to settle their territorial dispute and sign a peace treaty formally ending their World War II hostilities. Suga took office two weeks ago, replacing Shinzo Abe who stepped down due to poor health. Abe, during his nearly eight years in office, put a great deal of time and effort into improving ties with Russia in hopes of settling the territorial dispute, but with little progress.

Sanctions on Lukashenko

London: Britain has imposed sanctions on Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko, his son and six other senior government officials following the disputed presidential election and a crackdown on protesters in Belarus.

Botswana extends emergency period

Gaborone (Botswana): Botswana has extended its state of emergency for a further six months to combat the spread of COVID-19. The southern African country will maintain several restrictions, including limits to international travelers and tourism, in contrast to neighboring South Africa and Zimbabwe, which are opening up their economies.

TRUMP UPS SPENDING ON LAWYERS

AGENCIES

Cleveland (US), Sept 29: President Donald Trump's campaign is spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on lawyers to litigate voting by mail, including in the battleground state of Pennsylvania, Federal Election Commission (FEC) data showed.

The campaign paid more than \$250,000 to Porter Wright Morris & Arthur, the law firm representing it in lawsuits over the use of drop boxes and other changes to Pennsylvania's mail-balling procedures, according to the data.

In the Nov. 3 elections, more voters are expected to cast their ballots by mail instead of in person because of the novel coronavirus pandemic here but Republican Trump has repeatedly linked mail-in voting to voter fraud without providing evidence. More than 200 election-related lawsuits have been filed, many of them focusing on mail-in ballots, which Democrats are more



US PREZ POLL

likely to use, according to some opinion polls. Porter Wright did not respond to requests for comment. Trump campaign spokeswoman Thea McDonald declined to comment.

The Trump campaign in August paid out over \$980,000 for legal services that month compared to about \$332,000 in July, FEC data showed. It has spent over \$3.9 million on legal services between March, when Biden began to emerge as the leading Democratic presidential contender, and August, according to

the data. Democratic candidate Joe Biden's campaign by comparison spent about \$660,000 on legal services during that period, the data showed. Nearly \$472,000, went to the campaign's outside general counsel firm Covington & Burling, home to former Obama administration Attorney General Eric Holder. Biden spokesman Michael Gwin said in an email Tuesday that the campaign has "built a top notch legal team to support our campaign in critical ways, including through an unprecedentedly large voter pro-

Two-thirds of US voters don't expect winner on election night

Two-thirds or 66 per cent of the US voters do not expect the result of the November 3 election to be declared on the same night, according to a new poll. The Politico/Morning Consult poll released on Monday showed that only 20 per cent believed the winner will be declared on November 3 itself. Also, 19 per cent said they think the election will be resolved within a week, while 26 per cent others said it will be between two and seven days after the polls close, the poll showed. An additional 21 per cent of voters believe the period of uncertainty will stretch past one week. A majority of voters or 53 per cent in the Politico/Morning Consult poll said they were either very or somewhat concerned that President Donald Trump would prematurely declare victory for the election.

tection effort focused on ensuring access to the ballot box." The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled on Sept. 17 that state officials could accept mail-in ballots up to three days after Nov. 3, as long as they were mailed by Election Day. Republican President Donald Trump and Democratic rival Joe Biden will square off for the first time Tuesday in a pivotal debate that will pro-

vide a stark clash of styles and the prospect of a fiery and brutally personal grudge match. With more than a million Americans already casting early ballots and time running out to change minds or influence the small sliver of undecided voters, the stakes are enormous as the two White House candidates take the stage five weeks before the November 3 election.

UAE to launch spacecraft to Moon in 2024



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Sept 29: The United Arab Emirates plans to send an unmanned spacecraft to the moon in 2024, a top Emirati official said Tuesday, the latest gamble in the stars by the oil-rich nation that could see it become only the fourth nation on Earth to accomplish that goal.

The announcement by Dubai's ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, who also serves as the vice president and prime minister of the hereditarily ruled UAE, shows the rapid expansion of the space program that bears his name.

Already, an Emirati space probe is hurtling through space on its way to Mars while last year it sent its first astronaut to the International Space Station.

"It will be an Emirati-made lunar rover that will land on the surface of the moon in 2024 in areas that have not been explored previously by human missions," Sheikh Mohammed wrote on Twitter. He did not elaborate on the location that the UAE planned to explore, nor how they would launch the rover into space.

The launch of its Amal, or "Hope," probe to Mars took place at Japan's Tanegashima Space Centre in July.

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, which launched that probe, said nothing had been decided about the launch of the moon rover and declined to comment when reached by The Associated Press.

The Emirati rover will study the lunar surface, mobility on the moon's surface and how different surfaces interact with lunar particles, the government later said.

Lanka bans cattle slaughter

The country's Buddhist majority as well as the Hindus do not eat beef

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, Sept 29: The Sri Lankan government Tuesday approved the proposal to ban cattle slaughter in the island nation. However, it decided to import beef for the benefit of those who consume it.

