



KEEN OBSERVATION

Actor Kangana Ranaut says she has realised that fashion is nothing but freedom of expression

LEISURE P2



DELHI'S POLLUTION

New Delhi, world's most polluted city, recorded a fall in air quality, partly due to crop waste burning by farmers

TWO STATES P7



TRUMP, BIDEN CLASH

In the 1st presidential debate, Donald Trump and Joe Biden fiercely clashed over a number of issues

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I don't see any problem in taking strong action against the culprits, sir. They don't belong to influential families.

ALL 32 LET OFF IN BABRI CASE

BJP veterans LK Advani, MM Joshi and Uma Bharti were cleared of conspiracy charges

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 30: The acquittal of all 32 accused in the Babri Masjid demolition case Wednesday evoked contrasting responses from political parties, with the BJP hailing it as a "victory of truth and justice", and the Congress along with other opposition parties asserting that the court verdict runs counter to constitutional spirit and the 2019 Supreme Court judgement.

The accused, including BJP veterans LK Advani and MM Joshi, were acquitted by a special CBI court in Lucknow which said there was no conclusive proof against them.

While the BJP in one voice hailed the verdict as a vindication of its stance, several opposition parties like the Congress, CPI(M), Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) and All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) criticised the ruling. Some of them also demanded that the Central government should file an appeal against the order. Welcoming the court verdict by chanting 'Jai Shri Ram', Advani, the political face of the 'Ram Jannabhoomi Movement', said it vindicates his personal and BJP's belief and commitment towards the movement.

Later, in a statement, the 92-year-old former deputy prime minister said, "I also feel blessed that this judgement has come in the footsteps of another landmark verdict of the Supreme Court given in November 2019, which paved the way for my long cherished dream of seeing a grand Shri Ram Mandir at Ayodhya, the foundation laying ceremony of which was held on 5th August, 2020."

Former Union minister and BJP veteran Murlidhar Joshi termed "historic" the CBI court verdict and said, "I will say only one thing 'Jai Shri Ram, Sab ko sanmatti de bhagwan (May Lord, bestow wisdom on all)."

Several top BJP leaders hailed the court's decision, and described it as a

NOT GUILTY



victory of truth and justice. Senior BJP leader and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in a tweet said he welcomes the court's decision as "it shows that though late but the justice has won". BJP leader Ram Madhav said this acquittal was long overdue and everyone should welcome the judgement. Saffron outfit Vishwa Hindu Parishad also termed the case verdict as the "victory of truth".

In its reaction, the Congress said the verdict to acquit all the accused runs counter to constitutional spirit and the 2019 Supreme Court judgement that had described the demolition of the structure as an "egregious violation of the rule of law". Congress' chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said every Indian who has innate faith in the Constitution and in the spirit of communal amity and brotherhood expects and urges the Central

and state governments to file an appeal against the verdict delivered on Wednesday. The governments must follow the letter of the law and the Constitution without any "partiality and pre-meditated prejudice" Surjewala said, adding this is the true calling of rule of law and Constitution.

The verdict also triggered different reactions on social media with sarcastic hashtags like "ActofGod" and "NoOneDemolishedBabri" trending on Twitter. A number of netizens also

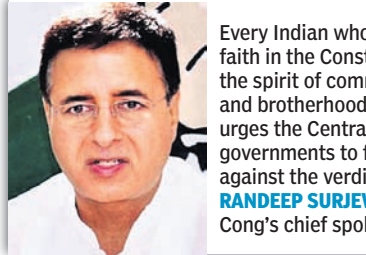
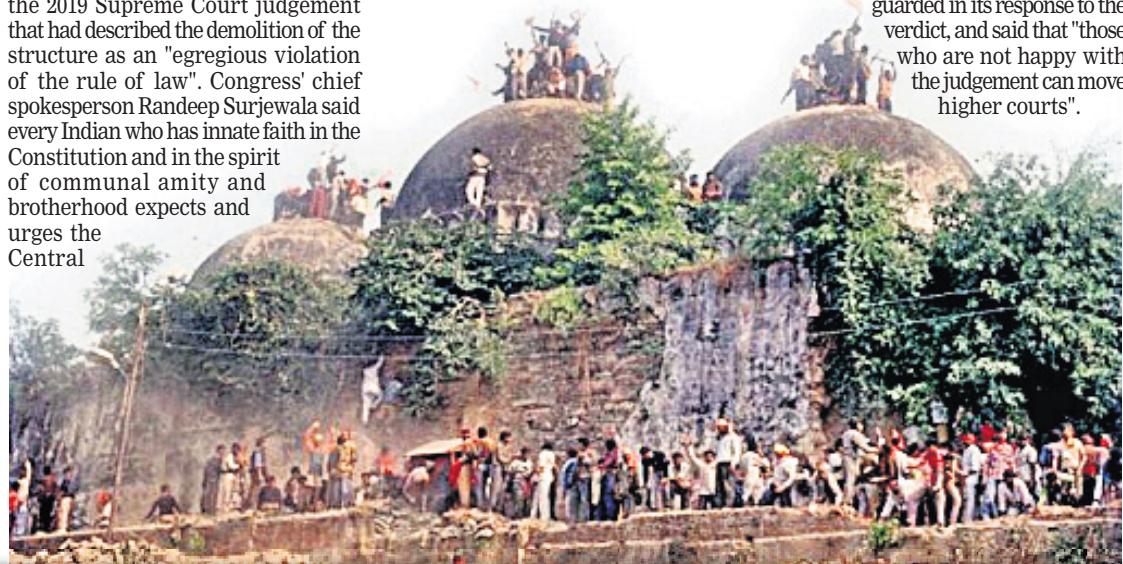
hailed the verdict as serving justice and trended hashtags like 'ShriRam'.

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury described the verdict as "complete travesty of justice". "All charged with criminal conspiracy to demolish Babri Masjid acquitted. Is it self-imposed? The Constitution Bench headed by then CJI had said that demolition was an 'egregious' violation of law. Now this verdict! Shame," he tweeted.

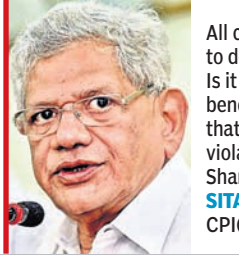
Expressing outrage over the verdict, AIMIM Chief Asaduddin Owaisi called it "obnoxious" and said the central agency should appeal against it. "This judgement satisfies the collective consciousness of Hindutva and its followers and ideology," Owaisi said.

The IUML termed as "unfortunate" the decision of the Special CBI court to acquit all the accused and opined that an appeal should be filed against the verdict. Reacting to the verdict, DMK president M K Stalin alleged the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has failed to act fairly in the Babri mosque demolition case and that it has become a "caged parrot" of the BJP-led Centre.

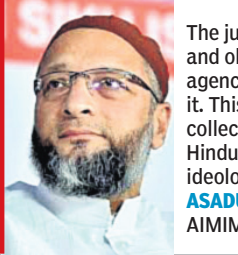
The Trinamool Congress was guarded in its response to the verdict, and said that "those who are not happy with the judgement can move higher courts".



Every Indian who has innate faith in the Constitution and in the spirit of communal amity and brotherhood expects and urges the Central and state governments to file an appeal against the verdict
RANDEEP SURJEWALA | Cong's chief spokesperson



All charged with criminal conspiracy to demolish Babri Masjid acquitted. Is it self-imposed? The Constitution bench headed by then CJI had said that demolition was an 'egregious' violation of law. Now this verdict! Shame
SITARAM YECHURY | CPI(M) general secretary



The judgement is unfortunate and obnoxious. The central agency should appeal against it. This judgement satisfies the collective consciousness of Hindutva and its followers and ideology
ASADUDDIN OWAIISI | AIMIM Chief

Sarpanch fined ₹1L for violating Covid norms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Sept 30: The sarpanch of Gaurenmunda panchayat in Bargarh district has been fined ₹1 lakh Wednesday for allegedly violating COVID-19 guidelines.

Block Development Officer (BDO) of Gaisilet block in the district Niranjan Sa has imposed the fine on sarpanch Malaba Sahu for conducting congregation of around 150 villagers on the block office premises Tuesday. According to sources, Sahu along with some villagers had gheraoed the BDO office Tuesday afternoon as protests against

kerosene scam under PDS scam.

The BDO alleged that the sarpanch had not taken any prior permission to organise the congregation. Due to the COVID-19 situation, congregation of such a large number of persons in a limited space is against the COVID-19 guidelines. For this, the district administration has imposed ₹1 lakh penalty on the sarpanch for his unlawful act. Sahu had been directed to submit the penalty amount at the BDO office within three days. Action will be taken against him if he fails to submit the amount, added BDO Niranjan Sa.

Hathras: Outrage over late night cremation

AGENCIES

Hathras/Lucknow, Sept 30: The 19-year-old Dalit woman, whose death in a Delhi hospital two weeks after she was brutally gangraped led to nationwide outrage, was cremated in the dead of the night early Wednesday with family members alleging they were forced by police to hurriedly conduct the last rites.

"The cremation was done around 2:30-3 in the morning," her father said, a day after his daughter, who suffered critical injuries when she was allegedly gangraped and tortured by four upper caste men, gave up the battle for life.

As political leaders and activists

voiced their protests on social media and other platforms over the manner in which the funeral was conducted near the woman's home in Hathras, a local police officer said it was carried out "as per the wishes of the family".

In the moments preceding the cremation of his sister, the teen's brother told PTI from his home, "Police have forcibly taken the body and my father along with them for cremation. When my father reached Hathras (from New Delhi), he was immediately taken (to the crematorium) by the police."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and said

strict action should be taken against the culprits, according to the Chief Minister's Office.

The chief minister also constituted a three-member SIT to probe the case and asked that the trial be conducted in a fast track court. The SIT has been asked to submit its report in seven days, an official said.

Recalling the horrors of the Nirbhaya case, the Dalit teen was allegedly sexually assaulted by four men on September 14 and referred on Monday to the Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi with spinal injuries, paralysis and cuts in her tongue. She died around 3 am on Tuesday. The men alleged to be involved in the crime are under ar-

rest and will now face charges under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code, according to Hathras Superintendent of Police Vikrant Vir.

The family left Safdarjung Hospital in Delhi on Tuesday night amid heavy police deployment and reached their village in Hathras, about 180 km from the national capital, after the body of the young woman, claimed a family member.

Another relative said 30 to 40 people accompanied the woman's father to the crematorium. Senior police and administration officials were also present at the crematorium in the middle of the night, an official said.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	38067.93 ↑ 94.71
NIFTY	11247.50 ↑ 25.10
DOLLAR	74.14 ↓ ₹0.06
EURO	86.58 ↓ ₹0.04
GOLD	₹50,335 ↓ ₹346
SILVER	₹60,940 ↓ ₹1526

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	30.7°C	33.0°C
TEMP MIN	25.0°C	23.4°C
Humidity	98%	94%
Rainfall	21.2mm	6mm
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

IT RETURNS DEADLINE EXTENDED TO NOV 30

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 30: In a major relief for taxpayers, the Centre Wednesday announced extension of the due date for filing income tax returns for assessment year 2019-20 by a couple of months to November 30, 2020.

The decision has come in the wake of many taxpayers facing difficulties in filing their income tax returns due to the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic.

The last date for filing returns for AY 2019-20 was extended earlier till September 30, the third such

extension during the pandemic. It has been further extended till November to provide more time to taxpayers.

"On further consideration of genuine difficulties being faced by taxpayers due to the Covid-19 situation, CBDT further extends the due date for furnishing of belated & revised ITRs for Assessment Year 2019-20 from 30th September, 2020 to 30th November, 2020," the Income Tax Department said in a tweet.

The Union government has already extended the date for filing income tax returns for AY 2020-21 to November 30.

None can mine coal in eco-sensitive zones: SC

JHARKHAND GOVT HAD CHALLENGED THE CENTRE'S DECISION TO AUCTION COAL BLOCKS FOR COMMERCIAL MINING

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 30: The Supreme Court Wednesday observed that if an area falls under eco sensitive zone then neither the Centre nor the state government will have the right to mine it. The remark was made by the top court which was hearing Jharkhand government's pleas challenging the Centre's decision to auction coal blocks for commercial mining. The apex court said prima facie Central government is entitled to auction the coal blocks in the state. However, it said that to find out if the areas in question are eco-sensitive or not, it may send



some experts.

A bench headed by Chief Justice SA Bobde asked the Centre to file an affidavit within a week on whether these areas in question are eco-sensitive zones or not. During the hearing, the bench observed that "at the moment we are not dealing with whether the Centre has the right

or Jharkhand to do mining. If the area is eco sensitive then no one, either the Centre or the state government, has the right to mine".

It said, "We are not experts to decide whether the areas are eco sensitive or not. What we will do is send some experts to say on this". At the outset, senior advocate FS Nariman, appearing for Jharkhand, said that auction of coal blocks can be postponed for a few months and the suit under Article 131 they have filed needs to be decided.

Senior advocate AM Singhvi, also appearing for the state government, said that the state has a large population of tribal people

and 30 per cent of area is forest area and falls under eco sensitive zone.

"I am challenging the coal auction as it is against the public interest and not the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act (MMDR Act)," he said. The bench told Singhvi that how can he say that the MMDR Act will not apply in the state on the ground that it is a scheduled area. The bench said that what has the state been doing in these areas and it would like to hear whether they are eco sensitive areas.

Attorney General KK Venugopal, appearing for Centre, said that just 14 days before a suit is filed, they had

filed a writ petition asking us to roll back auction of coal mine in Jharkhand for six to nine months or unless until Global investment climate improves, so that Jharkhand maximizes returns on natural resources. The bench said that at the moment it is not dealing with whether the Centre has the right or the Jharkhand has right to do the mining but if the area is eco sensitive then no one either the Centre or the state government have the right to mine. "Our experience shows that people want to exploit the eco sensitive zones and if the areas are eco sensitive then we will not allow either to mine," it said.

After Oct 15, states free to take call on schools' reopening

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 30: The Ministry of Home Affairs Wednesday left it to the states and union Territories to decide on reopening of schools and coaching institutions after October 15 in a graded manner.

Earlier, schools were partially reopened from September 21 in compliance with Unlock 4 guidelines.

In fresh guidelines for further reopening of the country amid the pandemic, the MHA stated, "For re-opening of schools and coaching institutions, State and UT Governments have been given the flexibility to take a decision after 15th

may be permitted to do so."

The guidelines added, "Students may attend schools or institutions only with the written consent of parents. Attendance must not be enforced and must depend entirely on parental consent." States and UTs have been asked to prepare their own standard operating procedures (SOP) regarding health and safety precautions for reopening of schools and institutions based on the guidelines to be issued by the Department of

The decision shall be taken in consultation with the respective school or institution managements based on their assessment of the situation

School Education and Literacy under the Ministry of Education. "Schools, which are allowed to open, will have to mandatorily follow the SOP to be issued by Education Departments of States and UTs. The Department of Higher Education (DHE), Ministry of Education may take a decision on the timing of the opening of colleges and higher education institutions, in consultation with the MHA," it added.

Higher Education Institutions, only for research scholars and post-graduate students in science and technology streams that require laboratory or experimental work will be permitted to open from October 15.



THE LION KING TO HAVE A FOLLOW-UP

The Hollywood blockbuster, *The Lion King*, is set to have a follow-up. Barry Jenkins, who called the shots on the Oscar-winning *Moonlight*, will direct the film. "Helping my sister raise two young boys during the '90s, I grew up with these characters," Jenkins said, according to a report in *variety.com*.

DISNEY PARKS TO FIRE 28K EMPLOYEES

Disney Parks is letting go of 28,000 US employees due to impact of the ongoing the pandemic on Disneyland and Walt Disney World. Disney Parks chairman Josh D'Amaro wrote a letter to employees, saying that this was "the only feasible option we have", reports *variety.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
The yogis have finally succeeded in impressing you. Was it a stint in an Art of Living course? Ganesh gives you the thumbs-up and suggests you join that music or dance class you have been wanting to. Generally a nice day, and success is on the cards.

TAURUS
Today, you need to take hold of your emotions. Ganesh urges you to not get carried away by your feelings. Instead, you should try to maintain a practical, sensible frame of mind. Women are like to feature prominently in your life during the day.

GEMINI
Your entire attention will be concentrated on the work-front today. You will be on the lookout for new projects and contracts to spur on your earnings. Opportunities for changing your job will come knocking on your door.

CANCER
There may not be many opportunities visible on the horizon today. And, chances are that you may end up getting embroiled in some complicated situations, without even a fault of yours. Relax! Given your people skills and lively spirits, you will be able to sail through.

LEO
You have to let go of your stubborn and obstinate streak. You will need to compromise according to the situation. If you do not have such an attitude, arguments and confrontations with your business partners, friends and family members are possible.

