



GYM JUNKIE

Actor Shilpa Shetty says she doesn't compromise on fitness regime despite her busy schedule

LEISURE P2



'SAFFRON' CONGRESS

The saffron hue, usually associated with BJP, appears to be the favourite of Congress ahead of MP bypolls

TWO STATES P7



OLI GOVT UNDER PRESSURE

Nepal's Oli govt is facing heat from several quarters to speak up against Chinese encroachments

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Of course, I know this party very well. I have been criticising it for years.

SHORT TAKES

Sarat Kar dead

Bhubaneswar: Former Speaker of Odisha Assembly Sarat Kar passed away Monday. He was 81. A noted politician, writer and columnist, Kar had been suffering from age-related diseases and was undergoing treatment at a private hospital here. He breathed his last at 3.20pm. The news of his demise came as a shock to all sections of society. Kar was born at Maheshpur village in Cuttack district September 5, 1939. After education from Allahabad University in 1964, he joined politics and worked as an aide of Biju Patnaik.

2 LeT men killed

Srinagar: Two Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) militants, including a top Pakistani commander involved in several recent attacks on security forces, were on Monday killed in an encounter in Old Barzulla area here, police said. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Old Barzulla area of the city here in the early hours of Monday morning after receiving specific inputs about the presence of militants in the area, a police official said. He said around 7:45 am, when the searches were going on, militants fired upon the forces. P8

Cash sops to mollify central employees

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 12: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday announced a payment of cash in lieu of LTC and ₹10,000 festival advance to please government employees ahead of the festival season and to stimulate consumer demand for overall economic recovery.

She also announced additional capital spending and ₹12,000 crore, 50-year interest-free loan to states to boost the economy that has been battered by the pandemic and the resulting lockdown. At a news conference, she said the government will give its employees income-tax-exempt cash vouchers in lieu of their entitled travel allowances this year.

This cash will have to be spent on buying goods that attract 12 per cent or more GST — a condition which eliminates the possibility of the cash being spent on food items. Central public sector enterprises and banks will also follow the cue and give cash in place of leave travel concession (LTC) as travelling during the pandemic is near to impossible.

Additionally, the government will as a one-time measure give ₹10,000 salary loan to all its officers and employees as festival advance. These two measures are "expected to create a consumer demand of about ₹28,000 crore", she said.

The government, which had in May announced a ₹20 lakh crore 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' stimulus, is pushing ahead with a full opening to try to boost the economy ahead of the usually high-spending festival season.

A tough lockdown imposed to stem the spread of coronavirus had resulted in the economy contracting by a record 23.9 per cent during April-June.

Together with the loan to states and additional capital spending, Sitharaman said, "very rough estimate is that potential private sector spending through LTC

FESTIVAL BONANZA

CPSUs, banks will follow the cue and give cash in place of LTC as travelling during the pandemic is near to impossible

₹25,000 crore additional budget will be provided towards capital expenditure on roads, defence infra, water supply, urban development and domestically produced capital equipment for defence

FM announces payment of cash in lieu of LTC and ₹10,000 festival advance to govt employees to stimulate consumer demand

Cash to be spent on buying goods that attract 12 pc or more GST -- a condition which will prevent cash from being spent on food items



tax benefit will be at least equal to the government employee-led demand of ₹28,000 crore and the total additional demand estimated to exceed ₹1 lakh crore".

She further said that the measures by the government to stimulate demand must not burden the common citizen with future inflation and must not put government debt on an unsustainable path. "Today's solution should not cause tomorrow's problem," she added.

Sitharaman said the central government employees get LTC in a block of 4 years (one to anywhere in India and one hometown; or two for the home town). Air or rail fare, as per scale/entitlement, is reimbursed and in addition, leave encashment of 10 days (pay plus DA) is paid. Due to COVID-19, employees are not in a position to avail LTC.

In lieu of one LTC, a cash payment will be made -- full payment on leave encashment and payment of a fare in 3 flat-rate slabs depending on the class of entitlement. Fair payment will be tax-free.

An employee, opting for this scheme, will be required to buy goods/services worth 3-times the fare and 1-time the leave encashment before March 31, 2021, she

said adding money must be spent on goods attracting GST of 12 per cent or more from a GST registered vendor and through digital mode. If central government employees opt for it, the cost will be around ₹5,675 crore. Employees of public sector banks and PSUs will also be allowed this facility and estimated cost for them will be ₹1,900 crore.

The tax concession will be allowed for state government/private sector too, for employees who currently are entitled to LTC, subject to following the guidelines of the central government scheme.

Demand infusion in the economy by the central government and central PSE/PSB employees is estimated to be ₹19,000 crore. Demand infusion by state government employees will be ₹9,000 crore. She said festival advance along with other similar advances were abolished on the recommendations of the 7th Pay Commission. It is proposed to restore the festival advance with one-time interest-free advance of ₹10,000 to be availed by March 31. The amount is supposed to be recovered in maximum 10 installments. The outgo under the head is expected to be ₹4,000 crore.

Parents sell off 9-yr-old son to fix divorce deal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 12: A couple wanting to separate has sold their nine-year-old son in Malkangiri district. The two wanted to go for a divorce as their love interests lay elsewhere and to ensure a seamless separation, they to sell off their son, Basudev Bhumia as he was a burden on both of them.

The news of sale of the boy which took place in Telgacheba village of Kianga panchayat under Mathili block of Malkangiri district, surfaced Monday. Basudev, however, escaped from the house of the person who had bought him and narrated his plight to an Anganwadi worker at Salpapadar village. He alleged he was being tortured and was being forced to do menial jobs, the Anganwadi worker said.



The Anganwadi worker, Jayanti Khara, said that the man who had bought Basudev threatened her with dire consequences for providing shelter to Basudev. Locals came out in support of Jayanti and informed officials of the Malkangiri district administration and police regarding the incident.

Mathili block development officer (BDO) Ashish Kumar Bhoi said that the matter is being looked into. "I will look into the matter personally. If the boy wants, we may shift him to his relative's house or else we will provide him education and accommodation facilities. We will also try to contact his parents and launch a detailed probe into the alleged sale," said Bhoi.

1800 266 266 1 (tollfree)

TIRTOL, BALASORE BYPOLLS

BJD DECLARES CANDIDATES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Monday declared its party candidates for the by-elections to Balasore Sadar and Tirtol Assembly seats.

Bijaya Shankar Das, the son of late BJD MLA Bishnu Charan Das, will contest from Tirtol while Swarup Kumar Das has been fielded for the Balasore Sadar seat, said a BJD statement. Swarup Das is the former councillor of Balasore Municipality.

Earlier, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had declared its candidates for the two seats. Manas Dutta, the son of late BJD MLA Madan Mohan Dutta, will contest from Balasore Sadar, while Rajkishore Behera has been picked up to contest from Tirtol. The bye-elections to Tirtol and Balasore Assembly seats are scheduled to be held November 3. The last date for filing nominations is October 16.

The by-elections were necessitated following the demise of Tirtol MLA Bishnu Charan Das and Balasore

MLA Madan Mohan Dutta. BJD vice-president Debiprasad Mishra announced the names of the two nominees as per the recommendations of party president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the party said.

Behera filed his nomination at the additional collector's office in Jagatsinghpur. He had unsuccessfully contested the 2009 and 2014 Assembly elections from Tirtol on a Congress ticket. Both the parties hope to draw sympathy votes for their candidates who are sons of deceased sitting MLAs.

The BJD had last year fielded Sabitri Agarwal in Patkura seat after the death of her husband and sitting MLA Bed Prakash Agarwal. She had defeated BJP nominee Bijay Mohapatra.

While Tirtol is considered a traditional BJD bastion, the BJP is working hard to capture the seat in the by-election. The Congress has also geared up the process of finalising its nominees for the two seats, sources said.

Govt twists norms to shield officers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: In the wake of the hue and cry triggered by the alleged scam in procurement of masks and PPE kits for Covid warriors, the state government has revised rules to shield officers.

The General Administration (GA) department has notified the Odisha Lokayukta (procedure of filing of complaint) Rules, 2020. As per new norms, the Lokayukta will have to process a complaint protecting the identity of the complainant and the public servant complained against till the conclusion of the inquiry.

However, the complainant himself can reveal his identity to any other office or authority while making a complaint to the

Lokayukta. The anti-corruption panel will have to protect the integrity of the process of inquiry or investigation.

The government has given power to Lokayukta to dispose of a complaint where the contents of the complaint are illegible, vague, ambiguous, trivial or frivolous.

If the Lokayukta is satisfied that there exists a case for an inquiry against the public servant including any person or institution, notice will be served on such public servant, person or institution calling for explanation from the noticee. The noticee will be given 45 days to reply.

The Lokayukta will now have to provide a copy of its order to all affected parties and respective departments concerned.

MERRYMAKING ON BEACH



Children playing on a vessel in the backdrop of gathering clouds at Kasimedu fishing harbour in Chennai Monday

2 Americans win Nobel economics



AGENCIES

Stockholm, Oct 12: Americans Paul R Milgrom and Robert B Wilson have won the Nobel Prize in economics for "improvements to auction theory and inventions of new auction formats."

The winners were announced Monday in Stockholm by Goran Hansson, secretary-general of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. The award caps a week of Nobel Prizes at a time when much of the world is experiencing the worst recession since World War II because of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Technically known as the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in memory of Alfred Nobel, the award was established in 1969 and is now widely considered one of the Nobel prizes.

Last year's award went to two researchers from the MIT and a third from Harvard University, for their groundbreaking research into efforts to reduce global poverty.

Few economists could have predicted last fall that the globe would come to a virtual standstill within months, as governments closed their borders, imposed lockdowns and ordered other measures to stop the spread of COVID-19, triggering a sharp dip in business activity worldwide. The prestigious award comes with a 10-million krona (USD 1.1 million) cash prize and a gold medal. The Nobel Committee awarded the prize for physiology and medicine for discovering the liver-ravaging hepatitis C virus. Tuesday's prize for physics honoured breakthroughs in understanding the mysteries of cosmic black holes.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	40593.80 ↑ 84.31
NIFTY	11931.00 ↑ 16.80
DOLLAR	73.40 ↑ ₹0.16
EURO	86.57 ↑ ₹0.13
GOLD	₹51,080 ↑ ₹263
SILVER	₹62,965 ↑ ₹81

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	33.4°C	34.0°C
TEMP MIN	25.6°C	24.0°C
Humidity	95%	85%
Rainfall	2.5mm	2mm
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

School closure may cost over \$400 bn to India: WB

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 12: The prolonged closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic in India may cause a loss of over USD 400 billion in the country's future earnings, besides substantial learning losses, according to a World Bank report.

South Asia region stands to lose USD 622 billion from the school closures in the present scenario or up to USD 880 billion in a more pessimistic scenario, it said, adding while the regional loss is largely driven by India, all countries will lose substantial shares of their GDP.

The report titled "Beaten or Broken? Informality and COVID-19 in South Asia" claims that South Asia is set to plunge into its worst-ever recession in 2020 as the devastating impacts of COVID-19 on the region's economies linger.



"Temporary school closures in all South Asian countries have had major implications for students. They have kept 391 million students out of school in primary and secondary education, further complicating efforts to resolve the learning crisis," said the report.

"While most governments have made enormous efforts to mitigate

the impact of school closures, it has been difficult to engage children through remote learning initiatives," it said. The report also noted that the pandemic may cause up to 5.5 million students to drop out from the education system and cause substantial learning losses, which will have a lifetime impact on the productivity of a genera-

tion of students.

"Most school systems closed in March, and - though there are important exceptions - countries are starting to reopen or have already opened their schools. Children have been out of school for approximately 5 months. Being out of school for that long means that children not only stop learning new things, they also forget some of what they have learned.

"The projected learning loss for the region is 0.5 years of learning-adjusted years of schooling (LAYS), falling from 6.5 LAYS to 6.0 LAYS, an enormous setback from recent advances in schooling," it said.

The 'Learning Adjusted Year of Schooling' (LAYS) concept, introduced by the World Bank, seeks to combine access and learning outcomes into a single measure. It combines quantity (years of schooling) and quality (how much kids know

at a given grade level) into a single summary measure of human capital in a society.

The report has projected that based on country data on household labor incomes, the average child in South Asia may lose USD 4,400 in lifetime earnings once having entered the labour market, equivalent to 5 percent of total earnings.

"These projections are based on what we currently know about returns to schooling, using the reduced level of learning caused by the crisis. Summing these numbers for all children in South Asia, the region stands to lose USD 622 billion from the school closures in the present scenario, or up to USD 880 billion in a more pessimistic scenario.

"While the regional loss is largely driven by India, all countries will lose substantial shares of their GDP. For reference, note that South

Asian governments spend only USD 400 billion per year in total on primary and secondary education. The total loss in economic output from the current closures is hence substantially higher than what countries currently spend on education," it said.

The novel coronavirus has infected over 3.7 crore people across the globe claiming over 10.5 lakh lives. India's COVID-19 caseload stands at 71.2 lakhs while the death toll is 1.09 lakh as Monday.

Universities and schools across the country were ordered shut March 16 to contain the spread of the novel coronavirus. On March 25, the Centre announced a nationwide lockdown. While several restrictions have been eased gradually in different phases of the 'unlock' since June 8, educational institutions continue to remain closed.

leisure



GAL GADOT, PATTY JENKINS TO RETEAM FOR 'CLEOPATRA' BIOPIC

Actor Gal Gadot will be reuniting with her *Wonder Woman* director Patty Jenkins for upcoming biopic *Cleopatra*. Gadot will play the titular role of the last ruler of Egypt's Ptolemaic Kingdom in the film to be directed by Jenkins and penned by Laeta Kalogridis.

LOST OUT ON THE PRINCESS BRIDE DUE TO HEIGHT : LIAM NEESON

Veteran action star Liam Neeson says filmmaker Rob Reiner rejected him for the role of Fezzik in 1987's fantasy adventure comedy *The Princess Bride* because he felt the actor wasn't tall enough to play the part. The movie was adapted a 1973 novel of the same name.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You may want to meet up with friends you haven't met in a long time, and the stars indicate that you will have great fun. Your enthusiasm will add a glow to whatever you do. Your sincerity in approach is what makes it special, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
You will focus on nurturing the positive aspects of your life today, says Ganesh. You might exhaust yourself mentally trying to set things straight. It would be better to brainstorm with someone close to you or approach people whom you have differences with.

GEMINI
You will let your personal likes and dislikes cloud your judgement today. Don't let that happen, or you may lose a worthy friend. You are likely to have a chance meeting with your soul mate or maybe even your ex-sweetheart.

CANCER
Today may not be a productive day for you. Though there may not be any major loss, you may feel a little lost and would like to be left alone. If you have kids, you may suffer from the empty nest syndrome with your kids not at home.

LEO
Though God is benevolent, it is not necessary that we reciprocate the magnanimity of the Almighty through our actions. So wake up today with a little prayer on your lips. Make it a point to visit a temple for some peace of mind.

VIRGO
If curiosity killed the cat, it is going to inspire you to go to exotic places and meet new people, says Ganesh. Enriching experiences enter enthusiastically today. But hold on, don't unpack, as you may set off on yet another adventure.

LIBRA
Lady Luck offers you a mixed bag today, so expect anything and everything. You may also develop a knack for pointing out others' mistakes, while turning a blind eye to your own shortcomings. Ganesh disapproves of this.

SCORPIO
You've been keeping things within for too long now, and today may just be the day when you vent it all out, says Ganesh. This overwhelming pressure may have an effect on your health. Ganesh counsels you to spend quality time with your loved ones to ease up a bit.

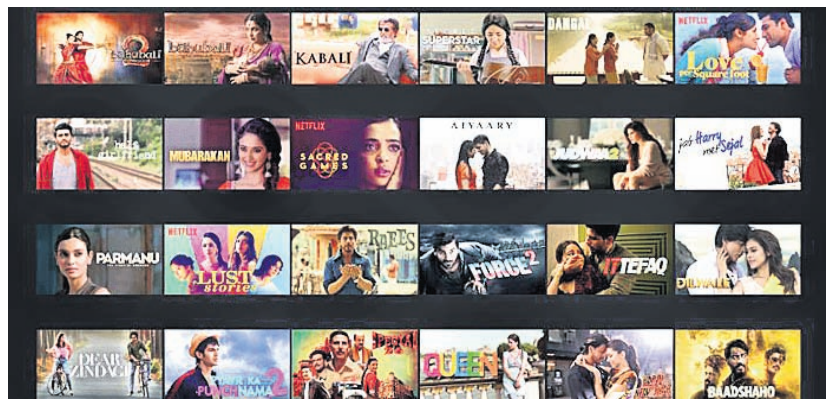
SAGITTARIUS
Skilled at multi-tasking as you are, today you may just take things one by one. Instincts will rule the roost for most of the time. And govern your actions too. But as peculiar as the day may be, you shall find yourself back to being your own assured self.

CAPRICORN
If trouble happens to knock at your door today, your guardian angel will come to your rescue, foresees Ganesh. Unlike many others who waste life running after impossible goals, you will be content with your achievements. But that does not, by any means, imply that you aren't ambitious.

AQUARIUS
You will seek spirituality as you feel thoroughly dejected by your present situation. Ganesh says that even struggling courageously with circumstances requires a spiritual endeavour.

PISCES
Your spiritual and religious streak comes to the fore. You will likely visit a place of worship to soothe your troubled soul. Meditative techniques may also be resorted to in your quest for peace and calm, says Ganesh.

B-Town files suit against select media outlets



Mumbai: A civil suit has been filed before Delhi High Court by four film industry associations and 34 leading production houses, praying that the court direct the news channel Republic TV, Arnab Goswami and Pradeep Bhandari of Republic TV, the news channel Times Now, Rahul Shivshankar and Navika Kumar of Times Now, and unknown defendants as well as social media platforms to refrain from making or publishing irresponsible, derogatory and defamatory remarks against the Hindi film industry as a whole and members of the industry.

The suit also sought to restrain the news channels from conducting media trials of film personalities and interfering with right to privacy of people associated with the film industry.

This comes in the wake of the above-mentioned channels using words and expressions for the industry such as 'dirt', 'filth', 'scum' and 'druggies'.

Almost all well-known names in the film industry are represented through the plaintiffs, including Producers Guild of India, Cine & TV Artists Association, Film and TV Producers Council, and Screenwriters Association.

Shilpa's fitness mantra from 'Valley of Gods'

Manali: Actress Shilpa Shetty is currently shooting in Manali, and she says starting her day at the break of dawn in the scenic resort mountain is an exhilarating experience. Although she has a busy schedule, she is not compromising on her fitness regime.

"MondayMotivation from Manali... Manali isn't called 'Dev Bhoomi' (the Valley of Gods) for nothing! The energy and beauty are exhilarating," she wrote on Instagram while sharing a video of her workout session.

"So inspiring that I decided to start my day at the break of dawn with the mountain pose in front of the mountains. Starting with Padahastana, Parvatasana, Marjariasana... this flow opens up the whole body; strengthens & stretches the back, hamstring, calf muscles & shoulders; improves digestion & blood circulation," said the actress, who is seen in a black sports bra and a pair of blue yoga pants in the video.

The actress is in Manali shooting for her upcoming film *Hungama 2*. She is shooting along with Paresh Rawal, Meezaan and Pranitha Subhash. The film is the second installment of Priyadarshan's 2003 hit, *Hungama*.



When Ayushmann-Tahira was caught with SRK fever



Mumbai: Ayushmann Khurrana and his wife Tahira Kashyap Khurana are huge fans of superstar Shah Rukh Khan, and an anecdote from their dating days is proof of the fact.

In Tahira's new book, *The 12 Commandments Of Being A Woman*, she has revealed that she used to 'make-out' with Ayushmann while watching SRK's movies in theatres.

SRK has now reviewed the book, and reacted on the revelation.

"I'm not sure if I should be happy or offended that Tahira and her beau's favourite make-out spot was in the cinema watching my movies (which kind of explains the strange smiles both of them have on their face wherever they meet me). This wonderful book is full of many such gems that will make you laugh as much as I did. More love to Tahira," SRK's review read.