The Cabinet has approved the proposal to ban cattle slaughter in the country, Cabinet spokesman and Mass Media Minister Keheliya Rambukwella said, adding that legalising the decision would be done in due course. On September 8, the Parliamentary Group of the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana

Peramuna (SLPP) approved Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa's proposal to ban cattle slaughter in the country. The Cabinet said it will take immediate necessary measures to amend the Animal Act, the Cattle Slaughter Ordinance and other related laws and regulations currently in force in the country.

According to officials, the Cabinet has decided to import beef and provide it at a concessionary price to people who consume it. A programme will also be launched for ageing cattle which cannot be used effectively for agricultural purposes.



RAGING INFERNO



Flames from the Glass Fire consume the Black Rock Inn in St. Helena, California. At least three people were killed, while thousands others were evacuated from their homes due to a massive wildfire in Northern California, according to media reports.

PTI PHOTO

Tensions mount as Armenia, Azerbaijan continue fighting



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yerevan (Armenia), Sept 29: Armenian and Azerbaijani forces accused each other of attacks on their territory Tuesday, as fighting over the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh continued for a third straight day following the reigniting of a decades-old conflict.

Azerbaijan's Defense Ministry said Armenian forces shelled the Dashkesan region in Azerbaijan, while Armenian officials said Azeri forces opened fire on a military unit in the Armenian town of Vardenis, setting a bus on fire and killing one civilian.

Armenia's Foreign Ministry "completely" denied reports of shelling the Dashkesan region and said in a statement that with those reports Azerbaijan was laying the groundwork for "expanding the geography of hostilities, including the aggression against the Republic of Armenia."

The previous two days of fighting killed dozens and left scores wounded. The Nagorno-Karabakh Defense Ministry reported 84 servicemen killed so far. Azerbaijan's president, Ilham Aliyev, said Tuesday that 10 civilians were killed on its side, but he didn't offer any details on the country's military casualties.

The heavy fighting broke out Sunday in Nagorno-Karabakh, which lies within Azerbaijan but has been under the control of ethnic Armenian forces backed by the Armenian government since 1994 at the end of a separatist war.

Kuwait's emir Sheikh Sabah dies at age 91

AGENCIES

Dubai, Sept 29: Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah, the ruler of Kuwait who drew on his decades as the oil-rich nation's top diplomat to push for closer ties to Iraq after the 1990 Gulf War and solutions to other regional crises, died Tuesday. He was 91.

In a Middle East replete with elderly rulers, Sheikh Sabah stood out for his efforts at pushing for diplomacy to resolve a bitter dispute between Qatar and other Arab nations that continues to this day.

His 2006 ascension in Kuwait, a staunch U.S. ally since the American-led war that expelled occupying Iraqi troops, came after parliament voted unanimously to oust his predecessor, the ailing Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, just nine days into his rule. Yet as Kuwait's ruling emir, he struggled



with internal political disputes, the fallout of the 2011 Arab Spring protests and seesawing crude oil prices that chewed into a national budget providing cradle-to-grave subsidies.

"He represents the older generation of Gulf leaders who valued discretion and moderation and the importance of personal ties amongst fellow monarchs," said Kristin Diwan, a senior resident scholar at the Arab Gulf States Institute in Washington who studies Kuwait.

Shahbaz remanded in NAB custody for 14 days

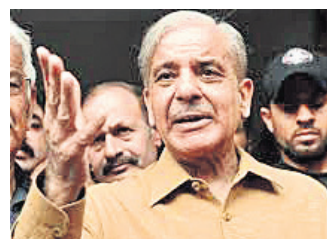
The Imran Khan gov't last week filed the money laundering case against Shahbaz

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lahore, Sept 29: Pakistan's Leader of the Opposition and PML-N chief Shahbaz Sharif was Tuesday sent on a 14-day physical remand by an accountability court in assets beyond means and money laundering case, a day after he was arrested by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) here.

Shahbaz, the younger brother of three-time former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, was taken into custody from the Lahore High Court's premises on Monday after the court rejected his bail application in the Rs 700 crores (USD 41.9 million) money laundering case.

The 69-year-old former chief minister of Punjab province was produced before the accountability court Judge Jawad-ul-Hasan



Tuesday. Shahbaz requested the court to allow him to present arguments in his defence instead of his lawyer. The court allowed him.

He denied any wrongdoing and said Prime Minister Imran Khan's nexus with the NAB has made mockery of accountability in the country and they are targeting the opposition leaders only.

"Money laundering charges against me are baseless. I do not do business. My parents had worked

hard to establish business in the country and transferred the same to my children," he said.

He said being the chief minister of Punjab province his decisions caused a loss of millions of rupees to the businesses of his elder brother Nawaz and his (Shahbaz) son Hamza in order to benefit the public. Following the arguments, the judge accepted NAB's request for a 14-day physical remand of Shahbaz and ordered for him to be presented in the court again on October 13.

The court directed that Shahbaz's performance report be made part of this case. Shahbaz's arrest 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 Khan.

