



BACK IN BUSINESS

Rhea Chakraborty appears in the trailer of 'Chehere' putting all rumours about her ouster to rest

LEISURE P2



BABY BORN WITH ANTIBODIES

A woman in the US has given birth to a baby who has antibodies against the novel coronavirus in her blood

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA LEVEL T20I SERIES

Debutant Suryakumar Yadav's half century helps India level the T20I series against England at Ahmedabad

SPORTS P12

Uniform Policy raises stink

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: In the aftermath of the news that 35,000 acres of Jagannath land are up for sale, questions are being now raised over the 'Uniform Policy' that will purportedly determine the value of the land.

Observers said the concept of the Uniform Policy is faulty as the ceiling price of land scattered across the state cannot be valued at the same rate. For example, land in Khurda district cannot be equated with land in remote Nuapada district in terms of their value. Similarly, questions were also raised as to who will be the ultimate beneficiaries of the policy—the temple or the encroachers.

The report published Monday in Orissa POST triggered an earthquake of reactions on social media with people cutting across parties attacking the government's policy to sell the Jagannath land.

The Uniform Policy was framed in 2003. According to it, the Odisha government had formed a panel named as 'Land Committee, Shree Jagannath Temple, Puri' in November 2002. The panel comprised bureaucrats from law, revenue & finance departments along with Puri ADM and chief administrator of the temple.

JAGANNATH LAND SALE



Subsequently, at a meeting, the temple authority put forth the draft policy, which was later approved by the law department. Notably, policy has not been discussed in the Assembly. Moreover, neither the government nor the temple administration had made any major effort to get back the Lord's land before coming up with the policy.

Even though over 60,426.923 acres of land belonging to Jagannath have been detected in 24 districts in Odisha, the temple administration has been able to get record of rights (RoR) for 34,876.983 acres only.

Commenting on the issue, Jagannath Sanskruti Surakhya Manch convener Laxmikanta Dash said, "It is the land of Lord Jagannath, not the government or temple administration. Earlier, they have given

huge amounts of land in Puri to a private company. In return what the temple got? Instead of selling the land, the temple administration should give it on lease for five or 10 years," and added, "The value of money will decrease, but the price of land and property will increase each year."

Meanwhile, a political slugfest began over the issue. Leader of Opposition Pradipta Naik condemned the move. "This is highly objectionable, unethical, against the spirit of crores of Hindus. Temple lands, property belong to gods and not the government, he said. Congress leader Suresh Routray said, "We will strongly protest the conspiracy of the government to sell the land of Lord Jagannath. The lands were donated by devotees to Lord Jagannath, who are you to sell it."

SJTA DENIES 'LAND SALE'

BHUBANESWAR: Chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Krishan Kumar issued a clarification Thursday contradicting the statement made by Law Minister Pratap Jena in the House March 16. Jena had said the Odisha government is taking steps to sell off approximately 35,000 acres of Jagannath Temple land as per the recommendation of the BD Sharma Committee. Kumar, however, claimed the media reports based on the minister's statement is 'false and motivated'. "Lands which are occupied or are under the possession of people since long belong to Shree Jagannath Mahaprabhu. Those are being settled by the temple committee as per the 'Unified Policy', framed for the purpose in the year 2003," Kumar said in a tweet. Kumar, however, mentioned that 291 acres were settled between 2001 and 2010 and 96 acres have been settled between 2011 and 2021. These have been settled for the benefit of the public mostly in the form of schools, medical college and roads, among others, he said.

କ୍ର.ସଂ ୩- ଶ୍ରୀଜୀଉଙ୍କର ଗୋଟିଏ ଅଞ୍ଚଳରେ ଥିବା ଜମି ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ୧୦ ଗୋଟିରେ ଅବଶିଷ୍ଟ ଏ.ଏ. ୨୫୫ଟି ପରିମିତ ଜମିକୁ ଡିଡିଏ ଡିଭିଜନ ଦ୍ଵାରା ଉନ୍ନତ ନିରମା ଲିମିଟେଡ୍ ଦ୍ଵାରା ବିକ୍ରୟ କରାଯିବ ବୋଲି ଜଣାଇ ଦିଆଯାଇଛି ।

କ୍ର.ସଂ ୫ ଓ ୬- ଡିଡିଏ ଡିଭିଜନ ୨୪ ଗୋଟି ବିକ୍ରୟ ଥିବା ଏ.୬୦,୪୨୭.୯୪୩୫୫ ପରିମିତ ଗ୍ରାମାଞ୍ଚଳ ଜମି ବିକ୍ରୟ କରାଯାଇଛି । ଉକ୍ତ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ଏ.୬୦,୪୨୭.୯୪୩୫୫ ପରିମିତ ଜମି ଏ.୬୦,୪୨୭.୯୪୩୫୫ ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିର ପ୍ରଶାସନ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟାଳୟରେ ପ୍ରାପ୍ତ ହୋଇଅଛି । ମାନ୍ୟତର ଜମିଖର୍ଚ୍ଚକ ସ୍ଵପାରିଶ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ଏହି ଜମିକୁ ବିକ୍ରୟ କରାଯିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ରାଜ୍ୟ ସରକାରଙ୍କ ଅନୁମୋଦିତ 'ଏମାନ ନାଟି' ରେ ବର୍ଣ୍ଣିତ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥା ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ପଦକ୍ଷେପ ଗ୍ରହଣ କରାଯାଇଅଛି । କିଛି ମଧ୍ୟରେ କରକ ସହର ଛିଡା ଭାବେ ମଠ କୋଠା ବ୍ୟତୀତ ଅନ୍ୟ ବିକ୍ରୟ ଥିବା ଜମି ମଧ୍ୟରୁ ଏ.୩୧୫.୩୩୭୫୫ ପରିମିତ ଜମିକୁ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଜମି କ୍ରୟ ବ୍ୟବସ୍ଥାକାରୀଙ୍କୁ ରେଡିଷ୍ଟି ବଲିକ ମାଧ୍ୟମରେ ବିକ୍ରୟ କରାଯାଇ ବିକ୍ରୟ ଲକ୍ଷ ୧.୧୧,୨୦,୭୭, ୯୯୧/- ଶ୍ରୀମନ୍ଦିର ଶାସନ ପାଠି ରେ ବିନିଯୋଗ କରାଯାଇଅଛି ।

ଏବଂ କିଛି ଡିଡିଏ ବାହାରେ ଅନ୍ୟ ୬ ଗୋଟି ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଥିବା ଶ୍ରୀଜୀଉଙ୍କ ଏ.୩୧୫.୩୩୭୫୫ ପରିମିତ ଜମି ବିକ୍ରୟ କରାଯାଇ ଏବଂ ଏହାକୁ ବିକ୍ରୟ କରାଯିବା ନିମନ୍ତେ ସଂପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ବିକ୍ରୟ ବିକ୍ରୟକାରୀଙ୍କୁ ପ୍ରସ୍ତାବ ଦିଆଯାଇଅଛି ।

Minister Pratap Jena's statement in House

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I've a medical condition. I'm a compulsive liar. When party came to know about it, they made me star campaigner!

Naveen's efforts solve Assembly imbroglio



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's intervention Thursday paved the way for a solution to the ongoing imbroglio in the Odisha Legislative Assembly. After discussions with BJP lawmakers, a decision was taken that Food Supplies Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain will give his statement Friday regarding paddy procurement at 11.30am in the Assembly. The BJP and the Congress for the last six days had been demanding an explanation from the government over the alleged mismanagement in paddy procurement.

However, prior to this decision, high voltage drama was witnessed in the state capital. The BJP MLAs led by Leader of Opposition, Pradipta Naik first questioned the silence of the government on irregularities in procurement of paddy and also questioned the CM's absence in the Assembly. They then decided to march from the Assembly towards Naveen Nivas.

The BJP delegation carrying posters and placards marched towards Naveen Nivas shouting anti-government slogans. They demanded that the CM must come out and respond to the questions raised by them. Several BJD MLAs and ministers tried to counter the BJP lawmakers. Among them were ministers and leaders like Bikram Keshari Arukha, Debi Prasad Mishra and Pratap Jena. They were seen negotiating with the protesting BJP leaders.

However, when negotiations failed, Patnaik decided to take matters into his own hands. The chief minister welcomed the protesting BJP MLAs and invited them for discussions inside his residence.

"The CM held talks with the protesting MLAs regarding the Assembly imbroglio and paddy procurement issues. We are now hopeful of resolving the deadlock in the Assembly," Arukha said.

After around two hours of hectic parleys at Naveen Nivas another all-party meeting was convened at the Assembly premises. It was decided that the government would respond to the allegations of mismanagement of paddy production in the Assembly.

"It was also decided during the all-party meeting that Food Supplies Minister Swain will give his statement on paddy procurement at 11.30am Friday," Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro said.

This development is certainly a ray of hope as for six days the functioning of the Assembly has remained stalled over protests and counter-protests over paddy procurement.

Life imprisonment for Bachan Sudha killer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Khurda District and Sessions judge Thursday sentenced Dipti Ranjan Patnaik, the main accused in the sensational Bachan Sudha Patnaik murder case to life imprisonment. The verdict came little more than seven years after the crime had been committed. The court also asked Dipti to pay ₹5,000 as fine failing which he will undergo another two months in prison.

The deceased was the wife of businessman Manu Charan Patnaik and the couple was staying at their residence at Sabar Sahi in Rasulgarh under

Mancheswar police limits.

Dipti worked as a security guard at the residence of the couple. He knew that they always kept cash and expensive jewellery in the house. So he hatched a plan to rob them.

Dipti entered the house September 11, 2013 when Bachan Sudha was alone. He killed her by slitting with a kitchen knife and fled with a diamond locket, some ATM cards and other valuables.

Bharat Charan Sahoo the IO in the case nabbed the accused from his hideout in Palasuni area here September 14, 2013 while Public Prosecutor Sarad Chandra Samanta fought the case.

LIKELY HIKE IN POWER TARIFF

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Power tariff is likely to be hiked further in the state as Discoms have filed a petition before the Odisha Electricity Regulatory Commission (OERC) proposing to increase the electricity tariff for the year 2021-22. The proposed hike in tariff is expected to be ₹1.50 per unit.

Six months back, the OERC had increased electricity charges to ₹5.25 with a rise of 20 paise per unit. If the rates are revised again it will certainly pinch a hole in the pocket of the consumers every month.

However, the Odisha Consumers' Association has said that they will oppose the possible hike in power tariff. The association has threatened widespread agitation across Odisha, if the power charges are revised and increased.

OrissaPOST BUSINESS EMINENCE AWARDS

Inaugurator: **Shri Naveen Patnaik**, Hon'ble CM, Odisha

Chief Guest: **Shri Dharmendra Pradhan**, Hon'ble Union Minister Petroleum & Natural Gas and Steel

Keynote Address: **Shri Vishal Dev, IAS**, Principal Secretary Tourism, Sports & Youth Services

20 March, 2021 Venue: Swosti Premium, Bhubaneswar

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KANYE WEST RICHEST BLACK AMERICAN WITH ESTIMATED NET WORTH OF \$6.6BN

Music producer-composer Kanye West is the richest Black person in the United States, according to a report in Bloomberg. The 43-year-old's net worth is close to \$6.6 billion, thanks to his sneaker and apparel business, Yeezy. West and his wife, Kim Kardashian, recently filed for divorce.

ANGELINA FILES 'EVIDENCE' OF ABUSE CLAIM AGAINST BRAD

Actress-filmmaker Angelina Jolie has filed papers as evidence in the court in support of domestic abuse allegations against her former husband, actor-filmmaker Brad Pitt. Meanwhile, a source close to Pitt told US Weekly that the filing is nothing but an attempt to merely 'hurt' the 57-year-old actor.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
So, busy bee, you finally realise you've been ignoring your near and dear. And now, it's going to cost you a lot of effort to make it up to them. Dinner at the finest restaurant, a trip to the theatre, shopping at a posh boutique... be ready to splurge, says Ganesh!

TAURUS
Your vision today will have a hue of green as you will draw to money like a fly to sweets. Taste the power of money with fortune as the monkey on your back. You may buy a pendant or a necklace today and your haggling skills will save you from being swindled, says Ganesh.

GEMINI
You will spend the day safeguarding sentiments of others and it is in your own interest. For most part of the day, probably the entire day, you will be away from your family, mostly on a trip for business or leisure purposes. Today, having a successful career will be only thing on your mind.

CANCER
You are a master of deception, and your sugar-coated comments play a pivotal role in your methods. Today, you will be able to smell trouble from a distance, and will know when to take a U-turn. Your methods may not make you very popular with the so-called moral brigade working with you, but you may think that this is the easiest way to the top.

LEO
Chess is a good start, but it is nothing compared to the strategic intrigues of your day today. Arguments will lead to further arguments, and nowhere else, reminds Ganesh. So, it only makes sense to counter a disagreement with an agreement. But then again, total agreement is doubly secretive.