VIRGO
You are quick-witted, sharp and artistic to the core, says Ganesh, so you may go ahead and enrapture people with your special abilities, perhaps at a social gathering. However, Ganesh says it would be better if you could conserve some of that enthusiasm in order to focus your attention on issues of greater importance.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will be able to show your love and appreciation for your beloved. Small issues will crop up and keep you tensed and uncomfortable today. Just remember good days and old memories and life will seem good again.

SCORPIO
You are in a mood of introspection and analysis, says Ganesh. This is likely to give you a clear vision in the days to come. Your systematic approach towards work will provide you room to think out of the box.

SAGITTARIUS
Begin your day with a renewed zest. Consider a jump case of lucrative offer. Cracking a telephonic interview may prove to be a milestone in your career path. Your dedication and determination towards your work and goals makes you a deserving employee, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN
You comparatively less experienced than others in the office, but the boss will choose you with a hope to get the company out of the existing troubles. Trusting your intelligence, skills, and potential, you will assigned some crucial matters.

AQUARIUS
You need not always put up a brave face, feels Ganesh. You can ventilate your emotions and speak your heart out in front of your loved ones. It will make the pain bearable and you'll probably get a way out of your problems.

PISCES
You will be busy with romance throughout the day. While singles are likely to find the person of their dreams, those who are married will establish a new closeness in their relationship. Your attitude towards work will begin to change.

'Fashion is nothing but freedom of expression'

Mumbai: Actress Kangana Ranaut has shared how her fashion sense has evolved over the years, and defines fashion as freedom of expression.

Kangana took to Twitter and posted then and now photos. In one photo, she is seen wearing a frock and a pearl necklace. In another, she is sitting in the front row of a fashion show.

Explaining how her fashion has evolved over the years, she tweeted: "When I was a little girl I decorated myself with pearls, cut my

own hair, wore thigh high socks and heels. People laughed at me."

"From being a village clown to attending front rows of London, Paris, New York Fashion weeks I realised fashion is nothing but freedom of expression," she wrote.

Kangana has in the past used her stardom to promote Indian fashion. Earlier this month, she spoke about how we draw inspiration from Europe or Japan for fashion, but handlooms in India are often ignored.



Kangana Ranaut



Tiger stuns fans with his agility

Mumbai: Action star and fitness enthusiast Tiger Shroff has stunned fans once again with his agility. In a new video he posted on Instagram, Tiger pulls off consecutive back flips with ease.

Rapper Yo Yo Honey Singh was amazed by Tiger's backflips and wrote in the comment section: "My head is spinning bro!! Amazing." Recently Tiger stunned fans with a video where he is seen pulling off a flying kick after his recent injury.

With no shooting, he has been busy exploring other avenues of talent. Earlier this month, the young actor made his debut as a singer with the single, Unbelievable.

The video of the song, helmed by Student Of The Year 2 director Punit Malhotra, shows Tiger as a hotel staff member romancing a colleague. Introducing the song, Tiger has spoken of how he was influenced by Michael Jackson while growing up.

B-TOWN'S SARCASTIC RETORT TO BABRI VERDICT

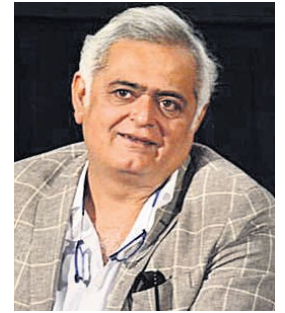
Mumbai: Several cine celebrities Wednesday reacted to the news of acquittal of all 32 people accused in the Babri mosque demolition case of December 6, 1992.

Filmmaker Anubhav Sinha, in a sarcastic reaction, said: "Congratulations



Mr Lal Krishna Advani you are now acquitted of the charges of single handedly drawing a bloody line across the soul of this country. May God give you a very long life."

Filmmaker Hansal Mehta was also caustic in his comment: "The Babri



Masjid Demolition was an Act of God."

Actress Gauhar Khan shared: "But of course! It



was an earthquake! Hahahaha. The joke is on us!"

Actress Swara Bhasker wrote: "Babri masjid khud hi



gir gaya tha (the Babri masjid had fallen by itself)."

Actor Sushant Singh expressed: "Na koi aya tha, na



kisi ne koi masjid banai thi (Nobody had come, nobody had constructed a mosque) #RIPJustice."

Those acquitted in the case that lasted 28 years include former Deputy Prime Minister LK Advani, former Union Ministers MM Joshi, Uma Bharti, former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Kalyan Singh and Mahant Nriyana Gopal Das.

Kiss The Ground : Aggressive agro therapy for planet Earth

DESPITE TALKING OF A HEAVY SUBJECT SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE FOR 84 MINUTES, THE FILM MAINTAINS A TONE THAT IS FAR FROM PREACHY

NARRATION: Woody Harrelson
DIRECTION: Joshua and Rebecca Harrell Tickell

AGENCIES

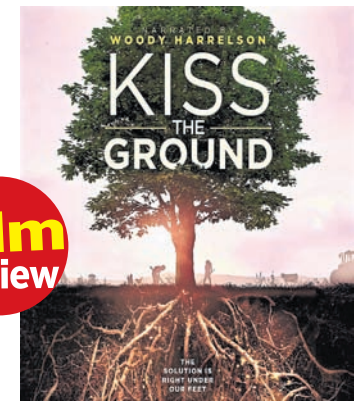
The much awaited documentary film streaming on Netflix talks of a simple solution to save planet Earth from most of its ecological woes. The docu-film draws focus on the power of the soil, and suggests regenerative cultivation of the soil as an effective way to avert impending doom.

For a glamour draw, directors Joshua and Rebecca Harrell Tickell have roped in Woody Harrelson as narrator of their cinematic prescription to resuscitate the planet. "Soil contains a universe of life," asserts Harrelson, as the narrative goes

about investing its minutes to explain how tapping into the power of the soil to lower carbon footprint is necessary if we must curb the ill impact of climate change.

In order to understand why soil is important, the Tickells and co-writer Johnny O'Hara start off by explaining how rampant abuse of the earth surface has triggered off erosion. The resultant effect has been only too obvious on the health of the planet and its inhabitants, as well as its climate.

The screenplay does a global recce to underline its point, in the process setting up a panoramic tour across farming cultures as different as the United States and China. The fact is effectively captured how regeneration of soil helps turn near-dead



Film review

stretches into lush expanses across environmentally varied landscapes.

A sprinkle of stardust is always a shot in the arm for activism, and this particular push for an aggressive agro

therapy to save planet Earth incorporates more than Harrelson's voiceover. The narrative accommodates celebrity climate warriors such as actors Patricia and David Arquette, Rosario Dawson, and Ian Somerhalder, supermodel Gisele Bundchen, her husband and NFL quarterback Tom Brady, and singer Jason Mraz. The idea should help grab the eyeballs and invariably inspire the fans. There are environment experts, too, to add weight to the effort.

The film makes its point simply and clearly. It is sincere in the proposal it extends to heal the planet, and the scientific context used to put across its logic is effective enough. Importantly, despite talking of a heavy subject as climate change for 84 minutes, it maintains a tone that is far from preachy or tedious.

FUN post

PEANUTS



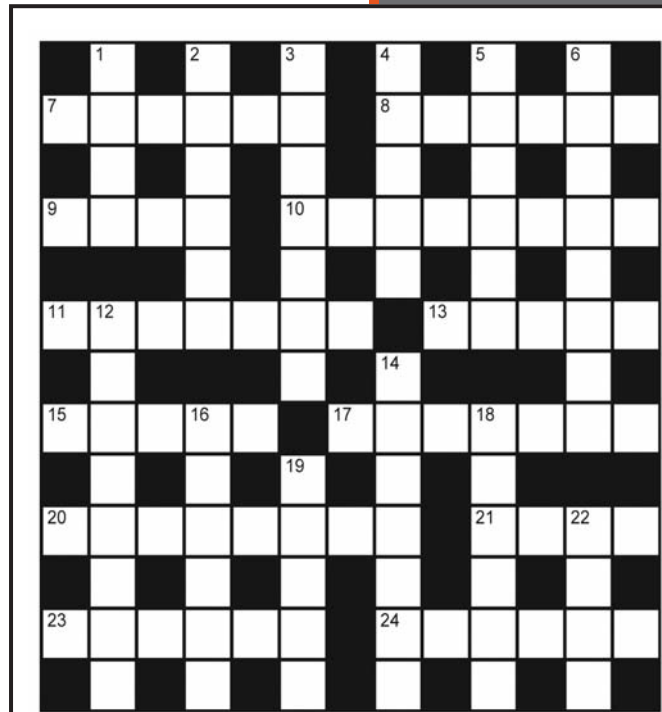
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



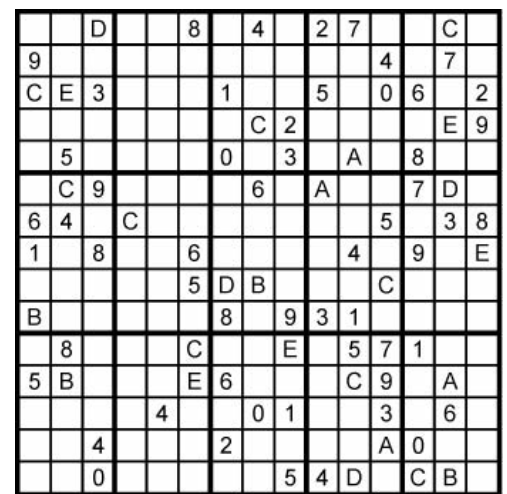
CROSSWORD



- Across**
7 Sleep
8 Talisman
9 Vivacity
10 Small, old star (3,5)
11 Cheese dish
13 Squirrel away
15 "Likewise"
17 Light fluffy egg dish
- Down**
20 Not an island
21 Diversify
23 Washer setting
24 Chewy candy
5 Win with brain power
6 Retaliation
12 Stirs
14 Escape artist of note
16 Beliefs
18 Prefer
19 Procrastinator's word
22 Harvest

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

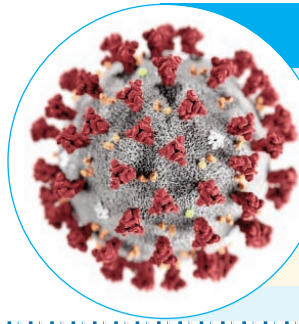


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



LIGHT & CRISP

A shopkeeper prepares puffed rice in College Square area of Cuttack, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

Table with 4 columns: Region, Infected, Recovered, Dead. Rows include World, India, and Odisha.

Odisha tops in child pornography: NCRB

2,036 incidents of sexual offences against girl children and 1,417 incidents of rape were reported from Odisha in 2019

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: Crimes against women and children seem to be haunting Odisha if the recent data released by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) is any indication.



According to NCRB data, Odisha recorded the highest of 542 cases of using child for pornography or for storing pornographic material under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in 2019.

the country by registering 390 such cases in 2019.

Similarly, Odisha has been ranked among the five worst performing states when it comes to cases of outrage of women's modesty.

An analysis of data regarding crimes against women for the last three years suggests that the state has seen a surge in number of crimes against women.

The NCRB report said that while the state had reported altogether 20,098 cases of crimes against

WOMEN & CHILDREN UNDER SIEGE

- Highest number of child pornography cases reported from Odisha
State second in reporting highest cases of outrage of women's modesty
Odisha among four worst Indian states in crimes against women
State reports highest cases of cybercrimes against women
Odisha is fourth state in the country to report maximum number of human trafficking cases

women in 2017 it went up to 20,274 in 2018 and 23,183 in 2019.

The crime rate with respect to crimes against women in Odisha is among the worst five states. It has a crime rate of 103.5 in such cases.

The NCRB data revealed that Odisha saw a total of 342 dowry deaths, three cases of rape and murder and a total of 1,382 cases of

rape of all types. Odisha is also the second state to report the highest number of cases of assault on women with the intent to outrage their modesty.

The state, however, saw zero attempts of acid attack, zero cases of kidnapping and abduction for murder, zero cases of kidnapping for ransom and no case of trafficking of girls from abroad.

State gets WHO pat for COVID mgmt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has praised the state government for its 'effective' governance and community-based strategies to contain the spread of COVID-19 and keep the fatality rate low.

In an article titled 'From governance to community resilience: Odisha's response to COVID-19', the WHO highlighted the state's early response, dedicated COVID-19 hospitals and decentralised management through gram panchayats to fight the pandemic.

"Evacuating the stranded people safely while adhering to social distancing measures was challenging but the state's experience in disaster management helped in managing the situation. Effective governance in collaboration with Panchayati Raj Institutions and community-based response strategy enabled the resilient state to contain the spread of the virus," it said.

Govt offices to remain shut on Saturdays

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: Like September, all government offices across the state will continue to remain closed on Saturdays in October too due to COVID-19.



All departments and sub-ordinate offices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack will function with 50 per cent staff strength (all staff including Group-A officers) during October and it would be ensured that the office work does not suffer.

The departments/head of offices in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack have been empowered to decide the manner of selection of employees who will attend office.

However, the offices and services like Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) and Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA), police, fire

services, health services and municipal services will function with full staff strength.

Government offices and employees have been instructed to strictly follow all precautionary measures issued by the department, it said. In case of detection of any Covid positive case among the office employees, the concerned office will follow the protocol issued earlier. The officers/staff, who have been provided with VPN will continue to work from home, when not assigned roster duty. They must be available to attend to office work of urgent nature, at short notice and be available on phone call at all times, read the order.

Outfits seek justice for Hathras gangrape victim



Activists of AIMSS hold a demonstration at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar seeking justice for the gangrape victim

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: Several civil society organisations (CSOs) in Odisha Wednesday condemned the gangrape and subsequent death of a Dalit girl of Hathras in Uttar Pradesh and sought immediate action against the culprits.

stringent action against the culprits involved in the gruesome incident.

"What is the solution to these kinds of crimes against women in our country where their safety is at stake? It is indeed a sad and shameful day for our country. We failed our daughters as a nation," said Anjan Pradhan, a local CSO member.

As per latest government data, India recorded an average of 87 rape cases daily in 2019 and altogether 4,05,861 cases of crimes against women during the year - a 7 per cent rise as compared to 2018.

"Nirbhaya's rapists were hanged earlier this year but cases are still rising and the latest case again puts a big question mark on justice and law and order situation in the country," said Naba Kishore Pujari, another activist.

The voluntary outfits demanded

Uproar in Assembly over nCoV 'mismanagement'

House passes Epidemic Diseases Amend Bill

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: The second day of the monsoon session of the Assembly witnessed uproarious scenes over failure of the government in Covid management.

Participating on a debate on admissibility of an adjournment over the failure of government in Covid management, Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik said, "The state government has totally failed in management of the pandemic and this was realized by people. As people of western Odisha don't get proper medical facility, they move to Chhattisgarh for treatment. It shows how our government has failed in providing basic healthcare to people."

He said not only Covid positive patients, non-Covid patients too suffer a lot. "Doctors are not attending to non-Covid patients, they are asking for Covid negative report. When a critically ill patient moves from pillar to post to get tested, his/her health condition deteriorates and he dies," Naik said.

Though the Centre has provided 567 ventilators to the state, the later has failed to utilize those to save the lives of Covid patients, the BJP leader alleged. He also alleged that the government has given priority to Ganjam district neglecting people from other districts which shows selfishness of

the CM. Another BJP member Jay Narayan Mishra said, "The entire health system in the state has collapsed. The statement and the claims made by the government are far from truth."

To get credit over Covid management, the government made tall claims for first few days and it was suddenly stopped when the situation started worsening, Mishra said.

Senior Congress legislator Narasingha Mishra too strongly criticized the state government over this issue saying, "The health system has been roasted. The government is in a comma. Let them first recover from the comma."

Congress leader Suresh Routray raised questions on the fatality data provided by the government. He said much more people than the number claimed by the government are dying of Covid. "The state government invited Covid by welcoming the migrant workers during the lockdown period," he added. However, Health Minister Naba Kishore Das said the pandemic is totally under control and the situation in Odisha is much better than many other states and national average.

BHUBANESWAR: The Assembly Wednesday passed the Epidemic Diseases (Odisha Amendment) Bill, 2020 amid protests by opposition BJP and Congress in the House.

The Bill, which was introduced Tuesday, was debated Wednesday



IN THE HOUSE

on the floor of the House where BJP and Congress members opposed the provision of imposing a hefty Rs 1 lakh penalty along with two-year jail term for violation of COVID-19 norms.

In the Bill, the government has amended Section 2 & 3 of Epidemic Diseases Act, 1897. The government has inserted a new provision under Section 2, which

OPPOSITION CRITICISED THE PROVISION OF IMPOSING RS 1 LAKH PENALTY ALONG WITH TWO-YEAR JAIL TERM FOR VIOLATION OF COVID-19 NORMS

IN THE BILL, THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAS AMENDED SECTION 2 & 3 OF EPIDEMIC DISEASES ACT, 1897

empowers the state government in procurement of goods, services and equipment necessary for prevention and control of the disease and the manner of such procurement.