Dark days ahead for Lebanon as crisis bites

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Beirut, Sept 29: The past year has been nothing short of an earthquake for Lebanon, hit by an economic meltdown, mass protests, financial collapse, a virus outbreak and a cataclysmic explosion that virtually wiped out the country's main port.

Yet Lebanese fear even darker days are ahead. The country's foreign reserves are drying up, the local currency is expected to spiral further out of control, and incidents of armed clashes between rival groups are escalating. Bickering politicians have been unable to form a government, putting an international bailout out of reach.

Last week, a French initiative to form a rescue government of specialists fell apart when the political factions split along familiar fault lines, deepened by the US-Iran rivalry. The country risks slipping



ping into chaos.

"Absent a major change in either side's political calculations, the coming weeks will see continued stalemate, a caretaker government that lacks the capability to implement any serious reforms, and an acceleration of the economic collapse," said Mike Azar, a former Johns Hopkins SAIS professor of finance.

French President Emmanuel Macron's plan was widely seen as a last opportunity to charter a way out of Lebanon's gravest crisis since the 1975-90 civil war. It included a six-month timeline for a small government made up of non-partisan experts to deliver reforms. Mistrustful of Lebanon's famously corrupt leaders, the West has made

billions of dollars in aid contingent on those reforms.

Lebanon's politicians initially committed to the plan and named a new prime minister-designate, Moustapha Adib, who promised to deliver a Cabinet within two weeks. To avert the usual horse-trading among factions over ministries, Adib tried to pick his own names to form the government.

But the two main Shiite parties, Hezbollah and Amal, accused him of acting on behalf of their local political rivals. They insisted on naming Shiite members of the Cabinet and on keeping the Finance Ministry for their sect. Adib refused and stepped down on Saturday.

For all the pressure on the factions to put aside their usual self-serving interest and jockeying, another force is in part making them dig in: escalating US-Iran tensions.

But can Lebanon wait? Last week, Lebanese President Michel Aoun,

an ally of Hezbollah, could not have been blunter when he was asked by a reporter where Lebanon was headed if a new government is not formed.

That aid is more sorely needed than ever, with worse still to come for Lebanon as the country's slide to the bottom. In the next few weeks, the Central Bank is expected to end subsidies on basic goods. Since the local currency's collapse, the bank has been using its depleting reserves to support imports of fuel, wheat and medicine.

Already, after the blow of the financial crisis, half the population is below the poverty line. Lifting subsidies will further fuel inflation and could be a trigger for food riots. Civil unrest would put the population in confrontation with demoralised security forces who — like other Lebanese — have seen their salaries decrease by up to 80% in US dollar terms.



OYO's rental housing arm OYO LIFE will offer a 20 per cent discount on monthly rent to its customers starting from the fourth month of their stay

AUTO SALES MAY FALL 20-25%

Rating agency Ind-Ra expects automobile sales to decline by 20-25 per cent this fiscal against its earlier forecast of 22-25 per cent on account of increasing preference for personal mobility



of the day quote

Over a period of time some more customers do ask for moratorium, so I can definitely say that the number has gone up a little bit rather than coming down



AMITABH CHAUDHRY | MD, AXIS BANK

With this funding, we will strengthen our product portfolio to target B2B logistics platforms for growth with diverse product offerings and more geographical presence



DEEPAK MV | CO-FOUNDER, ETRIO

We are happy to note that Amazon's investment in Tamil Nadu will generate significant employment opportunities. I am certain these fulfillment centres will push the agenda of growth



N MURUGANANDHAM | PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, TN INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT

SHORT TAKES

Vedanta to delist from BSE, NSE

New Delhi: Billionaire Anil Agarwal-controlled Vedanta Tuesday said it has received in-principle approval from stock exchanges -- BSE and National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) -- for its delisting from the bourses.

Maruti Suzuki to aid five startups

New Delhi: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL) on Tuesday said it has shortlisted five new startups as part of its third cohort of MAIL (Mobility & Automobile Innovation Lab) programme.

Play billing must for GP purchases

New Delhi: Google Tuesday said apps that choose to sell digital content through its Play Store have to use Google Play billing system and pay a percentage of the in-app purchase as fee.

India probes spike in subsidised pipes

New Delhi: India has initiated a probe into an alleged increase in subsidised imports of copper tubes and pipes, used air conditioning and refrigeration systems, from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam following a complaint by domestic manufacturers.

'India among the worst performing economies'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 29: Nobel Laureate Abhijit Banerjee Tuesday said India is among the worst performing economies in the world and the government's economic stimulus was inadequate to tackle the problem.

He, however, said that the country will see a revival in growth in the July-September quarter of the current fiscal. Speaking at a virtual event, Banerjee said the country's economic growth was slowing down even before the COVID-19 pandemic hit.

"Indian economy is among the worst performing in the world. The country's economy will see revival in the current quarter (July-September)," he said, adding that economic growth in 2021 is going to be better than this year.