VIRGO
You will shine exceedingly well in all the activities that you undertake today. Your dream of starting business operations on foreign shores will fructify today, says Ganesh. You may pay more attention to your personal appearance, which will boost your morale considerably.

LIBRA
Call it your generous side, but today is the perfect day to give back to all those from whom you have received so far. With roots set firmly in community service, it might do you well to extend that helping hand and return something back to them, preferably in the double. Go along with the spirit of an early thanksgiving today.

SCORPIO
An upcoming project of a new joint venture will capsize your personal life and keep you on your toes today, says Ganesh. You may not find the results in proportion to the efforts that you put in, but be patient because everything will fall in place only in due time. If all things in life came at an easy cost, then they would be grossly undervalued, reminds Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Karma will haunt you so be ready for the worst. You may receive advice - unasked and unwarranted. Don't overlook it either, as these suggestions can be worthy of consideration. Avoid arrogance and deceit. Lead an austere life, says Ganesh or you may be in problem.

CAPRICORN
You may have sweated your guts out for an opportunity to pursue higher studies abroad, and met with disappointment. Try again today, advises Ganesh. For those of you engaged in speculation, transaction in stock and shares is likely and may fetch substantial gains. Opportunities galore, but you won't progress until you exploit them to the best of your interest.

AQUARIUS
Work, work, work! That is what will pay rich dividends. Of course, a pat on the back does matter, and with your commitment record, you may be getting a lot of it! You may back off from taking risks, and yet want change. Ganesh wonders how you will fulfill your wish.

PISCES
Arguments lead nowhere, and why argue when, at the end of the day, you can step back and watch them end up with egg on their faces, break a leg, get crushed under a falling safe, or otherwise suffer the numerous disasters you wish them to, for disagreeing with you. You will end up having the last laugh, so you might as well use your time more effectively, says Ganesh.

When SRK helped Shilpa Shetty with lip-syncing

NEW DELHI: Actress Shilpa Shetty recalls how superstar Shah Rukh Khan taught her the trick to deal with lip-syncing during songs, while shooting Baazigar in 1993.

Shilpa, who is currently judging the music reality show Indian Idol, opened up when contestants Nihal and Sayali performed the songs Aye mere humsafar, Kitabein bahut si, Chura ke dil mera from the film on the show.

"Baazigar was my first movie and I was very nervous but Shah Rukh was very sweet. He used to always calm me down and help me with the scenes. When we were shooting for the song Aye mere Humsafar and I had to lip sync the lyrics, I was not getting it properly. SRK being the gentleman he is, he immediately popped in and helped me with the lyrics and told me a technique on how to get the lip-sync on point," Shilpa said.



The thriller film was directed by Abbas-Mustan and also starred Kajol.



Vaani shares her 'warm honey' vibes

MUMBAI: Actress Vaani Kapoor scorches in a new Instagram post she has shared Thursday. The actress uploaded a picture in yellow bikini top paired with white pants, looking tanned and sultry (in set).

"It was all glimmer and warm honey in the yellow light," she captioned her post. Vaani has been receiving

praises galore from her followers and colleagues.

The actress has a big line-up in the months ahead. She recently wrapped up the shooting of Chandigarh Kare Aashiqui alongside actor Ayushmann Khurrana. She will also be seen in Bell Bottom starring Akshay Kumar, and in Shamsheera with Ranbir Kapoor and Sanjay Dutt.



'Rhea integral part of Chehre'

MUMBAI: The trailer of the Amitabh Bachchan-Emraan Hashmi starrer Chehre launched Thursday, and actress Rhea Chakraborty also makes an appearance in it. This puts rumours of her being ousted from the project to rest.

Producer Anand Pandit says Rhea was always part of the film.

"There was never any question of not having Rhea in the film. She was, is and will always be an integral part of Chehre. I don't believe in getting swayed so easily," Pandit says. The actress was missing from the first poster and teaser of the film. She is also not part of the promotions of the film.

This will be Rhea's first release after her boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput's death. Rhea was accused by the family for abetting his suicide and she even spent a few weeks in custody after being charged with possession and supplying of drugs.



PANCHAMAVEDA'S DRAMA FESTIVAL CONCLUDES

Somarasa a reflection of depressing societal changes

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: The five-day state level comedy play festival organised by Panchamaveda in collaboration with Shristi Theatre came to an end here at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Thursday.

City-based drama troupe Magic Theatre presented play Somarasa on the last day of the event.

Written and directed by famous film actor Pragyan Ranjan Khatua, the drama depicted the prevailing 'drinking culture' in the society.

In the past, people used to help others voluntarily. But the time has changed so as the lifestyle, behavior and the mutual relationship. Things have come to such a pass that be it at the time of celebration or dur-



A scene from play Somarasa staged at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Thursday

ing difficult times, no one extends a helping hand if not treated with 'Somarasa' or liquor. It has become a trend. Though the practice make people suffer, it is becoming

difficult to get rid of this 'drinking culture'. This is what director Pragyan told the viewers in his play. Shankar, Sujit, Kailash, Bhakti, Rajesh, Soumya, Sushant,

Swarup and Pragyan were among the artistes who performed on the stage.

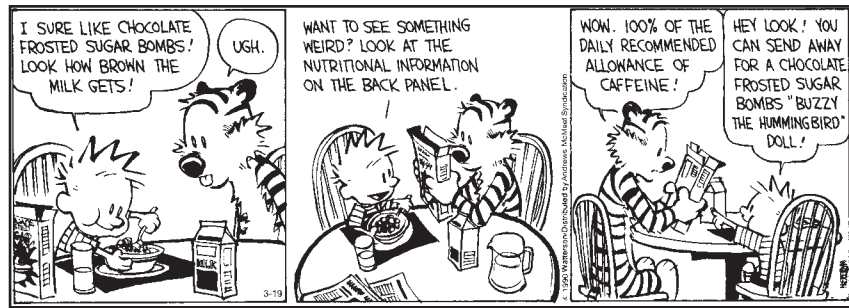
Eminent cinema and theatre personality Nrusingha Mohanty was conferred with Amiya Pattnaik Samman while actor and astrologer Pramod Satpathy, theatre director Sudhanshu Mohan Dwivedi, music director Manmath Misha and actress Namita Bhattacharya were honoured with Panchamaveda Samman on the occasion, said troupe's secretary Prakash Maharana.

The guests who attended the closing event include Energy and Industries Minister Dibyashankar Mishra, Kendrapara MLA Shashibhusan Behera, Income Tax Principal Commissioner Manoranjan Panigrahi and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi secretary Prabodh Kumar Rath. Panchamaveda's working president Haren Sahoo conducted the meeting.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

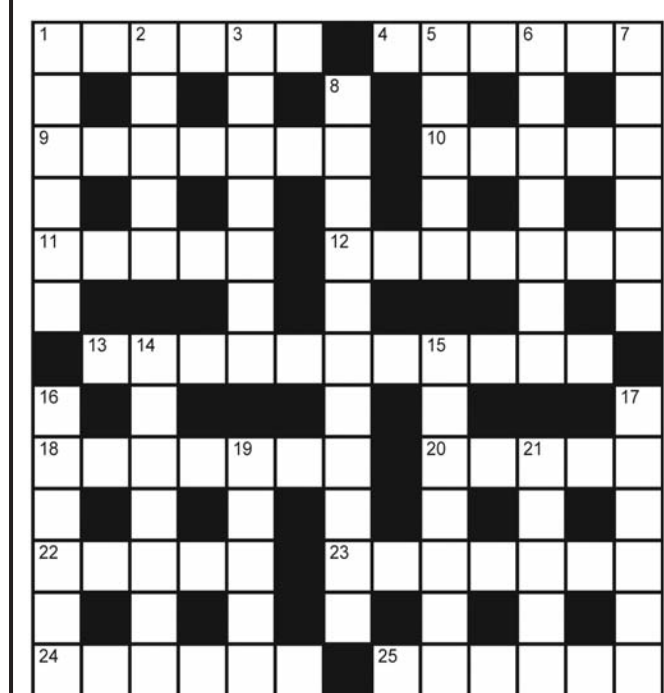


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
 1 Avaricious
 4 Newspaper VIP
 9 Lanai, in Hawaii
 10 Parting word
 11 Takes a chance
 12 Riot police weapon (4-3)
 13 Nannies
 18 High theatre walkway
 20 Rival of Paris
- Down**
 22 Andrea Bocelli, for one
 23 Cartoon, maybe
 24 Desk item
 25 Fights (3-3)
- Across**
 6 Gun part
 7 Defy
 8 Famous pirate (7,4)
 14 Lobster part
 15 Raw steak dish
 16 Edge tool for cutting grass
 17 Tree branches
 19 Eagle's nest
 21 Damp

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

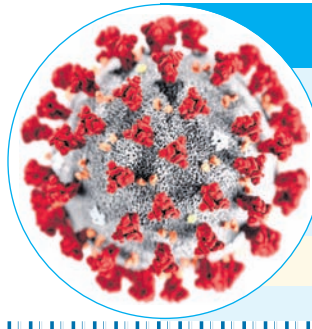
8	C	E	7	B	3	6	9	4	0	1	5	A	D	2
7	9	5	D	1	C	0	E	B	3	A	2	6	4	8
1	B	2	E	4	5	3	D	A	7	8	6	C	9	0
D	O	A	6	2	8	1	C	5	B	9	4	7	E	3
3	6	4	A	9	0	7	2	8	C	E	D	5	B	1
A	D	0	4	8	1	9	5	3	6	C	E	2	7	B
5	3	B	C	D	6	A	7	E	9	2	8	0	1	4
9	1	C	B	0	7	2	4	6	D	5	3	E	8	A
4	E	8	9	5	2	C	B	A	1	A	7	0	D	3
6	2	7	3	A	0	1	4	8	9	6	5	B	C	E
2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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



MOTHER WORSHIP

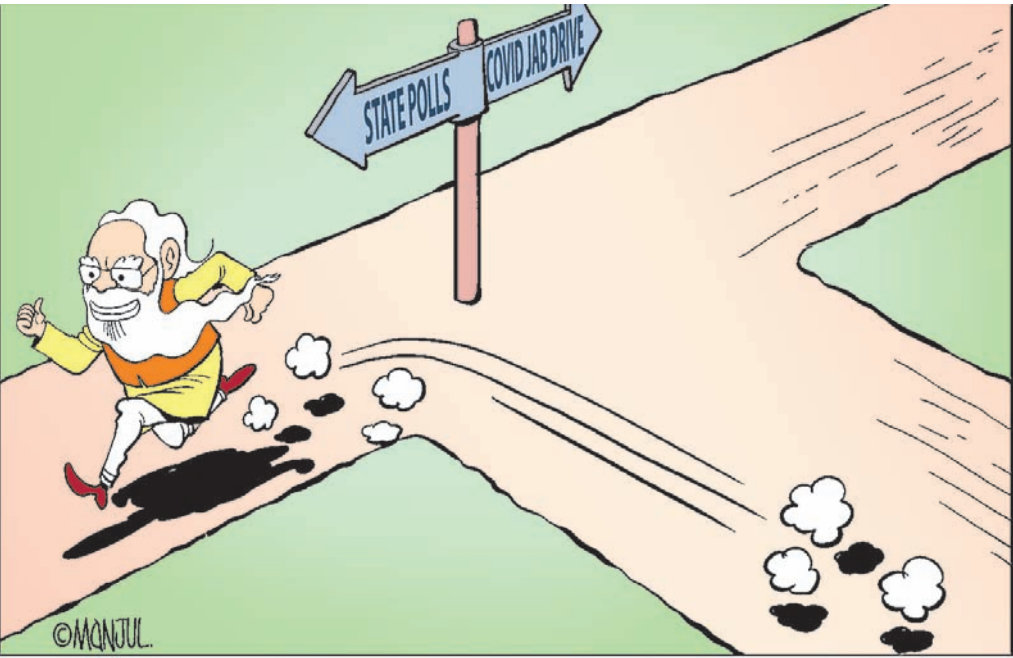
A servitor adorns Goddess Mahalaxmi with a new sari at the Lions' Gate of Srimandir, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	12,19,56,311	9,82,82,986	26,95,004
India	1,14,74,302	1,10,63,025	1,59,216
Odisha	3,38,489	3,35,923	1,918

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



1 CC cases fall prey to cop inertia: RTI reply

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: The officials of various police stations in the Capital city are reportedly showing least interest in taking action on Complaint Cases or 1 CC cases.

The victims often lodge complaints with the Magistrates after failing to get justice from the police. Subsequently, the Magistrates direct the police stations concerned to register cases if they find the complaints genuine under Clause 3 of Section 156 under CrPC. These cases are called as Complaint Cases or 1 CC cases.

According to sources, most of the complaint cases registered with the police pertain to either cheating or civil dispute matters. Many lax and irresponsible police officers often adopt a laidback approach in registering FIR at first instance. So, the victims move the magis-



WHAT ARE 1 CC CASES?

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trate to file the case.

Meanwhile, data obtained through an RTI plea revealed that justice still eludes many aggrieved complainants who approached the court to force the police to act on their complaints. According to the RTI reply, the cops are yet to arrest many accused persons in a large

number of complaint cases registered at the city police stations during the last 10 years.