The other amendment is that now government can impose fine upto Rs 1 lakh or imprisonment upto 2 year or both.

"What was the hurry to bring two amendments to the Act in such a short span of time? Why provision of such a huge amount of fine has been made in the Bill? What will be the problem, if less amount of fine is imposed?" asked Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik (BJP).

Dubbing it a 'Black Bill', senior BJP MLA Jay Narayan Mishra said, "The Bill was introduced to arrest the Opposition leaders, who are raising voice against the government in COVID mismanagement. No such regulation was imposed even during British rule." He demanded withdrawal of the Bill.

Congress legislative party leader Narasingha Mishra also raised questions on making amendments to the Act through ordinances in April and August. "When there was allegation of corruption and some people have been summoned by Lokayukta in July, the government brought the ordinance in August. I am opposing the amendment to Section 2 to the Act," the Congress leader said referring to the alleged scam in procurement of masks and PPE kits for healthcare workers. Congress MLA from Jeypore, Taraprasad Bahinipati, too opposed the provision of Rs 1 lakh fine. "People in my district and other KBK areas cannot pay such hefty penalty. They even don't understand the regulations. Besides, there is no provision of any appellate authority, where one can move against the fine."

Health Minister Naba Kishore Das said the Bill was made to strengthen the system and prevent people from getting infected with coronavirus and not meant to arrest any opposition party leader.

3 Odia lawyers in Central panel

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 30: Three Odia lawyers have been inducted into the Centre's advocates' panel to plead for the government in the Supreme Court.

and Supreme Court advocate on record Subhranshu Padhi have been included in Group A panel of counsels while advocate Navanjay Mahapatra has found place in Group B.

According to Law Ministry, the term of these lawyers will be of three years with immediate effect. These lawyers will represent Union government in the Supreme Court.

HC defers hearing on Durga idol issue



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 30: The Orissa High Court Wednesday deferred till October 9 the hearing of a petition filed over restriction on height of Durga idols in community puja pandals in Cuttack.

It has also asked the state government to provide protection to the idols which are currently under construction. Following COVID-19 guidelines issued by Odisha government, twin city Police Commissioner Sudhanshu Sarangi has directed all community puja pandal officials to limit the height of Durga idols to four feet. He has categorically stated that idols which are more than four feet in height will not be allowed inside the pandals.

Officials of Balu Bazaar Puja Committee in the Silver city had moved the HC against the police order. They filed the petition September 23 seeking scrapping of the police order in this regard.

Advertisement for 'Bargha' (বାର୍ঘা) featuring a portrait of a man and text in Odia, including 'ନବୀନ ପଟ୍ଟନାୟକ' and 'ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା'.

Advertisement for 'Bargha' (ବାର୍ଘା) featuring a portrait of a man and text in Odia, including 'ନବକିଶୋର ଦାସ' and 'ନବ କିଶୋର ଦାସ (ନବ କିଶୋର ଦାସ)'.

Zoos, parks get reopening guidelines

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: The state government issued guidelines for reopening of zoos and deer parks here Wednesday.

out. As per the guidelines, there will be no entry without masks, no entry for visitors with cold, fever, cough, senior citizens.



1,500 for large zoos. For small zoos, 750 visitors per day will be allowed and the number for mini zoos and deer parks is 300 visitors per day.

zoo, the visitors should maintain social distancing on the zoo premises and avoid touching barricades and other surfaces.

State's Covid-19 count nears 2.2L

WITH 3,443 NEW CASES, ODISHA'S NOVEL CORONAVIRUS TALLY STANDS AT 2,19,119, WHILE 14 FRESH FATALITIES PUSH THE DEATH TOLL TO 842

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: State's Covid-19 tally rose to 2,19,119 Wednesday as 3,443 more people tested positive for the disease, while 14 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's death toll to 842.



Returnees in various blocks of Ganjam spread awareness on the deadly virus as a part of the Covid Week

Of the new cases, Khurda recorded the highest number of new infections at 601, followed by Cuttack at 359 and Balasore at 152

while under treatment in hospitals," the HFW department said on Twitter.

Govt involved in land grabbing case: Congress

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: Congress leader Pradeep Majhi Wednesday held a press conference here and accused the state government of giving patronage to a government supplier who now owns 700 acres of land in the mining dominated area.

TAKING TO THE STREETS



SUCI activists demonstrate near Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, to press for fulfilment of their demands

"In this state, buying a tribal land is not easy. The tribals can do this only when serious health conditions compel them to do so. We have documents to prove that several tribal lands in Angul were sold to just one family citing several minor health conditions like piles, urinary infection and others," he said.

Veggies prices soar due to rains, Covid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: With Odisha and neighbouring states experiencing excessive rainfalls, the rise in prices of vegetables entered into third week as customers refrain from bulk buying amid inflated pricing burning a hole in their pockets.

in vegetables, especially onion, is due to lack of setting up fixed rates by the administration. While the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) is selling onion at Rs 32 a kg, prices at the Aiginia mandi here vary from Rs. 32 to Rs. 40 a kg depending on the quality of the vegetable.

Heavy rain likely for 5 days: MeT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: With a fresh low pressure area brewing over Bay of Bengal, the MeT office Wednesday forecast heavy rainfall in many parts of Odisha for five days, prompting the state government to ask district collectors to be prepared to deal with any waterlogging and localized flooding.



A brief spell of rain lashed many parts of the state Wednesday

situation in low-lying areas. Advice for fishermen must be strictly implemented, he said.

Kendrapada, Dhenkanal, Ganjam, Angul, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Kandhamal, Nayagarh, Boudh and Khordha districts on Thursday and Friday, it said.

ABVP activists booked for nCoV norm violation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: As many as 14 Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) activists have been taken into custody on various charges including taking out a rally unlawfully and violating Covid-19 norms here Wednesday, a senior official of the twin city Commissionerate Police said.

Drinking water project comes a cropper

Villagers claimed that they have raised the drinking water project issue with the authorities concerned time and again but to no avail

POST NEWS NETWORK

Naraj, Sept 30: The state government is spending crores of rupees to provide potable water to people. But, many drinking water projects in rural areas have failed to serve the purpose.



lakh to sink a borewell, build a pump house and lay pipes for the drinking water project. However, the project is yet to be made functional even though 15 years have passed since its construction.

have raised the drinking water project issue with the authorities concerned time and again but to no avail.

HELPING HAND



Puri administration distribute tricycles to the differently-abled, Wednesday

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Irregularities galore in Joda mines area

FIRMS WHICH HAVE SHELLED OUT HUGE, LIKE MORE THAN 100 PC PREMIUM, TO GET MINES' LEASES ARE VIOLATING GOVT GUIDELINES TO RECOVER THEIR COSTS

Keonjhar, Sept 30: After the mining scam came to the fore a few years ago, the state government tightened mineral laws to check illegalities in the sector. Despite this, illegalities are allegedly being committed in some mines, which were detected recently, a report said.



The director of Mines stresses on strict following of Rule-10 of Orissa Minerals (Prevention of Theft, Smuggling and Illegal Mining and Regulation of Possession, Storage, Trading and Transportation) Rule, 2007 while issuing permission for removal of stocks

its to mines at Jajanga, Nuagan, Ganua, Narayanposi and Thakurani. He detected irregularities in these mines, it was reported. The lessees had not made stacks of their extracted mineral in proper geometrical shapes while stacks were not in specified areas as per the approved mining plan.

GRAVE FINDINGS
The lessees hadn't made stacks of the extracted minerals in proper geometrical shapes. Stacks weren't in specified areas as per the approved mining plan. There was manipulation in the standard of minerals with evasion of taxes.

The letter pointed out that in this system, excess mineral carried by a vehicle is taken out and dumped beside weigh bridges and loaded where that vehicle carried less. When multiple grade minerals are dispatched simultaneously, there is chance of mix-up.

Dilly-dallying bridge work putting many lives at risk



The incomplete bridge

Absence of proper transport facilities forces residents of Korikunda and Sadar blocks to travel across Tamasa on boats overloaded with bikes and people on a daily basis

FLIRTING WITH DISASTER
Locals blame official apathy and the contractor for the delay. It is alleged that the tender winner has outsourced the project to another contractor

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 30: For years, thousands of people in more than 30 villages under Korikunda and Sadar blocks in the district have been suffering from commuting woes in the absence of a bridge across Tamasa river.

years ago, but it has not been completed till date," lamented a local. The absence of proper transport facilities has forced us to travel across the river on boats overloaded with bikes and people on a daily basis, it was observed.



Commuters travel in overloaded boats

OP PHOTOS

In rainy season, accidents happen and people have drowned in the past while being ferried. "We have a constant fear of drowning. But with no other option we have been dependent on this for years," a local said.

Extended range BrahMos missile successfully test-fired

AGENCIES

Balasure, Sept 30: The country Wednesday successfully test-fired BrahMos supersonic cruise missile with a strike range of more than 400 km from a base in the state, defence sources said.



September 30, 2019 a shorter range land version of BrahMos was successfully test fired from Chandipur ITR

Jointly developed by the DRDO and NPOM, a leading aerospace enterprise of Russia, the BrahMos missile is a medium-range ramjet supersonic cruise missile capable of being launched from submarines, warships, fighter jets or land.

range of 450 km, was successfully tested March 11, 2017. September 30, 2019 a shorter range land version of BrahMos was successfully test fired from Chandipur ITR.

Land acquisition for naval base in Paradip completed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paradip, Sept 30: All decks were cleared for establishment of a naval base in Paradip after port authorities acquired over 20 acre of land and handed it over to the Indian Navy authorities, Tuesday.

This was stated here by Biswajit Mishra, estate officer of Paradip Port while talking to mediapersons Tuesday. Mishra said the land was handed over to the naval authorities after clearing the encroachments in the area.

'Plan' to waive off ₹2600cr water cess

AMONG THE 55 DEFAULTING INDUSTRIAL UNITS, CASES REGARDING PAYMENT OF ₹2,665.887 CRORE OF 15 INDUSTRIAL FIRMS ARE PENDING IN SEVERAL COURTS



are backing off in depositing their water cess.

The state government showing generosity had waived of ₹56.4 crore towards water cess. This time also a sum of Rs 10 crore has been proposed to be waived off on IDCO towards one time settlement of water cess.

However, to everyone's surprise the state Water Resources department instead of making efforts towards collection of the outstanding money has adopted the route of one time settlement for collection of the arrears.

I'm yet to receive any communication from the state government for one-time settlement and waiving off of dues. I can only speak after receiving a letter in this regard

SANTOSH BALBANTRAY | ASST. EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, WATER RESOURCES DEPT., JARAKA

Resources department has proposed to waive off Rs2619.099 crore towards one time settlement of the arrears.

This apart, two industrial firms Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd at Lapanga in Sambalpur district and BRG Iron and Steel Company in Dhenkanal district have been exempted from the list of one time settlement of water cess as they have been pronounced insolvent.

Reports said that thousand cusecs of water are being drawn daily from various rivers and water bodies and being sold to various industrial firms. The state owned IDCO has been selling water to various industrial firms in Kalinganagar Industrial Complex in this district for the last 21 years by drawing water from Brahmani river.

More over, Orient Paper Mill Ltd owes ₹216.120 crore, Tata Refractories Ltd, Belpahar and Adhunik Metals Ltd ₹56.631 crore, Jindal Steel and Power

Ltd ₹84.777 crore and Essar Steel Ltd ₹8.353 crore towards water cess. In Jajpur district alone, Tailangi Chromite mines owes ₹0.720 crore, Saruabil Chromite Mines ₹0.505 crore, Ramku Environment Engineer Ltd ₹0.531 crore, Nilachal Ispat Nigam Ltd ₹10.623 crore and Rohit Ferrotech ₹0.311 crore.

When contacted, Santosh Balbantray, assistant executive engineer of Water Resources department at Jarak, said he is yet to receive any communication from the state government for one time settlement and waiving off of dues.

ଯୋଷଣାନାମା
ମୁଁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଦେବଦାସ ଦାସ, ବନ୍ଦୁ ପ୍ରାୟ ୬୪ ବର୍ଷ, ପିତା ସ୍ମୃତି କୃଷି ଦାସ, ଗ୍ରାମ/ପୋଷ୍ଟ: ପାଠିଆ ପଡ଼ର, ଥାନା: ଆବା, ଜିଲ୍ଲା: ବାଲିଆ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା।

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GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE PROJECT ADMINISTRATOR, ITDA, MALKANGIRI e-Procurement Notice Bid Identification No. ITDAMKG-03/2020-21

OFFICE OF THE REGULATED MARKET COMMITTEE, KARANJIA INVITATIONS FOR BIDS THROUGH e-Procurement e-Procurement Notice No.02 of 2020-21 TENDER CALL NOTICE NO.363 RMC dated:28.09.2020

It is not because a thing is difficult that one should give it up, on the contrary, the more a thing is difficult the more determined should one be to succeed it.

THE MOTHER



Dream called Maya

What is Maya? Narada Muni wanted the answer so he meditated for decades until Vishnu appeared. "Come," the god said, "let us walk and I will tell you what Maya is."

A girl wrote to me from Patna: A pedigree dog had been abandoned by his owners on the streets of Patna. He had been bitten by the street dogs, was almost blind with eye infection and bald with mange.

I asked Air India to fly him to me. I paid the fare, the girl got the cage and this very broken and hopeless-with-rage Chowchow came to me two months ago. As soon as he came he bit me and then no one would go near him.



Maneka Gandhi

If you are in this dream called Maya, make sure you don't make it a nightmare for everyone else

Two months later his hair is a beautiful black fur, his eyes are almost healed, he and Lambu are cordial and respectful to each other and he has settled in as a happy non-aggressive, loved being. Sometimes I wonder if he remembers his time of extreme suffering in Patna

This time of Covid has brought many new beings into my house: Nisha, whose leg was broken by her owner and abandoned, tied to a lamppost and fed by passersby. Someone brought her directly to my house, and I can never say no because that is their destiny and I am simply a small medium.

During this lockdown thousands of people have written about their travails with animals to me and we have tried to help all of them. Each story is unique and they are all painful - a litany of cruelty by people who should have used their time on earth to make it a better place, but have chosen to become mean and vicious and waste their lives by increasing the sum total of suffering.

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

WISDOM CORNER

He conquers who endures.

PERSIUS

Hitch your wagon to a star.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

A goal is a dream with a deadline.

NAPOLEON HILL

WORDSWORTH

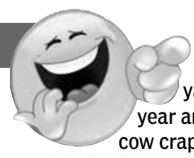
Truckle

Truckle is recorded as a dialect name for a cheese from about the beginning of the nineteenth century, usually one that is cylindrical or barrel-shaped. Some dictionaries say it's dialect still, but cheesemakers say that today it's a standard term in the industry for any barrel-shaped or cylindrical cheese that is taller than it is wide.

LOL

ANGRY NEIGHBOURS

Two neighbours had been fighting each other for nigh on four decades. Bob buys a Great Dane and teaches it to use the bathroom in Bill's yard. For one whole year Bill ignores the dog. So Bob then buys a cow and teaches it to use the bathroom in Bill's



yard. After about a year and a half of Bob's cow crapping in Bill's yard; being ignored all the while, a semi pulls up in front of Bill's house. Bob runs over and demands to know what's in the 18-wheeler. "My new pet elephant," Bill replies solemnly.

FOCUS BJP

SIDESTEPPING ALLIES

It was Congress-Mukt Bharat for the BJP. But now, it seems that the BJP is also keen to get rid of its alliance partners. Gone are the days, witnessed during the Vajpayee era, when the allies were treated with respect and their voices were heard.



Anita Saluja

THE ALLIES ARE NOSTALGIC AND MISS THE VAJPAYEE TOUCH. AKALI DAL SUPREMO PRAKASH SINGH BADAL COULD DIAL AND TALK TO VAJPAYEE AND ADVANI TO SORT OUT ISSUES. NOW, NO ONE TAKES SUCH CALLS IN THE BJP



The allies are up in arms. Yet, the PM is not rattled. Clearly Modi is taking a calculated political risk to sidestep the allies, with an eye on expanding the BJP footprint across India

Minister and Janata Dal (United) leader Nitish Kumar and could sort out issues that may arise from time to time.

Jaitley once confided that whenever he travelled to Patna, or Nitish came to Delhi, the JD(U) leader expected a tin of Gopaljee Rasgoolas from the former.

Now, the tragedy is that there is no one to even talk to the allies, let alone addressing their grievances. The Modi-Shah duo seldom talks to the allies. No third person, like Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, or BJP president JP Nadda, has been assigned to talk to the allies.

The allies are bitter that the NDA exists only on the paper. PM Modi never held an NDA meeting to discuss policy issues. The allies were not taken on board, ahead of passing the Bills to replace the Ordinance in the brief Monsoon Session of Parliament.