Sharing the feedback of Shah Rukh on her Instagram account, Tahira thanked the superstar.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

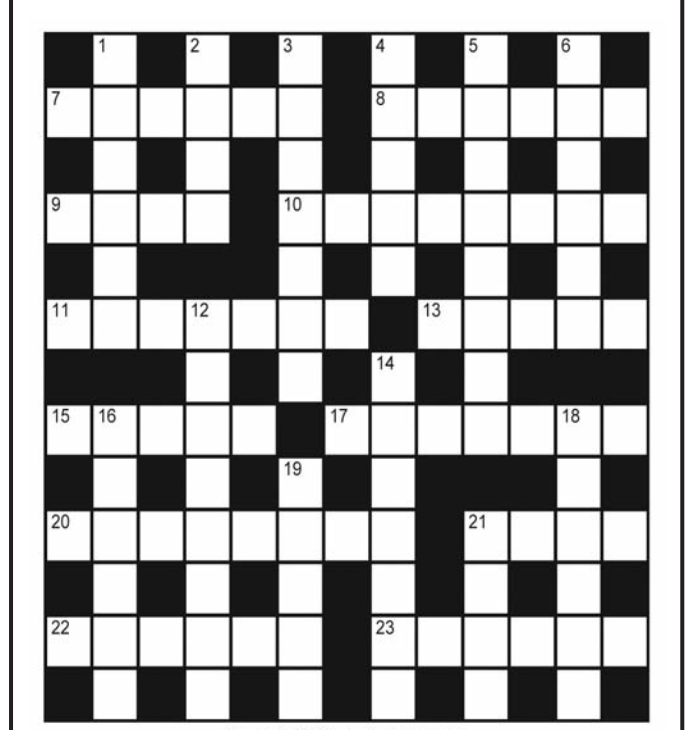


BREVITY



FUN post

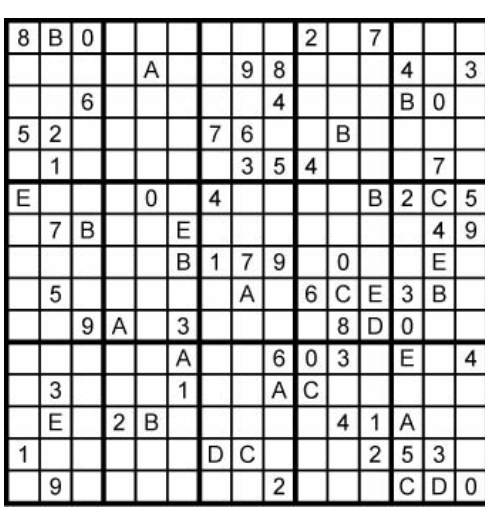
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Clunker
 - 8 Guanaco kin
 - 9 Highlands hillside
 - 10 Solicitor's fee
 - 11 Fashionable
 - 13 Female fox
 - 15 Purple shade
 - 17 Neat
 - 20 Gaborone locale
 - 21 Tacks on
 - 22 Polished
 - 23 Face fungus
- Down**
- 1 Root vegetable
 - 2 Volcano feature
 - 3 Durable wood
 - 4 Pub game
 - 5 Achieve maximum efficiency
 - 6 Machination
 - 12 Small sofa (4,4)
 - 14 Set straight
 - 16 On the train
 - 18 Soup scoops
 - 19 Bowling alley units
 - 21 "'Tis a pity"

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

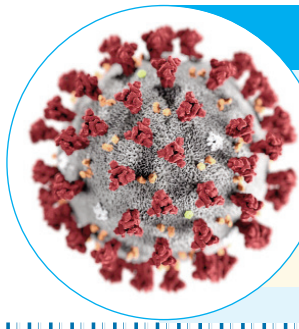


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



SHIFTING CAMP

A BJP worker from Tirtol joins the ruling BJD at the latter's party office in Bhubaneswar, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,79,02,144	2,84,63,684	10,83,410
India	71,60,805	62,03,130	1,09,667
Odisha	2,54,662	2,30,192	1,040

Srimandir may reopen after Nagarjuna Besha

PNN & AGENCIES

Puri, Oct 12: Almost all the servants of Srimandir Monday opposed the reopening of the 12th century shrine for the devotees at a virtual conference of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) chief administrator Krishan Kumar held to seek their views on the issue.

The SJTA chief administrator held the meeting after the Chief Secretary wrote letters to the temple administration and Puri Collector to file a report on the possibility of opening of the temple within 10 days after consulting all stakeholders.

Kumar had held the first round of consultations and sought the views of Pratihari, Pooja Panda, Suar-Mahasuar and Khuntia- the four important Nijogs of the temple and with temple managing committee members – through videoconferencing on the issue October 9, and the second round was held Monday.

The consultation would continue for six days. After gathering opinion of all Nijogs and stakeholders, a meeting of temple managing body and Chhatisha Nijog would be held where issue of reopening the temple gates for devotees would be discussed, said the administrator (rituals) of the temple.

The temple was closed for devotees since March 20 due to Covid-19 pandemic.

Kumar consulted Garabada, Mahajan, Puspalak and Bimanbadu Nijogs over the issue Monday. This apart, he also sought opinion of Chhatisha Nijog Nayak, Bhitarchhu Mahapatra, Tauchha Mahapatra, Pujapanda, Deula Karan and



COVID BLUES

Satyasundar Simhari, assistant secretary of Puspalak Nijog, and Raghunath Kar of Mahajan Nijog pointed out that hundreds of devotees, mostly elderly women, would through the Holy City and stay for one month to observe Kartika

This apart, Nagarjuna Besha scheduled for last day of Kartika would attract lakhs of devotees

It would be impossible on the part of administration to enforce Covid norms and infection would surge beyond imagination, they said

About 60 per cent servants got infected and their substitutes were now performing services. If they also fall sick, it would be difficult to perform daily rituals and rituals of deities

Tadhau Karan- the key servants of the temple. Almost all the servants opposed

the idea of reopening the temple for devotees.

Satyasundar Simhari, assistant secretary of Puspalak, and Raghunath Kar of Mahajan Nijog pointed out that hundreds of devotees, mostly elderly women, would through the Holy City and stay for one month to observe Kartika.

This apart, Nagarjuna Besha scheduled for last day of Kartika would attract lakhs of devotees. It would be impossible on the part of administration to enforce Covid norms and infection would surge beyond imagination, they said.

At present, hundreds of servants are affected by the virus and about a dozen fell victim to the virus and died.

About 60 per cent servants got infected and their substitutes were now performing services. If they also fall sick, it would be difficult to perform daily rituals and rituals of deities, they said.

The reopening of the temple, they said, should be considered after the Nagarjuna Besha.

OJEE begins at 53 centres

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE) -2020 began at 53 examination centres across the state, Monday. The examination conducted in three sittings on the first day was attended by at least 71 per cent students, said sources.

The first session was from 9 am to 11 am while the second session started at 12:30pm and ended at 2:30pm. Likewise, the third sitting was from 4pm to 6pm.

On first day, entrance examination was conducted for Lateral Entry Tech (Diploma) aspirants. The examination will be conducted in four sittings for admission to B Pharm course, said OJEE sources.

For MCA and MBA admissions the entrance tests would be conducted in two and three sessions respectively. Similarly, for the B Tech course the tests would be of three sessions.

For aspirants seeking admission to Integrated MBA (IMBA), M Tech, M Arch, M Plan, M Pharm, LE Tech and LE Pharm courses examinations would be conducted in a single session.

"About 79,800 candidates have registered for OJEE 2020 exams. So, the tests were conducted in multiple sittings," informed OJEE chairperson Sudeep Kumar Chand.

All necessary measures, in compliance with COVID-19 guidelines, with respect to hygiene and social distancing, were taken at the test venues. Apart from OJEE, thousands of student also appeared for the Common PG Entrance Test (CPET), conducted by Higher Education department for the first time for admission to PG courses in state universities and colleges.

Around 62,000 students appeared for the test at 68 state universities and colleges for admission to about 14,700 PG seats. The exam will continue till October 22.

PUJA AMID PANDEMIC



An artist gives finishing touches to the clay idol of goddess Durga at Ranihat Puja Mandap in Cuttack, Monday

NHRC seeks ATR on petrol pump blast

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Monday issued notice to the Secretary of Petroleum & Natural Gas Ministry and Odisha Chief Secretary seeking an action-taken report (ATR) in connection with the explosion at an IOCL petrol pump near Raj Bhawan here October 7.

The rights body sought the ATR while hearing a plea filed by human rights activist Radhakant Tripathy. The NHRC has directed the authorities to submit their responses within four weeks of the receipt of the order.

Meanwhile, Commissioner of Police Sudhanshu Sarangi has informed about stringent action



against the person found to be allowing negligence resulting in the blast that killed one person while left many injured. He said that

stringent Sections like 304 of IPC corresponding to causing death by negligence will be added in the FIR if found any negligence during the course of investigations.

Sources also revealed that none of the officials of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) were present during the refilling work on the day of mishap.

On the other hand, several videos reportedly shot a few hours before the explosion at the LPG tank have exposed lapses during the refilling work on the day of the mishap. In the videos, the workers were seen engaged in the work without any safety gears. The family members of the deceased Satya Nayak and missing Simanchala Parida have also alleged lapses during the work at the spot.

19 arrested for Puri group clash

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Oct 12: Brahmagiri police Monday arrested 19 people including seven women from Harijan Sahi locality of Dimirisena village under the police limits in Puri district. The arrests were made in connection with a group clash that took place Sunday.

Sources said at least two persons died and 10 others sustained serious injuries after a clash broke out between two families Sunday morning.

The two groups attacked one another with sharp weapons. The deceased, identified as Surendra Bhoi and Kalia Bhoi, succumbed to injuries caused by attacks with spears and axe.

Preliminary police investigation has revealed that the two families got into a spat over the laying of a pipeline. It then snowballed into a violent clash. Police have been deployed in the village to avoid any further escalation of tension between the two warring groups.

COVID NORM VIOLATION

Waiting for action against BJD leaders: Aparajita

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Two days after Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) sealed her office, Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha MP and BJD leader Aparajita Sarangi has written to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik seeking his response as to what action has been taken against BJD leaders, who had violated the Covid norms.

The BMC has sealed Aparajita's office here on charges of violation of Covid-19 guidelines during celebration of her birthday. In her letter, Sarangi said, "I appreciate the alacrity with which the BMC has taken this action. However, it is the selective nature of BMC's action which raises suspicion regarding the intent behind such enforcement."

The MP said she has come across instances of violation of Covid-19



guidelines at BJD's party office and by ministers, MLAs and BJD leaders. But, no action has been taken in these cases, she added.

Attaching supportive evidences of violations of norms, the BJD leader demanded equally strong action against the BJD leaders. "Given the flagrant violations at the BJD party office, I would also be looking forward when the BJD party office will be sealed," she said.

Heavy rain warning for eight districts

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Forecasting heavy rainfall in next 24 hours, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Monday issued yellow warning for eight districts.

The depression formed over west-central Bay of Bengal moved west-northwestwards and lay centred at about 250 km southeast of Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), 290 km east-southeast of Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh) and 330 km east-southeast of Narsapur (Andhra Pradesh), the IMD said in a bulletin.

It is very likely to intensify further into a deep depression during next 12 hours. It is very likely to move west-northwestwards and cross north Andhra Pradesh coast between Narsapur and Vishakhapatnam, close to Kakinada early Tuesday morning.



A stormy sea in Puri, Monday

OP PHOTO

Under its impact, some parts of south Odisha and two coastal districts may receive heavy rainfall. The districts are—Malkangiri, Rayagada, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Gajapati, Ganjam, Puri and Jagatsinghpur.

Due to the system, squally wind with speed 50-65 kmph (gusting to 75 kmph) would prevail over west central Bay of Bengal and adjoining northwest Bay of Bengal and along off Odisha coast till the Tuesday noon.

Gopalpur recorded 3 cm of rainfall while Kashinagar and Mahendragiri in Gajapati and Mathili in Malkangiri recorded 2 cm rain

As sea condition will be rough to very rough in these areas, the weathermen advised the fishermen not to venture into the sea along off Odisha coast till Tuesday.

Light to moderate rainfall has occurred at some places of south coastal Odisha and at one or two places over the rest districts during past 24 hours. Gopalpur recorded the highest 3 cm of rainfall while Kashinagar and Mahendragiri in Gajapati district and Mathili in Malkangiri recorded 2 cm.

CITY TO GET TWO MORE CREMATORIUMS

BMC IS FOCUSED ON ENSURING CONSTRUCTION OF THE TWO CREMATORIUMS WITHIN 45 DAYS: CHAUDHARY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Taking note of the rising number of bodies accumulating near Satya Nagar crematorium here and the difficulties faced by locals, the civic body, Monday, declared that it will come up with two more crematoriums in the Capital city.

Briefing the media, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Prem Chandra Chaudhary said that the BMC will ensure setting up of two more crematoriums – one in Patia and another in Khandagiri – to reduce the burden on the existing crematorium at Satya Nagar.

"Number of cremations at Satya Nagar crematorium has gone up abnormally due to Covid-19 deaths. Besides, the crematorium is also receiving more bodies as the Puri district administration has banned cremation of bodies coming outside the district at Swargadwar to contain the spread of the virus," Chaudhary said.

The Commissioner also mentioned that while the crematorium at Patia will be gas-based, the Khandagiri one will run on electricity. Sources at BMC said that



File photo of crematorium at Satya Nagar

the move has come soon after Ladies Forum of Satyanagar moved the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) alleging rise in number of cremations (both Covid and non-Covid cases) which was causing air pollution in the vicinity.

It is worth mentioning here that Orissa POST had earlier reported that the Capital Hospital had been

receiving more than 15 bodies everyday and most of them were found to be Covid-19 cases. The hospital has recorded a 35 per cent rise in the patient inflow as various local medicals including sub-divisional hospitals in the periphery of the city are referring patients to the Capital Hospital. Furthermore, the dysfunctional electric furnace at Satya

Nagar crematorium had made things worse. Source at BMC also said that the civic body has been cremating nearly 25 bodies every day without using electric furnace. Moreover, relatives of patients who died due to the novel coronavirus are either not reporting or coming very late due to the fear of getting infected.

However, responding to the is-

EASING BURDEN

BMC will ensure setting up of two more crematoriums – one in Patia and another in Khandagiri – to reduce the burden on the existing crematorium at Satya Nagar

Number of cremations at Satya Nagar crematorium has gone up abnormally due to Covid-19 deaths

Besides, the crematorium is also receiving more bodies as the Puri district administration has banned cremation of bodies coming outside the district at Swargadwar to contain the spread of the virus

Ladies Forum of Satyanagar moved the OHRC alleging rise in number of cremations which was causing air pollution in the vicinity

sues, Chaudhary said, "The electric furnace at Satya Nagar has been restored. We are aware of the problem but rest assured things will improve once cremation of dead bodies from other districts is allowed in Puri. In the meantime we are focusing on completing the work for the two crematoriums in the city within 45 days."

Govt ignoring faults pointed out by CAG

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Despite repeated reminders, the government has not taken action on serious faults and irregularities involving ₹964.33 crore pointed out by Comptroller and Accountant General (CAG).

In its report on general and social sector audit, the CAG said it has conducted audit of government departments to check for compliance to rules and regulations in transactions and verify the regularity in maintenance of important accounting and other records as per prescribed rules and procedures.

Important irregularities and other issues detected during inspection, which are not settled on the spot, find place in IRs. Serious irregularities are brought to the notice of the government by the office of the Accountant General.

As per the Regulations on Audit & Accounts, 2007, the officer in-charge of the audited entity shall

send the reply to an Inspection Report (IR) within four weeks of its receipt and the government should send a preliminary report to audit within six weeks of receipt of intimation. However, government officials are not responding to the audit finding which is in violation of the regulation.

The auditor found that 9,997 inspection reports comprising 47,425 paragraphs relating to 3,204 offices of 24 departments had remained outstanding up to the end of June 2018.

The CAG office has received replies only in case of 107 out of 420 inspection reports issued from April 2017 to March 2018 relating to 19 departments.

The unsettled reports contained 905 paragraphs involving serious irregularities like theft, defalcation, misappropriation of government money, loss of revenue and shortages, losses not recovered, written off amounting to ₹964.34 crore, it said.



State's nCoV deaths at 1,040

STATE'S CORONAVIRUS CASELOAD JUMPS TO 2,54,662 WITH DETECTION OF 2,423 FRESH CASES

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: State's novel coronavirus disease (Covid-19) tally surged to 2,54,662 Monday as 2,423 people tested positive for the virus, while 18 more fatalities pushed the death toll to 1,040, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

The state's quarantine centres reported 1,417 infections and the remaining cases were detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, comprising state capital Bhubaneswar, recorded 359 new cases followed by Angul (229), Sundargarh (195), Mayurbhanj 128 and Cuttack 118.

Five districts reported daily surge of over 100 positive cases.

For the third day, the state reported a decline in positive cases. While 2,854 positive cases were reported Saturday, it came down to 2,546 Sunday and to 2,423 positive cases Monday.

"Regret to inform the demise of

ODISHA & VIRUS



Khurda district, comprising state capital Bhubaneswar, recorded 359 new cases followed by Angul (229), Sundargarh (195), Mayurbhanj 128 and Cuttack 118

Cuttack registered four deaths, while the other fatalities were reported from Balasore, Khurda, Jajpur, Sundargarh, Jagatsinghpur, Mayurbhanj, Nabarangpur and Puri

Ganjam district alone has so far accounted for 222 deaths, followed by Khurda (176) and Cuttack (88)

eighteen #COVID19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals," the H&FW department said on Twitter.

Cuttack registered four deaths, while the other fatalities were reported from Balasore, Khurda, Jajpur, Sundargarh, Jagatsinghpur,

Mayurbhanj, Nabarangpur and Puri districts, the official pointed out.

Ganjam district alone has so far accounted for 222 deaths, followed by Khurda (176) and Cuttack (88).

As many as 53 other COVID-19 patients have also lost their lives, but the cause of their deaths was at-

tributed to other reasons, said the official.

Meanwhile, 2577 Covid patients recovered from the disease Monday, taking the total recoveries in Odisha to 2,30,192.

The state has thus far conducted over 37.96 lakh sample tests,

including 41,096 Sunday, the official said.

Twin cities report 345 cases, 503 recoveries

The Covid-19 cases in the Capital city rose to 24,735 with 271 fresh cases being detected in the Temple City in the past 24 hours, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) said Monday.

Of the fresh cases, 203 were local contact cases while the remaining 68 were quarantine cases, the civic body said in a tweet.

Meanwhile, Bhubaneswar also registered 313 recoveries in the last 24 hours, taking the total recoveries to 22,210.

The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC), on the other hand, said it has detected 74 Covid-19 cases in its jurisdiction in the past 24 hours. The civic body also reported 190 recoveries in its jurisdiction, Monday.

The Silver City has so far witnessed 13,542 Covid-19 cases and 59 deaths due to the virus.

FOR A CATCH



Youths prepare for a catch near Jobra barrage in Cuttack, Monday OP PHOTO

'ADVIKA' PROGRAMME TO EMPOWER TEENAGE GIRLS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: On the occasion of 'International Day of Girl Child 2020', the state Department of Women and Child Development as well as Mission Shakti launched 'Advika' - a welfare and empowerment programme for adolescent girls of Odisha.

The programme was launched in virtual mode by Minister Women and Child Development Tukuni Sahu. Advika is an initiative of the state government for adolescent girls between the age group of 10 to 19 years, which will be implemented through Anganwadi centres.

Useful features like Anganwadi pocket book, pocket book for adolescents, multimedia package, Kishori calendar and frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been contained therein.

"Advika is a renewed commitment of the state government towards adolescent girls. The programme is about building life skills among girls by exposing them to topics that are essential for them to han-



dle in everyday life. Advika will also be a platform to connect adolescent girls to various welfare programmes of the state government", informed Anu Garg Principal Secretary of the department.

Garg also announced that, a MIS is to be developed for tracking of adolescent girls. Unlike the MCP card (mother and child protection card), there will be a 'Kishori Card' which will record BMI, haemoglobin level including sessions of training undertaken. This will help to know the health, nutrition and safety status

of adolescent girls.

"The vast network of women self-help groups (SHGs) can play a vital role in creating an enabling environment for adolescent girls to survive and thrive by collective actions in challenging discrimination.

The SHGs will act as resource persons in counseling the adolescent girls, monitoring dropouts, curbing child marriages including their health, hygiene, sanitation and other self-protection related issues", Sujata Karthikeyan Commissioner Mission Shakti expressed.

Confectioner's murder: 2 contract killers held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: In a major breakthrough, Commissionerate police Monday solved the murder case of sweet shop owner by arresting the two contract killers from their hideouts in Kandhamal. Two-bike borne miscreants had hacked a confectioner to death in broad daylight at Samantarapur market under Lingaraj police limits October 4.

The Commissionerate Police also arrested the person on the charges of providing shelter the killers' duo at Tumudibandha area in Kandhamal.

The arrested contract killers have been identified as Sritik Biswal and Asutosh Mohanty. Another person identified as Abhijit Sahoo was also arrested by police on the charges of illegally harboring the duo after the murder.

The prime accused Raj kumar Behera alias Raja had earlier surrendered before the SDJM court here October 8.