Khandagiri police received 125 1CC cases between 2010 and 2020. The cops could arrest 42 persons in the above cases while 100 accused persons are still at large.

Similarly, Capital police regis-

tered 256 complaint cases and arrested 87 persons during the last decade. However, the Capital police cops are yet to arrest 340 accused persons in the 1CC cases referred by the Magistrates.

Nayapalli police station received 221 complaint cases during the period. As many as 110 persons were arrested by the Nayapalli police during the period. On the other hand, as many as 200 persons are yet to be arrested during the last 10 years. Likewise, as many as 234 complaint cases were registered at Laxmisagar police station between 2010 and 2020. However, the cops arrested 87 accused persons while 340 persons are still at large.

The situation is no different in other police stations. The above data has been pointing fingers towards a lack of interest by police to solve complaint cases referred by the Magistrates.

Barang mason found dead

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, March 18: A 50-year-old mason was found dead under suspicious circumstances in Naranpur area here Thursday, police sources said.

The deceased was identified as Tikina Swain of Munda Muhana village here. According to sources, a few locals discovered a naked and lifeless Swain on the veranda of Mahaveer Sporting Club near Naranpur playground and informed the police.

A team, comprising additional commissioner of police (ACP) (Zone-IV) Satyaranjan Mallick and Barang inspector in-charge (IIC) Sashikanta Rout, reached the spot and carried out preliminary investigations. Later, a forensic team also joined the probe.

Police got the body identified by Jayanti, Swain's wife, before sending it for an autopsy. "We've recovered a pair of blood-stained men clothing and slippers from near the body. There were a few injury marks on the body's face," the ACP said.

On the basis of a complaint lodged by Jayanti, Barang police registered a case (69/21).

According to Jayanti, her husband was a drunkard. And his death could be a mishap. However, the autopsy report and footage of nearby CCTVs will help us land at any conclusion, Mallick pointed out.

MEMO TO SMRITI IRANI

BJD seeks pending ₹649Cr W&CD funds from Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 18: A delegation of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MPs Thursday met Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani and sought release of Rs 649.71 crore as part of various centrally sponsored schemes pending with the ministry for the financial year 2020-21.

The delegation submitted a memorandum to Irani giving details of the amount pending with the Women and Child Development and Mission Shakti department. It has been submitted in the memorandum that the

The BJD MPs stated that out of ₹1291.03 crore ICDS money, the state has received ₹ 730.12 crore

Centre is yet to release Rs 560.91 crore as part of Integrated Child Development Scheme. The Centre and the state have to share expenditure of the scheme on 60:40 basis. The BJD MPs stated that out of Rs 1291.03 crore of anticipated receipt, the state has received Rs 730.12 crore while Rs 560.91 crore is yet to be released by the Centre.

Similarly, the state government is yet to receive Central share of Rs 19.91 crore for Integrated Child Protection Scheme, Rs 67.84 crore for the Prime Minister's Overarching scheme for holistic nutrition (POSHAN) and Rs 5.12 crore for the Scheme for Adolescent Girls, the BJD submitted in the memorandum.

"As we are in the terminal month of the current fiscal which is going to end very shortly, it is urged to direct the department concerned for release of balance central assistance against the anticipated receipt during the current fiscal without any further delay," the BJD MPs submitted.

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'ONCE VACCINE ROLLOUT IS OVER, REAL ESTATE WILL BOUNCE BACK'

The real estate market in the county had been terribly hit by the pandemic. Odisha was no different. However, with vaccination gathering pace, companies believe normalcy will be back before long. In a conversation with **Orissa POST**, Jagadish Prasad Naik, Chairman- DN Group, believes the sector will be back to normalcy in a year's time.



■ **How do you see the real estate scenario in Odisha? What are the growth prospects?**

■ The real estate market in Odisha is different from what they are in other states. The real estate market was stable as compared to other tier 1 & tier 2 cities during recession in 2008-09 when lots of cities faced adverse time. The prime reason for this is the supply-demand ratio. The supply has never spilt over demand in Odisha. It has rather remained below demand. It will take some years to reach that level. The local real estate companies are doing well and a few have established themselves with a better brand value catering to both investors and end-users.

In the 30 years of the real estate industry in Odisha, Bhubaneswar has been the real estate hub of the state, but now there is an RE presence in other cities too which should have happened a decade back. As Bhubaneswar holds the major infrastructural backing as compared to other cities of Odisha, it is still in the top priority of any home seeker in Odisha. Operation of airport, commercial developments like mall multiplexes, star hotels in the prime industrial and commercial cities of the state can encourage the real estate sector in those cities, because these aspects have been encouraging the Bhubaneswar real estate market for the home seekers of the state as of now. The growth prospect is always

there in real estate as its demand is not going to end at any given point of time. The sector also comes in top five employment generators of the country growing year by year and is also indirectly linked to about 300 allied industries.

■ **Pandemic has negatively impacted Indian GDP. How has the real estate sector been impacted?**

■ Pandemic has impacted all the sectors of the country with very few exceptions and real estate is also a worst hit sector. The real estate sector had a plunge in the two quarters and thereafter it regained slowly. People didn't think of a new house during those period as many company laid off their employees and self-employed were in financial crunch. The first and foremost priority was to save money for the future. Thereafter, the sector started improving slowly with the survivors of the pandemic which is about 50% of the pre-pandemic period. To start with the 50 per cent figure is not a bad one, but at the same time it is not a positive indicator too. Once the vaccines roll out to the mass and the normalcy resumes, the sector will bounce back which may take a year's time or so.

■ **Your company is well-known to customers. What are the future projects and the specialties of your customer service?**

■ Yes, our company is of course a popular brand among the home seekers for which we have been working for the last 17 years and improving ourselves every day to retain our brand value, which is a tough task. We have various projects coming up in future as we have also verticals in hospitality and education, but in real estate there are 5 mega residential projects coming up in southern part of Bhubaneswar.

After booking of a flat in our customer care division, we work on a lot of factors by which the customer finds every update of our project at his fingertips so that he lives in a peace of mind relating to his flat he has booked. Most importantly, we have a very simplified cancellation and refund policy which is almost a fear factor in all purchasers' mind with other companies. Through our simplified cancellation policy also a customer lives in a peace of mind.



AUTO SECTOR FACES SHORT-TERM LIQUIDITY CONSTRAINT: PRADEEP AGARWAL

Even as the scourge of Covid-19 has taken a heavy toll on every sector of the economy including automotive sector, the industry needs to familiarise itself with some of the new realities of the post-Covid-19 world like preference for personal mobility, going digital, online marketing among others. Speaking to **Orissa POST**, Pradeep Agarwal, Managing Partner, JMG automobiles highlights more about the constraints and the way forward. Excerpts...



■ **How did covid-19 impact automobile business? What were the challenges you faced and how did you overcome them?**

■ The automotive sector was bracing for a difficult year even before the pandemic. Auto sales had been tepid for 12 to 15 months before the Covid outbreak stalled production and overall economic activities. The industry now faces concerns on short-term liquidity as well as long-term growth in revenue and profitability even as automakers restart production. As it emerges from this crisis, the industry will need to familiarise itself with some of the new realities of the post-COVID-19 world like preference for personal mobility, going digital, online marketing, innovating with new features, and growth of subscription model. With things gradually opening up, travel has also started picking up and so has a preference for personal mobility. Hence, we are optimistic that 2021 will be a good year for the auto industry, specifically for two-wheelers.

■ **Nowadays, automobile manufacturers as well as dealers are facing scores of problems. What is your take on this?**

■ The pace of change across all industries is accelerating. Dealerships are facing disruptions from multiple directions - evolving mobility solutions, intensifying competition, product innovation, technology proliferation, stringent regulations, and changing customer preferences. Digitisation is the harbinger of change in the vehicle distribution industry, impacting everything from customer acquisition and vehicle delivery to sales. From the point of sale via digital tools to customer data analytics, remote servicing, and predictive maintenance - the way vehicles are purchased, distributed, and serviced is

changing dramatically. Online presence is increasingly becoming critical to first time customers. However, it continues to be a blind spot for traditional dealers as most of them do not intend to increase their online presence.

■ **Market is not showing that type of growth in demand. How would you see the trend in two-wheeler sales?**

■ Going forward, market volumes are likely to improve on the back of greater economic activity and better sentiment due to Covid vaccine. Meanwhile, dealers looking at ways to reinvent themselves such as reaching out to the customer in an all-new way through online platforms while delivering a personalized experience. A positive outlook for monsoon, strong rural demand, and the availability of finance are all indicators of a good economic recovery and buoyant demand, going forward in 2021-22. Challenges will remain in the short term due to the uncertainty of the pandemic and its impact on the supply chain. However, every crisis is an opportunity and we are trying to learn from it and define new norms, which we can benefit from.

■ **JMG automobile is a pioneering auto dealer in the state. How did you step into this business? What is the specialty of your showroom?**

■ We have been blessed to be associated with Hero MotoCorp the last 21 years. JMG has sold over 2 lakh two-wheelers only because of our customer-centric focus. For us at JMG, every aspect of customer service & convenience is the utmost priority. Quick and efficient service plays a crucial part in customer satisfaction, right from offering appointment-based services to a direct walk-in.

What we learned new was to achieve continuous technological & customer convenience enhancements by offering 'JMG 60, 90 & 120'. JMG 60 means a periodic maintenance service within 60 minutes of receiving the vehicle. Which was further advanced to JMG 90 & 120 for quick repairs & other services.

■ **Hero is very aggressive about new model launching. How would you see the response to the company's product portfolio?**

■ Hero surpassed the significant milestone of 100 million units in cumulative production. As part of the next five-year plan, Hero MotoCorp will introduce over 10 products including variants, refreshes, and upgrades every year.

■ **Joblessness is a key issue nowadays. What would be your views regarding setting up a business rather than choosing a job?**

■ Running a business is far bigger than being in a job. In a job, no matter what kind of work you do, you are always excelling in 1 direction which increases your chances of getting rehired even if you lose a job. There is no limit on how much and how fast you can earn as a business owner. Whereas in job, you will have to wait for a certain period for taking the next hike, no matter how good you are. Hence, business is better than a job. The only thing that matters is your current satisfaction and your long-term stability. The rest all is just noise.

■ **What did you learn from this pandemic? How did you spend time in lockdown?**

■ The main thing I learned is the value of freedom especially in the lockdown. At the end of the day, we need to respect the environment and not meddle with it. I spent time connecting with friends, reading, training online, yoga and meditation, playing board and card games, binge-watching series and attending virtual concerts.



SC unshackles private schools from fee row

Centre used nCoV as smokescreen: Ulaka

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 18: Raining fire on the Union government over inflation and unemployment, Congress MP from Koraput, Saptagiri Ulaka alleged that Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led Central government used Covid outbreak to hide its failures.

While speaking on Supplementary Demands for Grants - Second Batch for 2020-2021 in Lok Sabha, the Congress MP said that economy was contracted much before the outbreak of Covid-19. He said that the unemployment rate was at 6 per cent which was alarmingly high.

"The government has only given jumbas to the people of this country. The PM Gareeb Kalyan Yojana

This govt has only given jumbas to the people of this country. The PM Gareeb Kalyan Yojana amount of Rs 2.76 lakh was another jumba. You have blamed everything on Corona

SAPTAGIRI ULAKA | KORAPUT MP

amount of Rs 2.76 lakh was another jumba. You have blamed everything on Corona," Ulaka said. Ulaka also criticized the government for high inflation in the country. He blamed cess on petrol and diesel for rising inflation. Due to price rise, Anganwadi centers cannot afford the LPG cylinder. The Koraput MP also highlighted the issues faced by people of Odisha

due to unavailability of mobile network.

"The Prime Minister talks about Digital India but people in Rayagada district and other parts of the state are not having access to mobile network.

Children are climbing hills to catch mobile network for their studies. They are being attacked by bears in the hills. The children are risking their lives," the MP said.

Ulaka said that he had raised this issue multiple times in the House but nothing has been done. He alleged that KBK districts in the state have not been receiving funding since 2016-17 and urged the Union government to provide mobile connectivity in the region. "MGNREGA allocations are still low compared to demand," he said.

The Congress MP also took on the Union government over the issue of disinvestment.

"This government is hell bent on disinvestment. No one is buying anything though. No one has come forward to buy Air India," said Ulaka.



The Supreme Court held that the January 19 notification of the Odisha government for fee waiver will not have binding effect on those ICSE and CBSE private un-aided schools which were not signatories of the memorandum of understanding signed in September 2020

The apex court disposed of the petition filed by Association of Odisha ICSE Schools challenging the state government's notification regarding fee waiver in private un-aided schools

The association had challenged the order of High Court that upheld the notification issued by the state government January 19 allowing the fee waiver due to pandemic

Earlier on Wednesday, the bench had observed that it would pass an order similar to the one it had passed in the Rajasthan case. "Go through the interim order. If you do not agree with that then make your submissions," the bench had observed Wednesday.