The controversial Bills that replaced the Ordinances are the

Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020; the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020; and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 2020. The issues worrying the farmers are that they will no longer get paid the Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Ideally, these Ordinances/Bills could have been sorted out in the NDA meeting. But the times have changed. Despite the popular protests by farmers, the allies could not influence the opinion of the BJP on these controversial Bills. The Modi government knew what it was in for and was determined to forge ahead.

The allies are up in arms. Yet, the PM is not rattled. Clearly Modi is taking a calculated political risk to sidestep the allies, with an eye on expanding the BJP footprint

across India. He wants to establish the BJP as an all-India party, replacing the Congress that claimed to be the only pan-Indian party.

Who could have thought that BJP could be a coalition partner in the Jammu & Kashmir government? By joining hands with the PDP, Modi made it possible and thus expanded his base in the state. Similarly, he brought the BJP to power in the North-East, when the saffron party stormed to power in Assam and in the Red bastion of Tripura.

The BJP's sudden aggression in showing its thumb to its allies is not without reason. The party is no longer in a minority position in the Rajya Sabha to need the help of its allies. Earlier, it needed their support in the Rajya Sabha, where it was in minority, for pushing Bills during the first term of the Modi government.

Having carved out a niche for themselves, Modi and Shah want to expand their footprint all over India. Having played second-fiddle to Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and SAD in Punjab for years together, they are keen to establish the BJP as a strong party in these two states.

With the Punjab Assembly polls due in 2022, the BJP wants to try and expand its base in the northern state, which is not possible, if it continues to cling on to the Akalis. Even in Bihar, once a junior partner of JD(U), the BJP is seeking parity with its ally. With the aim of spreading its tentacles in all states, it is natural for the BJP to desert its allies. No one is as confident as the Modi-Shah duo of overshadowing everyone in elections - Lok Sabha or Assembly!

The writer is a Delhi-based journalist.

SPECTRUM EDUCATION

New law can make universities better

The Odisha Universities Act, 1989, has been replaced by a new law through an Ordinance of the Odisha government. Under this, universities will not have autonomy in terms of formulating courses and in recruitment of teachers. These would be handled by the Odisha PSC as they do for selection of lecturers in government colleges. Universities will retain the freedom for research and teaching.

Prof Radhakanta Barik

THE AUTONOMY ENJOYED BY UNIVERSITIES HAS DESTROYED THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION; NEW LAW CHANGES THIS

Universities need change the way they are run. Many teachers do not read, which affects their work; and without work, some of them have been made professors. Very rarely, their research works get published. These have affected the learning process as also brought down the quality of education. This has resulted in a process of learning from textbooks and notebooks without genuine application of mind; and there are less of debates and discussions among students.

The government order of 2020 is well-thought-out as it is hoped to help the intellectual growth of the universities by recruiting better quality teachers. Educationally better-equipped teachers are to be appointed by a neutral body set up by the government. This is possible as the catchment area for re-

cruitment of teachers into universities has increased. All teachers working in government colleges are eligible to face interview for entry into universities. If teachers of private colleges are also allowed to face the competition, this will widen the catchment area.

Autonomy is a necessary condition but not a sufficient condition as it requires talented teachers to impart knowledge by engaging students in discussing the issues of importance, including matters affecting the society and the state. Notably, most of the bright educated youths get recruited by the Staff Selection Commission. All the important scholars of the universities were initially working in colleges. Scholars like Bijay Bohidar, Sarita Bohidar and Late Sanjib Raut worked in government colleges, which reflect in their talents; and they are still working as visiting professors in various universities. The Staff Selection Commission is more neutral and non-partisan than the entities that recruit teachers to the universities. It is wrong to differentiate between college teachers and university teachers.

Most college and university teachers do not go to the library or the archives or the National

Archives and go to the classrooms and teach. They often use their old notebooks while teaching, but knowledge is an area that keeps changing. I had an occasion to meet a set of 20 teachers at a refresher course conducted by Sambalpur University. They were brilliant but had not taken the trouble of reading any book outside of the textbooks since they started as teachers a decade or two ago. They do not read newspapers. There yet is neither the vigil about the way universities function, from any side, nor the motivation among the teaching community to perform better. Corruption and nepotism are rampant in the appointment of VCs and teachers in universities and in matters of construction works on the campuses.

Perceptions are that external examination is better than internal as evaluation can be done in a neutral and non-partisan manner. Teachers would thus not indulge in favouritism; something that affects the examinations conducted by individual universities and evaluated by themselves. There are situations of teachers being threatened by students to get higher marks. It, thus, is better that the power of evaluation is shifted to a neutral body. A problem is also of the re-

vision of courses of studies. The Ravenshaw University removed the chapter on Shakespeare from the English literature syllabus and their students started getting up to 90 per cent marks in English, but could not qualify for admission to universities like Delhi for post-graduate studies. The same situation prevailed in Economics where Econometrics got removed from the course of studies here, except by Sambalpur University. Students then started getting up to 90 per cent in Economics but could not qualify for admission to Delhi School of Economics. The same thing happened in Physics; the course remained primitive and the students from here could not qualify for IITs.

The autonomy enjoyed by universities destroyed the quality of higher education; and such was the complacency that curriculum upgradation was rare. The responsibility on the government has increased after scrapping the Universities Act of 1989, but it would do well to create an academic committee that can formulate courses for the whole of Odisha and monitor the external examination for universities and colleges.

The writer was attached to Indian Institute of Public Administration, Delhi.

Hindu-Muslim unity

Sir, Have we ever heard or seen Hindus and Muslims fighting with each other in the localities they live together? I have many Muslim friends. They are as nice to me as Hindu friends. From the pages of history, we get examples of brotherhood between Hindus and Muslims. Some 90 per cent of the people of every religion behave well and are law-abiding. Political parties create rift among the people and cause riots for their vote-bank politics. The other day, I was listening to a special programme on Lata Mangeshkar on Big FM produced by Annu Kapoor. He narrated a story about Lata. She was close to the great singer of Pakistan, Noor Jahan. They talked over phone often and the two met in the past too. Once Lata wanted to meet Noor Jahan, but it was difficult to go to Pakistan, as VISA was not easy to be arranged. It was decided that both would meet at the no-man's land, and Lata went to the Wagha border. There, Noor Jahan was waiting with her husband. Both hugged each other and cried for a long time. They were pained at the ordeal they faced to meet each other, and happy that they could meet yet.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

God save our daughters

Sir, A 20-year-old woman who breathed her last in Delhi on Tuesday, two weeks after she was brutally gangraped and tortured in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras, was cremated by policemen in the wee hours of Wednesday. This, allegedly after her family and relatives were locked up in their homes. A disturbing sequence of events captured in overnight visuals shows the family arguing with cops, female relatives throwing themselves on the hood of the ambulance carrying the body and a mother weeping helplessly as cops insist on taking her daughter straight to cremation, without allowing a last look. A young life has been brutally silenced by the rapists, and her family members were denied their rights by the authorities. This is only one among the many horrific incidents in Uttar Pradesh. It is a chaotic state and policing is hardly evident. Politicians are either criminals or side with criminals. Police take bribes and back criminals. Those who run governments have little sympathy to the cause of the poor, while landlords and others play with the lives of ordinary people. May God save all daughters!

MN Alam, SAHARANPUR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Delhi loses cleaner lockdown air as farmers burn crop waste

REUTERS
New Delhi, Sept 30: India's longest spell of clean air on record came to an end in September when New Delhi, the world's most polluted capital city, recorded a significant deterioration in air quality, partly due to crop waste burning by farmers.



Up until this month, New Delhi and its satellite cities, which last year accounted for half of the dozen most-polluted cities worldwide, had enjoyed respite due to the strict nationwide lockdown to stem the spread of the coronavirus.

Authorities intensified a campaign to reduce crop waste burning after the outrage caused by last year's sickening air quality levels

But, a pick-up in economic activity and a slightly early start to crop waste burning, a significant source of pollution during the winter months, have made the air more toxic again.

"The gains which we had seen because of the lockdown are lost in September," said Sachchida Nand Tripathi, a professor at the IIT Kanpur and a member of the National Clear Air Mission, a federal body.

In September, the concentration of poisonous PM2.5 particles in a cubic metre of air averaged at 47.64 micrograms, more than 17 per cent higher from the same month last year, according to a Reuters analysis of government data, indicating a "poor" rating.

That is almost twice the level deemed safe by the World Health Organisation (WHO), though it is still below the safety level of 60 micrograms set by SAFAR, India's environment monitoring agency.

In Punjab state, to the north of New Delhi, there were about 70 crop fires in September, more than double the number in the same month last year, according to a study by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur in northern India.

Air pollution typically worsens during the winter months from October to December.

Last year, New Delhi suffered nine consecutive days in late October, early November when the air quality was hazardous, with a PM2.5 reading of 509.2 micrograms recorded November 3 by IQ AirVisual, a Swiss-based group that gathers air-quality data globally.

Authorities intensified a campaign to reduce crop waste burning after the outrage caused by last year's sickening air quality levels, and officials say farmers are likely to reduce burning by 75-90 per cent this year.

KEJRIWAL'S SOLUTION TO STUBBLE-BURNING

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government will work with Pusa Research Institute from October 5 to make an agri mix using a technique developed by it to reduce the need for stubble-burning in farms, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said Wednesday. In an online briefing, he said that the work on creating the agri mix capsules is likely to be completed by October 12-13. "We will visit farmers' homes and if they are willing, we will spray the mix. The mixture will soften the stubble and slowly convert it into manure," he said. This will also bring down the fertiliser usage in farm land, besides increasing the productivity, he said. Kejriwal said he had also written to the Centre urging it to ensure that other state governments also implement this solution. Stubble



burning is a major cause of pollution in Delhi-NCR every year, especially in the winter months. "During the time of coronavirus, pollution can be dangerous and state governments should work towards finding solutions. Pusa Research Institute has found an economical solution," he said. Experts at the institute have developed what they call as "decomposer capsules". Just four capsules, some jaggery and chickpea flour are needed to prepare 25 litres of a solution, enough to cover one hectare of land.

As cases spike, parties join hands to fight virus

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE
Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 30: An all-party meeting held here Tuesday under Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan agreed to jointly fight the spike in Covid cases, but ruled out a total lockdown.

Kerala has reported 1,95,106 infections so far. Speaking to the media after the meeting, Vijayan said that the general consensus is that a lockdown might not help, but all the parties have agreed to play a responsible role to ensure that things do not go out of hand.

"From now on, everyone should ensure that the Covid protocols are strictly adhered to, especially when in shops and markets or while taking part in social and political events. If this does not happen, things will become very grave for the state. All present in the meeting agreed to this," said Vijayan.



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PINARAYI VIJAYAN | CM

The Chief Minister said that at present there are 61,791 active cases in the state, while 1,24,688 people have been cured.

The state, where the COVID-19 cases were doubling on an average of every 20 days, reported 23 deaths Wednesday, taking the toll to 742. Across the state, 2,36,960 people are under observation, including 28,702

in various hospitals.

"At present, we are fully equipped to deal with the situation, but the fact of the matter is if things turn very grave and if the spread goes beyond our calculation, it might lead to a difficult situation. Hence, we all should ensure that Covid protocols are not violated at any cost," said Vijayan.

Antibody seroprevalence down at 25 pc

THE THIRD ROUND OF SERO SURVEILLANCE WAS CARRIED OUT BY THE AAP GOVERNMENT IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 1 AND 7

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, Sept 30: Seroprevalence of antibodies to COVID-19 reduced to 25 per cent in September from nearly 29 per cent last month among people in the national capital, the Delhi High Court was informed Wednesday.



Sero survey also found that nearly one-third of the participants, with a past history of infection, did not have detectable IgG antibodies

These are the findings of the third round of sero surveillance carried out by the AAP government in the national capital between September 1 and September 7.

The report was placed before a bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad during the hearing on a PIL seeking increase in the COVID-19 testing numbers in the national capital and getting

speedy results.

The report, filed through Delhi government additional standing counsel Satyakam, indicated that there was a reduction in the "antibody seroprevalence" from 28.7 per cent in August to 25.1 per cent in September.

It also showed that there was a significant decrease in seroprevalence in north east, north and central districts of Delhi, while there was a slight increase in south, east, west

and north west districts.

The seroprevalence was more in females during all the rounds of the survey and it was the least in the 18-49 years age group, as compared to age groups of less than 18 years and more than 50 years, it said.

"Seroprevalence was increased in participants belonging to the low socio-economic status and those living in unplanned colonies," the report said and added that this was probably due to difficulties in main-

taining social distancing and hygiene measures amongst people of these categories. The Delhi government surveyed 17,409 people across the national capital.

The report stated that asymptomatic infections were manifested in most cases during all the sero survey rounds and diabetes mellitus was observed to be a risk factor for subclinical infection.

The sero survey also found that nearly one-third of the participants with a past history of COVID-19 infection, "did not have detectable IgG antibodies."

"However, there is evidence that antibodies to COVID-19 may deplete over time," it added.

The surveyors have recommended that there is a need to space the sero survey rounds and future surveillance should focus more on "ensuring representativeness of the sample in terms of settlement type and socio-economic status."

The Delhi government told the bench that it will inform the court on the next date of hearing October 7 as to when it will conduct the next round of sero survey.

KERALA GOLD SCAM

Key accused ready to turn approver

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
Kochi, Sept 30: A key accused in the Kerala gold smuggling case Wednesday moved a plea in the Special NIA court here, expressing his willingness to turn approver.

Moving the plea, fourth accused Sandeep Nair, who was arrested by NIA from Bangalore along with prime accused Swapna Suresh, said he was ready to disclose the facts under Section 164 of the CrPC.

Under this section, any metropolitan magistrate or judicial magistrate may, whether or not he has jurisdiction in the case, record any confession or statement made to him in the course of an investigation.

Nair said he was very well aware that the statement he would give would be treated as evidence also against him. Multiple agencies including NIA, Customs and Enforcement Directorate are probing the case of smuggling of gold worth over Rs 100 crore through diplomatic baggage addressed to the UAE consulate at Thiruvananthapuram since November last year.

Swapna Suresh and Sarith were former employees of the UAE consulate and allegedly used their past connection to smuggle gold using the diplomatic channel.

The Customs is also probing whether M Sivasankar, who was removed as Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister and also IT Secretary after allegations surfaced that he had links with Swapna Suresh, had used his office to provide any help to the key accused.

The NIA had registered the case under Sections 16, 17 and 18 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967 against four accused - Sarith, Swapna Suresh, Faizal Fareed and Sandeep Nair July 10.

Suresh and Nair were arrested July 11 from Bangalore after they



LARGER CONSPIRACY

NIA said their investigation has so far revealed that the accused had conspired and sourced gold in large quantities from abroad on multiple occasions earlier and smuggled them through various airports, especially in Kerala.

It said their probe also revealed the larger conspiracy involving influential people both in India and abroad behind the crime.

NIA suspects that the profit from the proceeds of smuggling could be used for terror funding.

associates, besides suspects involved in financing the smuggling of gold, the agency said.

She was also questioned by NIA about the 'incriminating contents' of retrieved data from the digital devices seized by the agency.

NIA has said their investigation so far revealed that the accused had conspired and sourced gold in large quantities from abroad on multiple occasions earlier and smuggled them through various airports, especially in Kerala.

It said their probe also revealed the larger conspiracy involving influential people both in India and abroad behind the crime.

NIA suspects that the profit from the proceeds of smuggling could be used for terror funding.

During the course of the investigation, NIA arraigned 26 others as accused in the case, many of whom were arrested.

The agency's probe also revealed that the absconding accused - Faizal Fareed, Rabins, Sidhiquil Akbar, Ahamed Kutty, Raju and Muhammed Shameer - are in the UAE.

The NIA said it has initiated steps to issue blue corner notices against the absconding accused through INTERPOL to secure them for investigation.

ON WARPATH



Indian Youth Congress (IYC) members stage a protest against the rape and murder of a 19-year-old Dalit woman in UP's Hathras, near UP Bhawan in New Delhi, Wednesday.

Anti-India tweets: HC declines to entertain PIL against Twitter

The plea has contended that some 'promoted handles' on Twitter's platform were being allegedly used for promoting an agenda for a separate Khalistan



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, Sept 30: The Delhi High Court Wednesday declined to entertain a PIL seeking action against social media platform Twitter for being allegedly involved in conspiracy to promote anti-India propaganda such as Khalistan movement, saying the plea was based on claims and no representation about it was made to the Centre.

A bench of Justices Hima Kohli and Subramonium Prasad said "none of the issues in the petition have been flagged before the Union of India" and the plea was made on claims of a Member of Parliament and news reports in the public domain.

The bench also noted the contention of Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma that the petitioner should first approach the executive with her grievance before moving the court.

It allowed the petitioner; Sangeeta Sharma, to withdraw the plea to move an appropriate representation before the central government.

The petition, filed through advocates Desh Ratan Nigam and Awanish Sinha, had sought lodging a case against Twitter and its representatives in India under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the provisions of IPC dealing with sedition and waging war against the country and under the Information Technology Act.