Banerjee, currently a professor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), said he does not think that India's economic stimulus was adequate. "India's economic stimulus was limited. It was a bank bailout. I think we could have done more," he said.

The stimulus measures "did not



India's economic stimulus was limited. It was a bank bailout. I think we could have done more

ABHIJIT BANERJEE | NOBEL LAUREATE

INFLATION BENEFITTED INDIA

According to Banerjee, stimulus measures did not increase consumption spending of lower income people as the government was not willing to put money in their hands

Talking about inflation, Banerjee said India's growth strategy was closed economy with the government creating lots of demand, which resulted in high growth and inflation.

The government is not willing to put money in the hands of the low income population," he noted.

Talking about inflation, Banerjee said India's growth strategy was closed economy with the government creating lots of demand, which resulted in high growth and inflation.

SII TO PRODUCE MORE VACCINE DOSES FOR LMICs



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 29: Serum Institute of India (SII) Tuesday said it along with Gavi and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation will manufacture an additional up to 100 million COVID-19 vaccine doses for India and low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).

The latest collaboration between the partners brings the total number of vaccine doses to be covered to an aggregate of up to 200 million doses, SII said in a statement.

In August, SII had entered into a new partnership with international vaccine alliance Gavi and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to accelerate manufacturing and delivery of up to 100 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines.

The collaboration will provide upfront capital to SII to help it increase manufacturing capacity now, so that once a vaccine gets regulatory approval and WHO Prequalification, doses can be distributed at scale to LMICs, it added.

The doses will be distributed as part of the Gavi COVAX AMC mechanism as early as the first half of 2021, it said.

JIO SEEKS EARLY SPECTRUM AUCTION

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 29: Telecom major Reliance Jio has questioned the Department of Telecom's rationale to pause the policy of annual spectrum auction and demanded that the sale of airwaves should be held at the earliest to meet the demand for data services in the country.

Mukesh Ambani-led Jio in a letter dated September 28 to Telecom Secretary Anshu Prakash said that the nation-building policies should not be kept hostage to the vested interest of few operators and delay in auction is hurting the national exchequer as well as making investors jittery as perceived against the principle of ease of doing business.

The telecom major said that any delay in auction of unutilised spectrum will lead to serious issues around quality of mobile services



in terms of call drops etc and also result in "revenue loss to the government."

"We are unable to find any reasonable rationale behind this sudden pause in a successful and fruitful policy of auctioning all available spectrum every year, since the

Hon'ble Supreme Court decision in 2012," Reliance Jio said in the letter.

The spectrum auctions were held every year after the apex court order in the 2G case in 2012 and the last was held in 2016.

"In order for sustainable and or-

Big Bazaar's Public Holiday Sale starts from 1st October

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 29: It's that time of the year when Big Bazaar, one of India's leading hypermarket chain is back with everyone's favorite Public Holiday Sale. Starting from 1st October, Big Bazaar's Public Holiday Sale will be a four-day shopping fiesta and will be held till 4th October 2020.

The customers can avail exciting offers, discounts, deals on fashion, home furnishing, electronic, kitchenware, luggage and many other products. Customers can grab the latest fashion for men, women and kids



at Buy 1 Get 1 FREE, that too on the latest collection.

Welcoming the festive season, customers can upgrade their homes by availing at upto 50% off on home fashion products like bedsheets, bath décor, towels, curtains, kitchen-

- KEY OFFERS: Upto 60% Off on Electronics, Buy 1 Get 1 FREE on Fashion, Up to 70% Off on Dinner sets, Upto 50% Off on Bedsheets

ware, dinner sets and much more at upto 70% off.

Customers can also relax at home and order online conveniently on shop.bigbazaar.com and avail Public Holiday Sale offers between 1 to 4th October.

Ambani's wealth shoots up 73% to ₹6.58L cr

RELIANCE INDUSTRIES CHAIRMAN MUKESH AMBANI RETAINS THE TITLE OF BEING THE RICHEST INDIAN FOR THE NINTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 29: The personal net worth of Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani rose by 73 per cent to ₹6.58 lakh crore, helping him retain the title of being the richest Indian for the ninth consecutive year with a wider margin, according to a report released on Tuesday.

Ambani, 63, who has been selling stakes in telecom and retail arms lately leading to a strong performance in the Reliance Industries stock price, is also in the top five at a global level, the report prepared by Hurun in association with IIFL Wealth said.

The rankings come at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a deep economic impact on the lives and fears are being

RICH LIST: Mumbai continues to have an edge over New Delhi in being home to rich Indians, while among the global Indians, the US has the highest numbers in the rich list



expressed about a K-shaped recovery, which will result in more inequalities in the society.

The list identified 828 Indians who are worth over ₹1,000 crore as of August 31 and made it to the list of richest Indians.

Cyrus Mistry and Shapoor Mistry of Shapoorji Pallonji group, which is seeking nearly ₹1.78 lakh crore for its 18 per cent stake in Tata Sons,

saw a 1 per cent decline in their wealth at ₹76,000 crore each.