The apex court Thursday disposed of the petition filed by Association of Odisha ICSE Schools challenging the state government's notification regarding fee waiver in private un-aided schools. The association had challenged the order of Odisha High Court that upheld the notification issued by the state government January 19 allowing the fee waiver due to pandemic.

In the petition, filed through its secretary, the association of Odisha ICSE Schools had challenged the state government's January 19 notification, issued in compliance to

the order of Orissa High court dated January 7 that took on record the memorandum of understanding, dated September 10, 2020, where government and several other parties had agreed for fee waiver in a flat rate and prepared a slab of fees to be waived by private Un-aided institutions.

The petitioner had contended in the petition that the state government had contradictorily taken support of the MoU despite its clear submission before the High Court that there is no provision under the Orissa Education Act, 1969 for fixation of fee structure of different Private Un-Aided schools.

The Petitioner had submitted that during the lockdown almost all schools were conducting online classes and teachers were discharging their duties by imparting course work over an online system.

Covid care: Sundargarh tops in using DMF funds

Bhubaneswar: The state government Thursday told the Assembly that it has collected Rs 12,185.80 crore from miners under the District Mineral Foundation (DMF) scheme till February. State Planning and Convergence Minister Padmanabha Behera told the House that against these collections, the government was able to spend Rs 5,364.45 crore on several priority projects till January 2021. According to the minister, Sundargarh spent the highest of Rs 6,678 lakh DMF funds followed by Keonjhar (Rs 4,234.77 lakh) on Covid-19 activities. A total of nine mineral bearing districts used the funds for Covid-19 management. Other mining districts that have used the funds for pandemic response included Angul (Rs 203 lakh), Gajapati (Rs 0.40L) and Jajpur (Rs 952L).



Throwing social distancing norms to winds, people queue up at the registration counter of Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

College shut for 10 days as 12 test nCoV +ve in Cuttack

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Twelve students of a private college in Cuttack tested positive for Covid-19 even as Odisha's Covid-19 tally mounted to 3,38,489 Thursday as 84 more people were detected with the infection, a Health and Family Welfare department official said.

Of the new cases, 49 were reported from quarantine centres and 35 detected during contact tracing. Cuttack district recorded the highest number of new cases at 25, followed by Sundargarh (10) and Bargarh (9).

"Twelve students of a private college are among new patients and have been quarantined in the institute's hostel. Efforts are being made to trace their contacts," Cuttack Municipal Corporation's health official Satyabrata Mohapatra said.

The college will remain closed for 10 days as a precautionary measure, he said.

The death toll remained at 1,918 as no fresh fatality has been reported since March 13.

Fifty-three other Covid-19 patients have also died in the state due to comorbidities, the official said.

Odisha now has 661 active cases, and 3,35,857 patients have recovered from the disease.

The state has so far conducted over 87.12 lakh sample tests, including 24,984 Wednesday, and the positivity rate stands at 3.89 per cent, he added.

65 assistant fisheries officers appointed

State has enough opportunities for fish farmers: Sahoo



Agriculture Minister Arun Sahoo poses with the newly-recruited AFOs at Krushi Odisha Conference Hall, Thursday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Agriculture Minister Arun Kumar Sahoo, Thursday, distributed appointment letters to the 65 newly-recruited assistant fisheries officers (AFOs) at Krushi Odisha Conference Hall here on the fourth day of Krushi Odisha Mahotsav. Sahoo said that in fisheries sector, the state has enough opportu-

nities for fish farmers to earn well. The state has 480 km coastline, 6.86 lakh hectares of fresh water and 4.18 lakh hectares of salt water. The aim should be to use more and more scientific technique in fish farming and focus on exporting more in fisheries sector for more foreign currency.

In last 20 years, the state's fish production has increased from 2.59 lakh MT to 8.16 lakh MT. Similarly, fish exports reached Rs 3,247 crore from Rs 379 crore. According to the minister, over 14.64 lakh people in Odisha are involved in fisheries. Therefore, fisheries officers should focus on boosting those people's income. He had earlier said that the need for more and more farm schools for familiarizing the farmers with new styles of farming.

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₹1 crore donated to Srimandir

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, March 18: A devotee Thursday donated Rs 1 crore to Srimandir here, temple sources said. Kalinga Commercial Corporation Limited managing director Soumyaranjan Samal handed over a cheque of Rs 1 crore to Shree Jagannath temple chief administrator Krishan Kumar, sources added. "The state government had appealed to people to donate for Srimandir. I am extremely happy for donating money to the shrine," Samal said.

NZP to swap 8 animals for 47

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) sent 47 animals to Jaipur Nahargarh Biological Park, Rajasthan in an animal exchange programme. The animals include one tiger Chinu and tigress Rani. A six-member team from Rajasthan took them from NZP and travelled back to Rajasthan Wednesday. They also took one male bear, 30 Budgerigar birds and 14 Java sparrow bird species to Rajasthan. Under the programme, NZP will get eight animals from Rajasthan. They are: two leopards, two gharials, two hyenas and two chinkara deer. The animals would be brought to NZP before monsoon, said NZP deputy director Bimal Prasanna Acharya.

Special trains to run between Puri, Indore

Bhubaneswar: Railway authorities have decided to run special trains between Puri & Indore and Howrah & Kanyakumari. The Indore-Puri Special will leave Indore at 1500hrs every Tuesday with effect from March 23 and arrive at Puri at 1845hrs on the following day. In the return direction, Puri-Indore Special will leave Puri at 0030hrs every Thursday with effect from March 25 and reach Indore at 0540hrs on the next day. The special train will have 10 AC 3-tier coaches, six sleeper class coaches, two guard-coach-luggage vans and one pantry car in its composition.



Members of Odisha Abhibhabak Mahasangha, a state-level outfit of parents, sit on a hunger strike near the Cuttack Collector's office, Thursday, condemning the decision on changing the syllabus of SCB Medical Public School in the Silver City from ICSE to CBSE as well as merger of the school with DAV

Differently-abled get wheelchairs, laptops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Swabhimani, State Disability Information and Resource Centre along with Indian Metals Public Charitable Trust (IMPACT), the charitable wing of IMFA, conducted an empowering program to distribute standing wheelchairs and laptops to persons with disabilities (PwDs) from different parts of Odisha here Thursday.

The articles were distributed at a function held at AGM hall, IMFA building. Sulochana Das, State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (SCPD), was the chief guest on the occasion. Paramita Panda, Trustee, IMPACT and Sruti Mohapatra, Founder & CEO, Swabhimani were present at the event to encourage the recipients.

While Mohapatra highlighted the need for assistive devices like standing wheelchairs, educational aids like laptops for PwDs, Panda encouraged differently-abled students to continue their education with zeal and determination and become assets for their families and the country. She also motivated the sports persons to work harder and bring laurels to Odisha and India.

Sulochana Das spoke about the commitment of the government towards the empowerment and development of PwDs. She also spoke on the activities being taken up by the office of SCPD in this direction. She, along with Panda and Mohapatra, distributed the standing wheelchairs developed in an incubation lab in IIT to five deserving persons and laptops to meritorious students.

WASSUP TODAY

- BHUBANESWAR**
- Closing ceremony of Krushi Odisha, Biju Patnaik playground, Baramura, 6.30pm
- Int'l Performing Arts Festival, Soochana Bhawan, 6.30pm
- Inauguration of state-level play by Culture department and Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi, Bhanja Kala Mandap, 6.30pm
- Media briefing by Odisha Secondary School Teachers' Association, Sramika Bhawan-251, Kharavel Nagar, 4pm
- 13th Kalinga Herbal Mela, Idco Exhibition Ground, 10am
- 27th Guru Pankaj Utsav, Rabindra Mandap, 6pm

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'WE FORESEE GOOD SALES IN ACs, REFRIGERATORS IN THIS SUMMER'

Like many other products, electronic goods took a hit during the pandemic. Sales across board plummeted. Increased prices of goods and raw materials also impacted sales. Yet with custom-made solutions and a well-motivated staff, Spectra Vision weathered the tough months. **Debraj Rath, Managing Director of Spectra Vision, shares his experience during the pandemic and his other business experiences with Orissa POST. Excerpts of an interview.**



■ The impact of the pandemic on your business

Our business got severely affected as lockdown was imposed to contain Covid-19 outbreak. When it was withdrawn with certain conditions, we saw positive business in the months of May and June. Customers made purchases in these two months. With some difficulties in business again in July, we saw some improvement in October and November. Overall, business has not returned to normalcy yet. But we hope to see good sales in AC and refrigerator categories in this summer.

■ How did the pandemic affect the supply chain?

Appliance and Consumer Electronics (ACE) market depends on import. We had to shut our factory due to lockdown. Supplying the products was a challenge for us, and we still face the same challenge. It also impacted our business. Moreover, increased prices of electronic and other products have affected the retailers as well.

■ What is the current market scenario in electronic segments?

The price of raw materials, used to manufacture electronic products, has increased by 40-50 per cent in international market. Manufacturers have already used their stocked raw materials. Increased price will affect the producers when they go for fresh procurement.

Retail prices have increased by 10-12 per cent due to high production cost. We may face 5-6 per cent additional cost for new taxation policy. Such high prices will impact our business.

■ Customers' services during the lockdown

We took best care of our employees. Considering urgency, we didn't cut their salaries. We also took care of customers' services. We acquired special pass from government and reached out to our customers during their needs. We continuously communicated with our customers over phone. Affected businesses can get back on track but health of our employees was important.

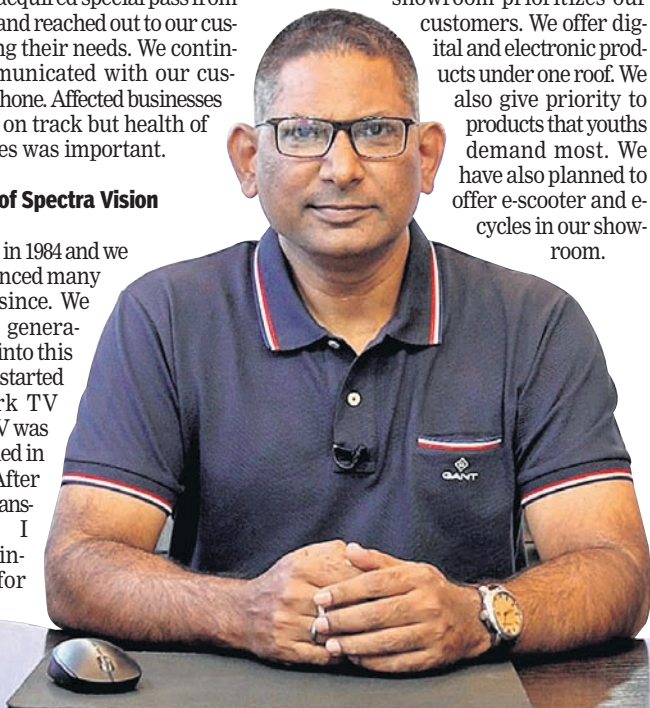
■ The journey of Spectra Vision

It was started in 1984 and we have experienced many events ever since. We are the first generation to come into this business. We started with Konark TV dealership. TV was newly launched in the market. After starting TV transmission, I showed my interest for

this business. My interest to associate with electronic businesses was the reason behind the inception of Spectra Vision.

■ Your experience with market and customers

Many players have come into this business and many have gone. Those who provided quality products and services have sustained in this market. Our showroom prioritizes our customers. We offer digital and electronic products under one roof. We also give priority to products that youths demand most. We have also planned to offer e-scooter and e-cycles in our showroom.



'RIGHT ATTITUDE, MINDSET AND GOOD ETHICS KEYS TO SUCCESS'

The pandemic was not all that gloom and doom time for all. For some, it brought in its stride challenges to learn cost-effective management and crisis management. It also taught people how to manage a recovery from such a crisis. A unique take on the global health disaster. **Siddharth Garg, Director of Gargson Group, speaks to Orissa POST about the many challenges and the opportunities Covid-19 threw up. Excerpts of an interview.**



■ How do you see the pandemic, a challenge or opportunity?

Pandemic was a big challenge for everybody but it was also an opportunity for us. Challenge because revenue was hampered and the future was unpredictable; car buying is the last resort of purchase. It was also an opportunity because, it boosted cost effective management, crisis management, it opened the gate when you learn the aspect of business which nobody has ever thought of. It was also an opportunity to manage how you can revive from such crisis.

■ How do you see the competition in the market?

The competition is always there but you do hard work and work on good ethics. If you are satisfying the customers we will always gain support from the customers. You will not have to run to market, people will come to you as they know that they are having good service. Because of my father and grandfather I got references. People came from several parts for any kind of deal. You may fail in your business but don't fail in value system. If you don't fail in value systems, you will recover again.

■ What is there shortage of supply?

The lack of supply is a part issue. We have demand but these are short terms. Not long term. We are smart enough to handle such short term issues. If you are worried about that, you are not planning for the long term. We have seen production getting improved from the manufacturers.

■ What is your vision?