The petition had also sought an enquiry by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) into the matter as the persons allegedly promoting the messages in relation to Khalistan are from outside the country.

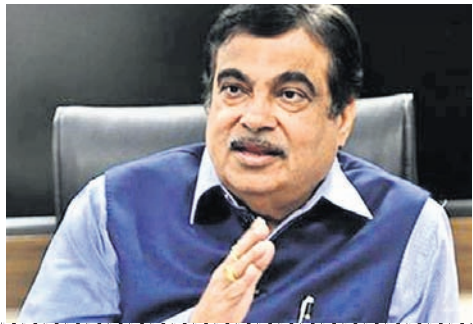
It had also sought that the revenue generated by Twitter from India should be taxed here and a direction that it share its source code with the Indian government.



The Central Bureau of Investigation's failure to prove the destruction of Babri Masjid as a planned act is a shame for the country's rule of law

GADKARI RECOVERS

Union minister Nitin Gadkari Wednesday said he has recovered from coronavirus infection and thanked people for their blessings and good wishes



of the day quote

I welcome the Special CBI Court verdict, acquitting all (the) accused, including our senior leaders L.K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi, Kalyan Singh, Uma Bharti and others in the case

The Babri Masjid demolition case lost its relevance after the Supreme Court settled the Ram Janmabhoomi title suit in 2019

True can be troubled but it cannot be defeated. Today, truth has won again. I hail the Indian judicial system

SHORT TAKES

UP court dismisses plea

Mathura (Uttar Pradesh): A civil court in Uttar Pradesh's Mathura Wednesday dismissed a petition seeking to remove the Shahi Idgah Masjid in the Hindu holy town on grounds that it was built over the Krishna Janmabhoomi land.

Jumbo kills man

Ranchi: A 60-year-old man was trampled to death while another woman was injured by a rampaging elephant in Jharkhand's Giridih district Wednesday.

Cash seized

Ranchi: Police seized ₹91 lakh from a car in Jharkhand's coal city of Dhanbad Wednesday.

Man arrested

Gurugram: A man was arrested on the charge of battering his father to death with a brick following an argument at Dundaheera village in Gurugram district on Wednesday morning.

Babri demolition verdict boost to BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 30: The acquittal of senior BJP leaders and Hindutva activists in the Babri mosque demolition case Wednesday has come as a big boost to the saffron party.

With the party set to intensify its campaign for the Bihar assembly polls besides by-elections to one Lok Sabha and 56 assembly seats, the court verdict has again brought the emotive issue, which has animated political discourse for long, to the centre stage and given the BJP a handy plank.

The special CBI court's order effectively absolves the BJP of any responsibility from the most controversial aspect of the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and what the Supreme Court has described as an "egregious violation of the rule of law" in its last year verdict that handed over the disputed site in Ayodhya to pro-temple parties in that dispute.

All the 32 accused, including BJP veterans L K Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and Kalyan Singh besides Uma Bharti and Vinay Katiyar, were acquitted by the court in Lucknow almost 28 years after the FIR was filed following the mosque's demolition on December 6, 1992 by 'kar sevaks'.

The court said there was no conclusive proof against the accused, which also included Sadhvi Ritambhara, Champat Rai and Mahant Nritya Gopal Das, who were all part of the movement.

The verdict will ensure that the BJP while owning up the movement's success in ensuring the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, can legitimately dis-



sociate itself with the demolition. It has also snatched a potent weapon from opposition parties, most of whom have targeted the BJP for the mosque's fall while either refraining from criticising or even welcoming the temple's construction.

It was the Ram Janmabhoomi movement and Advani's 'Rath Yatra' in 1990 to mobilise the masses in favour of building a temple at the disputed site, where believers hold that Lord Ram was born, that brought the issue to the center stage of national politics and helped the BJP emerge as an alternative to the Congress.

As part of the movement, Hindutva organisations had brought a large number of 'kar sevaks' at the site when the mosque was taken down by the mob. Reacting to the verdict, Advani said it has vindicated the BJP's and his stand.

A BJP leader said the judgment has ensured that the Ram Janmabhoomi movement leaves behind a "proud legacy" for the party without having any dimension to it about which it might have felt defensive. Though the CBI has the option to appeal in a higher court against the verdict, it remains far from clear if the central agency will do so.

Top BJP leaders hailed the special CBI court order acquitting all the accused and described it as a victory of truth and justice.

'BJP, JD(U), LJP to fight polls under Nitish'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 30: The BJP Wednesday sought to scotch speculation about differences with Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party, asserting that all the three National Democratic Alliance partners will fight Bihar assembly polls together.

After a long meeting of party leaders, including Home Minister Amit Shah and president J P Nadda besides those from the state, BJP general secretary Bhupender Yadav said that talks with allies on the seat-sharing arrangement will be completed in a couple of days.

"A lot of development work has happened in Bihar and the NDA will fight the polls on the basis of this under the leadership of Chief



Minister Nitish Kumar. The BJP, JD(U) and the LJP will fight the polls strongly along with Jitan Ram Manjhi, who has joined hands with JD(U), and will form government again with a three-fourth majority," he said.

Official sources said the final seat-sharing arrangement is likely to be announced soon and the list of candidates for the first phase of polls will be out by October 4 or 5. The nomination process for the first phase, under which 71 of the total 243 seats will go to polls, begins on Thursday and ends on October 8.

MATTER OF LIVELIHOOD



A farmer carries the harvested wheat crop at a field, amid the coronavirus pandemic, at Tangmarg in Baramulla District of North Kashmir, Wednesday

Flood condition worsens in Assam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Sept 30: The flood condition in Assam deteriorated marginally Wednesday with over 2.83 lakh people affected across eight districts, an official bulletin said.

According to the daily flood report of Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), more than 2.83 lakh persons are hit due to floods in Biswanath, Goalpara, Morigaon, Hojai, Nagaon, Golaghat, Dibrugarh and West Karbi Anglong districts.

At present 432 villages are under water and 26,652 hectares of crop areas have been damaged across Assam, ASDMA said. Nagaon is the worst hit with 2.08 lakh people suffering, followed by Morigaon with more than 40,600 persons and Goalpara with over 11,400 people, the report said.

Roads, bridges, culverts and other infrastructure have been damaged by flood waters in Morigaon, Nagaon and Kokrajhar districts, ASDMA said. Brahmaputra is flowing above its danger marks at Dhubri town, Nimatighat in Jorhat and Tezpur in Sonitpur district, while its tributaries Jia Bharali is doing so at NT Road Crossing in Sonitpur, Kopili river at Dharamtul and Kampur in Nagaon are flowing above their respective danger marks.

INDIA, CHINA HOLD TALKS

On Wednesday's talks, the MEA said the two sides reviewed the current situation along the LAC and had frank and detailed discussions on the developments since the last meeting of the WMCC on August 20



outcome of the sixth meeting of their senior commanders last week.

"They emphasised the need to implement the steps outlined in the joint press release issued after the last meeting of the senior commanders so as to avoid misunderstandings and to maintain stability on the ground. In this context, the need to strengthen communication, especially between the ground commanders, was emphasized by both sides," the MEA said in a statement.

Corps commanders of the two sides held a nearly 14-hour-long meeting September 21 following which they announced a slew of decisions to de-escalate the tense situation. The decisions included to stop sending more troops to the frontline, refrain from unilaterally changing the situation on the

ground and avoid taking any actions that may further complicate matters.

On Wednesday's talks, the MEA also said the two sides reviewed the current situation along the LAC and had frank and detailed discussions on the developments since the last meeting of the WMCC on August 20.

"They also noted that the agreement between the two Foreign Ministers should be sincerely implemented to ensure disengagement at all the friction points along the LAC," the MEA said.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi had held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meet in Moscow in the backdrop of a deteriorating situation in eastern Ladakh triggered by a fresh confrontation between the armies of the two countries.

At the meeting on September 10, the two sides reached a five-point agreement that included measures like quick disengagement of troops, avoiding action that could escalate tensions, adherence to all agreements and protocols on border management and steps to restore peace along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Maha withdraws Aug order

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 30: Under fire from all quarters, the Maharashtra government Wednesday stayed its own controversial order of August 10 implementing the three farm ordinances - now laws - that made it the first state in the country to enforce them, officials said here.

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

As per the August 10 order issued by the Director of Marketing Satish Soni, these ordinances were to be "strictly implemented" - even before the laws on it were passed by Parliament last week, sparking massive protests among peasants all over India.

The fast paced political circumstances leading to the stay order came after a Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) MLC Shashikant J. Shinde challenged



the Directorate of Marketing, Pune's order.

Among other things, Shinde contended that the August 10 order was issued without taking any of the stakeholders into confidence, including the APMCs, farmers' bodies, labourers, local officials and others.

The matter came up before the Marketing Minister Balasaheb Shamrao Patil who at a hearing stayed the August 10 notification and posted the matter for further hearing October 27.

Welcoming the order, Vasantnao Naik Sheti Swavlamban Mission (VNSSM) President Kishore Tiwari termed it "a victory of the poor farmers in Maharashtra" and the MVA allies Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress who are staunchly opposing the new farm laws.

Country received 'above normal' rainfall: IMD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 30: The country received above normal monsoon during the four-month rainfall season, recording the second highest precipitation in the last 30 years, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Wednesday.

The country received 109 per cent rainfall of the Long Period Average (LPA) with three of four months - June (107 per cent), August (127 per cent) and September (105 per cent) - witnessing above normal rainfall, while July recorded (90 per cent) below deficient rainfall.

"Quantitatively the 2020 monsoon seasonal rainfall during 1 June to 30 September 2020 has been 95.4 centimetres against long period average of 87.7 cm based on data of 1961-2010 (109 per cent of its Long Period Average)," R K Jenamani, scientist with the National Weather Forecasting Centre (NWFC) said.



The monsoon season in India officially starts on June 1 and lasts till September 30. The southwest monsoon delivers about 70 per cent of the country's annual rainfall, critical for the agriculture sector that accounts for about 14 per cent of India's GDP and employs more than half of the

country's 1.3 billion population. Good rains have boosted sowing of the kharif crops which farmers have sown in record 1,116.88 lakh hectares till last week as compared to 1,066.06 lakh hectares a year ago, according to the Agriculture Ministry's data.

The IMD has four meteorological divisions. Of the four, the east and northeast India, central India and south India have received above normal rainfall. The northwest India division has recorded deficient rainfall.

Nineteen states and union territories have received normal rainfall this year, while nine states and union territories saw excess rainfall. Bihar, Gujarat, Meghalaya, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Lakshadweep islands have recorded above normal rainfall. Sikkim recorded large excess rainfall.

However, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir have recorded deficiency. Ladakh has recorded large deficiency. "Considering recent years since 1990, the seasonal rainfall was 110 per cent of LPA in 1994 and 2019. It is consecutively for two

monsoon years, when India received good rainfall of 9 per cent above LPA or more.

"Data shows similar consecutive good monsoon rainfall years in 1958 and 1959 when it was 10 per cent and 4 per cent above LPA respectively," Jenamani added. Monsoon made an onset over Kerala on June 1, its normal annual onset date. Its timely onset was also aided by cyclone Nisarga. The monsoon covered the entire country by June 26, 12 days ahead of its normal date of July 8.

The withdrawal was also late. It withdrew from west Rajasthan and parts of Punjab on September 28, 11 days after its normal onset date. One of the main features of the monsoon was the rainfall in August. The month saw five low pressure areas (cyclonic circulations) that brought large amount of rainfall over central India. Total number of low pressure days was 28 against normal of about 15 in August.

ISRO to launch Venus mission in 2025

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 30: ISRO is scheduled to launch its Venus mission in 2025 and France will participate in it, French space agency CNES said Wednesday.

The VIRAL (Venus Infrared Atmospheric Gases Linker) instrument co-developed with the Russian federal space agency Roscosmos and the LATMOS-atmospheres, environments and space observations laboratory attached to the French national scientific research centre CNRS has been selected by the ISRO after a request for proposals, it said in a statement.

ISRO chairman K Sivan and CNES president Jean-Yves Le Gall held talks and reviewed the areas driving cooperation between France and India in space. "In the domain of space exploration, France will be taking part in ISRO's mission to Venus, scheduled to launch in 2025. CNES will coordinate and prepare the French contribution, the first time a French payload will be flown on an Indian exploration mission," CNES said in a statement.

However, there was no comment from ISRO. After the Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan) and Moon missions Chandrayaan-1 and 2, ISRO has set its eyes on Venus for carrying out its interplanetary mission.

France and India share a robust collaboration in arena of the space. It is one of the three nations with whom India collaborates in the strategic sectors of nuclear, space and defence - the other two being the US and Russia. In March 2018, the two countries also issued a 'Joint Vision for Space Cooperation'.

India and France are also working on ISRO's human space mission Gaganyaan project.



Farmers have been liberated from the shackles of middlemen and can now sell their produce to private traders as well

TELANGANA TO DISTRIBUTE NEARLY ONE CRORE SAREES

For the fourth year in a row, the Telangana government will distribute nearly one crore sarees among women belonging to poor families for the ensuing 'Bathukamma' festival



of the day quote

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a global crisis with far-reaching social and economic repercussions and one of the biggest challenges this crisis has brought is of mental health

SRI SRI RAVI SHANKAR | ART OF LIVING FOUNDER AND SPIRITUAL LEADER

It is a shameful move of the state government to oppress the Dalits and show them their place in society

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Called on honourable Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji in New Delhi today. Had fruitful discussion on various matters including mining

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

COVID LIKELY TO BE MORE LETHAL: EXPERTS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 30: With Covid-19 set to enter its ninth month in India after the country reported its first confirmed case in Kerala on January 30, there is a likelihood of increased transmission of the novel coronavirus virus during the winter months, health experts warned Wednesday.

The novel coronavirus that has traversed winter, spring, summer, monsoon and now creating havoc in autumn has proven to be an all-season virus which is currently spreading rapidly in India. With a spike of 80,472 coronavirus cases and 1,179 deaths in 24 hours, India's tally Wednesday surpassed the grim 62 lakh mark with a total of 62,25,763 cases.

"Based on our knowledge of other respiratory viruses, it may be possible that the coronavirus infections might rise in the coming winter months," Dr Richa Sareen, Consultant, Pulmonology at Fortis Hospital in New Delhi, said.

"Most respiratory illnesses like SARS, influenza, etc show a seasonal variation, with cases spiking in winter months. Viruses tend to survive longer in a cold and dry climate," she explained. Furthermore, low humidity promotes evapora-



tion of viral particles and aerosol formations, which can increase the airborne spread of disease.

According to Sareen, lack of sunshine in winters also depletes Vitamin D levels, thereby decreasing immunity, making us more susceptible to infections, including Covid-19. "The effect of winters on Covid surge is yet to be seen, however wearing a proper mask, following hand hygiene and social distancing are the mainstay to prevent Covid-19 infection till the vaccine arrives," she stressed.

On Tuesday, the key findings of the second round of sero-survey conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) suggested that India had 87 million Covid-19 patients by the end of August.

ICMR Director-General Balram Bhargava had said that one in 15 individuals was exposed to Covid-19 by August. Dr Suranjit Chatterjee, Senior Consultant, Indraprastha

Apollo Hospitals, New Delhi said: "Generally, flu-like diseases spread more during winters. Cold weather and humidity are favourable for the spread of the disease."

However, the rise in the cases will be accelerated mainly because people are becoming less vigilant, mask use is down and mobility is up. "Ramping up the testing for coronavirus, following social distancing rules strictly, and practicing respiratory and hand hygiene measures without any lackadaisical approach will be crucial during the winter months," Chatterjee said.

According to Praveen Gupta, Director and Head, Neurology, Fortis Memorial Research Institute, Gurugram, respiratory symptoms, which are one of the main symptoms of Covid-19, are known to worsen in winter: "There are chances of a spike in cases again if we do not take the necessary precautions," Gupta noted.

Navy takes to seas with Russia, Quad nations

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 30: The Indian Navy has conducted exercises with Russia and 'Quad' countries - an informal security forum comprising India, the US, Japan and Australia - in a message to China on getting a wider footprint in the Indo-Pacific region.

The Indo-Pacific region is seen from the west coast of India to the US. The Indian Navy carried out a three-day bilateral maritime exercise with Japan in the north Arabian Sea from September 26, 2020 to September 28, 2020. It was the fourth edition of India-Japan Maritime bilateral exercise JIMEX, which is conducted biennially. The last edition of JIMEX was conducted in October 2018 off Visakhapatnam in India.

Naval cooperation between India and Japan has increased in scope and complexity over the years. Advanced level of operations and exercises took place during three days. It is indicative of the continued upswing in Indo-Japanese defence relations and continued efforts by both governments to work closely for a more secure, open and inclusive global commons, in accordance with international regulations.

The helicopter carrier of Japan JS Kaga took part in the recent ex-



ercise. The Kaga and its sister ship the Izumo are being converted into aircraft carriers that will carry US-built maritime planes, the F35-B. India, Japan, China and South Korea are the countries now involved in what is seen in strategic circles as the Asian carrier race.