The commissionerate police also arrested five persons for hatching the plot to kill Prabhakar Sahoo alias Jambu. The accused arrested by Commissionerate Police include



The murder accused with weapon



OP PHOTOS

Dilip Behera, Sasmita Behera, parents of the prime accused Raja, his grandfather Balam Behera and his grandfater Balaram Behera and Rashmi Ranjan Barik and Biswajit Barik.

The Commissioner of Police, Sudhanshu Sarangi during a presser revealed that there was a deal. Sritik attacked Jambu Sahoo, the victim confectioner, with the sword while was Asuthosh was driving the vehicle used during the incident. The accused belong to Jagatsinghpur and Sishupalgarh here, respectively.

The cops also seized a blood

stained sword and two motorcycles from their possession. The sword has been sent to the State Forensic Science Laboratory for scientific examination.

Sarangi informed that the deal to kill Jambu was settled for Rs 50,000 while the contract killers were paid Rs 10,000 in advance. The accused family was also assured to bear all legal expenses to get the killers out on bail in case of their arrest.

Jambu used to work in the sweetmeat shop of Balam Behera before the lockdown at Samantarapur

market. However, Jambu was left jobless after Behera closed his shop during lockdown. The Behera family was angry with Jambu after he opened a stall at the market.

Raja had also earlier ransacked Jambu's stall and later Balam paid Jambu Rs 10000 as compensation after the intervention of Lingaraj police.

Sarangi also hinted that several more persons will be arrested in the case too. Meanwhile, Raja will be brought on remand for further interrogation.

PROTEST AGAINST EXORBITANT FEES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Odisha Parents Federation has decided to sit on hunger strike from 15th October in front of the office of director of secondary education demanding an ordinance on Fee Regulation Committee report for unaided private schools.

Basudev Bhatt, chairman of the federation, said that in 2018, a fees regulation committee constituted by School and Mass Education department under the chairmanship of director, secondary education, to finalize the fee structure and a mechanism to regulate it. The committee submitted its recommendations to dept. However, it is pending for government approval.

The federation will also protest in front of CBSE Regional Office Tuesday to demand stoppage of manual registration by schools.

Railways to run 4 special trains soon

These trains will have stoppages at important stations including Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Brahmapur, Balasore and Bhadrak



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Ministry of Railways has decided to run another two pairs of special trains between Yesvantpur & Kamakhya and Santragachhi & Chennai Central.

Kamakhya-Yesvantpur AC weekly Super fast Special will leave from Kamakhya at 1400hrs Wednesdays w.e.f. 14th October, 2020 and will reach at Yesvantpur Fridays at 1825hrs. In the return direction, Yesvantpur-Kamakhya AC Special from Yesvantpur will leave at 0830hrs Saturdays w.e.f. 17th October, 2020 and will reach at Kamakhya at 1400hrs Mondays till further advice.

This train has One First AC, Four AC-2 Tier, 12 AC-3 Tier, Two Guard cum Generator Vans and One Pantry Car in its composition having stoppages at important stations from both the directions including at Cuttack, Bhubaneswar,

Brahmapur, Vizianagaram in ECoR jurisdiction.

Santragachhi-Chennai Central bi-weekly AC Special from Santragachhi will leave at 1905hrs every Tuesdays & Fridays w.e.f. 16th October, 2020 and will reach at Chennai Central at 2245hrs on the following days. In the return direction, 02808 Chennai Central - Santragachhi bi-weekly AC Special from Chennai Central will leave at 0805hrs every Thursdays & Sundays w.e.f. 18th October, 2020 and will arrive at Santragachhi at 1030hrs on the following days till further advice.

This train has One First AC, Three AC-2 Tier, 12 AC-3 Tier, Two Guard cum Generator Vans and One Pantry Car in its composition having stoppages at Kharagpur, Balasore, Bhadrak, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Khurda Raod, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada and Gudur between Santragachhi and Chennai Central from both the directions.

Activists demand assistance for kin of dead lady

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Several rights activists Monday filed a plea before Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) seeking its intervention into the unfortunate incident regarding the death of an ailing woman who was brought to SCB medical college and hospital at Cuttack on trolley rickshaw from their residence at Satyabadi in

Puri district. As many six activists including advocate Biswapriya Kanungo have requested the OHRC to direct the commission's investigating wing to probe into the matter and award Rs 50 lakh as compensation to the bereaved family of the lady.

Notably, the deceased, identified as Sukanti Bhoi of Dasbidyadharpur village under Satyabadi block, was suffering from liver cancer.

According to sources, Sukanti was unwell for quite some days. Her husband Kabir Bhoi had consulted several doctors at various hospitals in Puri district to cure Sukanti.

Kabir had decided to admit Sukanti to SCBMCH as per the advice of a doctor in Puri. The couple did not have money to hire a vehicle and they were also ignorant about the free ambulance service of the state government.

Police brutality against Cuttack woman decried

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 12: A woman got injured after allegedly being beaten up by local police at Adashpur Bazaar in Cuttack district Sunday evening, for not wearing face mask. Tension mounted in the area, as locals blocked the main road here by burning tyres, following the incident.

The incident took place under Olatur police limits, during face mask checking. Manas Sethi of Tandikana Kalia village along with his wife and six-year-old son were on their way to Adashpur hospital for consultation on a bike, as the young chap was severely ailing.

The couple was detained, when the woman had covered her face with a cloth instead of face mask. Heated altercations ensued as the cops on duty slapped fine on them.

The police personnel allegedly thrashed the couple and dragged them up to the PCR van.

Local residents decried the police gesture and gheroed the PCR van. Later, they blocked Pulnakhara-Niali state highway in protest. The woman has sustained injuries on her head, local residents said.

After senior police officials reached the spot and assured the agitators to take action against the police personnel who attacked the woman, locals withdrew the road blockade which continued for three hours.

TAKING TO THE STREETS



Students under the banner of AISF demonstrate at Master Canteen Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday, demanding alternative examination to tackle Covid blues OP PHOTO

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Gloves, sanitisers shortage ails Angul DHH

Prior to the Covid pandemic, the DHH required 50,000 gloves a month; now, it has increased to 70,000

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Oct 12: Angul district headquarters hospital has been struggling with shortage of gloves and sanitisers for the last one and a half months, forcing COVID-19 warriors, starting from doctors to front-line health workers to reuse their protective kits.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the DHH required 50,000 gloves a month. As of now, it has increased to 70,000. But the doctors, nurses and other staff are not getting new gloves. "We are not getting new gloves. So, we are forced to reuse the old gloves after washing and drying them after every single use. If no immediate step is taken to address the problem, it will definitely hamper the service," rued dermatologist and blood bank officer Dr Biswajit Samal. According to him, the same problem has hit the blood bank. While conducting various tests here, the staff is required to wear gloves. Due to the shortage of gloves, they are also reusing their gloves. Meanwhile, the death of two



We aren't getting new gloves. So, we are forced to reuse the old gloves after washing and drying them after every single use

DR BISWAJIT SAMAL | DERMATOLOGIST (DHH), BLOOD BANK OFFICER

COVID-19 warriors of the DHH has left the doctors and staff in fear and apprehension. The doctors and other employees have been taking

the matter up with the chief district medical officer but to no avail. They have even sought the district Collector's intervention.

Sources said a tender for supplying the required number of gloves has been finalised. Since, the price of the gloves has increased due to the pandemic the organisation that has been awarded the tender is reluctant to supply the gloves at the predetermined price.

When asked, Dr Gyana Rajan Dash of the Orthopedic depart-

The problem of gloves shortage has badly affected the health service. Higher officials and the Health department have been made aware of this problem. Despite frequent reminders to Odisha Medicine Council, nothing has been done in this regard

DR ABHAY KUMAR DAS | CDMO, ANGUL

ment said nobody is paying any heed to our problem arising due to shortage of gloves. "So, we are forced to use PPE kits while attending patients. But it is not feasible to wear PPE kits all the time."

Chief district medical officer (CDMO) Dr Abhay Kumar Das, when contacted, said, "The problem of gloves shortage has badly affected the health service. Higher officials and the health department have been made aware of this problem. Despite frequent reminders to Odisha Medicine Council, nothing has been done in this regard as yet."

LAND FOR THE POOR



State revenue minister Sudam Marndi giving away land pattas to a landless person under the state-sponsored 'Jaga Mission' scheme at a programme organised in Baripada, Monday

Missile 'Nirbhay' test fired after initial snag

THE MISSILE HAS A LENGTH OF 6 METRES, WIDTH OF 0.52 METRES, WING SPAN OF 2.7 METRES AND WEIGHS ABOUT 1,500 KG; IT CAN CARRY NUCLEAR WARHEADS OF UP TO 300 KG

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, Oct 12: The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) Monday test fired the sub-sonic cruise missile 'Nirbhay' from the launch pad no-3 at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) at Chandipur off Odisha coast at 10.33 AM.

DRDO officials said that the missile developed snag during the flight test and the details of the snag were being ascertained, a DRDO official was quoted as saying.

'Nirbhay', developed indigenously by the DRDO, is a long range sub-sonic cruise missile capable of deep penetration into the enemy territory to strike high value targets with precision. The missile has a strike range of 800 km.

The missile is powered by a solid rocket motor booster and with a turbo-fan engine, is guided by a highly advanced inertial navigation system. The missile is capable of carrying 24 kinds of war weapons

and able to target multiple places simultaneously.

The missile has a length of 6 metres, width of 0.52 metres, a wing span of 2.7 metres and weighs about 1,500 kg. It can carry nuclear warheads of up to 300 kg.

It may be noted here that 'Nirbhay' sub-sonic missiles have already been deployed in a limited number near the border with China. 'Nirbhay' missile is capable of flying at a speed of 0.7 Mach. Its flying capabilities include sea-skim-



ming and terrain-hugging which helps it evade enemy radars.

'Nirbhay' is the tenth missile test-firing by India's lead defence research organisation in the last 35 days. The DRDO's effort to fast-track development of 'Made in India' strategic nuclear and conventional missiles - it has fired a missile every four days over nearly a month - comes against the backdrop of China's refusal to step back from the Line of Actual Control.

China's PLA had first clashed with Indian soldiers on the northern bank of Ladakh's Pangong Tso lake May 5 this year, setting up a stand-off that rapidly expanded to four locations in East Ladakh.

Angul villagers take upon themselves to build a road

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bantala, Oct 12: Fed up with the 'apathy' of the administration to build a concrete road, residents of Sankrida of Kothabhuin panchayat located in Satkosia sanctuary under Angul block have decided to do the job themselves.

They have felled a large number of trees in the forest and used the logs to make the muddy village road commutable. Approximately, 350 persons live in Sankrida village. Since there is no commutable road through the village, the residents find it difficult to move about, especially during the monsoons.

The condition of the six-kilometre-long road which runs to their village from the panchayat headquarters turns inaccessible during the rainy season.

According to village committee chairman Jitendra Pradhan and secretary Prashant Sahu, Angul is a district with many industries. It also provides substantial amount of revenues to the state coffers. "Yet we don't have an all-weather road. After taking up the issue with the district administration on several occasions, the Works department had initiated process to lay a concrete road. For this the department also awarded the tender to a firm one-and-a-half years ago but it has not started construction yet," Subhash Biswal, a local said.

"We were at the end of our tether. Hence, we decided to get the road



Villagers lay the road

ON DEAF EARS
THE 6-KM-LONG ROAD, WHICH RUNS TO THE VILLAGE FROM THE PANCHAYAT HEADQUARTERS, TURNS INACCESSIBLE DURING THE RAINY SEASON
THE WORKS DEPT HAD INITIATED PROCESS TO LAY A CONCRETE ROAD
THE DEPT ALSO AWARDED THE TENDER TO A FIRM ONE-AND-A-HALF YEARS AGO
NO CONSTRUCTION HAS STARTED YET

commutable and since last Friday we have been working on it," he added.

Bhaktabandhu Biswal, a local, said, "Most of us grow vegetables in our backyards. We face a lot of trouble in taking them to nearby markets. Carrying baskets of vegetables on our heads, we have to wade through knee-deep mud. There have been many instances when people have suffered injuries after falling down due to the slip-

pery conditions."

When asked, Angul Works department, assistant engineer Binay Kumar Padhi said, "Sankrida village needs a concrete road." He promised stringent action against the firm which has been given the responsibility of building the road. "A fresh tender will be floated soon and in this regard a letter has already been written to the executive engineer for his approval," Padhi informed.

Oct 'synonymous' with natural calamities for these Ganjam villagers

The depression over the west-central Bay of Bengal is very likely to intensify into a deep depression during the next 12 hours, Met said Monday



POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Oct 12: Every October, people of Ganjam district experience natural calamities. This October is no exception either.

The depression over the west-central Bay of Bengal is very likely to intensify into a deep depression during the next 12 hours. According to weathermen, it will cross the north Andhra Pradesh coast close to Kakinada during morning hours October 13.

Under its impact, south and coastal districts are likely to experience heavy to very heavy rainfall accompanied with gale for three to four days.

Keeping this in view, the district administration has issued a directive, asking people to take shelter in safe places and not to let their domestic animals out. This apart, people living in coastal villages and fishermen have been asked not to venture into the sea.

Even since the residents of

We are worried about our standing paddy crops. If the predicted squally wind condition prevails, our crops will definitely get damaged

BRUNDBAN SAHU | FARMER OF PUINTOLA

Podampeta, New Podampeta, Gokharkuda, Kantiagarh and Purunabandh areas under Ganjam block have received the alert message from the block administration; they have constantly been in fear.

In the event of gale reaching the speed of 65kmph, the farmers in the locality will be the worst sufferers. "We are worried about our standing paddy crops. If the predicted squally wind condition prevails, our crops will definitely get damaged," said Brundaban Sahu, a farmer of Puintola block.

Assuaging the fear, the block administration has come up with a statement that it is well prepared to face the cyclone like situation.

No one to look after Parabhadi stupa

THE HISTORICAL STUPA BUILT IN THIRD CENTURY AD IS THE OLDEST OF THE ANCIENT BUDDHIST STUPAS IN THE DIAMOND TRIANGLE IN JAJPUR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandikhole, Oct 12: An ancient Buddhist stupa 'Parabhadi' here in Jajpur district is on the verge of extinction due to lack of conservation and proper upkeep, a report said.

The historical stupa built in third century AD is the oldest of the ancient Buddhist stupas in the Diamond Triangle in the district. The Archeological Survey of India (ASI) has not spent a single pie on its maintenance since its discovery for which it is in a state of complete neglect and slowly inching towards extinction, the report added. This is the reason why nothing is known what lies inside the Parabhadi stupa. The mystery that lies underneath could be unraveled if the ASI takes up its excavation works, historians said.

Diamond Triangle is a collection of three Buddhist sites of Ratnagiri, Udaygiri and Lalitgiri. The sites belong to the Vajrayan sect of Buddhism, which is popularly known as the Diamond Vehicle, and hence the name Diamond Triangle.

Reports said Odisha has carved a niche for itself in national and international map for presence of several ancient Buddhist shrines in the state. This is the reason for which many national and international Buddhist conferences and seminars have been held in the state. These conferences provide a platform to knowledge seekers and scholars to visit these shrines and explore the history in its totality. Sources said the Parabhadi



The sites belong to the Vajrayan sect of Buddhism, which is popularly known as the Diamond Vehicle, and hence the name Diamond Triangle

Buddhist stupa lies on the Bandaeswar hilltop under Barchana block in Jajpur district. The ASI took the Buddhist stupa in its custody in 1994. However, it has not conducted any excavation of the site or worked for its conservation.

The Parabhadi Buddhist stupa was discovered at the same time when historians discovered the world famous Lalitgiri shrine and undertook its excavation in between 1975 and 1982. The ASI had then claimed the necessity for excavation and conservation of Parabhadi Buddhist stupa. Later, the conservation and ex-

cavation of Parabhadi Buddhist stupa was forgotten.

Historian and Buddhist researcher Harish Chandra Prusty said the Parabhadi stupa came to knowledge when Chinese traveler Huiyen Tsang visited Odisha during his India tour. He visited the site and conducted a review of the ancient stupa. The Parabhadi stupa finds mention in the 'Si-yu-ki' book written by the Chinese traveler.

The stupa was 40-ft in height when the ASI took the site in its possession. However, due to constant erosion and for other reasons the height of the stupa has been reduced to 15-ft and is on the verge of extinction due to lack of maintenance.

Historian Prusty said that the Parabhadi stupa is similar to the Buddhist stupas at Sarnath, Sanchi, Nagarjun Kenda and Barbodar in Java. The site might be initially known as Parabodhi but later became Parabhadi as Siddharth Gautam got his enlightenment under Bodhi druma at Bodhgaya and came to be known as Buddha. The researchers call the site as Parabodhi. Two of the main disciples of Gautam Buddha

known as Tapsu and Bhalluka took the leading role in construction of the Parabhadi stupa. The Buddhist stupa on Landa hill in Lalitgiri and the Parabhadi stupa are of the same time period, he said.

King Ashoka while working towards spread of Buddhism in the world made efforts to conserve the precious articles of Lord Buddha and stupas of the time. The bone relic of Lord Buddha was discovered from the stupa at Lalitgiri. The relics were stored in three small containers wood, silver and gold. The three containers have been conserved in a bullet proof museum built at Lalitgiri last year.

When contacted, Manas Ranjan Sahu, assistant superintendent of ASI said maintenance of the site has not been taken up due to lack of funds. They will certainly take up excavation and conservation of the site if any budgetary allocation is made in this regard.

Cultural outfit gets new VP

Bhawanipatna: Nila Madhav Singhdeo has been appointed as the state senior vice president (Odisha) of Karni Sena, sources said Monday. A leader from Madanpur Rampur in Kalahandi district, Singhdeo has won accolades for his organisational skills and leadership quality. While expressing contentment, Singhdeo thanked the organisation's leaders for the appointment.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. WAT-RSO-TENDER-12-2020
Name of the work with its location : HANDLING OF LINE BOXES OF LOCO PILOTS AND GUARDS AT RAYAGADA STATION ROUND THE CLOCK FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.
Value of Tender : ₹ 13,86,270/- EMD : ₹ 27,700/-, Cost of Tender form : ₹ 2,360/-, Completion period of the work : Two Years.
Tender closing date & time : at 1500 hrs. of 28.10.2020.
Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.
Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.ireps.gov.in
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (OP), PR-293/L/20-21, Visakhapatnam

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No. O-454
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RURAL WORKS DIVISION, NABARANGPUR
e-mail: eerwngpp@rediffmail.com, Phone No.: 222023
e-Procurement Notice Date: 07.10.2020
Letter No. 3154
Name of the Work : Road Works
Total No. of Works : 02 (Two) Nos.
Approx. Estimated Cost : Rs. 74.25 lakhs to Rs. 83.53 lakhs
Class of Contractor : "A", "B" Class of Contractor
Period of Completion : 03 (Three) Calendar Months
Procurement Officer : Bid Identification No. : No. of Works : Availability of tender online for bidding : Date & time of opening of Tender :
1 : 2 : 3 : 4 : 5 : 6
Rural Works Division-I, Nabarangpur : EERWNGPP-Online-06/2020-21 : 02 (Two) Nos. : 17.10.2020 at 10.00 A.M. : 04.11.2020 upto 03.00 P.M. : 05.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
For details can be seen from the Government website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Nabarangpur OIPR-25092/11/0006/2021

ODISHA HYDRO POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(A Gold Rated State PSU)
O/o. SR. GENERAL MANAGER, RENGALI HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT
P.O.: RENGALI DAM SITE, PIN- 759105, DISTRICT- ANGUL (ODISHA)
TEL NO.: 06760-277214, FAX NO.: 06760-277324
No.: OHPC/RHEP/TW/PUR-III-1135/5514 Date: 09.10.2020
No. CAD-572
e-Procurement Notice
TENDER CALL NOTICE No. 13/2020-21
Sl. No. Name of the Work Estimated Cost Period of Completion Class of Contractors
1 Renovation of Common and Ladies Toilets of Administrative Building of RHEP, Rengali Rs.6,11,120/- Two (02) Months "D" & "C"
Other details as follows:
a) Procurement Officer: C&P Head, RHEP, Rengali at Rengali Dam Site, Angul, Odisha.
b) Availability of tender online for bidding: From Dt.12.10.2020 at 10.00 hrs. to Dt.27.10.2020 upto 15.00 hrs.
c) Last date & time of seeking of tender clarification: Dt.19.10.2020 upto 17.00 hrs.
d) Last date and time for receipt of Bids in the portal: Dt.27.10.2020, Time: 16.00 hrs.
e) Date of opening: Dt.28.10.2020 at 16.30 hrs.
Further details can be seen from the Govt. website www.https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation if any shall only be published in the above website.
Sd./- C & P Head, RHEP, Rengali OIPR-04005/11/0021/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, SUNDARGARH
Phone No. (06622)-272247; E-mail: eemisundargarh@yahoo.co.in
e-Procurement Notice
Bid Reference No. EE MID SNG 01/2020-21
eemisundargarh@yahoo.co.in
No.1680// MID // date.07.10.2020
No. A-240:- Bid documents consisting of Work, Estimated cost, Cost of tender paper, EMD, time of completion, Class of Contractor, the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
** Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>
1 Name of the works :- Civil construction works.
2 No of Works :- 1 (One) No.
3 Estimated cost :- Approximately Rs.89.26 lakh.
4 Period of completion :- 09 (Nine) Calendar months
5 Date and Time of availability of bid documents in the portal :- From dt.15.10.2020 up to 5.30 PM to dt.29.10.2020 up to 5.30 PM.
6 Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal :- Dt.29.10.2020 up to 5.30 PM
7 Date of opening of Bid:- Dt.02.11.2020 at 11.00 AM onwards
8 Name and address of the OIT:- Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Sundargarh.
Sd./- 07.10.2020, Executive Engineer, M.I. Division, Sundargarh OIPR-32124/11/0001/2021

To be interested in what one does, one should try to do it better and better.
THE MOTHER



China in mission mode

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh today stated the obvious when he said there is a Pakistan angle to the aggressive Chinese movements in Ladakh region and along the LAC in recent months. He said the creation of a dispute in Ladakh was part of a 'mission', first by Pakistan and then by China. This was only to be expected, given the kind of association that China and Pakistan had over time, which the present day Indian establishment watched with considerable disinterest or surprising casualness. Trouble was in the making. Pakistani forces lay low for quite some time of late, but have resorted to unprovoked firing along the western line a few days ago, at the precise time when Indian attention remained concentrated on eastern Ladakh region. Quite likely, India could be faced with a two-front war, requiring us to divide attention between the northern and western borders. To add to India's predicament, Nepal has strayed away from its long-cherished ties with the southern neighbour and edged closer to China. It could also be that Nepal too could be drawn in by China to take on India. Nepal has already raised problems along its border with India. It came up with ticklish issues like a demand for return of nearly ₹1,000 crore of banned high-denomination Indian currency - done back in 2016. This will have serious implications. The trouble between India and Nepal started shortly after the turn of the century when King Birendra was assassinated in what was touted as a family fight in the palace. Thereafter, with democracy eventually gaining ground, Nepal's drift away from India started. The Himalayan nation adopting a new Constitution, making it a secular nation instead of the old status of being a Hindu nation, too strained bilateral ties as the Modi government did not take kindly to it. China is closer to Myanmar and is building economic bridges with Bangladesh too. A critical security situation is developing around India. China has lasting ties with Sri Lanka; and it stepped into Maldives too. Despite all these, point to note is that India is not giving adequate attention to either change the environment better for itself or equip itself with better military power. Fact that China is now having a five-time stronger military - as against an equal footing 20 years ago - makes the scenario more complex. China is bound to take on India in aggressive manners, and Pakistan is simply biding its time. Rajnath's utterances, therefore, seem childish as even a common Indian citizen is able to grasp the utter failure in diplomacy as demonstrated by the Modi government in the past seven years. Bravado at home and unacceptability abroad has become the hallmark of the present administration.