My vision is to satisfy and keep our customers happy in terms of sales and services.

■ Key mantra of success

There is no mantra but there is certain thing you need to look at. You should have a right attitude for doing a business. Attitude for business and attitude for service is different. Attitude for business is risk taking but attitude for service is not risk taking. The mindset is also very important. In business you will have a lot of negativity, but you have to have a positive mind. I feel, you should have ethics and a value system and it will ensure

that you are successful. Most of the entrepreneurs lack patients, but they should acquire that as there is not short cut to success. The vision and goal setting needs to be there.



PEOPLE IN FRINGE AREAS ARE LURED WITH FREEBIES BY NEIGHBOURING STATE

PATRAPUR VILLAGERS LEAVE FOR AP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patrapur, March 18: In an alarming development, residents in over 40 villages under this block bordering Andhra Pradesh have been migrating with their families to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh in search of greener pastures, a report said.

The development could have serious ramifications for the state government as they have been migrating due to non-availability of everyday livelihood opportunities, welfare schemes, healthcare services and education facilities in their respective areas, the report said.

In fact, the Andhra Pradesh government has been showering freebies on them to encourage the villagers to leave for the neighbouring state.

The villagers are locking up their houses or giving them on rent while leaving. They plan to take a house in Andhra Pradesh on rent to settle down with their families.

A man who shifted to Vishakhapatnam a few days ago alleged that he decided to get healthcare services, livelihood opportunities and education facilities at doorstep and for inclusion of his



A house lies abandoned by its occupants in Patrapur area

OP PHOTO

name in the welfare schemes of the Andhra government as his native village lacks all these facilities.

Moreover, a host of welfare schemes floated by the Odisha government are not available to them for which they are being forced to migrate to Andhra Pradesh.

Some of the villagers alleged that availability of healthcare services, education facilities, ration

cards, livelihood opportunities, financial assistance under KALIA scheme, latrines at their homes and a house under Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana, cow shed for their bovines and financial assistance under Harishchandra Yojana are still a dream for them in their native place.

Moreover, the Centre-sponsored poverty alleviation scheme implemented under MGNREGA is a mis-

nomer in their area.

They alleged that the step-motherly attitude of the local administration and presence of touts were responsible for the situation.

Meanwhile, their counterparts residing in Tumba, Buratal, Gundura, Gudipadar, Khambarigaon, B Nuagaon and Barang panchayats have been living in their native villages and enjoying the benefits of the welfare schemes of the Andhra government by enrolling their names.

They claimed that it is easy to get their names enrolled in the welfare schemes of the Andhra government by making corrections in their Aadhar cards in Telugu language. There is a stark difference in the benefits of welfare schemes available in Odisha and those in Andhra Pradesh.

The neighbouring state provides 30 eggs, six litres of milk and three kg sattu to the children per month at Anganwadi centres. Pregnant women in Andhra Pradesh receive 3 kg rice, two kg dal, half litre cooking oil, 25 eggs and five litres of milk per month. The ration card beneficiaries are provided with rice, sugar, chickpeas, oil, match box and candles at their doorsteps.

The AP government, under Jagannan kit scheme, has been providing free shoes, bags and uniforms to students from Class I to XII in their state.

The AP government is also depositing Rs12,000 in the bank accounts of every student per year. Similarly, the diploma and degree students are given Rs20,000 per year. The auto drivers, women tailors, goldsmiths, washermen and barbers are receiving ₹10,000 in their bank accounts per year.

The traders belonging to SC and ST communities are receiving subsidies of ₹60,000 in every loan worth ₹1 lakh they take from banks. The women SHG groups get 50 per cent subsidy on their loans, while women in the age-group of 45-60 receive ₹18,000 per year.

The differently-abled and elderly persons aged ₹2,500 as monthly pension and an increment of ₹250 every year. The state government has decided to provide land and houses to unmarried women and women deserted by their husbands in the rural areas, but it is yet to be implemented even three years after the passage of the legislation.

Saptasajya to get 'facelift' soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, March 18: The state's prominent tourist destination Saptasajya in Dhenkanal district will undergo a beautification drive soon. The administration chalked out action plans for the purpose Wednesday.

The natural surroundings of Saptasajya hills will be done up and necessary steps taken for its development. This was decided at a district level meeting of the officials chaired by Collector Bhumes Chandra Behera.

Thousands of tourists from within and outside Dhenkanal district throng the famous tourist destination round the year. The Raghunathjw shrine attracts devotees and visitors in large numbers during Ram Navami.

Earlier in the day, District Collector Behera visited the picnic spot including the Raghunathjw temple. He directed the officials to prepare an estimate of the proposed development project.

"Saptasajya will be developed



into a more attractive tourist destination in Dhenkanal. The available rivulet water will be preserved through a check-dam, be treated and made usable. The Raghunathjw temple infrastructure will be developed, including parking slot construction, electrification, toilets and mega drinking water projects works under the plan," the District Collector said.

Adequate funds will be allocated and the project work will be completed before Ram Navami this year, the Collector added.

Dhenkanal project director DRDA Narottam Behera, Sub-Collector and District Endowment Officer (DEO) Saphalya Mandit Pradhan and several other senior officials and people's representatives accompanied the Collector during his visit to Saptasajya.

Pet boar 'Dhudu' comes back from the wild

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar/Telkoi, March 18: The family members of Kuntala Kumari Penthei of Purushottampur under Telkoi block in Keonjhar district were on cloud nine after they got back their pet boar 'Dhudu'. Notably, the pet had been taken away from them by the forest personnel forcibly.

'Dhudu' has been an integral part of Kuntala Kumari's family since its childhood. Kuntala Kumari brought up the boar at her house. The family had rescued it from a forest.

But a few days back, forest officials had taken away 'Dhudu' seven days ago from the possession of a woman in Purushottampur village under Telkoi forest range in Keonjhar. The woman was accused of keeping the protected wild animal as a pet.

However, the separated wild boar made the woman emotional by coming back to its foster-home in the village Wednesday afternoon. Dhudu's foster-mother Kuntala could not hold back her tears after finding her pet after seven days.



A veterinary doctor treating the boar

OP PHOTO

Kuntala Kumari Penthei of Purushottampur village had reared the wild boar in her home when the animal was a calf and away from its wild habitat. Some villagers of Purushottampur spotted Dhudu while

wandering in Kamalang reserve forest which is 25 km away from the village. After the villagers informed the woman about Dhudu's whereabouts, Kuntala and her daughter Rajashri rushed to the forest and found it limping on one leg.

The officials of the department checked health of the boar at Kuntala's house in Telkoi Thursday

"I want the government to make necessary provisions for Dhudu to live along with us," demanded the woman's son Swosti Penthei.

On being contacted, Telkoi forest ranger said, "I know the wild boar has returned to its masters in the village. Appropriate steps will be taken in this connection after discussion with my higher-ups."

Meanwhile, the department provided treatment to the boar. The department will again take away the animal to the forest, it is said.

OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI, CHATRAPUR INVITATION FOR BIDS

Tender Call Notice: 01/2020-21 No. 724 / Dt.07.03.21

No. 1-86: The Block Development Officer, Chatrapur Block on behalf of Government of Odisha invites percentage rate bids in single for the works as detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate Estimate Cost in Rs.	Put to tender for civil work	EMD in Rs.	Class of Bidder	Period of Completion	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.)
1	Construction of Sub-Centre at Chikalakhandi under	2500000	1983689	19837	C & B	6 (Six) Calendar months	6000/-
2	Construction of Sub-Centre building at Muncipertho of Pottampur GP	2500000	1983689	19837	C & B	6 (Six) Calendar months	6000/-
3	Construction of Sub-Centre building at Karatali of Bipulungi GP	2500000	1983689	19837	C & B	6 (Six) Calendar months	6000/-
4	New Construction of Sub-Centre building at Bipulungi GP	3300000	2540637	25406	C & B	6 (Six) Calendar months	6000/-
5	Construction of Block Office Building	3000000	1990430	19904	C & B	6 (Six) Calendar months	6000/-

- The sale of bid document shall start from 22.03.2021 (10.00 A.M.) to 30.03.2021 (05.30 P.M.) during office hours in the Office of the undersigned. Bids shall be received on or before 5.30 of 30.03.2021 through Registered Post, Speed Post or it can be placed in the Box kept in office for the said purpose.
- Bid documents consisting of specification, the schedule of quantities and the set of terms and conditions of contracts & other necessary documents & collected from Block Office or can be downloaded from the website www.ganjam.nic.in.
- After the date, time and receipt of bid is over. The original Bids Security and Demand Draft towards cost of Bid documents shall be submitted alongwith the Bid or Registered Post in the Office of the undersigned from 22.03.2021 (10.00 A.M.) to 30.03.2021 (5.30 P.M.) during office hours on working days failing which the bid will be rejected. The received bid security and bid cost will be verified at 11.00 A.M. on 31.03.2021.
- The Bids received shall be opened at 11.00 A.M. on 31.03.2021 in the O/o. The Block Development Officer, Chatrapur in the presence of bidders who wish to attend. The bidders who participated in the bid can witness the opening of the bids. If the office happens to be closed in the last date of the opening of the bids as specified the bids will be opened in the next working day at the same time and venue of Bid.
- The authority reserves the right to cancel any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.
- Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation can also be seen in the paper.

Sd./- Block Development Officer, Chatrapur
OIPR-19102/11/0001/2021

“The Divine Truth is greater than any religion or creed or scripture or idea or philosophy”

SRI AUROBINDO



Procurement politics

Paddy procurement has always been a problem area in our state. Every year, the government receives flak for its inept handling of the programme. The Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCS), the key player of the state's ₹12,000 crore plus paddy procurement programme, has not learnt a lesson from its past mistakes. Allegations of corruption against supply department officials and those of regulatory market committees (RMCs) have been dime a dozen. Complaints of their hand in glove with rice millers and recently with Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs) and Pani Panchayats (PPs) fly thick and fast. Yet, the government has done precious little to fix the problem. Like in the past, this year too there are issues with procurement. Ever since paddy procurement was decentralised in the state and the OSCS was given the mantle of the programme, procurement has been mired in controversies. In 2005-06, the government had experimented with private players who bought paddy on behalf of the Food Corporation of India, but that was discontinued after two-three years. There were no such complaints then of non-lifting of paddy. The private players who procured paddy from farmers by investing upfront tried to do maximum lifting so that their returns are maximised. Delayed payments or non-payments to farmers, non-opening of *mandis*, and the token issue have bogged the process. These issues are cyclical. It is not that we have a set of new problems to grapple with this year, yet the government has failed to find a permanent solution to these problems.

Odisha is predominantly an agricultural economy. Over three quarters of its populace depend on farming for their livelihood. As paddy is the only crop that is sold at minimum support price (MSP), farmers here majorly cultivate paddy. In the absence of an open market for paddy, and lack of avenues to make rice-based products, farmers look to the government to buy their paddy. The programme happens in two phases — November to February and the summer paddy that arrive between May and June. The state Food and Consumer Affairs department under whose control the OSCS functions has to find a way out to end this mess. Farmers taking poison in *mandis* over their frustration to sell paddy, farmers staying up in *mandis* for days to sell their produce, and the much cursed token systems are cyclical problems. This year, the issue has been pushed to the centre-stage. The Opposition is not allowing the Assembly to function demanding that the government resolve the problems. That a BJP member attempted to commit suicide by consuming sanitizer in the House has brought in added gravity to the paddy procurement issue. While the BJD has demanded an apology from the member for his suicide bid in the floor of the House, the Opposition has been steadfast in its attack on the government. The stalemate in the House over paddy procurement continued for the fifth day Wednesday. Going by the way both the ruling party and the Opposition are arrayed over the issue, the session is headed for a washout.

What is the way out to end the recurring problems in paddy procurement? Is this not the time to review the entire programme? Is this not the time to divest the OSCS, which is already overburdened with too many responsibilities, of paddy procurement work? The corporation not only procures, it also distributes rice to the beneficiaries through various Central and state government schemes. Added to that are its myriad other responsibilities. Can't the state government create something like a special purpose vehicle (SPV) to take care of the paddy procurement? The government on its part should also stop meddling in the process in the form of involving WSHGs and PPs in paddy procurement. The SHGs in Odisha have been great tools for the government to win votes. Paddy procurement has been an uber-lucrative programme. If one studies the Centre's cost-sheet, there are fat commissions earmarked for every stakeholder involved in the exercise. This is the reason why the OSCS has been zealously trying to hold on to its turf and the government throwing breadcrumbs to its patrons to retain their goodwill. When everybody in the game is a winner, why should the farmer lose?

CHINA'S WAR AGAINST ANT

FOCUS ANT GROUP



Angela Huyue Zhang

POWER WITHIN THE CHINESE BUREAUCRACY IS FRAGMENTED AMONG CENTRAL MINISTRIES AND LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT. A DEPARTMENT'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES DETERMINE ITS STANCE AND APPROACH TOWARD REGULATING BUSINESSES

Ever since Alibaba founder Jack Ma criticized Chinese financial regulation in a speech last October, a regulatory storm has pummeled the country's entire online financial and consumer sector. The Shanghai Stock Exchange suspended the planned initial public offering of fintech conglomerate Ant Group — an Alibaba affiliate — just two days before its launch, and regulators subsequently launched a massive crackdown on Chinese Big Tech. While Ma's speech appears to have been an unforeseeable random event, the logic of Chinese bureaucratic politics made Ant's IPO debacle inevitable.