Gujarat-based Gautam Adani, who is diversifying into many businesses, saw a 48 per cent rise in his wealth to ₹1.40 lakh crore and moved up two places in rankings to being the fourth richest Indian.

Hinduja Brothers, who are reported to be in a property dispute, are worth ₹1.43 lakh crore and were

able to retain the second standing despite a 23 per cent reduction, according to the list. They are followed by HCL's Shiv Nadar and family whose fortunes rose 34 per cent to ₹1.41 lakh crore.

Wipro's Azim Premji slipped two places to fifth in the rankings with fortunes of ₹1.14 lakh crore. The world's largest vaccine maker Serum Institute of India's Cyrus Poonawalla had a 6 per cent rise in wealth at ₹94,300 crore and was at sixth place.

D-Mart's Radhakishan Damani and family broke into the top-ten with a 56 per cent rise in wealth to ₹87,200 crore.

Kotak Mahindra Bank promoter Uday Kotak saw an 8 per cent reduction in his net worth to ₹87,000 crore, slipping one place to being the eighth richest Indian.

Govt mulls selling 25 pc stake in LIC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 29: India is planning to seek cabinet's approval to sell 25% stake in the nation's largest life insurer, people with knowledge of the matter said, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeks resources to plug a widening budget gap.

The government plans to amend the act of parliament under which the state-run Life Insurance Corp. of India was set up to prepare for the sale, the people said, asking not to be identified as the discussions were private. A finance ministry spokesman was not immediately available for a comment.

A stake sale in LIC through a public offering of shares will help the government bolster its finances after the coronavirus pandemic stalled growth and threatens the fiscal deficit target of 3.5% of gross domestic product set for the year ending March 2021. The administration has raised about ₹5700 cr through asset sales in the fiscal year from April 1, as against a target of ₹2.1 trillion.

The government has picked Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India Ltd. and SBI Capital Markets Ltd.



The timing of the insurer's initial public offering will depend on market conditions, and the sale is likely to be done in tranches

Vehicle ancillary sector's revenue may fall 16-20 pc

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 29: The auto ancillary sector's revenue is expected to shrink 16-20 per cent in the current financial year, with both domestic market as well as exports likely to see contraction in demand, according to India Ratings and Research.

The rating agency, in a release on Tuesday, also said it has maintained a negative outlook for the auto ancillary sector for the October-March period of 2020-21.

It said auto ancillaries with high exposure to the commercial vehicle segment are expected to continue to be the worst impacted, in relation to those with high two-wheeler, passenger vehicle or tractor segment exposures.

While the sector was expected to start recovering from the second half of 2020-21, the revenue may now record a decline of 16-20 per cent y-o-y in the overall fiscal, India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) said in a release.

Although demand from the after-market segment is also likely to remain subdued, it would be the least affected. However, the performance in the October-March period of 2020-21 is expected to be better than the previous half.

BIZ BUZZ

derly growth of the sector; to meet the national objectives and for provision of quality broadband for all, allocating sufficient spectrum is imperative. Therefore, we reiterate that all available spectrum should be immediately auctioned," the letter said.

The Digital Communications Commission, the apex decision making body of the Department of Telecom, in May approved the spectrum auction plan subject to Union cabinet approval. The DoT, however, is yet to come up with any notification for the next round of auction in which airwaves worth ₹5.22 lakh crore are to be sold.

The telecom ministry gets an average revenue share of around 5 per cent as spectrum usage charge from telecom operators which is calculated based on their spectrum holding of companies and 8 per cent as licence fee from the revenue earned

by the companies from sale of communication services.

Jio said in the last four years, since the last auction, there has been an exponential increase in traffic and data consumption by almost 50 times with 3.5 times rise in mobile broadband users.

"We understand that a few service providers might be opposing spectrum auctions to stifle competition as they have amassed large amounts of spectrum through mergers and acquisitions and they are also losing customers every month," Jio said.

According to the Trai recommendation and government decision in 2012, spectrum auction should be held 18 months before the expiry on any licence or right to use spectrum.

Around 39 licences issued by the government in 2001 are set to expire in about eight months between July to September 2021.

SBI Card, Amex join hands to leverage scale

New Delhi: SBI Card has joined hands with American Express (Amex) to leverage scale and differentiated offerings for its premium customers. Under this partnership, SBI Card's top-end premium products - SBI Card ELITE and SBI Card PRIME -- will be available on American Express' global network.



"We (SBI Card) have a card base of about 10.5 million at this point, this is still a very small number compared to the State Bank of India (parent bank) customer base of 288 million. And if you look at the entire industry of 880 million debit cards, this is a long-way to go," Ashwini Kumar Tewari, MD & CEO, SBI Card told PTI.

BPCL's overseas acquisition under scanner



NEW DELHI: The CBI will look into alleged irregularities in state-owned Bharat Petroleum Corp Ltd's (BPCL) investment in a gas block in Mozambique, the government's approval to the firm's further spending in the block has recorded, sources said. The approval to Bharat PetroResources Ltd (BPRL), the oil and gas exploration and production subsidiary of BPCL, investing its share of the USD 24 billion cost of developing the gas fields in the Rovuma Area-1 Offshore Block came with a noting that the CBI will continue to look into alleged irregularities, sources with direct knowledge of the development said. BPRL had in August 2008 bought a 10 per cent stake in Area-1 Offshore.