Ajit Ranade

THE NEED NOW IS FOR A COMPREHENSIVE LOAN RESTRUCTURING PACKAGE THROUGH FISCAL RESOURCES, RATHER THAN EXTENDING WAIVERS AND VIITIATING CREDIT CULTURE. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE SUPREME COURT RECOGNISES THIS LARGER DANGER

Farm reforms face odds

The intervention of the Supreme Court on Monday to re-examine the recently passed farm Bills was only to be expected. Farmers in various states are upset with the provisions of the new Central legislation and are protesting even in the face of the health risks involved in the Covid-19 pandemic times. The court rightly noted that if the matter was not taken up now, the reforms could face problems later when its implementation gains pace. The Centre is also realising that talks are the way forward. It has called for a meeting with protesting farmers, and the Punjab government too has followed suit. The Bhartiya Kisan Union has rejected the offer of talks from the Modi government and is insisting on repeal of the law. At a time when the nation is caught in a serious economic mess, it is important to cool tempers, rather than having further disruption of public peace and order. A grave error on the part of the government was to avoid discussions with stakeholders and the Opposition before such a reform was pushed through in great speed, and at the most-inopportune time. The feeling that Modi's will is India's will is akin to the "Indira is India, India is Indira" days of Dev Kant Barooah and cronies. Such a concept must never be allowed to fester in the minds of elected leaders in any democracy. These mistaken perceptions of individuals prove very expensive and damaging for societies and nations. Better sense never prevails when one occupies a throne of great power and crowding cronies blind and deafen common sense.

WISDOM CORNER

- Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago. **WARREN BUFFETT**
- A truth that's told with bad intent beats all the lies you can invent. **WILLIAM BLAKE**
- A mind all logic is like a knife all blade. It makes the hand bleed that uses it. **RABINDRANATH TAGORE**

WORDSWORTH

Tussie-mussie

A thought was, "what in the name of everything wonderful is a 'tussiemussie'?" A visit to the Web site of the Royal Horticultural Society sorted that out: "Tussie-mussies are posies assembled from a carefully chosen selection of flowers and herbs, usually to convey a specific message." However, some dictionaries said, "Origin unknown". The Oxford English Dictionary is a little more forthcoming. It says that it may be a rhyming reduplicated form of tussy. This may in turn have come from an unrecorded word tus or tusse in the sense of a nosegay or garland of flowers. So its history is indeed poorly understood and "origin unknown" is a pretty good summary. The word has gone through lots of different forms, suggesting that its early users were as uncertain about its antecedents as we are today. Its first recorded appearance was in about 1440, when it was written as tusmose. In later centuries the spelling settled down to tuzzy-muzzy. By the end of the 17th Century it seems to have disappeared from the standard language. The reason for this may lie in an entry in Captain Francis Grose's Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue, dated 1811, which says "TUZZY-MUZZY. The monosyllable." Jonathon Green's Cassell's Dictionary of Slang says it was then a slang term for the vagina, so that "the monosyllable" was presumably cunt. William Dugdale was a famous publisher of porn in London (the Dictionary of National Biography says of him, "During the 1840s he made his name as the largest publisher of obscene titles in England, a position unchallenged for over twenty years.") One of his titles was a song book entitled The Tuzzymuzzy Songster. The term was reintroduced around the 1940s in its original sense of a nosegay by someone who was ignorant of its by then long-defunct slang associations. In the process the spelling was changed to tussie-mussie. The first modern case I can find is in the rules for a flower show in Dixon, Illinois, in September 1947. Altogether, a very interesting word.

LOL

INTERVIEW

Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources Officer asks a young engineer fresh out of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "And what starting salary are you looking for?" The engineer replies, "In the region of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package." The interviewer inquires, "Well, what would you say to a



package of five weeks vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years, say, a red Corvette?" The engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?" The interviewer replies, "Yeah, but you started it."

SPECTRUM HEALTH

Distorted perceptions over mental health



Harish Barthwal

CONSISTENTLY RISING TREND OF MENTAL DISORDERS IN INDIA WARRANTS EVOLVING NEW MECHANISMS TO IMPROVE THE MENTAL HEALTH OF INDIVIDUALS

The spongy 1.4kg mass of fatty tissue inside the cerebral cortex called 'brain' is the most intriguing yet least understood organ of human body for two reasons. One is its intricate, highly complex structure; and the other is its inalienable association with the man's spiritual aspect that is beyond the domain of medical and other sciences. Depending on genetic traits, conditioning, will-power and gravitas, an individual brain assumes a distinct permutation and mindset that usually lasts a life time. This makes it imperative to take care of the youngones in formative years. There are about 12 billion neurons in an average human brain, and each of them is capable of establishing a rapport with 25,000 other neurons, a capacity more than that of the world's largest mainframe computer! "Whatever the mind of man can conceive and believe, it can achieve," said Napoleon Hill. When a lady conceives, a life comes into being. Recall the person, who feels checkmated in the face of perceived hardships and may even consider suicide while another person in similar circumstances comes up with a working solution. Life is ten percent what happens to us

and 90 percent how we respond to it. The issue is how we perceive it. A major precept of neuro-linguistic programming, amalgamated into most institutional programmes the world over, is that mind and body are part of the one and the same system. This is a reiteration of what Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of healing, has stated and stressed - that one cannot perform well with the other being sick. The foundation of one's thought pattern, belief system and values is known to be laid the moment one is born. For ladies on the family way, resort to acts of virtuosity, congenial ambience and engagement in inspirational books and music are traditionally advised for having healthy children. Skin-to-skin contact with newborn and breastfeed are known to help the physical, mental and emotional health of child. Rather than promoting feelings of appreciation, gratitude, espousing native culture and local materials and philanthropy, an accent on putting one's own interests atop will negatively impact a healthy mental growth. The rising proportion of mental illnesses, currently among a fourth of the population, warrants evolving a system

in which the new generation is provided healthy environs. About a billion people living with mental disorders of various descriptions around the world are not only discriminated against, stigmatised and marginalised, but also put to emotional and physical abuse and distress. The mentally sick are also more susceptible to addictions. Lack of qualified mental health professionals and inadequate diagnostic and treatment facilities adds to their woes. They are often deprived of their human rights. Mental disorders are among the leading causes of ill-health and disability worldwide. Suicide is the worst manifestation of mental disorder. The figure of over 8 lakh people committing suicide is more than of people dying by war and homicide combined. Sadly, suicide is the second leading cause of death among 15 to 29-year-olds. Initiated by the World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH), World Mental Health Day on October 10 annually seeks to raise public awareness about mental health issues. The theme for 2020 is Mental Health for All - Greater Investment, Greater Access. Everyone, Everywhere. Access to treatment is a problem; in some countries, hardly 10 percent of the

needy receive it. Addressing the mental health disorders has emerged as a formidable public health challenge of our era. Mental illness is rising at epidemic rates. In India, given just 9,000 psychiatrists for the 20 million Indians with mental illness, the nation is not equipped to handle mental health issues on such a large scale. Fear psychosis, loss of livelihood, abrupt changes in lifestyle including work conditions as inevitable offshoot of Covid-19 have contributed to the burden of mental diseases. "The novel coronavirus is not only attacking our physical health, it is also increasing psychological suffering; grief at the loss of loved ones, shock at the loss of jobs, isolation and restrictions on movement, difficult family dynamics, uncertainty and fear for the future," warned UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. Yet, with lessons learnt, new lifestyle modalities adopted as a working arrangement could be set with a sensible and pragmatic approach to life. We must understand that problems in realistic life are not that bad as they are made out to be. The writer is a Delhi-based journalist.

FOCUS BANKING/LOANS

RESTRUCTURE, NO WAIVER



At a time of recession, when the banking system may have additional bad loans amounting to ₹4 lakh crore by next March, it is critically important to shield banking from the ill effects of waivers and moratorium extensions. As the RBI itself submitted to the court in its affidavit, the problem now calls for a comprehensive loan restructuring package through fiscal resources, rather than extending waivers and vitiating credit culture

Why do people repay a loan? Firstly, because they are bound by a loan contract to repay. If they break the contract, there could be a remedy in the form of a punishment or penalty. Secondly, if the loan is against a pledged collateral, then non-repayment can result in the loss of that collateral. Often the value of the collateral is more than the value of the loan. Hence, it is better to repay rather than suffer a bigger loss. Thirdly, repayment creates good credit history. That becomes part of a public record, which is useful for getting future loans. Indeed, in the case of micro-finance loans, which have zero collateral, repayment helps the borrower remain in good standing in the eyes of the lender. Thus, repayment ensures the availability of repeat loans. In informal markets such as vegetable vending, a loan could be taken every day, used in purchasing produce from wholesale markets, selling it as retail vending, and repaying the loan with interest at the end of the day. A fourth reason for repayment, especially valid in informal markets, could be due to sheer coercive power, or threat of physical harm. Lastly, repayment of a loan could also be due to the moralistic value, that non-repayment is a sin. Not repaying your debts is tantamount to a sin. As we can see, there are many angles to loan repayment, and the sum total of all this is what is called 'credit discipline'. The economy works if credit discipline is sound and ingrained in both borrowers and lenders. It is this that has to be nurtured and reinforced to ensure that credit becomes available to all who need it. It is credit creation which leads to the expansion of economic activity and growth. An individual may take a loan for education or buying a house. It represents borrowing from his or her future earnings, to build an asset (education degree or a house) for the present. Similarly, a company may borrow to fund working capital needs, or capacity expansion and loan repayment occurs from future earnings. Underlying all this is the found-

ation of a strong credit discipline. The banking system critically depends on a credit culture, so that despite legitimate defaults on loans (due to business downturns), it can serve the needs of a growing economy. Hence when repayment is halted by official sanction, it becomes a very critical decision, with long-term and deep consequences. Thus, when a political decision is taken to give loan waivers to farmers, it has consequences on credit culture. Firstly, it is unfair on those farmers who toiled hard to repay and avoid default. Secondly, with repeated waivers, it encourages behaviour of ignoring repayment discipline. Thirdly, it makes bankers and lenders circumspect and avoids lending altogether. It could lead to credit contraction rather than expansion. But, in times of acute distress, there is no alternative to loan waivers as an emergency medicine. Even in such cases, a moratorium loan restructuring is preferable, rather than an outright waiver. The former leaves open the possibility of repayment, by adjusting the time-table. If a

waiver which is less preferable, or a moratorium that is better for credit culture, is decided by the government, then the lender needs to be compensated from the fiscal resources, i.e., by taxpayers. Will the taxpayer agree that this is in the best interest of all? What if the lender has been hurt by wilful defaulters? What if there has been fraudulent lending based on collusion and corruption? Is it fair to impose the burden of the consequent bad loans on taxpayers? Are public sector banks and cooperative banks more prone to defaults and fraudulent lending? How do we improve governance and credit management in public sector and cooperative banks? These are questions beyond the scope of the present column. The question of protecting and nurturing credit culture has become relevant due to ongoing public interest litigation in the Supreme Court. The RBI as regulator of all banks allowed a six-month moratorium on repayment of all term loans, including home loans, credit card outstanding dues and other retail loans. This was a temporary measure to help bor-

rowers tide over problems of cash flows caused by the sudden stoppage of economic activity after the severe lockdown. However, during the moratorium, interest and repayment dues were accumulating. The total amount of loans affected is more than ₹38 lakh crore, so that the accrued interest during six months itself is about ₹2 lakh crore. This accrued interest whose payment has been postponed itself is like a fresh loan, whose interest burden in turn is about ₹5,000 crore. The petitioners in the Supreme Court are seeking a waiver of interest on interest. It amounts to denting credit culture. Paying interest is equivalent to paying the time value of money. It is the interest earnings of banks that allows them to repay their depositors with interest on savings and fixed deposits. If those interest earnings are denied, the banks will suffer, and will have to ask for a fresh equity infusion from their owners, shareholders. Since the government is the principal shareholder of public sector banks, it amounts to asking taxpayers for help. So, we are back to square one. Rather than imposing an unfair burden on banks, it is better that the government take it squarely on their chin, and give relief directly from the exchequer, i.e., the taxpayer funds. Otherwise, waiving of interest will cause harm to the credit discipline and to a culture built painstakingly over the years. At a time of recession, when the banking system may have additional bad loans amounting to ₹4 lakh crore by next March, it is critically important to shield banking from the ill effects of waivers and moratorium extensions. As the RBI itself submitted to the court in its affidavit, the problem now calls for a comprehensive loan restructuring package through fiscal resources, rather than extending waivers and vitiating credit culture. It is imperative that the court recognises this larger danger. The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution. THE BILLION PRESS

Leaders during pandemic

Sir, In the last seven months, several guidelines have been issued for Covid-19. Both state and Central governments are spreading awareness. We are focusing on norms like social distancing and use of masks. As per guidelines, people are obeying the rules of pandemic at marriage ceremonies and funerals too. Sadly, many leaders are not following the Covid-19 guidelines. They are running from one funeral to the other and from one marriage venue to another. Some ministers are gathering their followers for party work or for garlanding on their birthday. When our lawmakers are not observing rules, why would the public, and why fine them? **Santosh Kumar Mohanty, CUTTACK**

Mask as vaccine

Sir, The violation of Covid-19 guidelines is on the rise; and many violations are openly done by people's representatives in Odisha. They are itching to come out of their homes, be with the people, and move around. The Covid-19 pandemic is spreading without any respite across the country, and the scenario is pretty bad in Odisha as well. Leading pharmaceutical companies are moving at breakneck speed for the elusive vaccine which might be ready by early 2021. In India, many pharma firms are successfully pursuing trials to make a breakthrough at the earliest. Even if the vaccine is ready by March-April 2021, it will take a couple of months for it to be available for the ordinary people. In this critical situation, it is frightening to see thousands of people belonging to various parties joining street protests with little care for norms like social distancing and wearing of mask etc. This may please be avoided. Mask is our vaccine till mid-2021. **K Ravi, BHUBANESWAR**

Route of Rajdhani

Sir, There are three pairs of trains between Odisha and Delhi; and the Rajdhani Express is the best. This is routed via Tatanagar. Earlier, the Rajdhani route was twice a week via Adra, which was taking two hours less. Even the fare was lesser; it being based on the distance covered. The Railways are requested to run Rajdhani two to three days via the shorter route, i.e., via Adra, as this will be more beneficial to those who travel from here to Delhi or from Delhi to Odisha. **Gopal Prasad Mittal, BHUBANESWAR**

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

'Babas', 'gurus' bring saffron hue to MP Cong

THE COLOUR USUALLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE BJP, APPEARS TO BE THE FAVOURITE OF THE MADHYA PRADESH CONGRESS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Oct 12: The by-polls in Madhya Pradesh this time seem to be different from all the previous elections. The saffron hue, which is usually associated with the BJP, appears to be the favourite of the Congress now. The party has got several 'babas', 'sadhus' and 'gurus' to campaign for it.

Not only this, the Congress has made saffron clad Sadhvi Ram Siya Bharti its candidate from the Bada Malhera Assembly constituency.

The by-polls are going to be held in 28 Assembly seats in the state. In these elections, both political parties are putting in all their resources, but the Congress seems to be ahead of the BJP in getting sadhus and gurus to campaign for it.

It is generally believed that the



BJP uses saints and sadhus in elections, but the opposite is being witnessed in Madhya Pradesh. Although the BJP has two big saffron leaders -- Uma Bharti and Pragna Thakur in the state -- but their activism seems to be low key

during these elections.

While the BJP is avoiding bringing sadhus to the poll forefront, the Congress is going full steam ahead with saffron. The 'Computer Baba' group is taking out a 'Save Democracy Yatra' for the Congress.

The group has given a call to support Congress candidates in the state. Similarly, 'Mirchi Baba' is campaigning for the Congress. Sadhana Bharti, who is the national spokesperson of the Congress, has also hit the campaign trail.

Congress spokesperson Ajay Yadav said that while the BJP has always tried to take advantage of religion in politics, the Congress has never used religion. But now the Congress is expressing its religious feelings openly. State Congress chief Kamal Nath built a grand statue of Lord Hanuman in Chhindwara, while programmes were held at his residence and the party office before the foundation stone of the Ram temple was laid in Ayodhya.

Political analysts believe that the Congress is fighting on all fronts and that is why it is trying to use this strategy, which has given the BJP big numbers so far.

For the Congress, a team of holy men is campaigning hard. It remains to be seen how much benefit this saffron strategy will give to the Congress in the by-polls.

Turban row: Minority panel seeks report from Mamata govt



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 12: If a non-BJP Chief Minister such as Amarinder Singh and former cricketer such as Harbhajan Singh raising the matter wasn't embarrassing enough for the Trinamool government in West Bengal, the National Commission for Minorities (NCM) has stepped in over the 'turban row'.

The minority body has shot off a letter to Bengal's Chief Secretary demanding a report on the alleged incident of turban pulling of a Sikh security official by the West Bengal police, within the next 15 days.

The NCM sprung into action after BJP's Delhi spokesperson Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga complained to the body.

"The undersigned is directed to request you to send a report in this matter within 15 days, so that the matter could be placed before the commission for its consideration," read the letter.

A copy of the said letter is also marked to the Director General of Police of the West Bengal Police for 'similar action'.

The matter pertains to a video clip showing Balwinder Singh, a security official attached to a BJP leader, being shoved. His turban was allegedly pulled off by the police in Kolkata during a protest march October 8 to the state Secretariat Nabanna by the BJP's youth wing. The video went viral on social media. However, the Bengal government has denied the charges.

The Mamata Banerjee government alleged that the incident was being given a 'communal colour'.

The BJP, in turn, has accused the Bengal police of hurting religious sentiments.

Earlier today, DSGMC President Manjinder Singh Sirsa told IANS that he along with two other DSGMC members will visit the Howrah police station and lodge a formal complaint against the policemen.