The Australian Navy and Indian Navy carried out passage exercise in the East Indian Ocean Region from September 23 to September 24. The exercise involved participation of HMAS Hobart from the Australian side and Indian naval ships Sahyadri and Karmuk. In addition, an Indian maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters from both sides carried out coordinated exercise.

The exercise, aimed at enhancing interoperability, improving understanding and imbibing best practices from each other, involved advanced surface and anti-air exercises including weapon firings, seamanship exercises, naval manoeuvres and cross deck flying operations.

Shopian encounter: Bodies to be exhumed

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Sept 30: The bodies of the three persons killed in an encounter in South Kashmir's Shopian district on July 18 will be exhumed and handed over to the families, Inspector General, Kashmir Vijay Kumar said Wednesday.

"Since DNA samples have matched with the families, the three dead bodies will be exhumed and handed over to the families after due process of law," Kumar said.

Earlier, the DNA samples of the family members, hailing from J&K's Rajouri district were matched with three persons -- Imtiyaz Ahmad, Abrar Ahmad and Mohammad Ibrar. The three were killed by the security forces during an anti-terror operation in Shopian.

An army inquiry later found that the security personnel had exceeded their powers under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) during the encounter.

The Jammu and Kashmir Police and the army started probing the killing of the three after the families claimed that their kin had gone missing and photographs emerged on social media about them reportedly having been killed in the encounter. Police have so far arrested two persons, who were under suspicion and are being questioned.

SHORT TAKES

Bengal minister Covid positive

Kolkata: West Bengal Sunderbans Affairs Minister Mamtaram Pakhira has tested positive for Covid-19, sources in the state health department said. He was first admitted to Kakdwip Super Speciality Hospital on Tuesday but later he was taken to Belegata ID hospital in Kolkata for treatment. Bengali actor and Trinamool Congress leader Soham Chakraborty also tested positive for Covid-19 and was admitted to a private hospital near the EM bypass.

Woman found dead in Maha

Palghar: A middle-aged woman was found dead on the roadside at a village on Mumbai-Ahmedabad road in Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said Wednesday. The unidentified woman was found strangled to death with a scarf in Kolhe village of Chinchoti, inspector Vilas Chowgule of Valiv police station said.

Farmer ends life

Sehore: A 55-year-old debt-ridden farmer allegedly committed suicide in Madhya Pradesh's Sehore district, police said. The farmer's family members said his soyabean crop was damaged due to heavy rains in the district this year. Nannulal Verma allegedly hanged himself at his residence in Naaplakhedi village in the morning. Additional Superintendent of Police Samir Yadav said. The official said according to family members of the farmer, who has three sons, he had taken loan for constructing a house and there was some dispute between them over the division of property.

3 killed in J&K

Jammu: Two Army men and another person were killed in separate road accidents in Udhampur and Doda districts of Jammu and Kashmir, police said Wednesday. The deceased soldiers have been identified as havaladar Suresh Kumar and Naik V M Pawar of Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, they said. They died after their vehicle plunged into a 50-foot gorge in Udhampur district on Tuesday, a police official said, adding the bodies were handed over to their unit after completion of legal formalities. In another accident, a car rolled down into a deep gorge in Gandoh area of Doda district resulting in the death of a 50-year-old person Wednesday.

Baby stabbed, body found

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhopal, Sept 30: A two-day-old girl was stabbed to death by an unidentified person and the body dumped in a temple premises in Bhopal, police said Wednesday.

The newborn's body having multiple stab wounds was found wrapped in a shawl in the premises of a temple in Ayodhya Nagar area on Monday, they said. The police sent the body for postmortem and its report received on Tuesday revealed that the child was attacked with a sharp tool multiple times on the stomach and back, Ayodhya Nagar police station in-charge Renu Murab said. A murder case has been registered against an unidentified person, the official said, adding that no arrest has been made so far. The police are trying to gather details from nearby hospitals about the birth of children in last one week, she said.

Cops seize 6,000 marijuana plants

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bengaluru, Sept 30: As part of widespread hunt for ganja (Marijuana) growers, the police in Karnataka's Kalaburagi district raided sugarcane fields where ganja was stealthily grown and seized more than 6,000 ganja plants.

The widespread hunt for the ganja growers or stockists has commenced after the Bengaluru police had seized 1,350 kg of ganja from a sheep farm about a month ago. Kalaburagi is 626 km from Bengaluru. The police are on the lookout for both owners of this field where ganja was allegedly grown - Hanumanta Raya Nayak and Bhima Raya Nayak who are on the run after their fields were raided.

'No truth in clean chit to Deepika, Sara, Shraddha'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 30: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Wednesday refuted claims about clean chit given to Bollywood divas Deepika Padukone, Shraddha Kapoor, Sara Ali Khan and others questioned in connection with the a drugs case surrounding the death of Sushant Singh Rajput, saying such reports are "devoid of 'truth and facts'".

"The news article mentioning that the drugs law enforcement agency giving clean chit to those examined by NCB is devoid of the facts and truth," He said that the nec-

essary "rebuttal" is being issued to the concerned.

The remarks came after a media report claimed that the NCB has given clean chit to Deepika, her former manager Karishma Prakash, Sara, Shraddha and others in a drugs related case. The NCB questioned Deepika, Shraddha and Karishma Saturday in Mumbai for several hours over their alleged chats discussing drugs. The NCB also questioned Sara, who starred with Sushant in "Kedarnath" for over five hours in the case Saturday.

Deepika is the daughter of badminton icon Prakash Padukone



and married to actor Ranveer Singh, while Shraddha is daughter of veteran actor Shakti Kapoor. Sara is daughter of actors Saif Ali Khan and Amrita Singh.

The NCB also grilled actor Rakul Preet Singh in connection with its probe Friday for four hours.

However, the officials of the NCB have remained tightlipped on its findings after the questioning of these actors in the case as it is corroborating the statements of all the people questioned in the case so far. The NCB also arrested Kshiti Ravi Prasad former executive Producer of the Dharma Productions in connection with the case after it was found that he procured drugs for over a dozen times between May to July and paid Rs 3,500 for every 50 gm of the contraband.

The NCB has already arrested Sushant's girlfriend Rhea

Chakraborty, her brother Showik, the late actor's house manager Samuel Miranda, personal staff Dipesh Sawant in the case along with 16 other accused.

The NCB registered a case after it received a request from Enforcement Directorate (ED) following the alleged chats discussing drugs came to the fore. The NCB registered two cases and Sara and Shraddha are inter-linked in both the cases. Besides NCB, the CBI and the ED are also probing the death of Sushant, who was found dead in his Bandra's Mont Blanc apartment on June 14.

MOTHERLY LOVE



A female hippopotamus with her baby at Assam State Zoo in Guwahati PTI PHOTO

With no smartphone for online classes, teen kills self

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Satara (Maharashtra), Sept 30: In a shocking incident, unable to afford a smartphone to attend to her online education classes, a farm widow's 15-year-old daughter studying in SSC, committed suicide, police said here Wednesday.

According to investigating officer Balkrishna Jagdale of Karad Police Station, the incident happened last Wednesday in a small village, Ond, around 15 kms away from the (Karad) town.

"The victim, Sakshi Abasaheb Pol was a student of Secondary School Certificate (SSC) with the Pandit G.B. Pant High School nearby and was required to attend online classes since the past few months in view of the corona pandemic," Jagdale said.

However, her widowed mother Swati -- who works as a farm labourer in the village - could not



afford a smartphone for her daughter as the family's income was barely sufficient to survive. Sakshi, who has a 13-year old brother, had been demanding a smartphone since the past few months, but her mother kept cajoling her to "wait till we have enough money".

On the morning of September 23, as Swati left to work in the farmlands, an infuriated Sakshi again made the demand but her mother expressed sheer helplessness in the matter. Shortly

after she left, Sakshi hanged herself in her home, and was found dead later by the family and neighbours, said Jagdale.

"We have not made any arrests since there is no complaint and no foul play is suspected in the matter," the official added. Sakshi joins the long list of young students hailing from very poor families who cannot manage to buy smartphones or computers with Internet connections to comply with the requirements of online education.

71% parents not willing to send children to school: Survey

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 30: A majority of 71 per cent parents will not be sending their children to school in October even if schools reopen.

With rising Covid cases, percentage of parents willing to send their children to school drops from 23 per cent to 20 per cent in one month, according to a Local Circles survey.

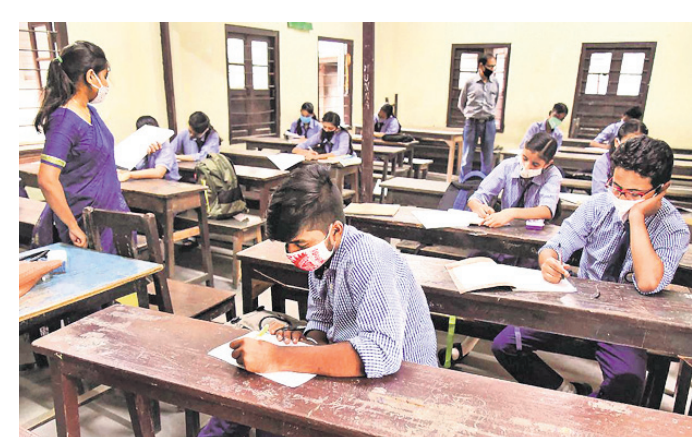
Only 28 per cent parents are in favour of schools reopening in calendar year 2020 while 34 per cent feel they should open only in the next academic year i.e. April 2021.

Many parents in North India expect COVID-19 combined with October-November smog will only make the situation worse for children.

The Covid-19 cases in India have risen to over 60 lakh and are showing no signs of plateauing, with more than 80,000 cases being reported every day. The daily case load has slightly reduced but the numbers are misleading as the average number of tests in the last two weeks has fallen from 11 lakhs a day to 7 lakh a day, LocalCircles said.

The death toll in India is now approximately 1 lakh while people are confused about whether to go out or stay home as markets, restaurants, bars, metro and various other services are now open.

Schools in the country have been closed since March after the lockdown was announced with voluntary attendance for students of senior classes permitted from



September 21 basis authorisation from parents. LocalCircles conducted a survey

to get pulse of the parents on school reopening. The survey received over 14,500 responses from parents lo-

cated in around 217 districts of the country with 61% parents from Tier 1 districts, 21 per cent from Tier 2 districts and 18 per cent from Tier 3, Tier 4 and rural districts of India.

When asked if the Central Government and their State Government decide that schools should open in their state in October, would they be sending your child/grandchild to school in October, 71 per cent responded in a clear 'no' while only 20 per cent said 'yes'. 9 per cent were unsure about it.

LocalCircles had conducted a similar survey in August this year and the percentage of parents who said they would want to send their kids to school during the COVID-19 pandemic stood at 23%. The data

clearly shows that with rising COVID cases, percentage of parents willing to send their children to school drops from 23 per cent to 20 per cent in one month.

In the second question, parents were asked given the current daily Covid-19 case load and the upcoming festive season, what is their position regarding opening of schools in India. In response, 32 per cent said schools should not open till December 31, 2020, while 34 per cent said Government should not open schools for this academic year i.e. till March/April 2021. 7 per cent said schools should open from October 1, 12 per cent said schools should open from November 1, and 9 per cent said schools should open from December 1.

international



China is now the biggest emitter worldwide and it's very important that China contributes to efforts to protect the climate
ANGELA MERKEL | GERMAN CHANCELLOR

SHEIKH NAWAF SWORN IN AS KUWAIT'S NEW RULING EMIR

Kuwait's new emir was sworn in at parliament Wednesday as the country prepared to lay to rest late ruler Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah, a Gulf Arab elder statesman who helped steer his people through some of the Middle East's most turbulent decades



of the day quote

A series of state measures are now being taken to block the coronavirus inflow into the country, and all people adhere strictly to anti-epidemic regulations while maintaining the highest alert
KIM SONG | NK'S UN AMBASSADOR

I think the American people deserve to have an ability to compare and contrast the (Prez) candidates
KAMALA HARRIS | US SENATOR

US financial sanctions have caused Venezuela's oil revenue to plunge 99 per cent over the last six years
NICOLAS MADURO | VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

No wild animals in Paris' circuses

Paris: As part of sweeping new animal welfare measures, France has said it will gradually ban the use of wild animals in travelling circuses. On Tuesday, Ecology Minister Barbara Pompili said, "Our attitude to wild animals has changed." She also announced a ban on farming minks for fur and on keeping dolphins and orcas in captivity in marine parks, *BBC* reported. The move was hailed as "an historic victory" by leading animal rights groups.

China restricts climbing Great Wall

Beijing: As China approaches the busiest holiday season, Beijing authorities have warned that it will punish those who plan to climb the 'wild Great Wall'. This refers to parts of the Great Wall that are unrestored and aren't officially open to tourists - people can be fined if they flout rules, the *BBC* reported. Rules will be enforced more strictly over Golden Week, with thousands of domestic tourists expected to visit. China is banking on the holiday to boost its badly hit tourism industry.

'Moderna vaccine well-tolerated'

Boston: Results from the Phase 1 trial of an investigational COVID-19 vaccine co-developed by researchers at the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and the American biotech company Moderna have shown that it is well-tolerated and generates a strong immune response in older adults. The study noted that the experimental vaccine, mRNA-1273, was well-tolerated by the older trial participants, who were over 55 years of age.

LIFE AMID PANDEMIC



A man comforts his daughter just before she attends her first day of grade 1 at P.S. 130 in the Brooklyn borough of New York City

REUTERS

Paris rattled by sonic boom from French fighter jet



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, Sept 30: A massive boom heard across Paris Wednesday morning briefly caused panic as residents reported buildings shaking and windows rattling.

Police in the French capital quickly confirmed that the noise was made by a fighter jet breaking the sound barrier, and asked people to stop calling the emergency line, as per media reports.

"A Rafale (warplane) based at Saint-Dizier, intervening to assist an airliner which had lost contact, was allowed to break the sound barrier to join the airplane in trouble. It broke the sound barrier east of Paris," Army spokesman Colonel Stephane Spet said in a statement.

It was not immediately clear whether the problem with the commercial jet had been resolved. In a city already tensed since a knife attack outside the former offices of satirical magazine *Charlie Hebdo* Friday, the unusually loud blast sent people onto their balconies to see what had caused it. It also prompted intense messaging on social media and a flood of calls to emergency services. The Paris police prefecture explained what had happened in a statement on Twitter and urged people not to call emergency services about the noise.

After 493 days, Belgium gets new PM

Belgium has a long history of political instability and previously went without a government for 541 days in 2010 and 2011

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Brussels, Sept 30: Flemish liberal leader Alexander De Croo will be Belgium's new Prime Minister at the head of a seven-party coalition government, it was announced Wednesday - 16 months after an inconclusive election.

De Croo's French-speaking socialist rival Paul Magnette confirmed that the parties had chosen the 44-year-old finance minister as premier. He is to be sworn in on Thursday by Belgium's king.

By choosing a Flemish leader, the incoming government hopes to balance the fact that its parliamentary base will be drawn from mainly French-speaking parties, with the main Dutch-speaking groups in opposition.

"We flipped a coin and it came down to Alexander and it's an excellent choice," Magnette joked at the end of the press conference to present the outcome of the negotiations.

Belgium has had no governing majority for 21 months since the collapse of former leader Charles Michel's government, and it has been 493 days since federal elections failed to resolve the crisis. Leaders from seven parties met until the early hours Wednesday before coming to an agreement on a government programme and cabinet line-up to be presented to King Philippe. De Croo will replace French-speaking liberal leader Sophie Wilmes who has served as acting premier during the coronavirus epidemic but never wielded a parliamentary majority.

The new coalition will bring together two socialist parties - one French-speaking, and one Flemish - two liberal parties and two sets of greens. The CD&V, a party of Flemish Christian democrats will also join, but the larger Flemish nationalist N-VA, which was in government between 2014 and 2018 will leave power. Belgium's House of Representatives is expected to meet Thursday to endorse the new government. The country has been governed by a minority coalition since December 2018, when the N-VA abruptly left Michel's government during a row about immigration. The legislative election of May 2019 saw gains by various green and fringe groupings, further fragmenting the political landscape and making it harder to build a majority around the traditional parties.

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Alexander De Croo

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Imran wants Sharif brought back to Pak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Sept 30: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has asked relevant authorities to take steps to bring back PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif from London, where he has been staying since November 2019 on medical grounds, and to ensure that the former premier faces the corruption cases pending against him in various Pakistani courts, according to a media report.

The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting Tuesday, the *Dawn News* reported, quoting a Cabinet member whose identity was not revealed. Khan asked the authorities to pursue the matter vigorously, the report said.

According to the Cabinet member, the government had earlier sent a request to the British gov-

ernment for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader's repatriation.