As I elaborate in my new book, power within the Chinese bureaucracy is fragmented among central ministries and levels of government. A department's mission and objectives determine its stance and approach toward regulating businesses.

China previously regulated its financial system using a "one bank and three commissions" structure. The People's Bank of China (PBOC, the central bank) was responsible for monetary policy and macro-prudential regulation, while separate banking and insurance regulators and the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) oversaw their respective sectors. But these institutions' overlapping functions and lack of coordination allowed some non-financial firms to seek regulatory arbitrage, as the fallout from financial scandals involving the Anbang Insurance Group and Tomorrow Group made clear.

After these scandals came to light, the Chinese government implemented a series of organisational shakeups to address regulatory failures. In 2017, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China made reducing financial risk a top economic priority, and emphasized "high-quality" rather than "high-speed" growth. The State Council also established the Financial Stability and Development Committee, a super-regulator headed by Vice Premier Liu He, to



Chinese fintech conglomerate Ant Group has quickly grown into an internet titan, owing not only to regulatory lag but also to its agile adaptation to rule changes. But recent strong official criticism of the firm, coming on top of the suspension of its IPO, suggests that the country's regulators have finally caught up

exercise comprehensive oversight, particularly over financial activities that fall through the cracks of traditional regulation.

A massive government overhaul in 2018 further consolidated financial regulatory power by merging the banking and insurance regulators into the China Banking and Insurance Regulatory Commission (CBIRC). Meanwhile, the PBOC took over the CBIRC's legislative functions, further solidifying the central bank's leading role in maintaining financial stability.

In addition, CBIRC Chairman Guo Shuqing was also appointed party secretary of the PBOC, a move widely viewed as a step toward facilitating coordination between the two banking regulators. By 2018, therefore, the balance was already tilting toward tighter regulation of non-financial businesses.

Ant is one of those targets. From the start, the group has marketed itself as an internet technology firm that uses Alipay, its highly popular mobile-payment app, to provide a wide range of financial services. But Ant presents Chinese regulators with unprecedented challenges because many of its services fall outside the scope of existing financial rules.

Moreover, Ant's exponential growth and aggressive expansion into new business lines have put regulators on high alert. One of the PBOC's most important monetary policy tools is adjusting banks' capital reserve requirements, but Ant did not need to satisfy these requirements, because it is not a bank. Regulators became even more alarmed when Ant's IPO filing revealed further details about the scale and risk model of its lending business. The highly oversubscribed offering, and the huge valuation premium Ant obtained by being a tech firm rather than a bank, stoked fears of a bubble.

Although the default rate on Ant's loans is relatively low, the group's short history (six years) and vast size pose potential unforeseen perils — which, from the PBOC's standpoint, could amount to systemic risk. As the lender of last resort, the central bank is naturally risk averse; if Ant fails, the bank would have to bail it out.

Other Chinese financial regulators may have a completely different risk profile. The CSRC reportedly approved Ant's IPO application within just two months, compared to the usual seven months or more for other listings, in order to boost confidence in

China's stock market amid deteriorating relations with the United States. Ant's planned dual listing in Shanghai and Hong Kong was intended not only to entice more Chinese tech firms to list domestically, but also to counter US threats to delist Chinese companies from its stock exchanges.

But the PBOC has other priorities. Its mission to ensure financial stability makes it a persistent regulator, and Ma's speech gave the central bank exactly the opening it needed to rein in Ant. His scathing criticisms of Chinese financial regulation directly irked many senior officials who previously had voiced contrasting opinions on the same regulatory issues.

These policymakers soon revealed their displeasure with Ma and Ant. A few days after the speech, the PBOC-affiliated newspaper Financial News published three consecutive commentaries criticizing Ant's business model.

Once the powerful central bank publicly turned against Ant, bureaucrats who had endorsed the group fell silent and other departments began to jump on the bandwagon. For example, China's antitrust authority has always had a clear interest in regulating the country's large tech firms in order to expand its policy domain, but had been taking a lax approach because it was uncertain whether to put innovation or regulation first. The top leadership's adverse reaction to Ma's speech gave the authority the green light to act against tech giants like Alibaba.

Ant's rapid growth and emergence as an internet finance titan reflected not only regulatory lag but also the firm's agile adaptation to rule changes. "We always step ahead of the regulators — we have to," Ma said in 2017. "Otherwise, we go nowhere." This time, though, it seems the regulators have finally caught up.

Angela Huyue Zhang is Director of The Center for Chinese Law and Associate Professor at the University of Hong Kong.

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WISDOM CORNER

"I wake up every morning and think to myself, 'how far can I push this company in the next 24 hours.'" LEAH BUSQUE

"If people doubt how far you can go, go so far that you can't hear them anymore." MICHELE RUIZ

"We need to accept that we won't always make the right decisions, that we'll screw up royally sometimes — understanding that failure is not the opposite of success, it's part of success." ARIANNA HUFFINGTON

WORDSWORTH

Busman's holiday

A report in a Bristol newspaper featured a singer who took time out from recording albums to write songs for children. She called this her busman's holiday. You are unlikely to have busman in your personal vocabulary, as it's mostly journalistic headline shorthand. It dates from the 1840s for the driver or conductor of a horse-drawn London omnibus (the conductor was the second man of the crew, who rode inside to collect the fares, a post now almost unknown in Britain). A busman's holiday is free time a person spends in an activity that's much like what he or she does for a living. So a carpenter who spends a weekend repairing a friend's house or a teacher who works at summer school during the holidays is taking a busman's holiday. Having been at the heart of Obama's two successful bids for the US presidency, Axelrod is probably the most accomplished American political operator enticed to take a busman's holiday in Britain, but he is by no means the first. Busman's holiday is originally British, dating from the end of the nineteenth century. It initially spread to other countries through reports of London affairs and then caught on locally. It appeared in the Sunday Times of Sydney, Australia, in May 1896 and the Auckland Star of New Zealand in October 1902. It reached North America in 1909. It's now known throughout the English-speaking world. Some writers on etymology have got into a mess trying to explain it. A typical story appeared in John Ciardi's A Browser's Dictionary in 1981: "British drivers of horse-drawn omnibuses, becoming attached to their teams, were uneasy about turning them over to relief drivers who might abuse them. On their days off, therefore, the drivers regularly went to the stables to see that the horses were properly harnessed and returned at night to see that they had not been abused".

LOL

BIRTHDAY GIFT

It was the kindergarten teacher's birthday and the students decided that they would each buy their teacher a gift. The first student, whose parents own a florist shop, gave her a present. She held it and said "I guess that it is flowers". "How did you guess?" asked the little boy. She laughed and thanked him. The second student, whose parents own a candy store, gave her a present. She held it and said, "I guess that it is some candy."



"How did you guess?" asked the little boy. She again laughed and thanked him also. The third student, whose parents own a bottle shop, gave her a box which was leaking. The teacher touched the liquid with her finger and tasted it. "Mmmmm is it wine?" she asked. "No," said the little girl. So she tasted it again. "Is it champagne?" she asked. "Noooo," replied the little girl, "It's a puppy."

SPECTRUM COVID STIMULUS

How to spend \$12 trillion

Even before the passage of the latest stimulus Bill in the United States, governments around the world have offered almost \$12 trillion in financial aid to businesses and households affected by COVID-19, equivalent to 12% of global GDP. But how well have they delivered that unprecedented amount of assistance to the intended recipients? And what lessons do these efforts hold for the future?

Many are asking such questions, from policymakers and fintech innovators to economists and civil-society watchdogs. We recently sought answers by analysing 12 government pandemic-support programmes, for both individuals and small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), in seven countries — Brazil, India, Nigeria, Singapore, Togo, the United Kingdom, and the US.

We assessed the ambition of each programme's design — its scope, scale, and specificity — and the effectiveness of delivery, measured by the speed and coverage of disbursements. Our study revealed considerable variance. Some programmes combined ambitious design with effective delivery. But many fell short in one or both areas, with problems including slow rollout, failure to reach eligible beneficiaries, and in some cases fraud. The key takeaway from our research is that large-scale, rapid,

and targeted economic disbursements require robust digital financial infrastructure. Beyond helping provide support during crises, this infrastructure also fosters economic growth and resilience more generally. This is true for all countries, but emerging economies have more to gain than richer countries in economic value for every percentage point of GDP spent on incremental government disbursements. That may be because advanced economies already have more digital financial infrastructure in place.

In our study, Singapore's Job Support Scheme and the UK's Job Retention Scheme were among the best performers in terms of both design and delivery. But some emerging-economy schemes also scored well. Two Indian programmes — one targeted at women, and an emergency credit guarantee scheme that benefited more than three million SMEs and micro-businesses — were able to build on existing financial infrastructure to perform strongly. Togo, which has less developed financial infrastructure, was still able to make good use of what it has: its Novissi programme made for timely cash transfers to informal workers' mobile money wallets that amounted to 30% of the minimum monthly wage for the duration of local lockdowns.

One of our main conclusions is that effective government support programmes have three critical features of financial infrastructure in common: digital payment channels, a basic digital ID system with broad population coverage (such as India's Aadhaar programme), and simple data on individuals and firms that are linked to the digital ID.

Countries whose financial infrastructure included these three features could design programmes optimally and deliver them quickly. Singapore's SME job-support programme, for example, transferred funds automatically to eligible businesses; amounts were calculated based on firms' payroll, without the need for an application process. This was made possible by the "CorpPass" digital ID system, which assigns each SME a unique ID linked to government data on the firm's tax payments and employee wages.

But countries lacking one or more of these infrastructure features had to make trade-offs between their assistance programmes' design ambition and delivery success. The US Economic Impact Program sought to pay more than 50% of the population, but had only limited targeting; all individual Social Security recipients and tax filers earning less than \$75,000 annually received the same amount, for example.

A second significant finding is

that building robust digital financial infrastructure can give the economy a larger boost than we had previously thought. Before the COVID-19 crisis, we estimated that applying basic and advanced digital ID to a wide range of interactions between individuals and institutions could deliver an economic gain by 2030 of between 3-13% of GDP, depending on the country. But we now estimate that the potential gain could be up to 20% higher.

The pandemic has served as a high-stakes stress test for many countries' financial systems, highlighting critical gaps and opportunities. At the same time, it provides valuable lessons about how to improve efficiency and resilience.

Our analysis covers only a subset of assistance programmes in a small number of countries. But it shows that strong financial infrastructure for SMEs and individuals is vital, not just for responding to unexpected and potentially catastrophic crises such as the coronavirus pandemic, but also for boosting financial resilience and economic growth.

Olivia White is a partner in McKinsey & Company's San Francisco office. Anu Madgavkar is a Mumbai-based partner at the McKinsey Global Institute.

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

OrissaPOST

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Use digital tickets in buses

Sir, In view of the diesel price hike and outbreak of COVID-19, private bus owners in the state have hiked the bus fare in the unmeasured manner. Although the government is fixing the rate by automatic fare revision mechanism, the bus owners/conductors are charging fares higher than the actual value, on the pretext of COVID-19 and fuel price hike. While the distance between Cuttack and Bhubaneswar is 29 kms, conductors are charging ₹40 and ₹50 per passenger in non-AC and AC-buses respectively. In the rural areas bus conductors are exploiting the passengers to the hilt. Also they are not obeying the COVID guidelines during journey. These days a limited number of trains are running in the state, giving the bus owners an opportunity to exploit the passengers. Hence, the Transport department should direct the bus operators to use digital ticket machines (as in Mo Bus) for the larger interest of common people of the state.

Dilip Kumar Mishra, BHUBANESWAR

Dirty politics

Sir, The past few weeks in most of the poll-bound states people are witnessing hitherto never seen and never heard of theatrics, gimmicks, tricks and stunts. Earlier, if it was conflicts and clashes and jumping from one party to another, this time along with the "conventional practices," it went to another level — leaders of the same faction fighting tooth and nails to get party nominations. Those who didn't get tickets, revolted and rebelled in amazing ways. A leader in Kerala tansured her head as she was not selected by her party. Leaders wanted to get comfortable seats where they could win easily without sweating a lot. Even the local people in some areas revolted when they didn't get the candidates of their choice. Some even went to the extent of politicising 'accidents' in which they were bruised and hurt! Members of a well-known party in Kerala went to the extent of threatening to commit suicides if their leaders were not given a chance to contest election. All these just show how low our political system has come down to. What everybody wants is name, power and wealth. It is really sad that in a nation that produced so many eminent leaders in the past is now witnessing wealth and limelight seekers. It is high time the common man be prudent enough to choose the right candidate and support parties that work for the betterment of the common people.