Female workforce participation increases

BANGALORE: Hiring rate and female workforce participation have increased in India, according to a 'Labour Market Update' put out by online professional network LinkedIn. Hiring picked up by 25 percentage points by end of July as compared to June, it said. Female workforce participation increased from 30 per cent in April to reach 37 per cent at the end of July. 'Labour Market Update' is a monthly update on hiring trends and insights based on LinkedIn's 'Economic Graph', a digital representation of the Indian economy built by conducting a close analysis of actions of more than 69 million members in India, it said in a statement.



RASHID GUIDES SRH TO 1ST WIN

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Sept 29: Rashid Khan (3/14) bowled a brilliant spell to guide Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) to their first win of this year's IPL here, Tuesday. The David Warner-led side defeated Delhi Capitals by 15 runs.

Chasing a challenging 163, DC never looked like troubling SRH. SRH were reduced to 42/2 in 7.2 overs losing Prithvi Shaw (2) and skipper Shreyas Iyer (17). They failed to deal with a disciplined SRH bowling attack.

Shikhar Dhawan (34), Rishabh Pant (28) and Shimron Hetmyer (21) got starts but couldn't capitalise bowling down to the pressure. At some point, Pant and Hetmyer gave DC some hope but they perished one after the other to end DC's two-game winning run. DC finished their innings at 147/7. Bhuvneshwar Kumar finished his spell with figures of 2/25.

Earlier, opener Jonny Bairstow (53, 48b, 2x4, 1x6) scored his second fifty of the tournament to help SRH post a competitive 162/4.

Bairstow shared two crucial partnerships – 77 off 57 balls with Warner (45, 33b, 3x4, 2x6) for the opening stand and 52 off 38 balls with Kane Williamson (41, 26b, 5x4) for the third wicket. Making his IPL debut, Jammu and Kashmir's Abdul Samad (12 n o, 7b) blasted a four and six in his useful cameo.



(From L): Rashid Khan rejoices after taking a wicket; Kane Williamson in action; David Warner and Jonny Bairstow run between the wickets, Tuesday

Put into bat, Warner and Bairstow were circumspect with the pace trio of Ishant Sharma, Kagiso Rabada (2/21) and Anrich Nortje (0/40) maintaining their line and length. The result was Sunrisers could only score 38 in the powerplay. Bairstow picked his first bound-

ary in the seventh over off leg-spinner Amit Mishra (2/35).

The duo tried to make up for the lack of boundaries on the slow track with their excellent running between the wickets to keep the scoreboard ticking.

Playing his first match of the

season after recovering from an injury, Williamson smashed two fours in the 16th over to take SRH to 128 for two.

Bairstow reached his fifty off 44 balls before holding out to Nortje in the 18th over. Williamson too was dismissed in the last over.

BRIEF SCORES: Sunrisers Hyderabad 162/4 (Jonny Bairstow 53, David Warner 45, Kane Williamson 41; Kagiso Rabada 2/21, Amit Mishra 2/35) beat Delhi Capitals 147/7 (Shikhar Dhawan 34, Rishabh Pant 32; Rashid Khan 3/14, Bhuvneshwar Kumar 2/25) by 15 runs.

RR TEST AWAITS KKR

TODAY'S MATCH

RR VS KKR AT 7:30 PM

TELECAST: STAR SPORTS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 29: Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) will have to bat out of their skin to stop a marauding Rajasthan Royals (RR) when the two teams clash in an IPL match at the Dubai International Stadium here Wednesday.

Having started off as underdogs, the Royals have taken the IPL by storm, chasing down the highest tournament total 224 against Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) in their last match.

In two wins from two matches, the Royals have got past the 200-mark with ease. In their success, they have found two stars in Sanju Samson and Rahul Tewatia, who have outshone marquee players.

In his second coming at the Royals, little known Haryana all-rounder Tewatia has got instant stardom for his 31-ball 53 against KXIP, which helped the side chase down a record 224 with three balls to spare against KXIP.

Struggling to get off the blocks quickly, Tewatia, who was on 17 from 23 deliveries with the team needing 51 from the last three overs, suddenly woke up from the slumber, smacking left-arm quick Sheldon Cottrell for five sixes in an over to turn the tables for RR.

But the season so far belongs to Samson – the wicketkeeper from Kerala. Boasting of the season's highest strike-rate of 214.86, Samson has two successive half centuries that has once again put him in contention for a longer rope in the Indian team as a

keeper-batsman.

Skipper Steve Smith has been ever reliable, striking two half centuries, while opener Jos Buttler will be waiting to explode.

To match or even surpass the Royals, KKR have the biggest stars in Andre Russell to go along with reigning World Cup winning English skipper Eoin Morgan, one of the best in limited-overs cricket.