The three-member DSGMC delegation, which visited Kolkata on Sunday in the wake of 'manhandling' and arrest of Sikh security guard Balwinder Singh, also plans to meet West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

Earlier, the Punjab CM also asked Mamata Banerjee to act "against concerned cop for hurting the Sikh religious sentiments".

The matter went beyond the realm of politics when former India cricketer Harbhajan Singh Friday took to Twitter to express his dissatisfaction over the incident.

The Bengal home department, in a series of tweets Sunday, had said, "Our Sikh brothers and sisters live in West Bengal in perfect peace and harmony...with respect from all of us for their faith and practices. A recent incident when one iso-

'Bengal police do not indulge in communalism'

Kolkata: The West Bengal police does not indulge in communalism or dividing people on the basis of caste and creed, state Congress president Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury said Monday, in what will be music to the ears of Mamata Banerjee government, under attack over the turban of a Sikh man coming off during a BJP march. When lakhs of Sikhs in Punjab are facing an uncertain future because of farm laws passed by the BJP-led central government, the saffron party is crying foul over an alleged incident of pulling off of the turban of a Sikh man in West Bengal, Chowdhury said. "West Bengal police has become an agent of the Trinamool Congress. West Bengal police has demolished democracy. But I do not believe they indulge in dividing people on the basis of caste and creed," Chowdhury said. Holding that the Sikhs and Bengalis have lived in harmony in West Bengal for ages, he said that "the BJP will not be able to draw them into communal politics". Chowdhury said that there may have been attacks on the Sikhs in other parts of the country, but there has never been an incident of atrocity on them in this state. "Lakhs of Sikh people are protesting against the Narendra Modi government's farm laws since they fear that these will throw their lives into an uncertain future. If the BJP really has any feeling for the sentiment of the Sikhs, its leaders in Bengal should speak out against the farm laws," he said. Three contentious farm laws have triggered protests by farmers especially in Punjab and Haryana. He said that at least 40 crore jobs are needed in the country now and that the people are going through an unprecedented phase of poverty and hardship amid the coronavirus pandemic. The buying capacity of people in the country has reduced drastically as they do not have money in their hands.



lated individual got caught with one illegally carried firearm amidst 'agitators' (sic) in an agitation that was not authorised is now being twisted out of context, being distorted, and being given communal colours in fractious and partisan interest."

PhD scholars, postgraduates apply for job requiring Class-VIII pass

The situation of the job market is dismal. The crisis has been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic with many people having lost their jobs, companies closed and the private sector freezing recruitment. I want to do any kind of government job even if that is contractual

SUDEEP MOITRA | PG IN HISTORY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Malda, Oct 12: Several research scholars, postgraduates and engineering students in West Bengal have applied to the post of forest assistants, the qualification required for which is Class-VIII pass, a senior official said.

The West Bengal government is hiring 2,000 'Bana Sahayaks' or forest assistants on a contractual basis to protect wildlife and prevent man-animal conflict. "Many highly-educated applicants have applied for the job and told us that they don't have any hang-ups," said Subir Kumar Guha Neogy, the range officer of the Malda Forest Division. Among those who turned up for the recruitment process are PhD scholars and people having master's degrees, he said.

Sudeep Moitra, a post-graduate



in History who applied for the position, said that he would prefer a government job even if it is contractual and requires a much lower qualification given the current situation amid the COVID-19 pandemic. "The situation of the job market is dismal. The crisis has been aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic with many people having lost their jobs, companies closed and the private sector freezing recruitment. I want to do any kind of

government job even if that is contractual," he said.

Raktim Chanda, an MSc in Economics, said, "Being employed with a salary for a few thousand of rupees is better than doing nothing given the present economic situation." The candidates applying to the post are being tested for reading (30 marks) and writing (30) Bengali or any officially recognised language of the state. Besides, the ability to read English or Hindi (10 marks), general knowledge (20), and personality fitness for forestry works (10) are also being examined.

"What can we do if highly-qualified people such as researchers apply for the job, which is much beneath their academic credentials. We can't prevent them," a senior forest department official in Kolkata said.

Barbs fly thick & fast at MP hustings

POLITICAL ANALYSTS SAY THE BY-POLL RESULTS COULD CHANGE THE POWER EQUATIONS IN THE STATE DUE TO WHICH BOTH PARTIES ARE MAKING EFFORTS TO WOO THE VOTERS WITH RHETORIC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, Oct 12: The war of attrition between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the primary Opposition Congress has peaked ahead of the upcoming Madhya Pradesh Assembly by-polls. Now the political battle between BJP leader and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan, and Congress leader and former Chief Minister Kamal Nath has intensified over the symbolic 'coconut'.

By-elections will be held November 3 for 28 Assembly seats in the state and the poll bugle has been sounded in earnest. From trading barbs such as 'Stable vs Saleable', 'Fighter vs Traitor', 'farm loan waiver' and 'deceiver', the fight has now turned centre stage over 'coconut'.

Kamal Nath had taunted Shivraj Chouhan, saying "he walks by carrying a coconut in both his pockets" while the latter was launching development projects in the state.

Following Kamal Nath's remark, Chouhan had retorted, saying: "Coconut is part of our culture and tradition. Coconuts are used to



mark the beginning of every auspicious work. We do not carry coconut just like that but for laying the foundation stones of the development works which were stalled by the Congress and the Kamal Nath government." Chouhan added that his government had constructed 13,000-km of roadways during the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Coconut is a symbol of service and we walk with coconut and not with champagne bottles," Chouhan



added. In response to Shivraj's statement, Kamal Nath said, "Shivraj Singh Chauhan, you rightly said coconut is a symbol of purity, service and used to worship God that is why I say that by breaking coconuts for false electoral promises you are being sanctimonious. Do not make it a part of misleading and confusing politics."

"I would have been happy if you had walked with a coconut in your pocket for 15 years but you only

BY-ELECTIONS WILL BE HELD NOVEMBER 3 FOR 28 ASSEMBLY SEATS IN THE STATE AND THE POLL BUGLE HAS BEEN SOUNDED IN EARNEST. FROM TRADING BARBS SUCH AS 'STABLE VS SALEABLE', 'FIGHTER VS TRAITOR', 'FARM LOAN WAIVER' AND 'DECEIVER', THE FIGHT HAS NOW TURNED CENTRE STAGE OVER 'COCONUT'.

KAMAL NATH HAD TAUNTED SHIVRAJ CHOUHAN, SAYING "HE WALKS BY CARRYING A COCONUT IN BOTH HIS POCKETS" WHILE THE LATTER WAS LAUNCHING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THE STATE

carry a coconut at the time of elections and break it anywhere to which I strongly object. The construction of the 13,000 km roadways was started by the Congress," Kamal Nath added.

Political analysts say the by-poll results could change the power equations in the state due to which both parties are making efforts to woo the voters with rhetoric.

6 lakh truckers in WB go on strike, goods supply likely to be hit



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 12: Supply of essential commodities in West Bengal is likely to be disrupted as around six lakh truckers went on a 72-hour strike from Monday, demanding immediate implementation of revised carrying capacity for goods vehicles among others.

Federation of West Bengal Truck Operators' Association president Subhas Bose said the strike has been called mainly to demand a 25 per cent increase in maximum safe axle weight for goods vehicles plying in West Bengal, claiming that other states have already implemented the rule.

"Revised norms of safe axle weights for transport vehicles have been implemented across the country except West Bengal," he told PTI.

Barring a few, around six lakh trucks have gone off-road in the state in support of the strike, Bose said.

"We have requested all the truckers' associations to join the 72-hour strike. Most of the organisations participated in the protest but some have not," Bose said.

A body of truckers operating at the port here and the Calcutta Goods Transport Association have not participated in the strike.

The truck operators also demanded the removal of unnecessary no-entry points on highways, withdrawal of tax levied at toll plazas and waiving off the road tax for the current fiscal in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The FWBTOA had earlier written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to withdraw the tax levied at toll plazas.

PANDAL HOPPING ON AC TRAMS TO AVOID COVID

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Oct 12: Trams have always been a part of Kolkata's charm, and what better time than Durga puja, the biggest festival here, to take a joy ride across the city and catch a glimpse of the popular marquees, all the while avoiding crowd amid fears of COVID-19 transmission.

The West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) has decided to roll out air-conditioned trams on 'Saptami' and 'Nabami' -- two of the five festival days giving passengers an opportunity to check out the Durga pandals, and click photographs through the large glass windows of the electricity-operated vehicles, an official said.

"We will ensure that the festive fever grips each of our passengers, as dhak music will be played all along the journey and snacks will be served on board the decked-up trams," said Rajanvir Singh Kapur, the managing director of WBTC -- which runs the only existing tramway of the country.

Passengers would have access to free Wi-fi inside the trams, which



Amid the COVID-19 gloom, we are trying to revive the charm that the city beholds, weaving the tram ride with the biggest festival

RAJANVIR SINGH KAPUR | MD OF WBTC

would also go past the iconic landmarks in the metropolis, he said.

"Amid the COVID-19 gloom, we are trying to revive the charm that the city beholds, weaving the tram ride with the biggest festival," Kapur said.

According to the official, the joyride will cost Rs 500 per passenger, in-

cluding refreshments and on-board guide.

"Tickets can be booked on 'www.wbtonline.in', he said, adding that adequate safety measures would be taken, and all passengers would have to wear masks.

Will virtually inaugurate pujas this year: Mamata

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Monday said she would be virtually inaugurating Durga pujas this year from the state secretariat. She set aside October 15, 16 and 17 for unveiling different marquees in the city. "I will inaugurate Durga Pujas virtually from Nabanna (state secretariat). Pandals in the northern part of the city will be unveiled on October 15, those in the Behala and Jadavpur areas the next day and the ones in south Kolkata the day after," the chief minister said. She asked puja committees, willing to invite her for inauguration, to write a mail to her office, and said arrangements would be made accordingly. The CM further said she would be unveiling the pandals around 5 pm on the three days. Later in the day, she visited a popular pandal in the city patronised by her cabinet colleague Firdah Hakim, and drew the eyes of goddess Durga on her idol, as part of a religious ritual. Banerjee, on the occasion, urged the puja organisers at Chetla Agrani club to strictly abide by COVID-19 protocols. 'Chokkhudan', or the ritual inviting the goddess to Earth by drawing eyes on her idol, is usually performed by the craftsman on the day of Mahalaya, which heralds 'Devi Paksha' or the beginning of Durga puja. This year, however, Mahalaya was observed a month ahead of the festival. Banerjee had been performing the ritual for Chetla Agrani club since 2014. Hakim, who holds the urban development and municipal affairs portfolio, was present at the ceremony, along with other members of the puja committee.

of the day quote

Very sad to know about the demise of Bihar government's Cabinet Minister Shri Vinod Kumar Singh. He was a popular public representative and struggled for the development of Bihar and the well being of the people. My condolences to his family and supporters



RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

The Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University's first academic session is expected to start next year in close consultation with companies, who will be treated as customers in this endeavour, so that courses are in tune with industry demand



ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address the people of West Bengal on the occasion of Durga Puja to be held later this month



KAILASH VIJAYVARGIYA | BJP NATIONAL GENERAL SECRETARY

SHORT TAKES

Nurse killed

Betul (MP): A nurse was killed and the chief medical and health officer of Betul district in Madhya Pradesh was seriously injured after their car fell into a culvert, police said Monday. CMHO Pradeep Dhakad was driving the car and lost control of it late Sunday night while trying to avoid a truck coming from the opposite direction. Kotwali police station official Sanjay Pandre said.

Girl gangraped

Jashpur: A 19-year-old girl was abducted and gangraped allegedly by three men in Chhattisgarh's Jashpur district, two of whom have been arrested since, police said Monday. October 9, Arun Lakra (33), Sushil Chauhan (37) and Firoz Bek abducted the teen from her village in Tapkara area, said Jashpur Superintendent of Police Balaji Rao. "She and her family members were watching television at a kin's house, after a power outage, her family members returned home but the teen went missing. She was found unconscious next morning gagged and bound by her own clothes," he said.

Woman ends life

Muzaffarnagar: A married woman allegedly committed suicide by consuming a poisonous substance in Uttar Pradesh's Muzaffarnagar, police said Monday. The incident took place Sunday evening. According to Senior Sub-Inspector (SSI) Manoj Kumar, the woman and her husband had been living separately for quite some time after a family dispute. She was rushed to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead, Kumar said.

Man kills grandmother

Palghar: A man allegedly killed his 62-year-old grandmother in Maharashtra's Palghar district over suspicion that she practised witchcraft on him, police said Monday. The accused, Kailas Dangte, a resident of Yeshwant Nagar in Vikramgad taluka, believed that he was facing problems in life because of the witchcraft practised by his grandmother and used to quarrel with her over it, they said. Sunday, the accused allegedly hit his grandmother with an axe several times and then fled from the house, an official at the district police control room said.



The government will soon deploy environment marshals to help curb violations of anti-pollution norms, including the burning of waste

GOPAL RAI | DELHI ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

NAIDU RECOVERS

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu Monday tested negative for COVID-19, his office said. Naidu had tested positive for coronavirus September 29



China appears to be on mission to create dispute, says Rajnath

The defence minister was speaking after inaugurating the bridges built in strategically key areas of Ladakh, Arunachal, Sikkim, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: After Pakistan, China is also creating a dispute at the border with India as if it was part of a "mission", defence minister Rajnath Singh said Monday, as Indian and Chinese troops remain locked in a standoff in eastern Ladakh for over five months.



built in strategically key areas of Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

The defence minister, speaking at an online event after inaugurating 44 bridges, said India is not only facing the situations along the frontiers resolutely, but it is also bringing in major development including in border areas. "You are well aware of the conditions created along our northern and eastern borders. First it was Pakistan, and now also by China, as if a border dispute is being created under a mission. We have a border of about 7,000 km with these countries where the tension continues," Singh said.

The defence minister was speaking after inaugurating the bridges

China, the country was not only resolutely facing them but also bringing about historical changes in all sectors of development.

The defence minister also laid the foundation stone for Nechiphu Tunnel in Arunachal Pradesh. This 450 metre-long tunnel would ensure all-weather connectivity across Nechiphu pass. The bridges inaugurated by Singh included 10 in Jammu and Kashmir, eight in Ladakh, two in Himachal Pradesh, four each in Punjab and Sikkim and eight each in Uttarakhand and Arunachal Pradesh.

In his address, Singh complimented the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) for their achievements in improving infrastructure in border areas and said that dedication of 44 bridges in one go in itself was a record. He said the annual budget of BRO that varied from Rs 3,300 crore to Rs 4,600 crore in years between 2008 and 2016, saw a substantial rise and is pegged at over Rs 11,000 crore in 2020-21.

KUSHBOO JOINS BJP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Actor-turned-politician Kushboo Sundar joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) here Monday, hours after she quit the Congress.

Speaking to reporters at the joining ceremony, the actor from Tamil Nadu said she had come to the understanding over a period of time that if the nation has to move forward, then someone like Prime Minister Narendra Modi is needed to take the country "in the right direction and to its glory". She said people have reposed their faith in Modi time and again. "You have 128 cr people actually believing in one man and that's our Prime Minister. I think they're doing something absolutely right," she added.

Kushboo said that she was willing to discharge her responsibility as a BJP leader in whatever capacity the party deems fit for her. BJP general secretary C T Ravi and Tamil Nadu BJP president L Murugan were present at the ceremony. She later met BJP president J P Nadda who welcomed her. Assembly polls are due in Tamil Nadu in the first half of the next year, and the BJP hopes her induction will be a boost to it.

2 militants killed



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 12: A top Pakistani Lashkar-e-Toiba terrorist and his local accomplice were killed Monday in a fierce gunbattle with security forces in Old Barzulla area of Srinagar, police said.

Saifullah, the Pakistani terrorist who masterminded at least three attacks on security forces during the past month, was killed in the encounter with security forces, a police official said. He said Saifullah was the first Pakistani terrorist to be killed in several years during an operation in Srinagar. Security forces had launched a cordon and search operation in Old Barzulla locality of the city in the early hours of Monday after receiving specific inputs about the presence of militants in the area, the official said.

He said around 7:45 am, when the searches were going on, militants fired upon the forces, leading to an encounter. Two militants were killed in the gunfight, the official said.

Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh said Saifullah was a Pakistani and a top commander of the LeT and was involved in several recent attacks on security forces in and around Srinagar. "A top Lashkar commander from Pakistan named Saifullah has been killed in the operation. He was involved in three back-to-back major attacks on security forces in Nowgam, Chadoora and Kandizal here," Singh told a press conference at police control room here.

The DGP said Srinagar city has witnessed eight encounters so far this year in which 18 militants have been killed. "In total, this

year so far 75 successful anti-militancy operations have been carried out in which 180 terrorists have been killed. Also, 138 militants and their associates have been arrested this year. In terms of operational achievements, it is a record of sorts compared to the last year. The number of both killed and arrested is more this year than the last year," he said.

The UT's police chief said all the anti-militancy operations conducted this year were clean and were undertaken in a professional manner. "Barring one operation at Batamaloo Srinagar, in which a woman got killed unfortunately in a crossfire, all operations were clearly conducted by the security forces," he said.

Asked about the number of fatalities on the security forces' side, Singh said this year, 19 J&K policemen lost their life, while 21 CRPF personnel and 15 Army soldiers - majority of them were on the LoC - were killed in the UT.

Asked whether Lashkar and other outfits were trying to set their foot again in the Srinagar city, the DGP said the security forces were able to take care of the militants because of an effective intelligence network.

"Lashkar and all are trying to find their foothold in the city, but our int (intelligence) network is quite good and quite effective and it is because of this effective network that our troops have been able to find them and take care of them," he said. He said at present only one militant was active in the city and so far has been involved in a couple of attacks on the security forces.

UP girl raped inside college campus

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jhansi (Uttar Pradesh), Oct 12: A 17-year-old girl has been raped by a student of a polytechnic college in Uttar Pradesh inside the campus despite police presence while a civil service exam was underway. Her tormentors robbed her, made objectionable videos and even thrashed the boy she had gone to meet.



said two of the main accused have been arrested. The victim had gone to meet her friend, a boy, when over a dozen students approached them. They forcibly took them inside the hostel where they manhandled the victim and thrashed her friend, the SSP said.

The victim alleged that around a dozen students of the polytechnic college Sunday forcibly took her inside the campus where one of them raped her. The incident took place inside the campus where provincial civil services (PCS) examination was being held amid heavy police protection. SSP Jhansi, Dinesh Kumar P.,

Besides, the accused boys took away Rs 2,000 from the girl. One of

the students raped her while the others made a video. "When some police personnel, who were passing near the campus heard the cries of the victim, they took her to Sipree Bazar police station. The girl who was in a trauma, revealed the entire ordeal to the police and identified one of the accused as

Bharat," the SSP said. "The accused are second year students of the polytechnic whose actual identities are yet to be established," Naveen Kumar, principal of the polytechnic, said. "It has to be ascertained whether they are hostellers or not. There is only one security guard for the entire campus whose whereabouts are not known at the time of the incident as he was busy with the PCS exams going on in the college on Sunday," he added.

The SSP said police have lodged an FIR against main accused Rohit Saini and Bharat and other unknown persons under sections 120B, 376-D, 395, 386, 323 of the IPC, section 66D of the IT Act and section 3/4 of POCSO Act.

Voters to miss Lalu Prasad, Ram Vilas, others in poll arena

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Oct 12: Although coming Bihar Assembly elections are unique in many ways since the campaigning and balloting will be held amid coronavirus pandemic, the voters will miss RJD leader Lalu Prasad's light-hearted jibes and potshots at his political rivals since he is in jail after conviction in fodder scams.

Also missed in the political arena will be Lok Janshakti Party leader and Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan who breathed his last in Delhi October 8.

Veteran socialist and former RJD leader Raghuvansh Prasad Singh would be another leader conspicuous by his absence from the poll battle. Singh, who was close to Lalu, had died September 13 at AIIMS in Delhi.

Most political parties have announced their candidates for majority of the seats in the run-up to the elections. Regional parties will focus on small ral-

lies instead of big ones in view of the COVID guidelines.

Lalu Prasad, a star campaigner of the Rashtriya Janata Dal in the past elections, has been a crowd-puller capable of changing the course of electioneering and election results with his oratory. But the former Railway Minister will not be able to showcase his skills as he is admitted in Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences in Ranchi. He cannot participate in campaigning without court permission.

Even RJD leaders admit they miss Lalu Prasad's absence in these elections. Party leader Mrityunjay Tiwari pointed out that the jailed RJD supremo was not only a star campaigner in Bihar but across the country.

The importance of Lalu Prasad and Raghuvansh Prasad can be gauged from the fact that in the 2015 elections, both participated in 170 and 100 RJD rallies and roadshows respectively.