M Pradyu, KANNUR

'Khela' will end, 'vikas' to start: Modi tells Didi

Countering Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress' popular slogan "Khela Hobe", Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday trained guns at the West Bengal Chief Minister countering her with politics of developments, instead of unabated violence.

Kolkata, March 18: Countering Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress' popular slogan "Khela Hobe", Prime Minister Narendra Modi Thursday trained guns at the West Bengal Chief Minister countering her with politics of developments, instead of unabated violence.

"Didi bole khela hobe, BJP bole chaakri hobe. Didi bole khela hobe, BJP bole vikas hobe. Didi bole khela hobe, BJP bole shiksha hobe... Khela shesh hobe, Didi ar vikas aarambho hobe, (Didi says there will be a game but BJP says there will be employment generation, development and education. Didi's match will come to an end and the process of development will start in Bengal)," Modi said at an election rally in Purulia.

Modi also took a dig at the issues like drinking water crisis, rampant corruption and violence across the state by the ruling Trinamool Congress in the past 10 years.

"People of Bengal want an answer from Mamata Didi. This govern-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during an election campaign rally, ahead of West Bengal Assembly polls, in Purulia district, Thursday

ment has robbed people of its rights in the name appeasement. It has neglected the issues of Other Backward Class (OBC) communities. The state government has also encouraged coal and sand mafias in running 'syndicate raj' across Bengal," he said.

Optimistic about Bharatiya Janata Party's electoral win, he said that the people of Bengal would resist the misuse of Trinamool in the forthcoming state Assembly polls this time.

Braving high mercury, hundreds of sloganeering BJP supporters, armed with party's flags, caps and posters came to attend the Modi rally that was held at Bhangra More in Purulia district Thursday.

"The countdown for the end of the Trinamool government has begun. Now no more fear. Our target is to

only secure electoral victory... Didi has received leg injury. I'm concerned about that. I pray so that she gets well soon," he said, wishing Mamata Banerjee a speedy recovery. Earlier, the state unit of BJP had dubbed Mamata's Nandigram incident a sheer 'drama' to win voters' sentiment in the seat.

Banerjee had sustained injuries while campaigning in East Midnapore's Nandigram March 10. She had been taken to Kolkata and admitted to the state-run SSKM Hospital. She was discharged last week after two days of medical observation.

Modi further alleged that the Trinamool Congress has encouraged Maoist's violence in Bengal for their political gains. "Didi I know you are angry with me. But you are also a daughter of India and I respect

you," the PM said at the rally.

Nandigram is a stronghold of newly-inducted BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari, who had been elected from the high profile seat in 2016 and became a minister in Mamata Banerjee-led state cabinet.

Adhikari had joined the saffron brigade in December last year. The rebel Trinamool leader had claimed earlier that he would defeat Banerjee by over 50,000 votes in Nandigram.

Giving a befitting reply, the saffron unit had also announced Adhikari's name as their candidate in Nandigram seat. Naturally, Nandigram Assembly constituency virtually turned into a high-octane battle ground for the warring Trinamool and BJP camps with the state's two political titans - Banerjee and Adhikari - fighting an election against each other.

Sachin Hindurao Vaze: Police officer or business baron

How a police officer like Vaze was holding directorships and equity in as many as three companies may become the point of another investigation

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 18: Sachin Hindurao Vaze, the senior Mumbai police officer who is being investigated, is listed as a director in three companies namely Diginext Multimedia, Multibuild Infraprojects and Techlegal Solutions.

Was Vaze a Mumbai cop or a business baron? And was there a conflict of interest? How a police officer like Vaze was holding directorships and equity in as many as three companies with business interests may be something that has been alleged and may become the point of another investigation into his business interests. Two of the companies have been struck off by Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), while Diginext Multimedia is still listed as active. Shirish Thorat is listed as director on two companies.

There are reports that he was driving a Mercedes which used to be parked in police headquarters with a fake number plate with no questions asked.

Diginext Multimedia Limited was incorporated September 27, 2011. It is classified as non-government company and is registered at Registrar of Companies, Mumbai. Its authorised share capital is Rs 5,00,000 and its paid up capital is Rs 5,00,000. The company status is active as per records.

The company is involved in manufacture of television and radio



transmitters and apparatus for line telephony and line telegraphy.

Diginext Multi Media Limited's Annual General Meeting (AGM) was last held 30 September 2017. Its balance sheet was last filed March 31, 2017. The company has been struck off the records by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs.

The directors of Diginext Multimedia Limited are Venkatesh Appasaheb Waze, Sanyog Shivaji Shelar, Shirish Thorat, Alok Jayant Thakkar, Sumeet Mahendra Rathod and Sachin Hindurao Vaze.

Its registered address is Office No 1, Kelkar Compound Court, Naka Thane, Thane, Maharashtra.

Multibuild Infraprojects was incorporated January 19, 2013. It is classified as non-government company and is registered at Registrar of Companies, Mumbai. Its author-

ized share capital is Rs 500,000 and its paid up capital is Rs 500,000.

It is involved in building of complete constructions or parts thereof, civil engineering.

The directors of Multibuild Infraprojects Limited are Sanjay Chandrakant Mashilkar, Sachin Hindurao Vaze, Uday Pundalik Wagle, Yash Uday Wagle and Vijay Pandhari Gawai.

Multibuild Infraprojects Limited's registered address is Office No 1, Radha Niwas, Kelkar Compound Court Nakka, Thane (West), Thane.

Techlegal Solutions Private Limited was company incorporated February 5, 2010. It is classified as non-government company and is registered at Registrar of Companies, Mumbai. Its authorized share capital is Rs 2,00,000 and its paid up capital is Rs 1,30,000. It is involved in business activities.

Techlegal Solutions Private Limited's AGM was last held August 30, 2011 and as per records from MCA, its balance sheet was last filed March 31, 2011. It has also been struck off the records by MCA.

The directors of Techlegal Solutions Private Limited are Sachin Hindurao Vaze, Shirish Thorat and Mandar Vishwas Joshi. Its registered address is Office No 1, Kelkar Compound Court, Naka Thane, Thane, Maharashtra, the same as Diginext Multimedia.

Shirish Thorat is listed as a director with Vaze in two companies, Techlegal Solutions and Diginext Multimedia.

After 40 years in jail, Calcutta HC releases Nepal resident

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 18: The Calcutta High Court Wednesday ordered the release of a Nepali citizen who has been incarcerated for over 40 years in a correctional home here as an undertrial prisoner in connection with a murder case in Darjeeling.

Dipak Jaishi, who is now 70, has been languishing in Dum Dum Central Correctional Home since his arrest in Darjeeling district of West Bengal for the alleged murder of a man there in 1981.

Ham radio operators traced him following information by a person who was lodged at the same correctional home.

Jaishi's relatives, who did not know about his whereabouts all these years, contacted the Nepal government after learning about his incarceration in Kolkata.

Taking notice of a news report on Jaishi's detention, the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court had asked a lawyer to file a petition before the court. The petition was filed earlier this year seeking Jaishi's release and repatriation to Nepal.

State Legal Service Authority lawyer Jayanta Narayan Chatterjee said that Jaishi has lost his mental balance and has no memory of his native place in Nepal.

A report by psychology experts of the University of Calcutta has stated to the court that his IQ level indicates that his current mental age in terms of intellectual functioning is around 9 years and 9 months.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice TBN Radhakrishnan and Justice Aniruddha Roy ordered the release of Jaishi and entrusted his custody to his cousin Prakash Chandra Sharma Timsina, who became a party to the case after learning about his whereabouts. The bench directed Timsina to furnish a simple bond undertaking to produce Jaishi as and when directed by this court.

The court directed that the bond should be attested by Satish Thapa, Office Secretary of Consulate General of Nepal in India at Kolkata. Upon execution of the bond to the satisfaction of the Registrar General of the high court at the earliest, preferably within a day, the Dum Dum Central Correctional Home will release Dipak to the custody of Timsina, the bench directed.

The court directed that upon his release, all statutory authorities will ensure and do the needful to facilitate Jaishi's transit to Nepal under the aegis of the Consulate General of Nepal in India at Kolkata.

BATTLE FOR BENGAL



West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee addresses a rally at Kalaikunda in support of three TMC candidates Dinen Roy, Pradip Sarkar and Jun Maliha, ahead of the State Assembly polls, in West West Medininipur, Thursday

BJP names 148 candidates for Bengal in second list

While state BJP chief Dilip Ghosh is unlikely to contest the Assembly polls, Mukul Roy's name features in the list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 18: The BJP has announced its second list of candidates Thursday for the Bengal elections, naming 148 candidates including Mukul Roy from Krishnanagar. In this list the BJP has fielded a fifth MP - Jagannath Sarkar. The parliamentarian from Ranaghat will contest at Shantipur. The name of Dilip Ghosh - the



party's state unite chief is not on the list. Sources said he would not contest the Assembly elections. Veteran

Bengal unit leader Rahul Sinha will contest from Habra.

The party also continued with fielding celebrities in this round too, naming folk artiste Ashim Sarkar from the Haringhata Assembly seat. Scientist Gobhardhan Das was fielded from Purbasthali Uttar.

The names announced Thursday are for the phases five, six, seven and eight. The party's

first list of candidates, issued last week, had triggered huge protests that continued for two days and had to be quelled by the police with a lathi charge.

Angry supporters had gathered at the party's election office in Kolkata and even heckled senior leaders Mukul Roy, Arjun Singh and Shiv Prakash. They were joined by protestors from Udaynarayanpur, in Howrah.

BJP loses Jalgaon mayoral election, Sena nominee wins

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, March 18: In a jolt to the BJP, its candidate Thursday lost the mayoral election in the Jalgaon Municipal Corporation as 27 party corporators cross-voted.

Shiv Sena's Jayshree Mahajan was elected the mayor after winning 45 votes.

The BJP with 57 corporators is in power in the 75-member civic body, which has been the party's bastion for several years.

In the election on Thursday, Shiv Sena's Jayshree Mahajan bagged the mayor's post, while BJP rebel Kulbhushan Patil was elected the deputy mayor.

Mahajan got 15 votes of the Shiv Sena, three of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) and 27 of the BJP rebels. The BJP's nominee, Pratibha Kapase, got 30 votes.

Talking to this news agency, Eknath Khadse, a prominent leader from Jalgaon who quit the BJP in October last year and joined the NCP, claimed the BJP corporators were upset since the last two-and-a-half years.

"Since the BJP came to power two-and-a-half years ago, it became arrogant and did not work for the development of the city. The BJP's own corporators wanted to teach the party leaders a lesson," he claimed, referring to BJP leader Girish Mahajan.

Buddhist monk group condemns military crackdown in Myanmar

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, March 18: Myanmar's government-appointed body representing Buddhist monks has opposed the bloody crackdown by the military junta in the country that has left more than 200 dead.

The draft statement by the State Sangha Mahanayaka Committee called upon the military junta to 'immediately halt' firing on demonstrators. "Killing peaceful protesters must stop," the statement said.

The final draft was released by the Sangha Maha Nayaka committee Thursday after it is discussed with the religious affairs minister, a monk close to the government-appointed organisation told this news agency.

When that happens, it might be the most forthright condemnation of the military's bloody crackdown on pro-democracy protests since the February 1 military takeover.

Buddhist monks, often the most



reversed in Myanmar and whose numbers run in thousands, have often led pro-democracy movements in the country.

They were at the forefront of a 2007 "Saffron Revolution" against military rule that paved the way for the 2008 military drafted Constitution and subsequent elections in the country.

The military tried to swing the Buddhist clergy their way by secretly funding radical groups such as Ashin Wirathu's Ma Ba Tha and playing on the Bamar Buddhist identity during the 2017 turmoil in Rakhine state when Rohingya Muslim rebels attacked more than twenty police stations.

Maha farmers start fresh fruit cake 'movement'

FRUIT GROWERS IN RURAL MAHARASHTRA HAVE STARTED AN INNOVATIVE 'MOVEMENT' TO PROMOTE FRESH FRUIT CAKES AS A HEALTHIER OPTION, INSTEAD OF THE TRADITIONAL BAKERY-MADE CAKES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Pune, March 18: Fruit growers in rural Maharashtra have started an innovative 'movement' to promote fresh fruit cakes as a healthier option, instead of the traditional bakery-made cakes, to celebrate birthdays and other special occasions. According to farmers and agrar-



ian experts, the aim of this 'spontaneous' movement, which is gaining popularity on social media, is to encourage farmers and their families to increase the intake of fruits in their diet and to find a new way of selling their produce in the times of COVID-19.

As part of the movement, farmers, their families and various organisations of cultivators are en-

couraging cakes made locally using fruits like watermelon, muskmelon, grapes, orange, pineapple and banana while celebrating special events. Deepak Chavan, a Pune-based agriculture analyst, told this news agency that of late, the production of fruits in several regions of the state has increased, leading to a surplus supply in markets and causing a drop in the prices of fruits.