However, it would again send a fresh application now. Besides a normal application, a formal request for his extradition would also be made. "Although we have no extradition treaty with the United Kingdom, wanted people can be repatriated under special arrangements as we had also handed over some people to the UK," the member said. The Islamabad High Court Wednesday said that it needs to be determined if Sharif was evading court proceedings on purpose.

The three-time premier, his daughter Maryam and son-in-law Muhammad Safdar were convicted in the Avenfield properties case July 6, 2018.

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Common cold may protect you from nCoV

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 30: People who have had a bout of seasonal or common cold in the past may get some protection from COVID-19, according to a study which suggests that immunity to the disease is likely to last a long time - maybe even a lifetime.

The study, published in the journal *mBio*, is the first to show that the COVID-19-causing virus, SARS-CoV-2, induces memory B cells, long-lived immune cells that detect pathogens, create antibodies to destroy them and remember them for the future.

The next time that pathogen tries to enter the body, those memory B cells can hop into action even faster to clear the infection before it starts, according to the researchers from the University of

TRUMP, BIDEN CLASH OVER SEVERAL ISSUES IN BITTER PREZ DEBATE

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 30: US President Donald Trump and his Democratic rival Joe Biden fiercely clashed over a number of issues, including the COVID-19 pandemic, racism, economy and climate, during the first presidential debate, marked by angry interruptions and bitter accusations.

During the first of the three presidential debates in Cleveland, Ohio, Tuesday night moderated by Fox News anchor Chris Wallace, 74-year-old Trump and his 77-year-old rival Biden also traded barbs about each other's families, making it one of the most chaotic White House debates in years. "The fact is that everything he's (Trump) saying so far is simply a lie. I'm not here to call out his lies. Everybody knows he's a liar," Biden said.

Trump responded, saying Biden is a liar and graduated last in his class. Attacking Trump over the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic that has killed more than 2,00,000 people and infected over 7 million in the US, Biden said the President has 'no plan' to fight the deadly disease and he lied to Americans.

"He still hasn't even acknowledged that he knew this was happening, knew how dangerous it was going to be back in February, and he didn't even tell you. He is on record as saying it. He panicked or he just looked at the stock market, one of the two, because guess what, a lot of people die and lot more are going to die un-



President Donald Trump and Democratic presidential candidate former Vice President Joe Biden participate in the first presidential debate Tuesday

Common cold may protect you from nCoV



Rochester Medical Center (URMC) in the US. Because memory B cells can survive for decades, they could protect COVID-19 survivors from subsequent infections for a long time, but further research will have to confirm this.

The study is also the first to report cross-reactivity of memory B cells - meaning B cells that once attacked cold-causing coronaviruses appeared to also recognise SARS-CoV-2.

less he gets a lot smarter, a lot quicker," he said. Trump hit back, saying, "don't ever use the word smart with me." Trump also asserted that he paid millions of dollars in income taxes and dubbed the recent *New York Times* report that he paid just \$750 in income tax in the year he was elected US President as 'wrong'. Biden described Trump as the "worst President America has ever had."

On nominating Judge Amy Coney Barrett for the Supreme Court to fill up the vacancy following the death of Judge Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Trump said: "We won the election and we have a right to do it". Biden disagreed. Trump also rued that Biden was getting better press than him.

"They give you good press. They give me bad press because that's the way it is, unfortunate. I don't care. I've gotten used to it. But I'll tell you, Joe, you could never have done the job that we did. You don't have it in your blood," Trump added. Biden also branded Trump 'a fool', when the President was talking about the large crowd that he has been drawing in the election campaign.

Hitting back, Trump said nobody shows up to Biden's rallies. Trump also expressed hope that the November 3 election would be 'fair' and urged his supporters to watch 'very carefully' the entire voting process to ensure there is nothing fraudulent.

Trump raised concerns over the use of mail-in ballots, saying there are high chances of the process getting manipulated.

DEATH THE ULTIMATE TRUTH

World's first patient cured of HIV, dies of cancer

MORE THAN 37 MILLION PEOPLE WORLDWIDE ARE CURRENTLY INFECTED WITH HIV, AND THE AIDS PANDEMIC HAS KILLED ABOUT 35 MILLION PEOPLE SINCE IT BEGAN IN THE 1980S

REUTERS

London, Sept 30: Timothy Ray Brown, the first person known to be cured of HIV when he had a unique type of bone marrow transplant, has died in California after relapsing with cancer, his partner said.

"It is with great sadness that I announce that Timothy passed away this afternoon surrounded by myself and friends, after a 5 month battle with leukaemia," his partner, Tim Hoeffgen, said in a post on Facebook. He said Brown was his "hero" and "the sweetest person in the world". Brown, born March

11, 1966, became known as the "Berlin Patient" after his HIV was cleared by treatment there in 2007.

The American's case fascinated and inspired a generation of HIV doctors as well as patients infected with the virus that causes AIDS, offering a glimmer of hope that one day a cure will be found that eventually ends the AIDS pandemic.

"We owe Timothy and his doctor, Gero Huetter, a great deal of gratitude for opening the door for scientists to explore the concept that a cure for HIV is possible," said Aadeba Kamarulzaman, president of the International AIDS Society



Timothy Ray Brown

(IAS). Brown was diagnosed with HIV in 1995 while living in the German capital, and in 2006 was

also diagnosed with a type of blood cancer known as acute myeloid leukaemia.

While Brown remained clear of HIV for more than a decade after being treated, he had suffered a relapse of the leukaemia in the past year. His doctors said the blood cancer had spread to his spine and brain, and he had recently been in hospice care in his home town of Palm Springs, California.

"I'm heartbroken that my hero is now gone. Tim was truly the sweetest person in the world," Hoeffgen said in the Facebook post. He said Brown had made it his life's work

to tell the story of his HIV cure and "became an ambassador of hope". For Huetter, the German doctor caring for him in 2007, Brown's case was a shot in the dark. The treatment involved the destruction of Brown's immune system and the transplanting of stem cells with a gene mutation called *CCR5* that resists HIV.

A second HIV patient, Adam Castillejo, who was known as "the London patient" until he revealed his identity this year, is also thought to be in remission from HIV after having a transplant in 2016 similar to the one Brown had.

Azerbaijan, ethnic Armenian forces fight for fourth day

REUTERS

Yervan/Baku, Sept 30: NATO allies France and Turkey traded angry recriminations Wednesday as international tensions mounted over the fiercest clashes between Azerbaijan and ethnic Armenian forces since the mid-1990s.

On the fourth day of fighting, Azerbaijan and the ethnic Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh accused each other of shelling along the line of contact that divides them.

Dozens have been reported killed and hundreds wounded in fighting since Sunday that has spread far beyond the enclave's borders, threatening to spill over into all-out war between the former Soviet republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia. The skirmishes

have raised concerns about stability in the South Caucasus region, a corridor for pipelines carrying oil and gas to world markets, and raised fears that regional powers Russia and Turkey could be drawn in. Some of Turkey's NATO allies are increasingly alarmed by Ankara's stance on Nagorno-Karabakh, a breakaway region inside Turkey's close ally Azerbaijan that is run by ethnic Armenians but is not recognised by any country as an independent republic.

Echoing remarks by President Tayyip Erdogan, Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said Wednesday Turkey would "do what is necessary" when asked whether Ankara would offer military support if Azerbaijan requested it.



Today, the need to go digital is a necessity and SMBs are hard-pressed to digitise fast. We need to do everything we can to handhold millions of small businesses in their digital transformation journey and support business recovery during the current crisis

SHALINI GIRISH | CUSTOMER SOLUTIONS DIRECTOR, GOOGLE INDIA

UBER PARTNERS WITH HELPAGE INDIA

Uber has announced a partnership with HelpAge India, an NGO dedicated to serving the disadvantaged elderly, for providing 1,000 free rides a month in 12 cities. Uber will provide these rides across Bhubaneswar, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi NCR, Hyderabad and Mumbai among few cities from October to December 2020



of the day quote

Any auctioning of E and V bands would deny...consumers and the nation at large with the benefits of broadband connectivity and economic growth...go against the concerned Trai recommendations...go against international best practices

TV RAMACHANDRAN | PRESIDENT, BROADBAND INDIA FORUM

The government is opening up the economy for greater participation of the private sector and has been working in different ways to remove entry barriers for new investments

PIYUSH GOVAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

We are actively looking at addressing logistics challenges which emanate at our borders to facilitate quicker turnaround time for both the industries in India and Bangladesh

SMRITI IRANI | UNION MINISTER

April-August fiscal deficit reaches 109% of budget estimates

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 30: The Union Government's fiscal deficit remained above the annual target for second month in row at the end of August, mainly on account of the impact of lockdown on revenue collections.

According to the data released by the Controller General of Accounts (CGA), fiscal deficit during April-August was at 109.3% of the annual target estimated in the Budget.

In absolute terms, the fiscal deficit was at ₹8,70,347 crore. It stood at 78.7% of Budget Estimates (BE) in the corresponding period during the last fiscal.

Fiscal deficit or the gap between the expenditure and revenue had breached the annual target in July. The government had pegged fiscal deficit for 2020-21 at ₹7.96 lakh crore or 3.5% of GDP in the Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in February.

These figures, however, may have to be revised significantly in view of the economic disruptions created by the outbreak of coronavirus pandemic.

Fiscal deficit had soared to a seven-year high of 4.6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2019-20, mainly on account of poor revenue realisation, which dipped further towards the end of March because of a nationwide lockdown to contain the spread of coronavirus.

As per CGA data, the govern-



The government had pegged fiscal deficit for 2020-21 at ₹7.96L cr or 3.5% of GDP in the Budget presented by FM Nirmala Sitharaman in February

ment's revenue receipts stood at ₹3,70,642 crore or 18.3% of BE in April-August. During the same period of the last fiscal, it was at 30.7 per cent of BE.

Tax revenue stood at ₹2,84,495 crore or 17.4% of BE during the first five months of the fiscal. During the corresponding period of the last fiscal, it was at 24.5% of BE.

Total receipts of the government stood at 16.8% of BE or ₹3,77,306 crore. In the Budget, the government had estimated the total receipts for the fiscal at ₹2.45 lakh crore.

The government's total expenditure stood at ₹12,47,653 crore or 41% of BE at end-August. During the same period of the last fiscal, total expenditure was at 42.2% of BE.

CORE INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT CONTRACTS 8.5% IN AUG

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 30: The deceleration rate in the production of India's eight major industries continued in August, official data showed Wednesday. As per the data, the Index of Eight Core Industries for August declined by 8.5 (provisional) % as compared to August 2019.

It had declined by (-)8% (revised) in July, compared to decline of (-) 12.9% in June.

Though not comparable, the ECI index had slipped by (-) 0.2% in August 2019.

"The combined Index of Eight Core Industries stood at 117.6 in August 2020, which declined by 8.5 (provisional) % as compared to the Index of August, 2019. Its cumulative growth during April to August, 2020-21 has been (-) 17.8%," said the Office of Economic Advisor, DPIIT, on the Index of Eight Core Industries for August 2020.

"Final growth rate of Index of Eight Core Industries for May 2020 is revised to (-) 21.4%."

India's eight core industries comprise 40.27% of the weight of items included in the Index of Industrial Production (IIP).

These industries comprise of coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement, and electricity.

On a sector-specific basis, the output of refinery products, which has the highest weightage of 28.03, declined (-) 19.1% in August 2020 compared to the corresponding month of the last fiscal.

Similarly, electricity generation, which has the second highest weightage of 19.85, inched lower



With the underlying sectors reporting divergent trends, the contraction in the core sector deepened to 8.5% in August 2020 from the revised 8% in July, a sudden stalling of the recovery seen since May

ADITI NAYAR | PRINCIPAL ECONOMIST, ICRA

by (-) 2.7%.

Steel production, the third most important component with weightage of 17.92, was lower by (-) 6.3% during the month under review, whereas coal mining, with a 10.33 weightage, edged higher by 3.6%.

The extraction of crude oil, which has an 8.98 weightage, declined by (-) 6.3% during the month under consideration. The sub-index for natural gas output, with a weightage of 6.88, declined by (-) 9.5%.

Cement production, which has a weightage of 5.37, slid by (-) 14.6% in the month under review.

However, fertiliser manufacturing, which has the least weightage - only 2.63 - rose by 7.3% last month.

According to Aditi Nayar, Principal Economist, ICRA: "With the underlying sectors reporting divergent trends, the contraction in the core sector deepened to 8.5% in August 2020 from the revised 8% in July 2020, a sudden stalling of the momentum of the recovery seen since May 2020."

WB seeks \$12 bn for Covid vaccine in developing nations

AGENCIES

Washington, Sept 30: The World Bank (WB) has said that it has asked its Board of Directors to approve \$12 billion to help poor countries purchase and distribute eventual vaccines against Covid-19.

The bank has already implemented emergency response programs in 111 countries and the extra money, if approved, would be aimed at low-and middle-income countries.

"An effective and safe Covid-19 vaccine is the most promising path forward for the world to reopen safely," a World Bank spokesman said. "The global economy will not recover fully until people feel they can live, socialize, work and travel with confidence."

The funds would be disbursed over 12-18 months.



Covid-19 vaccines aren't commercially available yet but World Bank President David Malpass told French newspaper Le Figaro "the process of distributing a vaccine is complex" and it was important to anticipate the needs associated with it.

"We wanted the poorest countries to have access to it (a vaccine), and in these countries, we want the most vulnerable people and medical personnel to be vaccinated," he said.

SHORT TAKES

NTPC eyes ₹98K cr revenue in FY21

New Delhi: NTPC is eyeing Rs 98,000 crore revenue from operations and about 15 million metric tonne of coal output from its mines in the current fiscal year. The state-owned power giant is also aiming 340 BU (billion units) of electricity generation in 2020-21 as part of its MoU with the Ministry of Power, a company statement said. As per the MoU, NTPC will aim to achieve capital expenditure of Rs 21,000 crore and coal production of 15 million metric tonne in the current fiscal year.

Govt cuts natural gas price by 25%

New Delhi: The government Wednesday slashed the rate at which most of the natural gas produced in India is sold by a steep 25% to \$1.79. Gas produced by state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp (ONGC) and Oil India from areas given to them on nomination basis will cost \$1.79 per million British thermal unit for six-month period beginning October 1, 2020, an official order said. The price of new gas from difficult fields such as deep sea has also been cut to \$4.06 per mmBtu.

'HPI rises 2.8% on annual basis'

Mumbai: The all-India House Price Index (HPI) rose 2.8% in the first quarter of the current financial year on an annual basis, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The quarterly HPI for the April-June 2020 period is based on transaction-level data received from housing registration authorities in 10 major cities. The cities are Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Jaipur, Kanpur, Kochi, Kolkata, Lucknow and Mumbai.

General Atlantic to invest ₹3,675 cr

Mumbai: General Atlantic, a leading global growth equity firm will invest Rs 3,675 cr in Reliance Retail Ventures Limited, RIL said in a BSE filing Wednesday. General Atlantic's investment will translate into a 0.84% equity stake in RRVL. The deal values Reliance Retail at a pre-money equity value of Rs 4.285 trillion, said RIL in a media release.

Honda rolls out H'ness CB350 motorcycles in India

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/New Delhi, Sept 30: Making a grand entry in to the mid-size 350-500cc motorcycle segment, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd. (HMSI) Wednesday announced its global unveiling of the brand new H'ness - CB350. Build with nine new patent applications, H'ness - CB350 is the third BSVI model in the Honda's BigWing portfolio - its exclusive Premium Bike vertical.

Noriaki Abe (Managing Officer, Honda Motor Co., Ltd. & Chief Officer, Motorcycle Operations, Honda Motor Co., Ltd.) and Masayuki Igarashi (Operating Officer, Honda Motor Co., Ltd., Chief Officer, Regional Operations (Asia & Oceania), Honda Motor Co., Ltd. President and CEO, Asian Honda Motor Co., Ltd) from Japan were present at the unveiling.

CB350 is the big powerful 350cc, air cooled 4-stroke OHC single-cylinder engine equipped with PGM-FI technology. It delivers a category leading max torque of 30 Nm@3000 rpm.

Its dual channel ABS prevents wheels from locking when brakes are applied in emergency or when operated on slippery roads ensuring a greater sense of confidence.



Anchoring the motorcycle is a large 310mm disc brake up front and 240mm rear disc providing adequate braking performance.

Honda will also be offering a special 6-year warranty package (3 years standard + 3 years optional extended warranty) on H'ness CB350.

MD-President & CEO of HMSI Ogata said, "Globally, CB series of motorcycles symbolise Honda's history of challenges. For more than 60 years, Honda has consistently given the prefix "CB" to models representing on-road sports. Also, the riders have always been the focus in the evolution of the CB. It was once again the Indian riders

who motivated the development of H'ness - CB350.

To this end, the latest technologies are generously reflected in its nine new patent applications. Today, we are proud to usher in a new motorcycling culture in the mid-size segment with this global unveiling of H'ness-CB350."