RAIN FURY



Motorcyclists waded through a flooded road in Secunderabad, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Woman gangraped, son killed in Bihar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Patna, Oct 12: Seven men in Bihar's Buxar district gangraped a woman and killed her 5-year-old son, an official said Monday. One person has been arrested.

The incident was reported near Chaigain village Saturday. A man hunt is underway to nab the others, police said. The victim had visited a bank in the village to deposit money. While returning home, she was intercepted by the accused and taken to a nearby forest area where they took turns raping her.

Their brutality did not end there. The accused then strangled the mother and son (who had accompanied her) using ropes and threw them in to a canal. The men thought them to be dead.

However, passersby rescued them and took them to Sadar hospital where doctors declared the child brought dead. The woman survived. "The medical examination of the victim is complete. We have arrested one of the accused named Munni Ram and raids are on to nab others," said K.K. Singh, SDPO of Dumraon range.

Corona 'extremely robust' for 28 days on glass, currency: Study

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The novel coronavirus responsible for COVID-19 may survive for up to 28 days on common surfaces including banknotes, glass - such as that found on smart phone screens - and stainless steel, according to a laboratory study by Australia's national science agency.

The finding, published in the Virology Journal, shows that SARS-CoV-2 can remain infectious on surfaces for long periods of time, reinforcing the need for good practices such as regular hand washing and cleaning surfaces.

The research, undertaken at the Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness (ACDP), found that SARS-CoV-2 survived longer at

lower temperatures and on non-porous or smooth surfaces such as glass, stainless steel and vinyl, compared to porous complex surfaces such as cotton.

The researchers at CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, also found that the novel coronavirus survived longer on paper banknotes than plastic banknotes. "Establishing how long the virus really remains viable on surfaces enables us to more accurately predict and mitigate its spread, and do a better job of protecting our people," said CSIRO Chief Executive Larry Marshall.

"At 20 degrees Celsius, which is about room temperature, we found that the virus was extremely robust, surviving for 28 days on smooth



surfaces such as glass found on mobile phone screens and plastic banknotes," Debbie Eagles, Deputy Director of ACDP added.

For context, similar experiments for Influenza A have found that it

survived on surfaces for 17 days, which highlights just how resilient SARS-CoV-2 is, the researchers said.

The study involved drying the virus in artificial mucus on different surfaces, at concentrations similar to

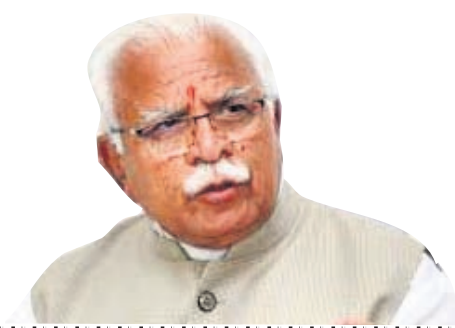
those reported in samples from infected patients and then re-isolating the virus over a month.

Further experiments were carried out at 30 and 40 degrees Celsius, with survival times decreasing as the temperature increased. The study was also carried out in the dark, to remove the effect of UV light as research has demonstrated direct sunlight can rapidly inactivate the virus.

"While the precise role of surface transmission, the degree of surface contact and the amount of virus required for infection is yet to be determined, establishing how long this virus remains viable on surfaces is critical for developing risk mitigation strategies in high contact areas," Eagles said.

According to Professor Trevor Drew, Director of ACDP, many viruses remained viable on surfaces outside their host. "How long they can survive and remain infectious depends on the type of virus, quantity, the surface, environmental conditions and how it's deposited - for example touch vs droplets emitted by coughing," Drew said. "Proteins and fats in body fluids can also significantly increase virus survival times," he said.

The study may also help to explain the apparent persistence and spread of SARS-CoV-2 in cool environments with high lipid or protein contamination, such as meat processing facilities and how we might better address that risk, the researchers said.



An ordinary BJP worker is capable of defeating former CM Bhopinder Singh Hooda from Baroda Assembly seat in Sonapat
MANOHAR LAL KHATTAR | CHIEF MINISTER OF HARYANA

MATTER OF CONCERN

Delhi recorded its worst air quality since February Monday as the concentration of fine particulate matters PM2.5 and PM10 increased to their highest recorded levels this season



of the day quote

Even saints are not safe in the government led by a saint in UP
MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

Lohia brought his ideas into practice and was a lifelong adherent to democratic norms and values
NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

It is not possible for any school or social worker to make Rahul Gandhi understand the India-China matters
VIRENDRA SINGH | BJP MP

Hathras rape victim's kin appear before HC

The woman's father, mother and three brothers were brought to the court amid tight security from Hathras earlier in the day



AGENCIES

Lucknow, Oct 12: Family members of the 19-year-old Dalit woman who died after allegedly being raped by four upper caste men in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras appeared before the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court, which fixed November 2 as the next date of hearing.

They were heard by the Bench of Justices Pankaj Mithal and Rajan Roy Monday. The UP Additional Chief Secretary, DGP; and the ADG

(Law and Order) also deposed before the court, along with the Hathras DM and SP.

The DM told the court that the decision to cremate the body in the night was taken due to the law and order considerations and there was no pressure from the state authorities. Additional Advocate General V K Shahi, who represented the state authorities in the court, said the next date of hearing has been fixed for November 2.

The court had summoned the

Additional Chief Secretary, Home; the Director General of Police; ADG, Law and Order; and the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police of Hathras to furnish the status report of investigation into the case. The woman was allegedly raped by four upper caste men on September 14. She succumbed to severe assault injuries at a Delhi hospital a fortnight later, which was followed by a hushed up cremation at night, allegedly forced

BIG MOVE DM owns full responsibility for 'night cremation'

Hathras district magistrate Parveen Kumar Laxar has owned full responsibility for the decision related to holding the cremation of the 19-year-old victim in the night. Laxar pleaded that cremation had been done in the dead of the night because they had received intelligence inputs that some vested interests could try to provoke caste violence. He also said that there was a possibility the body decomposing if the cremation was delayed further.

by the district administration. The brutal injuries suffered by the woman and the administration's move to cremate her body late at night triggered a massive outrage, resulting in a pitched political battle from Delhi to Hathras. "Shocked" by the murder and alleged gang rape of the Dalit woman and the subsequent cremation, the Lucknow Bench of the Allahabad High Court had on October 1 summoned top government officials.

'Darkness' at noon for Mumbai citizens

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 12: A rare citywide power outage paralysed Mumbai Monday, halting local train services, trapping people in lifts and disrupting work from home adopted by millions during the ongoing pandemic.

Power restoration efforts began on "war footing" and pocket-wise resumption in supply was started around 12 noon onwards, nearly two hours after the outage.

Trains services took two and half hours to resume operations, beginning with CR's Harbour Line. The trains are carrying only essential services workers at present, which helped minimise the passenger inconvenience.

Both the Western Railway and Central Railway blamed the power cut from Tata Power (their power supplier) for the disruption in services.

With work-from-home becoming the norm across the services sector, employee output was impacted as the homes do not have power back-ups like institutional bodies.

However, a few were not so lucky, like the employees working in an upscale business complex in central Mumbai who found themselves stuck in an elevator during times of social distancing. After a few jittery minutes, they were evacuated. In June 2018, there was a widespread power outage in the city and adjoining areas due to a technical glitch and also led to sustained period of load-shedding for

CM ORDERS PROBE

Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray took serious cognisance of a massive power outage in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) and ordered an immediate probe into it. State Energy Minister Nitin Raut also said the reasons behind the technical snag that caused power failure in parts of the MMR will be probed once the electricity supply is restored.

some consumers.

Maharashtra's Power Minister Nitin Raut said the trouble Monday emanated from Maharashtra State Electricity Transmission Company (MSETCL) facilities during a planned maintenance work.

Tata Power, which is into both generation and distribution, attributed the outage to a simultaneous substation tripping at 1010 hrs at state-run transmission company MSETCL's two substations in the suburbs of Kalwa and Kharghar. Power outages were reported from suburbs like Thane, Panvel, Dombivili and Kalyan as well, along with those in the island city and the suburbs.

Raut assured that power supply will resume soon, as officials were working on it on a war footing. As the afternoon progressed, power at many pockets including the Bandra Kurla Complex business district, Lower Parel, the western suburbs and South Mumbai started resuming operations.

SHORT TAKES

Act against neighbour: Rhea

Mumbai: Actress Rhea Chakraborty, accused of abetting the suicide of her actor boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput, Monday urged the CBI to take action against her neighbour for giving 'false' statements to the media to misled the investigation in the case. In a letter addressed to Nupur Sharma, heading the CBI's special team, Chakraborty said her neighbour Dimple Thawani had falsely claimed that Rajput had dropped her (Chakraborty) to her house in suburban Mumbai in his car June 13, a day before he was found hanging at his residence in Bandra.

Yedi replaces Health Minister

Bangalore: In a major development, Karnataka Chief Minister, BS Yediyurappa effected a minor reshuffle of his cabinet Monday by divesting B Sreeramulu from health and family welfare portfolio and assigning Medical Education Minister, Dr K Sudhakar as his Health Minister. According to party insiders, Sreeramulu had faced numerous embarrassments ever since the COVID-19 pandemic broke out in March, as since then, Dr Sudhakar had always been in the forefront to brief the media as well as the opposition over COVID-related issues.

Kerala sets record

Thiruvananthapuram: Kerala Monday became the first state in the country to go completely digital in public education. This has been possible due to the efforts of successive governments in the state, where education has always been given huge importance. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan will be making the official announcement soon.

3 religious school teachers detained under PSA in J&K

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 12: Three teachers of a religious school in Shopian district of south Kashmir were arrested Monday under the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) for allegedly spreading hatred while teaching, police said.

They said the three were booked under the PSA - which allows authorities to detain a person for up to two years without a trial - after it came to the fore that some of the school's students and alumni were involved in militant activities.

The police action came a day after the PTI reported that the religious school was under the scanner of investigating agencies

after 13 of its students were found to have joined terror groups. Kashmir Inspector General of Police (IGP) Vijay Kumar told a press conference here the school is affiliated with the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) outfit.

"The school's name is Sirajuloom Imam Sahib. It is not that this school has not been under observation. We have already booked three teachers of the school namely Abdul Ahad Bhat, Rouf Bhat and Mohammad Yusuf Wani under the PSA," Kumar told the reporters. The institution's alumni include Sajjad Bhat, an accused in the February 2019 suicide attack on a CRPF convoy in Pulwama that left 40 personnel dead.

VOICE FOR RIGHTS



Police detain AAP workers who were staging a protest against new farm laws, at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi PTI PHOTO

Seven Indians kidnapped in Libya released, says MEA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Seven Indians, who were kidnapped in Libya last month, have been released, the Ministry of External Affairs said Monday.

"We are happy to inform that the seven Indian nationals who had been abducted at Assherif in Libya September 14 were finally released yesterday," the MEA said. Last week, MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said the Indians were working at a construction and Oil field supplies company. "Our Ambassador to Tunisia Puneet Roy Kundal spoke to them over phone after they were handed over by the abductors to the company Al Shola Al Mudia. All of them are in good health and are currently staying in the company's premises in Brega. We are trying to complete requisite formalities to enable their return to India," the MEA said. Following the kidnapping, the Indian embassy in Tunisia reached out to the Libyan government authorities as also the international organisations present there, seeking help in rescuing the Indian nationals. Libya, an oil-rich country in North Africa, has been witnessing large-scale violence and unrest since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's four-decade regime in 2011.

'Homoeopathy best for skin diseases'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 12: There are many who certify that Homoeopathy can do wonders in cases of skin related viral diseases, Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) said Monday.

A case study published recently in AYUHOM, the Research Journal of the North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homoeopathy, Shillong illustrates this point, mentioned AYUSH. The case study has been authored by Sangita Saha, Reader, Department of Organon of



Medicine and Mahakas Mandal, Post Graduate Trainee, Department of Practice of Medicine, the Calcutta Homeopathic Medical College and Hospital along with Koushik Bhar, Post Graduate Trainee, and the National Institute of Homoeopathy, Kolkata. Treatment of five patients suffering with five different skin diseases with Homoeopathy has given notable results which give a boost

to the conviction of the positive effects of Homoeopathic medicine on such skin disorders. Skin diseases are numerous and frequently occurring health problems affecting all ages, not only India, but globally also. The Global Burden of Disease project has shown that the skin diseases continue to be the fourth leading cause of non-fatal disease burden worldwide. Experts engaged with Homoeopathy treatment opine that Homoeopathic approach to common viral skin diseases can be a game changer in offering affordable and effective solutions to a large number of people.

18,000 tonnes of nCoV waste generated in India since June

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: India generated 18,000 tonnes of COVID-19 biomedical waste in the last four months, with Maharashtra contributing the maximum (3,587 tonnes) to it, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data.

According to the data received from state pollution control boards, all states and Union Territories have since June generated 18,000 tonnes of COVID-19 related biomedical waste which is being collected, treated and disposed of by 198 common biomedical waste treatment facilities

(CBWTFs). COVID-19 biomedical waste could include PPE kits, masks, shoe covers, gloves, human tissues, items contaminated with blood, body fluids like dressings, plaster casts, cotton swabs, beddings contaminated with blood or body fluid, blood bags, needles, syringes etc.

According to the data, Maharashtra, which has reported over 15 lakh coronavirus cases so far, generated 3,587 tonnes of COVID-19 waste in four months - 524 tonnes in June, 1,180 tonnes in July, 1,359 tonnes in August and 524 tonnes in September.

The Indian nationals, hailing from AP, Bihar, Guj and UP, were kidnapped at Assherif September 14

complete requisite formalities to enable their return to India," the MEA said. Following the kidnapping, the Indian embassy in Tunisia reached out to the Libyan government authorities as also the international organisations present there, seeking help in rescuing the Indian nationals. Libya, an oil-rich country in North Africa, has been witnessing large-scale violence and unrest since the fall of Muammar Gaddafi's four-decade regime in 2011.

Kerala houseboats ready to greet tourists again

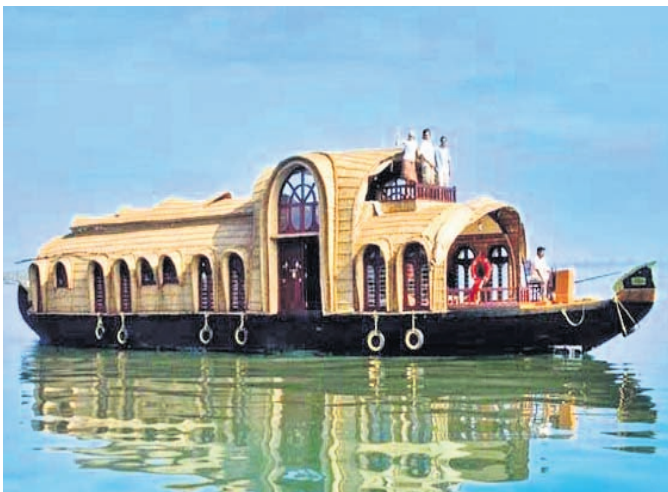
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Alappuzha (Kerala) Oct 12: After a long wait of seven months, the houseboat industry in Kerala is ready to greet tourists again.

The Kerala government has given its nod to all tourist activities to resume from Monday, while the beaches will open from November 1.

Alappuzha, often referred to as the Venice of the East, offers an exquisite facility to tourism - houseboats - the once-forgotten traditional rice boats, which used to carry paddy from the fields to the markets or to the barns.

After the Covid pandemic struck in March, the businesses of over 800 houseboats plying the famed Vembanad lake came to a grinding halt. After almost seven months, the authorities



have given the permission to resume activities from Monday and the houseboat owners and the workers are now busy getting the

houseboats ready for tourists. Speaking to IANS, Tomy Pulikattil, who owns a fleet of houseboats ranging from single bedroom to

six-bedroom, said they are all ready and are waiting for the guests. "We have started to contact the guests who got in touch with us in the recent past to check if the houseboats were operating. We have decided to offer 25 per cent discount to all our guests who travel with us."

"The last seven months were like a nightmare for all of us, as we were having a hand-to-mouth existence. We also had to pay our permanent employees," said Pulikattil. On Monday, the houseboat owners were engaged in last minute cleaning and making the boats ready for welcoming the tourists.

The boats are being sanitised and for that a new pump has been bought. Employees have also been trained to follow the COVID protocols. The biggest houseboat ply-

ing here is a 10-bedroom houseboat, while a huge majority are one and two-bedroom ones, and the minimum tariff is ₹6,000 for a 24-hour trip.

"We have been drained completely because of no business. We did raise our concerns with the Kerala government and the report is that all will be given a maintenance grant of ₹1 lakh. Depending on the size of the houseboat, the total expenses will go up to ₹4 lakh," added Pulikattil.

According to the present Covid guidelines, tourists arriving from outside the state but not for more than seven days need not undergo any quarantine.

However, they have to carry a COVID negative certificate. Those who wish to remain in the state beyond a week will have to undergo quarantine for seven days.

ANTI-JUDICIARY REMARKS

AP HC orders CBI probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, Oct 12: Expressing displeasure over the investigation by the state CID, the Andhra Pradesh High Court Monday directed the CBI to probe the alleged derogatory comments made by ruling YSR Congress leaders in social media against some judges and the judiciary.

A bench, comprising Justices Rakesh Kumar and J Uma Devi, directed the CBI to register an FIR and submit a report in eight weeks.

During the course of hearing, the Court expressed displeasure over the investigation by the state Crime Investigation Department (CID) and commented that cases were not registered against the YSRC leaders only to save them. It directed the state government to co-

operate with the CBI in the investigation. The High Court had on its own taken cognisance after a series of alleged derogatory posts were made on social media platforms against judges and the judiciary following some verdicts that went against the state government.

On the directions of the High Court, its Registrar General lodged a complaint with the CID giving names and related evidence but the state police wing reportedly booked only nine people.

The court took serious note of the comments made by Assembly Speaker Tammineni Sitaram, Deputy Chief Minister Narayana Swamy, MPs V Vijayasai Reddy, Nandigam Suresh, former MLA A Krishna Mohan and other leaders of the ruling YSRC and questioned the CID why cases were not registered against them.



Courts are not designed to solve every problem or right every wrong in our public life
AMY CONEY BARRETT | US SUPREME COURT NOMINEE

FACEBOOK BANS HOLOCAUST DENIAL, DISTORTION POSTS

Facebook is banning posts that deny or distort the Holocaust and will start directing people to authoritative sources if they search for information about the Nazi genocide



of the day quote

This past week, the President demonstrated very clearly that he has not taken the war against the virus seriously, personally or nationally
NANCY PELOSI | US HOUSE SPEAKER

In my nearly five decades of public service, I have never publicly endorsed any political candidate
ANTHONY FAUCI | TOP US SCIENTIST

I will intercede if the leadership row between House Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano and Rep. Lord Allan Velasco threatens the passage of next year's budget
RODRIGO DUTERTE | PHILIPPINE PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

EU weighs Russia sanctions

Brussels: European Union foreign ministers were weighing Monday whether to impose sanctions on Russian officials and organizations blamed for the poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny with a Soviet-era nerve agent. The ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, are considering a proposal from France and Germany to freeze the assets of those suspected of involvement and ban them from travelling in Europe under sanctions to combat the use and spread of chemical weapons. Navalny, an anti-corruption investigator and major political opponent of Russian President Vladimir Putin, fell ill August 20 during a domestic flight in Russia.

6 kidnapped near Pak-Iran border

Islamabad: At least six pilgrims were abducted by unidentified armed assailants near the Pakistan-Iran border, the media reported. The incident took place Sunday in Balochistan's Panjur district when the Shia pilgrims, belonging from Karachi, were arriving from Iran, reports The Express Tribune. Sources said that the pilgrims had spent around 50 days in Iranian city of Mashhad and were on their way back to Karachi. The kidnappers left two women and took away six male pilgrims with them.

Palestine ready for elections

Ramallah: Palestine is ready to hold "free and democratic" elections as soon as possible, said Prime Minister Mohammed Ishtayeh. "We will go to a national celebration when we hold our democratic elections in order to restore our national institution," Ishtayeh said Sunday while participating in the olive harvest season celebrations in Ramallah. "All the Palestinians will meet under our parliament in true national unity, as it was in the past, under the framework of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) in order to establish the Palestinian state on the ground," he added.

Fire breaks out on Mt Kilimanjaro

Dodoma: Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA) said that a fire broke out on Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak, adding that efforts were on to contain it. On Sunday, TANAPA posted a photo on Twitter showing flames on the mountain, reports Xinhua news agency. "A fire broke out on Mount Kilimanjaro and efforts to extinguish it are still ongoing. More information will follow," the agency tweeted.