But both Morgan and Russell have got limited opportunities so far, having dropped down to No.5 and 6 respectively.

The fixture might just finally see them bat higher up, especially the star Jamaican, who was their highest run-getter last season with 510 runs at a astonishing strike rate of 204.81.

Having started off with a familiar defeat to Mumbai Indians in their opener, Kolkata Knight Riders put up a determined show to bounce back against a sloppy Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Talented opener Shubman Gill's unbeaten half-century, aided by Morgan's late firepower overtook SRH's below-par 145 with two overs to spare.

Come Wednesday, it may well be a run feast with no target 'safe' against the Royals. Dubai has been host to both the Super-Over matches this season. The venue will be an uncharted territory for both the teams who will be playing here for the first time this season.

For the record, the teams batting first have won all the five matches here so far.

Comments on RCB-MI match

VIRAT KOHLI: Outstanding Super Over from him (Saini), bowling against Hardik (Pandya) and Pollard. I think the longer boundary helped him gain some confidence with his yorker, because he has got the pace and then he was using the wide yorker well too. It was such a roller-coaster of a game. We batted well in the first innings to get us past 200 and then the start of bowling was outstanding. They played well in the middle overs, waited for the dew to kick in. Pollard and Ishan to bat the way they did was outstanding to keep them in the game

ROHIT SHARMA: Nothing to take away from RCB. They stuck to their plans, although we put them under pressure, they held their nerve more than us. It was a great game of cricket, we were not in the game at all when we started with the bat. But great innings by Ishan (Kishan) there to get us back in the game and then Polly (Pollard) was brilliant as usual. In the Super Over, Ishan was drained out and was not comfortable. We thought we could send him in but he was not feeling fresh and Hardik is somebody we trust for hitting the long-balls but it did not come off

Different French Open, same start for Rafa



REUTERS

Paris, Sept 29: It might be an unusual French Open but claycourt master Rafa Nadal started his quest for a record-extending 13th French Open title in the usual way with a straightforward 6-4, 6-4, 6-2 first-round win against Belarusian Egor Gerasimov Monday.

The Spaniard, looking to equal Roger Federer's record of 20 Grand Slam men's singles titles, is used to slow starts at Roland Garros and this year's debut was no different.

On the revamped court Philippe Chatrier, whose roof stayed open throughout, Nadal converted all of his five break points to set up a meeting with American Mackenzie

McDonald. The second seed, who had complained about the new balls being too heavy, did not appear too bothered in front of some 200 fans, wrapping up the match with a service winner.

"It's a different Roland Garros. Of course we play in the same place. But the conditions are completely different than any other Roland

Garros that we've played," said Nadal.

The French Open was moved from its usual May-June spot to September 27-October 11 amid the COVID-19 crisis, meaning players have to deal with rough weather conditions – colder, more humid.

Nadal arrived here with no title on clay under his belt after being beaten by Argentine Diego Schwartzman in the quarterfinals of the Italian Open, but Monday's match gave him reasons to be optimistic.

With the Spaniard's topspin having less of a devastating effect on the heavier clay, Nadal had to adapt and play more aggressively than usual, taking the ball earlier to unsettle his opponent – a tactic that worked perfectly.

He broke in the fifth game as he bagged the opening set in solid fashion, and he stole his opponent's serve again in the third game of the second.

With a mountain to climb after falling two sets behind and as blue skies ate away the dark clouds, Gerasimov broke for 2-0 in the third set.

Nadal quickly regained control, however, and levelled for 2-2, with Gerasimov twisting his ankle on the last point of the fourth game.

The physiotherapist taped the Belarusian's ankle and play resumed after a short interruption with Nadal breaking again for 3-2.

Gerasimov's challenge was fading as Nadal piled on the pressure to seal a routine win, moving a step closer to a potential semifinal with last year's runner-up, Austrian third seed Dominic Thiem.

REDS MAKE OMINOUS START TO PREMIER LEAGUE TITLE DEFENCE

3 in a row for Liverpool

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 29: Three wins from three games, two big rivals dispatched, and an expensive new signing already on the scoresheet. Liverpool are making an ominous start to its title defense in the English Premier League (EPL).

The champions' high-risk, high-reward strategy paid off in their come-from-behind 3-1 win over Arsenal Monday in an open game featuring a late clinching goal by Diogo Jota in his first league start for Liverpool.

"This was absolutely exceptional," Liverpool manager Jürgen Klopp said, "100% dominant against a team in form."

Liverpool gave up some glaring chances inside an empty Anfield by deploying an aggressive press and a high line – Alexandre Lacazette, who put Arsenal ahead, squandered two one-on-one opportunities at 2-1 – but the brave tactic forced many openings of their own.

He'll be pleased the way the nascent standings look, too. Liverpool are one of three teams to have opened with three straight wins, including over Chelsea and now Arsenal. With two of their other main rivals – Manchester City and Manchester United – having already lost a game each, the start to the season could hardly have gone better for Liverpool.