The latest model is available in two variant DLX and DLX Pro. DLX variant is available in three colours renowned red metallic, pearl night star black, mat marshal green metallic while DLX Pro variant comes in athletic blue metallic & virtuous white, pearl night star black & spear silver metallic, mat steel black metallic & mat massive grey metallic.

Ek-Do-Teen-Chaar Fashion Tyohaar at Esplanade One

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 30: The festive season in India this time starts with an extended weekend from October 2-4. Cashing in on this opportunity, Bhubaneswar favorite shopping destination has come up with Ek-Do-Teen-Chaar, Bhubaneswar Ka Sabsebad Fashion Tyohaar, which is a four-day flash sale with all the prominent fashion brands participating with great deals and offers. The objective of the campaign is to give everyone in the region an opportunity to upgrade their wardrobe before the festivities begin across the country.

The participating brands include Lifestyle, M&S, Iconic, Max,



Trends, Project Eve, Big Bazaar, W, Auralia, Eartwear, and, Globaldesi, Biba Indya, Rangriti, Manyawaar, Rare Rabbit and many more.

Centre Director said, "Across the country, we celebrate our festivities with a lot of fervor. In this new normal, we are sure people will restrain and maintain social distancing.

Digital advertising set to overtake television by FY21

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 30: Advertising spend on digital media is set to overtake TV by financial year 2021, with digital likely to be one of the only media and entertainment segments to continue to grow in double digits in the coming year.

According to the KPMG Media and Entertainment Report 2020, outdoor entertainment formats and traditional media have been badly impacted as people stayed indoors and advertising dried up.

Digital advertising, OTT and gaming fared much better, with massive spikes in digital consumption during the lockdown across geographies and socio-economic classes.

The report notes that the low-touch economy that has burgeoned post Covid-19 will encourage every business to invest in credible digi-

tal fulfillment models as consumers migrate faster online.

"A more optimistic scenario for the M&E sector is that consumers simply rebalance-rather than reduce-expenditure away from outdoor options such as theatres, concerts and plays to indoor ones like OTT and gaming", the report said.

In the short term, however, the pain is likely to be pervasive, it added. Impacted by a slowing economy, the M&E sector grew by 7% in FY20 - almost half its previous year's number - to ₹1,751 billion.

The decline in advertising revenues was even more pronounced as growth fell to 3% in FY20 from 14% in FY19.



ments to grow. By FY22, the sector should regain its growth trajectory and achieve a similar scale to today; an implied loss of around two years of growth due to Covid-19.

The M&E sector faced significant disruption with the ongoing lockdown forcing all forms of outdoor entertainment, particularly

cinemas and events to shut down and content supply chains to dry up.

Additionally, advertising spends also declined as all major advertisement spend sectors were witnessing their own business continuity challenges. With lockdowns easing, the content supply appears to be restarting, albeit with baby

THE PARADIGM SHIFT

Digital advertising, OTT and gaming fared much better, with massive spikes in digital consumption during the lockdown across geographies

The M&E sector faced significant disruption with the ongoing lockdown forcing all forms of outdoor entertainment (cinemas and events) to shut down

steps.

Cinemas and events, however, continue to be shut and face significant uncertainty regarding return to normalcy in the near term.

Advertisement spends appear to be recovering and with a strong festive quarter expected in Q3FY21, there is likely to be a quicker re-

covery in marketing budgets. The overall reduction in advertising expenditure therefore may turn out to be lower than the contraction in economic activity.

The M&E sector in India is projected to see a significant decline of 20 per cent in total revenues in FY21, with deep cuts in print and films, followed by television, on account of the Covid-19 disruption.

The digital consumption segments i.e. Digital (including OTT video) and online gaming are expected to be silver linings, with digital consumption across the board having seen a significant upswing owing to people working from home.

While advertising revenues on digital have been impacted from last year's hyper-charged growth, the subscription revenues have seen an upswing and could end up at an accelerated new normal once the pandemic subsides.

YOUNG GUNS LIFT KNIGHT RIDERS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Sept 30: Coming off heartbreaking losses, the Indian Premier League (IPL) game between Mumbai Indians (MI) and Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) will be a test of character for both sides as they look to regain momentum here, Thursday.

KXIP were at the receiving end of the highest successful run-chase in the tournament history as Rajasthan Royals overhauled a target of 224 with three balls to spare Sunday.

While Kieron Pollard and Ishan Kishan led a remarkable fight-back, chasing 202, before Mumbai went down to Royal Challengers Bangalore in a Super Over.

Defending champions Mumbai Indians lost their opening game but bounced back to beat Kolkata Knight Riders. However, Rohit Sharma's men failed to cross the line against RCB.

Similarly, after losing to Delhi Capitals in their opener, KXIP came back strongly to register their first points by defeating RCB. But, despite a fabulous batting display, they lost to Rajasthan.

KXIP have failed to tighten the screws when it mattered most. In their two losses, they were in a good position but could not grab the moments.

Their bowling looked out of sorts against Rajasthan as they failed to deliver a big total with Rahul Tewatia hitting pacer Sheldon Cottrell for five sixes in an over to win the match for his team.

Even Mohammed Shami (3/53),



who has been in brilliant form prior to that onslaught, was taken to the cleaners. Barring an economical spell by leggie Ravi Bishnoi (0/34), the other KXIP bowlers had an off day against Rajasthan.

Skipper KL Rahul and Mayank Agarwal have made inspiring starts this season, hitting a century and a fifty each, and getting the duo out early will be the key for Mumbai.

Against Rajasthan, the pair shared a 183-run opening stand with Agarwal scoring his maiden ton while Rahul, fresh from recording the highest score by an Indian in IPL history, hit a 54-ball 69.

Mumbai Indians are blessed with a splendid batting firepower with the likes of Rohit, Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan at the top order, followed by the big-hitting Pollard and Hardik Pandya.

A major cause of concern for them will be pace ace Jasprit Bumrah's inconsistency. The speedster has picked up only three wickets in as many games and has failed to make the kind of impact that is expected from a bowler of his calibre. Mumbai, though, will have the psychological advantage having played a game here before.



(From L): Shivam Mavi rejoices after taking a wicket; Kamlesh Nagarkoti celebrates after dismissing a Royals batsman; Shubman Gill plays a defensive drive

KKR found a fast and furious Archer (2/18) too hot to handle. Archer hit the deck hard and clocked the fastest delivery of the tournament (152.1 kph) in a fiery spell, taking two key wickets including a dangerous look-

ing Gill after the Royals opted to field. With Archer triggering a mid-innings collapse, the big-hitting Andre Russell (24, 14b, 3x6) too was dismissed cheaply and it was left to England World Cup-winning skip-

per Morgan to stay till the end. Russell's wicket meant KKR lost four wickets for 33 runs in the back-10 and with KKR playing with an extra bowler, it was left to Morgan to prop up the total.

BRIEF SCORES
KKR 174/6 (Shubman Gill 47, Eoin Morgan 34 n o; Jofra Archer 2/18) beat RR 137/9 (Tom Curran 54 n o; Kamlesh Nagarkoti 2/13, Shivam Mavi 2/20, Varun Chakravarthi 2/25) by 37 runs.

RASHID KHAN: It has been a tough one and a half year for me, first my dad expired and then my mom (in June this year). And it took a bit of time for me to come back. My mom was my biggest fan, especially in the IPL and when I was the MoM, she would always talk to me through the night

SHREYAS IYER: They (SRH) outplayed us in all three departments and credit to them for that. 162 was a par score on this wicket. It was surprising and in the second innings, it (pitch) was two-paced. When I went in, the ball wasn't coming onto the bat. We thought dew would come on but we can't give any reasons at this moment. We didn't execute the way we wanted to

RICKY PONTING: I don't think the conditions were that different. The grounds are bigger, there are bigger square boundaries here. (But) at the end of the day, we were just outplayed by SRH. We were a little bit off from our absolute best. SRH had good top-order partnerships and they rotated the strike well, and a few of them made big scores. So, that was the difference in the game

MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN (on missing IPL): If the BCB knew that the Sri Lanka series would be postponed, they would have given me the NOC (No Objection Certificate) for IPL. But whatever happens, happens for the best. I may have earned BDT (Bangladesh Taka) one crore had I played the IPL

Comments on SRH-DC match

Pacer Natarajan, who broke through shackles of poverty

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, Sept 30: Breaking through the shackles of poverty by bowling pinpoint yorkers at will, Thangarasu Natarajan has done almost everything he could for his family, except for convincing his mother to give up selling chicken on the roadside.

That she wouldn't as she feels it had helped the family survive the tough times, said Jayaprakash, Natarajan's mentor.

The birth of Natarajan as a death bowling specialist had taken place a few years before the ongoing IPL, where he is rattling the best of batsmen with his yorkers, ball after ball.

In the intervening period, he has managed to build his parents a house, give his sisters education, open an academy in his Chinnappampatti village in Tamil Nadu's Salem district and convince a teammate to not give up the game.

All this while perfecting the art of bowling yorkers and carrying much of Tamil Nadu's pace bowling hopes on his shoulders.

"I am not surprised as he has worked very hard. He has gone through a lot. He has overcome injury problems, worked his way



back into the state team and is now doing well when given an opportunity by SRH," Jayaprakash told this agency.

First picked by KXIP for Rs 3 crore in 2017, Natarajan took three years to come of his age at the big stage, having proved expensive in the six games that he had played in the past.

He was picked by SRH in 2018 but played his first game for them

only this season. In SRH's win over Delhi Capitals Tuesday, Natarajan played his part by hurling a series of yorkers in the innings 14th and 18th over. His spell of 40-21-1 included the prize wicket of Australian big-hitter Marcus Stoinis.

Son of a daily-wage labourer, Natarajan has ensured that his parents don't suffer any longer and constructed a house for them while also making sure his siblings receive proper education.

That is not all, Natarajan has opened an academy in his village in an effort to provide the necessary facilities to youngsters, which he did not have.

The 29-year old is also helping out many people who used to play with him and G Periyaswamy, who rose to prominence in last year's Tamil Nadu Premier League, is one of them.

Natarajan, who had issues over his action early in his career, also faced shoulder problems and worked his way back after struggling for some time.

Avinash Khandelwal, fielding coach of the Tamil Nadu team, said Natarajan has always been known to possess a superb yorker in the state's cricket circles.

Eves' Challenger series to be held in UAE, Nov 4-9

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 30: The much-awaited Challenger series, popularly known as women's mini IPL, will be played in the UAE November 4-9, a senior IPL official confirmed the development Wednesday.

"Yes, the dates of the tournament has been finalised. It will be played November 4-9. There will be single round robin league between the three teams Trailblazers, Velocity and Supernovas along with the final. In all four matches will be played," a senior IPL official privy to the development told this agency on conditions of anonymity.

"The final has been slotted November 9 as we didn't want to schedule on the day of the men's final. There is enormous interest for the women's event and its only commercially prudent that it is separated from men's event," the official said.

Only last week, the BCCI has announced the new women selection panel under former left-arm spinner Neetu David, which has now been entrusted to pick the three squads. It is expected that the teams will be flying to the UAE by the second week of October and will undergo a six-day mandatory quarantine period on arrival.

MESSI CALLS FOR UNITY



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, Sept 30: Lionel Messi wants to put his dispute with Barcelona behind him and called for the club and their fans to unite. In only his second interview since unsuccessfully pushing for a transfer in the offseason, Messi said Barcelona will be stronger if everyone works together to help the club succeed.

"After so many disagreements, I would like to put an end to it all,"

he told the daily Sport. "We must unite as Barcelona fans and believe that the best is yet to come."

In an interview, Messi said that the only way for the club to reach its goals is to keep "united and rowing in the same direction."

Messi told Barcelona he wanted to leave after the team's 2-8 loss to Bayern Munich in the quarterfinals of the Champions League in August, but he ended up staying to avoid a legal battle with the "club of my life."

Messi has continued to criticize

DEST ARRIVES

BARCELONA: After days of speculation it seems that Sergio Dest has finally arrived here to complete his move from Ajax. The right-back was spotted at the airport late Tuesday after flying in from Amsterdam. The 19-year-old is expected to sign a five-year deal at the Camp Nou and be officially unveiled as a Barcelona player later this week. Dest will replace Nelson Semedo in the squad, after the Portugal international completed his move to Wolves, and will rival Sergi Roberto for the right-back spot. Barcelona have beaten off competition from Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich for Dest who is expected to cost the club around 25 million euro.

club officials since deciding to stay. He has said that he did not like the direction that the club was heading.

"I'll take responsibility for my mistakes," he said. "It happened, it was with the intention of making Barcelona better and stronger."

Messi said he wanted to send a "message" to club members and fans, saying that "if at any time I upset some of them for something I did or said, they shouldn't doubt that it was always thinking about the best for the club."

Messi scored a goal in Barcelona's 4-0 win over Villarreal in its Spanish league opener Sunday. Barcelona visit Celta Vigo for its second league match Thursday.

Spurs shoot Blues down



ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 30: Tottenham staged a second-half comeback before eliminating Chelsea on penalties to reach the quarterfinals of the League Cup. The first nine penalties were all successfully converted before Chelsea's Mason Mount missed the target to ensure Tottenham advanced 5-4 in the shootout after the game ended 1-1.

Tottenham, playing their second of three games in a four-day span, was completely overwhelmed by Chelsea in a first half when Timo Werner scored his first goal for the west London club.

Sergio Reguilon gave the ball away on his Tottenham debut at left back before Werner scored in the 19th minute. But the recruit from Real Madrid made

amends in the second half when Jose Mourinho's side were transformed, showing the threat missing before the break.

Reguilon chipped the ball over for Erik Lamela, who got ahead of Emerson Palmieri to net the equaliser in the 83rd minute past goalkeeper Edouard Mendy who was making his debut in the Chelsea goal.

No extra time is played in the League Cup, so the game went straight to penalties and Spurs scored all their spot-kicks in a shootout without the usual pressure coming from the stands. Games are being played in empty stadiums still due to the pandemic.

Tottenham, who were held to a draw by Newcastle in the Premier League Sunday, return to action in their stadium Thursday to play Maccabi Haifa in the Europa League qualifying playoffs and then play at Manchester United Sunday.

One Tottenham player had to briefly duck out of the game. Eric Dier rushed off the pitch for a toilet break in the second half, with an angry Mourinho chasing after him down the tunnel.

Djokovic leaves his foe 'suffocated'



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Sept 30: Novak Djokovic's backhand clipped the net and landed wide, so he shook his head. That was it. Later, a too-soft drop shot found the white tape and bounced back on his own side, finally ceding a game in a dominant debut performance at the 2020 French Open. Djokovic simply bowed and walked to the sideline.

And when he flubbed yet another drop shot — he kept using them on the slow red clay during a 6-0, 6-3, 6-2 win over 80th-ranked Mikael Ymer — and got broken Wednesday, Djokovic pulled an extra tennis ball out of his pocket and merely gave it a gentle tap with his racket strings.

The ball landed right behind him, safely in the middle of the court. Playing his first Grand Slam match since his US Open disqualification for smacking a ball after dropping a game and accidentally striking a line judge in throat, Djokovic never really gave himself reason for histrionics or shouts of dismay or displays of anger. Sure, there was some eye-rolling

and one sarcastic kiss directed at one of the few fans on hand under the roof at Court Philippe Chatrier. But otherwise, what was there for Djokovic to be disturbed about?

"I just felt very suffocated out there. It's just corner, corner; very, very rarely miss. His position is unreal in the court," Ymer explained. "You know how the snake kills its prey?" Ymer said. "That's a little bit how I felt being out there."

And Djokovic, for his part, said that what happened in Flushing Meadows was of no concern to him, either, as he began his pursuit of a second title at Roland Garros and 18th Grand Slam trophy overall.

"I have not had any traces of New York in my mind. I'm over it. Honestly forgot about it. I'm not thinking about it," the World No.1 said after improving to 32-1 in 2020, the only blemish being that fourth-round default this month.

With Dominic Thiem, the US Open champion and two-time French Open runner-up, watching from the stands in a black winter coat, Djokovic broke Ymer nine times and ended up with a 32-12

SERENA PULLS OUT

PARIS: Saying she is 'struggling to walk,' Serena Williams ended her latest bid for a 24th Grand Slam title and withdrew from the French Open before her second-round match Wednesday because of an injured Achilles heel. Williams hurt herself during her semifinal loss at the US Open three weeks ago and said she hasn't had 'enough time to properly heal' and needs 'four to six weeks of sitting, doing nothing'. The sudden announcement came roughly an hour before the 39-year-old American was supposed to head out onto Court Philippe Chatrier to face Tsvetana Pironkova. Williams said it is 'more than likely' she will not play another tournament in 2020. This is Williams' earliest exit at any Grand Slam tournament since a second-round loss in Paris in 2014.

edge in total winners.

And when Djokovic did have a rare misstep, dropping a service game to make it 2-1 in the second set, he responded in a constructive way: improving his play. Eighteen minutes and four near-perfect games later, the set belonged to him.