'Trump working to reach N-agreement with Russia before polls

AGENCIES

Moscow, Oct 12: A tight circle of people in the administration of US President Donald Trump is engaged in talks to close a nuclear accord with Russia before the November 3 presidential election, the Axios news portal reported Monday, citing an administration official.

Last week, media reported, citing sources, that the United States and Russia had reached an agreement in principle to continue curbing their nuclear arsenals, which would potentially lead to an extension of their only remaining arms control agree-

ment, the New START, during October. Commenting on the matter to Sputnik, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov denied that the sides had overcome the differences in their stances to the point anyhow signaling a soon agreement.

According to Axios, citing a Trump administration source, talks have been ongoing within a tight circle of people at the highest levels in the US National Security Council and the Department of State with briefings provided to a few members of the US Senate's Foreign Relations Committee and a national security working group in the Congress.



The New START extension has been endorsed by Russian President Vladimir Putin and former US vice president Joe Biden, who is Trump's contender in the election. Trump, in turn, has sought to draft a new deal

Last week, media reported, citing sources, that the United States and Russia had reached an agreement in principle to continue curbing their nuclear arsenals

that would involve not only Russia but also China, the owner of the world's third largest nuclear stockpile. The US administration now tries to craft a deal in a language that both Moscow and Beijing could live

with, Axios said, citing a knowledgeable source. China has repeatedly stressed its opposition to considering any trilateral nuclear arms control pacts with Russia and the US.

After the US unilaterally withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces with Russia last year, the New START remained the only remaining legally binding agreement on nuclear arms control between the two countries owning the world's two largest nuclear stockpiles. The treaty has been in force since 2011 and is due to expire in February 2021 with a possibility to be renewed for another five years.

Trump claims he is immune to Covid-19



AGENCIES

Washington, Oct 12: US President Donald Trump claimed Sunday that he is now "immune" from the coronavirus, though medical research has suggested it is possible to be re-infected with the virus.

"It seems like I'm immune, so I can go way out of a basement," Trump said in an interview on Fox News.

"It looks like I'm immune for, I don't know, maybe a long time, maybe a short time. It could be a lifetime. Nobody really knows," Trump added, Xinhua news agency reported.

White House physician Sean Conley said on Saturday that the president, who tested positive for Covid-19 October 1 and was later hospitalized for three days before returning to the White House with continued treatment, is "no longer considered a transmission risk to others." However, Conley did not disclose when Trump last had a negative test result.

A study published in September in the journal Nature Medicine, however, indicated that recovery from the coronavirus does not confer lifetime immunity.

Before and after Trump's infection, a number of White House staff members have also tested positive for the virus.

FATF keeps Pakistan on 'Enhanced Follow-Up List'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Oct 12: Noting that Pakistan's measures against money laundering and terror-financing "is not yet sufficient to justify a re-rating", a regional affiliate of the Financial Action Task Force Monday retained the country on its "Enhanced Follow-up" list, according to a media report.

The development came only a few weeks ahead of the meeting of the FATF - the Paris-based global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog - to decide on Pakistan's grey list status. The first Follow-Up Report on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan released by the Asia-Pacific Group (APG) underlined that the country's progress on the 40 FATF recommendations on the effectiveness of anti-money laundering and combating financing terror (AML/CFT) system largely remained unchanged - non-compliant on four counts, partially compliant on 25 counts and largely compliant on nine recommendations, the Dawn News reported. Pakistan has improved its full compliance on only two of the 40 FATF recommendations, the APG report noted.

"Pakistan will remain in enhanced (expedited) follow up, and will continue to report back to the APG on progress to strengthen its imple-



The APG Mutual Evaluations is a peer-review system to determine whether countries meet the compliance standards for money laundering and terror financing

mentation of AML/CFT measures," the APG concluded in its 12-page report. The APG Mutual Evaluations is a peer-review system to determine whether countries meet the compliance standards for money laundering and terror financing.

After a country submits a Mutual Evaluation report, APG members can decide to place a member either through regular or enhanced follow-up. While a regular follow-up means just biennial reports, a country put under enhanced follow-up has to send four reports of compliance the following year.

The APG report noted that though the country has taken measures on recommendations pertaining to money laundering and terror financing, the progress "is not yet sufficient to justify a re-rating". Pakistan had requested for re-rat-

TERROR FUNDING

The first Follow-Up Report on Mutual Evaluation of Pakistan released by the Asia-Pacific Group found Pakistan has improved its full compliance on only two of the 40 FATF recommendations

The 41-member APG in August last year had downgraded Pakistan's status to "Enhanced Follow-up" category from "Regular Follow-up"

ings on three areas declared partially compliant by the APG in October last year. The request was accepted on one count and rejected on two due to "insufficient" progress to the satisfaction of international experts. The 41-member APG in August last year had downgraded Pakistan's status to "Enhanced Follow-up" category from "Regular Follow-up" over technical deficiencies to meet normal international financial standards by October 2018.

"Enhanced follow-up" is an intensive process of correction that deals with members with significant deficiencies in their AML/CFT systems. The APG's report came ahead of the virtual FATF plenary scheduled for October 21-23 during which it would be decided if Pakistan should be excluded from its grey list.

ENCROACHMENT IN NEPAL

Oli govt under pressure to speak up against China

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kathmandu, Oct 12: The KP Sharma Oli government in Nepal is now facing increasing heat and is under pressure from several quarters to speak up against the boundary encroachment by China.

Recent reports have suggested that China has encroached upon Nepali territory in Humla district and one boundary pillar No 12 has been constructed by the Chinese without notice of the Nepalese side.

Without a bilateral agreement, no boundary pillar can be repaired by either side. A team of the Nepali Congress, the Opposition party of Nepal, led by a lawmaker Jeevan Bahadur Shahi, recently visited the northern border of Nepal, spent 11 days in the treacherous Himalayan region and found that pillar No 12 was damaged and erected inside Nepali territory.

Now even ruling party leaders have begun to speak against land encroached by China in Nepal's Humla district.

The local elected representatives have also accused China of encroaching upon Nepali territory

and asked with the government to send a fact-finding team to find out the truth. Shahi told this news agency the China side has recently replaced the boundary pillar No 12 so that a large chunk of Nepali territory has slipped into China.

Though the Oli administration in Nepal has kept denying that China has encroached on Nepali territory, a senior ruling party leader, Bhim Rawal, on Monday urged the government to make public the facts about the Nepal-China border issue.

He also demanded an on-site study on the Nepal-China border in Namkha Rural Municipality of Humla, Limi Lolungiang by a team comprising government officials, including the Department of Survey and Ministry of Foreign Affairs among others. Rawal, who is a staunch opponent of Oli, said that the issue related to the territorial integrity of the country should be resolved through an objective way.

About his findings, Shahi said that China has unilaterally repaired and replaced the boundary pillar which is against the border protocol signed between two countries in the past.



Bangla approves death penalty for rape cases

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dhaka, Oct 12: The Bangladesh Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Monday approved a legal amendment to elevate the maximum punishment in rape cases to death from life imprisonment.

Following the Cabinet's approval of the proposed amendment, titled the Women and Children Repression Prevention Act, President Abdul Hamid is likely to issue an ordinance as Parliament is not in session, bdnews24 quoted Cabinet Secretary Khandaker Anwarul Islam as saying to the media.

"The ordinance will be issued tomorrow," Law Minister Anisul Huq later told bdnews24.

The approval comes in the wake of protests staged by different organisations at Dhaka's Shahbagh

square and other parts of the country against sexual assaults on a woman in Noakhali and the rape of another woman in Sylhet's MC College.

As many as 4,541 rape cases have been reported Bangladesh in the past 16 years and the accused were punished in only 60 of these incidents, according to data from the tribunals.

At least 889 women have been raped in Bangladesh between January and August 2020, rights group Ain O Salish Kendra said.

As many as 192 others faced attempted rapes and sexual harassment in this period, while nine of the victims took their own lives, bdnews24 reported.

Rights activists believe the numbers are much higher because many of the victims do not complain to the police.

BACK TO SCHOOL



A schoolgirl stands next to the Kenya-Uganda railway line during the partial reopening of schools, after the government scrapped plans to cancel the academic year due to the coronavirus in Kibera slums of Nairobi, Kenya. REUTERS PHOTO

Climate change spurs doubling of disasters since 2000: UN

Major disasters occurred between 2000 and 2019, claiming 1.23 lives, affecting 4.2 billion people and costing the global economy some \$2.97 trillion

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Geneva, Oct 12: Climate change is largely to blame for a near doubling of natural disasters in the past 20 years, the United Nations said Monday.

The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction said 7,348 major disaster events had occurred between 2000 and 2019, claiming 1.23 lives, affecting 4.2 billion people and costing the global economy some \$2.97 trillion. The figure far outstrips the 4,212 major natural disasters recorded between 1980 and 1999; the UN office said in a new report entitled "The Human Cost of Disasters 2000-2019".

The sharp increase was largely attributable to a rise in climate-re-

lated disasters, including extreme weather events like floods, drought and storms, the report said.

Extreme heat is proving especially deadly. "We are wilfully destructive," UNDRR chief Mami Mizutori told reporters in a virtual briefing. "That is the only conclusion one can come to when reviewing disaster events over the last 20 years." She accused governments of not doing enough to prevent climate hazards and called for better preparation for looming disasters.

'UPHILL BATTLE'

"The odds are being stacked against us when we fail to act on science and early warnings to invest in prevention, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction," she said. The report did not touch



on biological hazards and disease-related disasters like the coronavirus pandemic, which has killed over one million people and infected over 37 million in the past nine months. But Mizutori suggested coronavirus was "the latest proof that political and business leaders

are yet to tune in to the world around them". Monday's report showed 6,681 climate-linked events had been recorded since the turn of the century, up from 3,656 during the previous 20-year period.

While major floods had more than doubled to 3,254, there had

been 2,034 major storms up from 1,457 in the prior period. Mizutori said public health authorities and rescue workers were "fighting an uphill battle against an ever-rising tide of extreme weather events".

While better preparedness and early warning systems had helped bring down the number of deaths in many natural disaster settings, she warned that "more people are being affected by the expanding climate emergency".

DEADLIEST DISASTERS

Monday's report relied on statistics from the Emergency Events Database, which records all disasters that kill 10 or more people, affect 100 or more people or result in a state of emergency declaration. The data showed that Asia has suf-

fered the highest number of disasters in the past 20 years with 3,068 such events, followed by the Americas with 1,756 and Africa with 1,192.

In terms of affected countries, China topped the list with 577 events followed by the United States with 467. While a warming climate appeared to be driving the number and severity of such disasters, there had also been an increase in geophysical events like earthquakes and tsunamis that are not related to climate but are particularly deadly.

The deadliest single disaster in the past 20 years was the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, with 226,400 deaths, followed by the Haiti earthquake in 2010, which claimed some 222,000 lives.

business



“nCoV has accelerated the need for upskilling and has shown that the future of learning will be profoundly personalised. We are committed to empowering learners and educators across India to skill themselves in emerging technologies”

ANANT MAHESHWARI | PRESIDENT, MICROSOFT INDIA

'AMAZON PAY, UBER JOIN HANDS'

Amazon Pay and Uber announced a partnership that will allow users in India to pay for their rides on the ride-hailing platform using Amazon Pay. India is the first market where the two American companies have formed such an alliance



of the day quote

Tamil Nadu is one of our key markets for growth. It is the most diversified market and we have over the years invested towards strengthening our foothold in the state. We will continue to balance growth across our key markets as we look to further deepen our reach across India

VARUN BERRY | MD, BRITANNIA INDUSTRIES

Our government has delivered in a very innovative and fiscally prudent way to boost demand in the economy. The set of measures announced today (stimulus to boost demand) for supporting consumption and investment demand would energise growth over the remaining part of the year

SANGITA REDDY | PRESIDENT, FICCI

Leaving the supply chain disruption behind us, we see good demand in both load and PV segments and are gearing up the production accordingly to meet the festive demand. With launches (of 3-wheelers) we are confident to regain our spot among the top three players

VEEJAY NAKRA | CEO (AUTOMOTIVE DIVISION), M&M

Govt capex increases by ₹25K cr, total FY21 spend rises over ₹4L cr

The additional capex by the Centre will be invested on roads, defence infrastructure, water supply, urban development and domestically produced capital equipment

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 12: The government has increased its capital expenditure budget to step up expenditure on projects that generate employment and spur economic activity and growth.

Accordingly, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday announced that Centre's capital expenditure budget for current fiscal has been increased by an additional ₹25,000 crore from a level of ₹4,13,000 crore provided for FY21.

The additional capex by the Centre would help in stimulating demand and growth in Covid affected economy. The GDP has already slid by around 24% in the



April-June quarter. The additional capex by Centre will be invested on roads, defence

infrastructure, water supply, urban development and domestically produced capital equipment.

Allocations for this expenditure will be made in forthcoming Revised Estimate discussions of Ministry of Finance with concerned ministries, Sitharaman said.

The total boost to demand from government measures is estimated at ₹73,000 crore, and all spending has to be done by March 31, 2021.

Sitharaman said that if the private sector also takes the measures as announced with regard to LTC for its employees, additional demand boost of ₹28,000 crore could be generated, this taking the total demand measures at over ₹1 lakh crore for FY21.

Future Generali rolls out 'Total Health Score'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 12: Considering the higher incidence of mental health issues in India, especially during the ongoing pandemic, Future Generali India Insurance Company Limited (FGIL), announced the launch of an online mental health assessment test 'Total Health Score'. This unique self-assessment will enable an individual to evaluate the quality of one's mental well-being.

The Total Health Score is a questionnaire & API-based assessment that is designed by practicing therapists and counsellors who understand the early signs of potential mental health issues. Once the individual completes the assessment s/he will be attributed a score that outlines the current state of his/her mental health. In addition, s/he will have access to self-care content to understand and manage various mental health issues like stress, anxiety, depression and other related concerns. The self-care content is developed by mental health experts specially for Future Generali.

Company's MD & CEO Anup Rau said, "Our objective is to be a lifetime partner for our customers and demonstrate expertise with a human touch. We can only achieve this if we truly understand India's cultural norms & constraints and enable some difficult conversations."

Industrial production contracts 8% in Aug

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Industrial production declined by 8% in August, mainly due to lower output of manufacturing, mining and power generation sectors, official data showed Monday.

According to the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data, manufacturing sector production registered a decline of 8.6%, while the output of mining and power segments fell 9.8% and 1.8%, respectively. The IIP had contracted by 1.4% in August 2019.

"It may not be appropriate to compare the IIP in the post pandemic months with the IIP for months preceding the COVID 19 pandemic," the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation said in a statement.

"With the gradual relaxation of restrictions, there has been a relative improvement in the economic activities by varying degrees as well as in data reporting," it added. Meanwhile, the contraction in IIP in July has been revised to (-) 10.8% from the (-) 10.4% provisional data released last month.

Similarly, May IIP has been revised marginally to 33.4% contraction from 33.9% decline. The decline in IIP for June remained unchanged at (-) 15.8%.

The government had imposed a lockdown to contain the spread of COVID-19 infections March 25, 2020.



According to the IIP data, manufacturing sector production registered a decline of 8.6%, while the output of mining and power segments fell 9.8% and 1.8%, respectively

The contraction in IIP in July has been revised to (-) 10.8% from the (-) 10.4% provisional data released last month

As per the latest data, the manufacturing sector, which constitutes 77.63% of the IIP, recorded a decline of 8.6% in August 2020

the same month last year. Similarly, mining sector output fell 9.8% as against a flat growth in August 2019.

Power generation shrank by 1.8%, compared to a contraction of 0.9% a year ago.

Output of capital goods, which is a barometer of investment, fell by 15.4% in August as against a contraction of 20.9% earlier.

Consumer durables output also declined by 10.3%, as against a contraction of 9.7% in August 2019.

Consumer non-durable goods production fell 3.3%, compared to a growth of 3.1% a year ago.

The IIP for April-August period has contracted by 25%, according to the data.

Retail inflation spikes to 8-month high of 7.34%

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 12: Pushed by rising prices of essential kitchen items, the retail inflation rose to an eight-month high of 7.34% in September, making the RBI's task to push growth by reducing the interest rate even more difficult in coming days. The Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation was 6.69% in August and 3.99% in September 2019.

Inflation has been hovering above 4% since October 2019. The previous high in the CPI was witnessed at 7.59% in January 2020.

According to the data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO), the Consumer Food Price Index (CFPI) crossed the double-digit mark and was 10.68 per cent in September. It was 9.05% in the previous month.

The inflation in the vegetable segment was 20.73% in September, significantly up from 11.41% in the preceding month. Similarly, the rate of price rise in the fruits was high over August.

Data showed that the rate of price rise in the protein-rich eggs was 15.47% in September compared to 10.11% in August.

Icra economist Aditi Nayar said the CPI inflation hardened beyond expectations in September.

"Even though the high food inflation will eventually prove to be transient, with the favourable base effect and Kharif arrivals to soon initiate a downward trajectory, the average inflation figures for FY2021 as well as H2 FY2021 are likely to



Even though the high food inflation will eventually prove to be transient, with the favourable base effect and Kharif arrivals to soon initiate a downward trajectory, the average inflation figures for FY2021 as well as H2 FY2021 are likely to be uncomfortably high

ADITI NAYAR, ECONOMIST, ICRA

be uncomfortably high," she said. The retail inflation was also high month-on-month in 'meat and fish, and pulses and products'. However, it was lower in 'cereals and products' and 'milk and products'.

The government data further showed that the CPI-based price rise was lower in the fuel and light segment at 2.87% during September over 3.10% in the preceding month.

Nayar said amidst the unpalatable headline and food inflation figures, the relatively stable core inflation over the last three months offers some relief, keeping the hopes of a February 2021 rate cut alive. The government has tasked the Reserve Bank of India to keep the retail inflation at 4%, with a margin of 2% on either side.

SHORT TAKES

CAI revises production

Mumbai: Cotton Association of India (CAI) has increased the estimate for cotton output by 5.50 lakh bales to 360 lakh bales for the 2019-20 season in its September estimate due to higher production in the central zone. The total cotton production in 2018-19 (October-September) stood at 312 lakh bales, the CAI said in a statement Monday. CAI in earlier its estimate had pegged the production at 354.50 lakh bales for the 2019-20 season.

Cow dung 'diyas' to hit market

New Delhi: The Rashtriya Kamdhenu Aayog is targeting production of 33 crore eco-friendly earthen lamps (diyas) made from cow dung during Diwali next month, in order to counter Chinese products, its Chairman Vallabh Kathirai said Monday. The Aayog, set up in 2019 for the protection, promotion and conservation of indigenous cattle in the country, has started a nation-wide campaign to encourage use of cow dung-based products during the forthcoming festival.

RAI welcomes govt stimulus

New Delhi: The Retailers Association of India (RAI) Monday welcomed government's LTC cash voucher scheme and ₹10,000 festival advance to government employees to stimulate consumer demand during the festive season. The move, it said, will help retailers recover from the immense loss of business caused due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Exim Bank extends soft loan

New Delhi: India has extended a \$400 million (about ₹2,932 crore) soft loan to Maldives through the Exim Bank to finance a connectivity project in the nation of islands, a statement said Monday. The Exim Bank on behalf of the Indian Government has extended a Line of Credit of \$400 million for undertaking Greater Male's connectivity project in Maldives, the bank said.

'FRESH STIMULUS TO PUSH ECONOMIC ACTIVITY'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: The fresh stimulus package announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to boost domestic demand will give a much-needed push to economic activity, Niti Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar said Monday.

Sitharaman announced a ₹73,000 crore package, including advance payment of a part of wages to central government employees and cash in lieu of LTC, to stimulate consumer demand and investment in the economy damaged by the coronavirus pandemic.

"As she had assured us, honorable FM Nirmala Sitharaman has announced a fresh stimulus package to boost domestic demand and thereby giving the needed push to economic activity.

"The timing of the stimulus is perfect coming just ahead of the festival season when the green shoots of recovery are becoming stronger," Kumar said in a tweet. The multiplier effects of the package are expected to be multiples of the original amount, and higher economic activity would be sustained in the coming period, Kumar said. As much as ₹11,575 crore would be paid as LTC allowance and advance to central government and PSU employees on the condition that they spend on non-essential goods before March 31, she said. States would separately be eligible to get ₹12,000 crore in 50-year interest-free loans for capital expenditure, while the Union government will spend an additional ₹2,500 crore toward capital expenditure on roads, defence infrastructure, water supply and urban development.

SMALL TOWNS SET TO DRIVE RECORD FESTIVE SALES

Based on the expected strong festive sales performance, e-commerce is anticipated to grow and reach \$38 billion in sales in CY20, up 40% y-o-y

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 12: While the ongoing pandemic has left crores of Indians in deep financial trouble who are struggling to make ends meet, the aspirational Bharat - riding on the pent-up demand and discretionary income - is all set to embark on a record online festive sale journey that begins this week.

e-Commerce marketplaces Amazon, Flipkart and Snapdeal are ready with festive discounts and mega offers that will begin raining on the consumers from October 16 and those five-six days are set to defy the pandemic-induced economic distress that has engulfed the masses, according to industry experts.