Arsenal dropped points for the first time but were threatening to beat Liverpool for a third straight month – after wins in the league



MAKING HIS PRESENCE FELT: Diogo Jota (L) is ecstatic after scoring on his Premier League debut for Liverpool against Arsenal, Monday

in July and the Community Shield in August – when Lacazette took advantage of a rare mistake by Andrew Robertson to give the visitors a 25th-minute lead.

Sadio Mane equalised inside three minutes before Robertson made amends by scoring himself after controlling a cross from Liverpool's other flying full back, Trent Alexander-Arnold.

That wild nine-minute period, featuring three goals, characterised a high-risk game plan from Liverpool that causes chaos for their opponents because of the way they are squeezed high up.

Break the press and Liverpool is in trouble, though, and Lacazette was played through clean on goal in the second half for chances to

equalise. Both of his efforts were tame and comfortably saved by Alisson, and Lacazette was spotted hiding his head in his jersey in the dugout after being substituted.

Jota sealed victory in the 88th by driving in a shot that glanced the post as it went in, after David Luiz's headed clearance only reached the edge of the area.

Nothing appears to have changed at Fulham. The last time the southwest London club was in the Premier League – in the 2018-19 season – it conceded a division-high 81 goals and got relegated. Already in its first season back in the top flight, Fulham has let in 10 goals and lost all three of its matches – the latest being at home to Aston Villa 3-0.

Kerber bows out of French Open early, again

PARIS: Former World No.1 Angelique Kerber suffered yet another first-round exit at the French Open when she was beaten 3-6, 3-6 by Slovenian Kaja Juvan Monday. The German, whose best result at Roland Garros was reaching the quarterfinals in 2012 and 2018, was never in contention on a floodlit court 14 as she went out in the first round for the fourth time in the last five years. Kerber, seeded 18th in Paris, has won the other three Grand Slams but has never been comfortable on the French clay and this year was no different. The 32-year-old bowed out after one hour and seven minutes when she made her 30th unforced error.

Muguruza survives Zidensek scare

PARIS: Former champion Garbine Muguruza said there was no such thing as a relaxing match these days after narrowly avoiding a first-round exit at the French Open Monday when she battled for three hours to beat Slovenia's Tamara Zidensek 7-5, 4-6, 8-6. The Spaniard, who reigned on the clay in 2016, looked in big trouble as she trailed 0-3 in the final set to the World No.83 but, unlike several other big names who are packing their bags, the 26-year-old survived to fight another day. She ended the match with 64 unforced errors but crucially played her best tennis when it mattered most, breaking the Zidensek serve at 6-6 with a crosscourt forehand winner before sealing victory on her first match point.

Bublik stuns local hope Monfils at Roland Garros

PARIS: Unseeded Kazakh Alexander Bublik upset local hope and eighth seed Gael Monfils 6-4, 7-5, 3-6, 6-3 in the opening round of the French Open Monday for his first career win over a top-10 player in six attempts. Monfils, the World No.9, started strongly to run up a 3-0 lead in the opening set but Bublik stormed back by winning five straight games to take the set. The Frenchman had a set point in the second but once again saw his advantage wither away. Monfils, 34, somehow managed to find some energy to stay in the match but it was not enough as Bublik closed out the match with a double break in the fourth set. It was the third successive opening-match loss for Monfils in as many tournaments since the resumption after pandemic.

Pliskova battles past Sherif in first round

PARIS: Czech second seed Karolina Pliskova managed to rein in her errors and found a way past battling Egyptian qualifier Mayar Sherif with a 6-7(9-11), 6-2, 6-4 victory in the opening round of the French Open Tuesday. Pliskova had 27 unforced errors and hit six double faults in the first set under the open roof of Court Philippe Chatrier as the 24-year-old Sherif, making her Grand Slam main draw debut, saved eight set-points to win the opener in the tie-breaker. Former World No.1 Pliskova improved drastically in the second to level the match. Pliskova sealed the match with an ace and will next meet 2017 champion Jelena Ostapenko, who earlier defeated American Madison Brengle 6-2, 6-1.

Schumi's son Mick to make F1 practice debut

Maranello, Sept 29: Michael Schumacher's son, Mick, will have an official Formula One drive during a race weekend for the first time next week at the Nurburgring, Alfa Romeo and Ferrari said Tuesday. Schumacher gets the practice drive in an Alfa Romeo October 9 on his home track in Germany as a member of Ferrari's young driver program, taking over Antonio Giovinazzi's car for the first session of the weekend. "I am overjoyed to get this chance in free practice," Schumacher said

in a statement. "I'm going to prepare myself well, so that I can do the best possible job for the team and gain some valuable data for the weekend."

The 21-year-old Schumacher leads the Formula 2 standings after winning races in Monza and Sochi. He won the European Formula 3 championship in 2018 and tested a Ferrari F1 car in Bahrain in April 2019.

He's also done demonstration runs in his father's old cars, most recently this month ahead of the Tuscan Grand Prix in a championship-winning 2004 Ferrari.