Driven by the small-town India, the festive sales are looking to break earlier records. According to Bangalore-based management consulting firm RedSeer, the forthcoming festive season sale is projected to generate a gross merchandise value (GMV) of \$7 billion - a massive 84% growth compared to \$3.8 billion in GMV sales in the same period last year.

Based on the expected strong festive sales performance, e-commerce is anticipated to grow and reach \$38 billion in sales in CY20, up 40% year-on-year.

As experts debate the impact of the pandemic in small-town India, RedSeer said in its annual 'Online Festive Sales 2020 Forecast' report that this year's festive season sale

BIZ BUZZ

Govt to give interest-free loan to states

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman Monday announced a ₹12,000 crore interest-free 50-year loan to states for spending on capital projects in a bid to boost economy. Addressing a press conference, she said, out of the ₹12,000 crore, ₹1,600 crore will be given to north-eastern states and ₹900 crore will be for Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. She said ₹7,500 crore will be for the remaining states. ₹2,000 crore will be given to states that fulfill pre-stated reforms. The loan will have to be spent entirely on new or ongoing capital projects, she said adding that states can settle bills of contractors and suppliers but all the amount has to be paid before March 31, 2021.



BookMyShow adds safety shield tag

New Delhi: With many cinema theatres set to re-open later this month, online ticket booking platform BookMyShow (BMS) has added a new safety shield tag to help create awareness about the various safety and hygiene measures available across various properties listed on the platform. The 'My Safety First' safety shield tag has been rolled out across BMS' web and app platforms in collaboration with cinema partners all over India. Created using BMS' robust consumer and data analytics, this safety shield feature will highlight the best practices being followed by all cinemas across India, according to a statement. It will list various safety indicators available across every cinema listed on the platform.

BEATING THE PANDEMIC



will see more than half of the orders coming from tier-2 towns and cities with 45 to 50 million users.

According to Prabhu Ram, Head-Industry Intelligence Group (IIG), CMR, the festive season sales will be driven by two broad consumers' cohorts.

"On the one hand, premium buyers will seek to engage in impulsive shopping to make-up for the lost time. On the other hand, there will be the value buyers, including many first-time e-commerce shoppers from aspirational Bharat," Ram told IANS. Over 1 lakh Amazon-enabled

local shops, kiranas and neighbourhood stores across India will serve customers in the upcoming festive season on the e-commerce platform.

More than 20,000 offline retailers, kiranas and local shops from "Local Shops on Amazon" programme will participate in the "Great Indian Festival" sales for the first time, that starts from October 17.

"This festive season we are focused on helping our sellers and other MSME partners grow their business and bounce back from the recent challenges," said Manish Tiwary, VP, Amazon India.

More than 6.5 lakh sellers are ready to offer crores of products on Amazon.in and customers can

shop from over 4 crore products from small and medium businesses (SMBs) and products from over 20,000 local shops across 100 cities.

Flipkart is not far behind. It will unveil over 200 special edition products in partnership with more than 100 leading brands during its 'Big Billion Days' sale that begins from October 16.

The e-commerce marketplace has also on-boarded over 50,000 kiranas to bring festive cheer to consumers across 850 cities.

Snapdeal said it worked closely with manufacturers to bring products for its customers at prices lower than last year, adding over 10,000 sellers in the last three months to increase its inventory of value-priced merchandise.

ABD, BOWLERS LIFT RCB



AB DE VILLIERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sharjah, Oct 12: Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) were a completely different side than what their fans have witnessed so far as they comfortably defended their first-innings score of 194/2 against Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) here in their IPL game, Monday.

AB de Villiers (73 n o, 33b, 5x4, 6x6) was at his best in a magnificent batting display, which powered RCB to 194/2. Then the Virat Kohli-led side, who have struggled while defending targets, were excellent with the ball as well. They restricted KKR to 112/9, sealing an 82-run win.

Chasing a massive 195, KKR struggled to get going throughout their innings against a disciplined RCB bowling attack. Shubman Gill (34, 25b, 3x4, 1x6) was the top scorer for the losing side, while only two other batsmen – Andre Russell (16) and Rahul Tripathi (16) – could reach double figures.

For the Bangalore outfit, offie Washington Sundar (2/20) and pacer Chris Morris (2/17) shared four wickets between them. The other four bowlers, used by Kohli, got a wicket each.

Earlier, De Villiers and skipper Kohli (33 n o, 28b, 1x4) put together an unbroken third wicket stand of 100 runs from 7.4 overs to take the team out of a middle-over muddle.

On a pitch that was slowing down, spinner Varun Chakravarthy bowled a tidy 0/25 from four overs, while young pacer Kamlesh Nagarkoti (0/36) cleverly mixed up his deliveries with cutters to put brakes on RCB midway their innings.

Opener Aaron Finch (47, 37b, 4x4, 1x6) looked sluggish in the middle and struggled to find boundaries before being castled by M Prasadh Krishna (1/42).

With boundaries drying up, De Villiers unleashed his array of shots, racing to his fifty in 23 balls as RCB cruised to 83 runs from the last five overs to prop up the total.

This was after RCB openers Finch and Devdutt Padikkal (33) started off in a blazing fashion. But boundaries soon dried up after the Powerplay with Russell giving the breakthrough by cleaning up Padikkal with a fuller delivery.

BRIEF SCORES: RCB 194/2 (AB de Villiers 73 n o, Aaron Finch 47, Virat Kohli 33 n o, Devdutt Padikkal 32) beat KKR 112/9 (Shubman Gill 34; Chris Morris 2/17, Washington Sundar 2/20) by 82 runs.



AARON FINCH



Washington Sundar (C) is congratulated by AB de Villiers after getting a wicket as Virat Kohli shouts in celebration



FALTERING CSK UP AGAINST SRH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 12: Time is fast running out for the MS Dhoni-led Chennai Super Kings (CSK), a team who desperately need their batting to click when they take on Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) here Tuesday in a battle to keep their IPL hopes alive.

The three-time champions and last edition's runner-up, CSK are seeking a revival of fortunes after suffering five defeats in seven games. They are currently at the penultimate position in the eight-team standings halfway into the tournament.

Considered one of the most successful chasers in the history of IPL with a chase-master in Dhoni, CSK's batting struggle this year can be gauged from the fact that all their defeats came while going after targets.

While Shane Watson and Faf du Plessis have had decent outings so far, CSK need a stronger show from their faltering middle-order to.

After facing brickbats for persisting with Kedar Jadhav, CSK dropped him in their last match and his replacement Narayan Jagadeesan (33 off 28) made a decent score in the company of Ambati Rayudu (42 off 40). However, CSK's chase fell apart after the duo departed.

The likes of Sam Curran, Ravindra Jadeja and Dwayne Bravo too failed to come to the team's rescue. Dhoni himself has not been able to force the pace while chasing and the skipper had no qualms in admitting the flaws in his batting department.

"Batting has been bit of a worry. We need to do something about it," Dhoni had said. "I think we are better off playing the other way round – play the big shots and even if you get out, it is fine because we can't leave too many after the

15th or the 16th over. That just puts too much pressure on the lower order batsmen."

On the bowling front, Deepak Chahar and Jadeja were impressive the other night and Bravo's return was a welcome relief but the likes of Curran, Shardul Thakur and Karn Sharma need to pull up their performances. The tie also provides Dhoni and Co. a chance to avenge their seven-run loss to SRH in their previous outing.

SRH, on the other hand, are only a tad better-placed than CSK at the fifth spot with three wins from seven games. But the five-wicket defeat to Rajasthan Royals Sunday would be hurting SRH badly as at one stage, they looked in complete control after posting a competitive 158/4.

Batting has not been SRH's concern at all as the likes of Jonny Bairstow, skipper David Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane Williamson are all among runs and have the ability to shoulder the responsibility on their own.

But it is the bowling unit which let SRH down Sunday. Despite losing senior pacers Bhuvneshwar Kumar and all-rounder Mitchell Marsh to injuries, SRH have shown tremendous fighting abilities with Rashid Khan and yorker specialist T Natarajan doing the job for the side.

But Sunday SRH let Royals off the hook in the middle overs after reducing them to 78/5. The likes of Sandeep Sharma, Khaleel Ahmed and young Abhishek Sharma are the weak links in bowling which they need to address.



UEFA NATIONS LEAGUE

England stun Belgium

London: Marcus Rashford's penalty and a deflected strike from Mason Mount helped England come from a goal down to overcome top-ranked Belgium 2-1 at Wembley Sunday and climb above them in their UEFA Nations League group. Romelu Lukaku opened the scoring for the visitors from the penalty spot in the 16th minute after being brought down by a lunging tackle from Eric Dier. However, when England won a corner late in the half, Belgium's Thomas Meunier clumsily pulled down the hosts' captain Jordan Henderson to concede a penalty. Rashford converted from the spot. England then got their reward through Mount in the 64th with a shot that took a heavy deflection off the boot of a Belgium defender, looping over keeper Simon Mignolet into the far corner of the net.

France, Portugal play out goalless draw

Paris: France drew 0-0 at home to Portugal in the UEFA Nations League Sunday in a cagey clash between the world and European champions which largely failed to live up to their billing. The teams could only manage one shot on target in the first half, a hopeful attempt by Antoine Griezmann from the tightest of angles which stung the hands of keeper Rui Patrício. Cristiano Ronaldo came closest to scoring when he fired a left-footed strike at goal in added time but his deflected shot was well saved by France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris. The result kept holders Portugal top of League A Group 3 with seven points after three games, while France are second, also with seven. Croatia are third on three after winning 2-1 at home to Sweden, who are bottom with no points.

Underdogs Poland hold sloppy Italy

Gdansk: Italy coach Roberto Mancini fumed over the state of the pitch after his team were held to a 0-0 draw away to Poland in the Nations League Sunday. After a glaring miss by Federico Chiesa early in the game, Italy struggled to create chances and managed only three shots on target despite enjoying 60 per cent of possession. Even so, Italy extended their unbeaten run to 18 matches as they stayed top of League A Group One with five points from three games. The Netherlands and Poland have four each and Bosnia two.

Injured Ishant out of IPL 2020

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 12: Veteran pacer Ishant Sharma was Monday ruled out of the Indian Premier League (IPL) with a rib-cage injury, his team Delhi Capitals said.

Ishant is the second Delhi Capitals player to be ruled out after leg-spinner Amit Mishra, whose campaign ended due to a ring finger fracture sustained during one of the earlier matches.

The 32-year-old Test specialist had featured in only one of the seven games that Delhi Capitals have played so far, finishing his four overs wicketless for 26 runs against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Abu Dhabi.

DC are all set to seek a replacement with two senior bowlers ruled out of the remainder of the IPL.

Ex-India footballer Chapman dies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 12: Former India football captain and midfielder Carlton Chapman, who formed a deadly trio at the club level with Bhaichung Bhutia and IM Vijayan in the 1990s, died Monday following a heart attack in Bengaluru. He was 49.

Chapman was hospitalised Sunday night at a hospital in Bangalore and passed away early this morning. "I got a call from Bangalore from one of his friends that Chapman is no more. He passed away early this morning. He was a happy-go-lucky man, always smiling and ready to help others," Chapman's one-time India teammate Bruno Coutinho told this agency from Goa.

A creative midfielder, Chapman played for India between 1995 and

2001 and the country won the 1997 SAFF Cup under his captaincy.

At the club level, he had two successful spells with East Bengal and one with now defunct JCT Mills.

A product of the Tata Football Academy in early 1990s, Chapman joined East Bengal in 1993 and scored a hat-trick in his team's 6-2 win against Iraq club Al Zawra in a first round match at the Asian Cup



Winners Cup that year. But his best came after moving to JCT in 1995.

Chapman won 14 trophies with the Punjab-based club, including the inaugural National Football League in 1996-97, and formed a formidable combination with Vijayan and Bhutia.

Chapman had also joined now-defunct FC Kochin. But after one season, he returned to East Bengal in 1998 and the club won the NFL under his captaincy in 2001. He announced his retirement from professional football in 2001.

As coach, Chapman had stints with I-League second division club Tata Football Academy, Royal Wahingdoh FC of Shillong and Sudeva Moonlight FC of Delhi before becoming the Technical Director of the Kozhikode-based Quartz International Football Academy in 2017.

The more things change, the more they stay same for Rafa

REUTERS

Paris, Oct 12: Rafa Nadal is a creature of habit and there were suggestions that various new things at this year's French Open could unsettle the Spaniard in his bid for a 13th Roland Garros title.

The way he crushed Novak Djokovic in the final Sunday, however, proved that it would take more than a new stadium, different

balls and unfamiliar weather conditions to throw the clay-court king off his stride.

As usual, the Spaniard put his water bottles on his left side, labels facing the correct way, before starting his demolition job to humble Djokovic 6-0, 6-2, 7-5 and match Roger Federer's record of 20 Grand Slam men's singles titles.

While the closed roof should have given Djokovic an advantage, and heavier balls and chilly weather were detrimental to his devastating top spin – his biggest weapon – Nadal delivered one of his best performances at Roland Garros.

"The personal satisfaction is big because under the circumstances that we played this Roland Garros, even if I played an amazing match this afternoon, the conditions

bit not the conditions that I will choose, never, to play an event like this," Nadal, who now leads Djokovic 5-4 in their Grand Slam final confrontations, told a news conference.

In addition to the unusual conditions, Nadal was also facing a player who appeared at his peak, having suffered his only defeat of the year when he was defaulted at the US Open.

But the Mallorcan raised his level to the maximum when it mattered after entering the tournament on the back of a quarterfinal defeat at the Italian Open.

"For me, honestly, one month and a half ago if you tell me you're going to have this trophy with you again, I will say, 'This year will probably be too difficult'," Nadal said.

"I played an amazing level of tennis, no? For two sets and a half I played great. I can't say another thing. It is impossible to have this score against him without playing great. I played a very good final. I played at my highest level when I needed to play at my highest level, so it is something I am very proud of."

FACT BOX

NADAL'S 13 FRENCH OPEN TITLES

- 2005: vs Mariano Puerta 6-7(6-8), 6-3, 6-1, 7-5
- 2006: vs Roger Federer 1-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6
- 2007: vs Roger Federer 6-3, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4
- 2008: vs Roger Federer 6-1, 6-3, 6-0
- 2010: vs Robin Soderling 6-4, 6-2, 6-4
- 2011: vs Roger Federer 7-5, 7-6(7-3), 5-7, 6-1
- 2012: vs Novak Djokovic 6-4, 6-3, 2-6, 7-5
- 2013: vs David Ferrer 6-3, 6-2, 6-3
- 2014: vs Novak Djokovic 3-6, 7-5, 6-2, 6-4
- 2017: vs Stan Wawrinka 6-2, 6-3, 6-1
- 2018: vs Dominic Thiem 6-4, 6-3, 6-2
- 2019: vs Dominic Thiem 6-3, 5-7, 6-1, 6-1
- 2020: vs Novak Djokovic 6-0, 6-2, 7-5

FAB 3 STATS (NADAL, FEDERER & DJOKOVIC)

GRAND SLAM TITLES

FEDERER: 20
(Australian Open 2004, 2006, 2007, 2010, 2017, 2018; French Open 2009; Wimbledon 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012, 2017; US Open 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008)

NADAL: 20
(Australian Open 2009; French Open 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020; Wimbledon 2008, 2010; US Open 2010, 2013, 2017, 2019)

DJOKOVIC: 17
(Australian Open 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2019, 2020; French Open 2016; Wimbledon 2011, 2014, 2015, 2018, 2019; US Open 2011, 2015, 2018)



HEAD-TO-HEAD RECORD

All meetings	Grand Slam meetings
Djokovic vs Federer 27-23	Djokovic vs Federer 11-6
Djokovic vs Nadal 29-27	Nadal vs Djokovic 10-6
Federer vs Nadal 24-16	Nadal vs Federer 10-4

MOST ATP TITLES

Federer (103); Nadal (85); Djokovic (81)
(Jimmy O'Connors leads the chart with 109 titles followed by Federer, Ivan Lendl (94), Nadal and Djokovic)

MOST ATP MASTERS TITLES

Djokovic: 36; Nadal: 35; Federer: 28

FEDERER CONGRATULATES NADAL

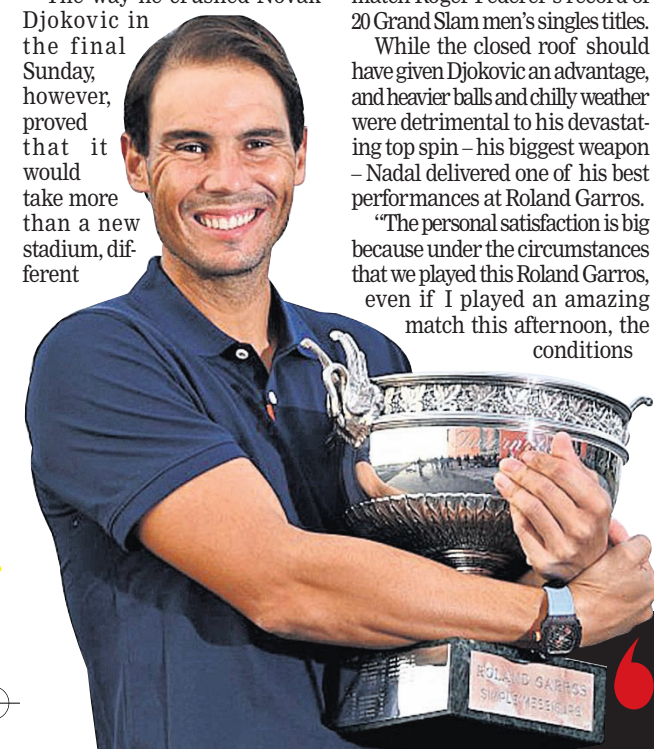
Rafa Nadal made history Sunday by winning his 20th Grand Slam trophy, tying Roger Federer for the most major titles in history. Federer was the first to congratulate him. "I have always had the utmost respect for my friend Rafa as a person and as a champion. As my greatest rival over many years, I believe we have pushed each other to become better players," Federer wrote on Twitter. "Therefore, it is a true honour for me to congratulate him on his 20th Grand Slam victory. It is especially amazing that he has now won Roland Garros an incredible 13 times, which is one of the greatest achievements in sport," Federer wrote. "I also congratulate his team, because nobody can do this alone. I hope 20 is just another step on the continuing journey for both of us. Well done, Rafa. You deserve it." This is the first time Federer and Nadal have held the same number of major titles. When they started their careers, Pete Sampras held the all-time Grand Slam championship record with 14. Now Federer and Nadal each have 20, and Djokovic owns 17 major trophies. "Thanks to Roger for the words. As everybody knows, we have a very, very good relationship. We respect each other a lot," Nadal said. "In some ways, I think he's happy when I'm winning and I'm happy when he's doing things well. In some way for me it means a lot, the positive relationship that we have together, because we have been going through a great rivalry for a very, very long time."

Correction please!

Paris: Former American great Chris Evert called out Novak Djokovic for saying his rivalry with Rafa Nadal was the greatest in the history of tennis after his humiliating defeat by Nadal in the French Open final Sunday. "I've played (Rafa) more than I (have) played any other player in my professional career. Our head-to-head is the biggest head-to-head ever in the history of the sport... he's definitely my greatest rival," Djokovic said. Evert, however, was quick to point out how many times she had played Martina Navratilova. "Well, true... in men's tennis... Martina and I played 80 times," Evert, who won 18 Grand Slam singles titles, wrote on Twitter. The Tweet was mentioned by 12-times singles Grand Slam winner Billie Jean King who also reminded her followers that Evert and Navratilova had faced each other 80 times. Navratilova also won 18 Grand Slam singles titles and beat Evert on 43 occasions as the pair dominated women's tennis in the 1970s and 1980s.

Night sessions on cards in 2021

Paris: The French Open will have night sessions that will be televised in France exclusively on Amazon Prime Video as of next year, organisers said Sunday. The French tennis federation said that one match a day, from the first Monday until the quarterfinals, would start at 2100 local time. "Spectators are guaranteed to see that day's headline men's or women's match from 9pm onwards," the FFT said in a statement. The FFT's decision leaves Wimbledon as the only of the four Grand Slam tournaments without a night session.



"I don't have much to say but that I was completely outplayed by Rafa, by the better player on the court. He's phenomenal. No holding him back it seems like. It's amazing. I mean, I admire all his achievements, I mean, especially the one here. Today you showed why you are king of the clay... I was definitely outplayed by a better player on the court" **DJOKOVIC ON NADAL**