Farmers have already suffered due to the lockdown and now due to surplus supply, traders are purchasing their produce at lower rates, he said. "As a solution, farmers have started this innovative movement on social media where cakes made of fresh fruits are being used to celebrate birthdays, marriage anniversaries and other events," Chavan said. Generally, it has been seen that fruit cultivators and their families do not consume adequate fruits as part of their diet, he said.

"The movement is serving the right purpose as farmers and their families are now consuming fruits on different occasions in the form of fresh fruit cakes. These cakes are far better than the bakery-made cakes which have less nutritional value," he said. Chavan said the movement is currently restricted to farmers and their families, but he is hopeful it will become a sustainable solution for all fruit growers.

'Hoy Amhi Shetkari', a farmers' organisation, is holding a 'fresh

fruits cake' competition on social media. Participants are supposed to make cakes using only locally available fruits.

"As the fresh fruit cake movement is picking up steam, we decided to hold a competition and invited entries from people to send photos and videos of fresh fruits cakes," said Sangli-based farmer Amol Patil, who is a member of the group.

He said they have so far received over 150 entries, with people and farmers sending pictures of their fresh fruit cakes. Patil said their organisation's social media platform wall is now abuzz with pictures of fresh fruit cakes sent by farmers, their families and other people.

Some people are also using their decorative skills to make the cakes more attractive by using locally available fruits, he said.

"The movement is at a nascent stage and professional and commercial touch is needed to make the endeavour more sustainable to support farmers and their produce," he said.

national



Four astronauts are being trained for India's first human space flight. Their one-year training in Russia is completing this month, with some delay on account of the COVID pandemic
JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

ACTOR ARUN GOVIL JOINS BJP

Days before assembly polls begin in West Bengal and three other states, actor Arun Govil, who played the role of Lord Ram in the famous TV serial Ramayan, joined the BJP Thursday, saying his decision was triggered by TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee's "irritation" to the chant of Jai Shri Ram



of the day quote

In view of the panchayat elections and Holi festival, antigen tests must be made mandatory at railway stations, airports and bus stations
YOGI ADITYANATH | UP CHIEF MINISTER

Inflation is at its peak due to wrong policies of the BJP, and all the promises of 'Ramrajya' have proved to be mere promises
SHIVPAL SINGH YADAV | PRAGATISHEEL SAMAJWADI PARTY NATIONAL PRESIDENT

People will see our performance and management. Will fulfil all promises before going to polls
AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER

Changing molester into brother unacceptable: SC

INDOASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 18: The Supreme Court Thursday said setting the tying of a rakhi as a condition for bail, and transforming a molester into a brother by a judicial mandate is not unacceptable as it has the effect of diluting and eroding the offence of sexual harassment.

A bench of Justices AM Khanwilkar and S Ravindra Bhat said the law criminalises outraging the modesty of a woman, as it criticised the July 30 order by the Madhya Pradesh High Court, where a man accused of molestation was asked to get a 'rakhi' tied on him by

the victim as a condition for bail.

"Granting bail, subject to such conditions, renders the court susceptible to the charge of re-negotiating and mediating justice between confronting parties in a criminal offence and perpetuating gender stereotypes," the bench said in its 24-page order, setting aside the bail condition in the High Court order.

Noting that gender violence is most often unseen and is shrouded in a culture of silence, the bench said: "The causes and factors of violence against women include entrenched unequal power equations between men and women that foster violence and its acceptability, aggravated by cultural and social norms, eco-

RAKHI FOR BAIL



conomic dependence, poverty and alcohol consumption, etc."

The top court said judges can play a significant role in ridding the justice system of harmful stereotypes. "They have an important

responsibility to base their decisions on law and facts in evidence, and not engage in gender stereotyping," it noted.

The bench also added the judges should identify gender stereotyping, and identify how the application, enforcement or perpetuation of these stereotypes discriminates against women or denies them equal access to justice. "Stereotyping might compromise the impartiality of a judge's decision," it observed.

The bench said men, perhaps more than women, have a duty and role to play in averting and combating violence against women.

Noting Attorney General K.K. Venugopal had suggested steps that

should be taken to sensitise all stakeholders, especially courts, while dealing with offences against women, the bench said: "On gender equality and gender sensitisation, the Attorney General argued that to achieve the goal of gender justice, it is imperative that judicial officers, judges, and members of the bar are made aware of gender prejudices that hinder justice."

The top court said if judges falter, especially in gender related crimes, they imperil fairness and inflict great cruelty in the casual blindness to the despair of the survivors as it passed a slew of direction on the aspect of gender sensitisation in the legal fraternity.

83 thatched houses gutted in Arunachal



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Itanagar, March 18: Two persons, including a five-year-old girl, were charred to death and 83 thatched houses gutted after a fire broke out in a village in Arunachal Pradesh's Tirap district on Thursday, an official said.

The incident took place around 12.30 pm at Longliang village, and no fire tenders could be pressed into service as the rural hamlet is on a hillock, Tirap Deputy Commissioner Taro Mize said. Though initial reports from the district suggested that 143 houses were reduced to ashes, but after further assessment, the number was revised to 83 houses out of a total of 139 in the village with a population of 702.

"An elderly person, who was bed-ridden, and a little girl were charred to death. The deceased have not been identified," Extra Assistant Commissioner (EAC) of Lazu D K Thungdok said. He said the extent of damage and the cause of the fire are yet to be ascertained.

Mize said essential commodities have been dispatched through special relief teams. Meanwhile, senior Congress MLA from the district Wanglin Lowangdong has urged the state government to immediately make ex-gratia payment to the next of kin of the deceased and relief to the affected.

TWITTER DEBATE SHREDS U'KHAND CM'S RIPPED JEANS REMARK



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun/New Delhi, March 18: They may or not be the current fashion trend but ripped jeans are out of the cupboard and at the centre of debate on social media and beyond with celebrities, politicians and many 'nobody's' too taking on Uttarakhand Chief Minister Punit Rawat for his comment on women who wear them.

From actor Gul Panag and writer-lyricist Varun Grover to Shiv Sena MP Priyanka Chaturvedi and RJD leader Rabri Devi, and a host of others in between, everybody had a view and social media platforms were flooded with one-liners, memes and photographs of jeans with artful rips, some narrow and others gaping.

The hashtag #rippedjeans was trending on Twitter for much of Wednesday and Thursday as well, following Rawat's controversial remark wondering what values women wearing ripped jeans impart to their children.

Rawat, who was sworn in as Chief Minister March 10, said at an event Tuesday that youngsters today follow strange fashion trends due to a lack of values and consider themselves to be big shots after wearing jeans ripped at the knees. Women also follow such trends. Rawat then went on to describe the attire of a woman who sat next to him on a flight. He described her as wearing boots, jeans ripped at the knees, bangles in her hands and with two children travelling with her. He also said she runs an NGO, goes out in society and has two children and wondered what values she would give them.

The fashion trend of wearing frayed or shredded jeans has plenty of naysayers but Rawat's comment touched a chord even in those who

make sure they never don them - some young and others old, women of course and many men as well. Senior Congress leader Kapil Sibal said he was "shocked" by Rawat's statement.

In a statement, Uttarakhand Congress chief Pritam Singh termed Rawat's remarks "shameful" and demanded that he apologise to women.

State Congress spokesperson Garima Dasgupta added that it doesn't behove a chief minister to make a derogatory remark about someone's sartorial choices and said such comments can hurt public sentiment. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) slammed Rawat over his "distasteful" remarks.

Rawat did find support in his party colleague, Surendra Singh, MLA from Bairia in Uttar Pradesh. Men and women, he said, need to wear "decent clothes" and women, especially daughters, are the family's "prestige" and must behave in a dignified manner.

However, what went down on Twitter was quite different in tone, reflecting outrage and sometimes humour, with many people, particularly women, posting their photographs in their carefully ripped jeans. While some asked the Uttarakhand chief minister to mind his own business, others lambasted him for imposing his "patriarchal" and "misogynistic" views.

"Time to rip apart the glass ceiling of misogyny and toxic patriarchy!" wrote a user alongside her picture in ripped jeans. "Ripped jeans is not the issue, ripped mentality of BJP is," said another. In a reply to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's tweet congratulating Rawat on his oath ceremony as Uttarakhand CM, RJD leader Rabri Devi blasted the ruling party for trying to define identity and culture through one's clothes.

HAPPY FEET



BSF soldiers performing Bhangra on the opening of the BSF (Border Security Force of India) v/s BGB (Border Guard Bangladesh) Maitri (Friendship) Football Match at Belonia in Agartala

UNI PHOTO

India, Kuwait to expand ties

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: India and Kuwait Thursday decided to establish a joint ministerial commission that will formulate a framework to strengthen ties in sectors like energy, economy, investment, manpower and labour and information technology.

The decision was taken during talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his visiting Kuwaiti counterpart Sheikh Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah.

Al-Sabah handed over to Jaishankar a letter from Kuwaiti Prime Minister Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Sabah addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister arrived here Wednesday evening on a nearly 18-hour visit. In their deliberations, the two foreign ministers explored ways and means to impart further dynamism in the traditional and friendly ties, while Jaishankar invited more investments from Kuwait into India in sectors like energy, infrastructure, food security, healthcare and education, the MEA said.

AMBANI SECURITY SCORE

Two cars used by Waze seized

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, March 18: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Thursday seized two more luxury cars allegedly used by suspended Mumbai police officer Sachin Waze, sources said.

A Toyota Land Cruiser Prado was found parked outside Waze's residence in Saket area of adjoining Thane, an agency official said. A Mercedes car was also seized but it was not clear from where it was picked up. The total number of vehicles seized has gone up to five, including another Mercedes, a Scorpio and an Innova.

The vehicles were brought to the NIA office at Cumballa Hill on Pedder Road here. The NIA on Thursday called two policemen, including an aide of Waze and a senior police inspector, for questioning, sources said.

The NIA arrested Waze on Saturday night in connection with the security scare outside the south Mumbai residence of industrialist Mukesh Ambani. Under fire over handling of the bomb scare outside Ambani's house, Maharashtra Government on Wednesday shifted Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh to the Home



Guard. Senior IPS officer Hemant Nagrale has replaced Singh as Mumbai police commissioner.

The NIA on Tuesday seized a black Mercedes from the Crawford market area in Mumbai and recovered from it the original number plate of the explosive-laden SUV that was placed outside billionaire Mukesh Ambani's residence 'Antilia' on February 25. A 27-year-old travel operator said on Wednesday he sold the Mercedes-Benz car in February to a website that deals in used vehicles. He said he did not know Waze.

Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Thursday said he was transferred after some of his colleagues committed "serious and

unforgivable mistakes". In his first public comments after Singh's transfer, Deshmukh said he was shifted to ensure that the probe into police officer Sachin Waze episode is conducted "properly and without hindrance".

Deshmukh said the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) and the NIA are conducting the probe into the episode "professionally". He said that action will be taken against whoever is found guilty in the respective probes by the NIA and ATS.

"This is not an administrative transfer (of Singh). Some things have come to light through the probes conducted by the NIA and the ATS," Deshmukh said.

India saw largest spike in malware attacks in 2020: Report

THE COUNTRY SAW MORE THAN 25 MILLION MALWARE ATTACKS IN DECEMBER 2020, SAID THE "2021 SONICWALL CYBER THREAT REPORT"

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

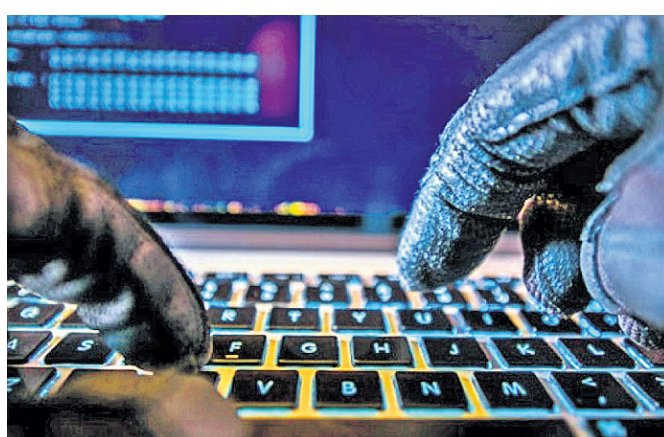
Mumbai, March 18: India experienced the largest spike in malware attacks, with the monthly volume more than tripling between September and October, said a new report from cybersecurity firm SonicWall.

The pandemic's work-from-home reality resulted in an unprecedented change for organisations as they fought to defend exponentially greater attack surfaces from cybercriminals armed with powerful Cloud-based tools, cloud storage and endless targets.

As working environments evolved, so did the methods of threat actors and other motivated perpetrators, as detailed in the report.

"2020 offered a perfect storm for cybercriminals and a critical tipping point for the cyber arms race," SonicWall President and CEO Bill Conner, said in a statement.

"The pandemic - along with remote work, a charged political climate, record prices of cryptocurrency, and threat actors weaponising cloud storage and tools - drove the



effectiveness and volume of cyberattacks to new highs."

The report highlights how Covid-19 provided threat actors with ample

opportunity for more powerful, aggressive and numerous attacks, thriving on the fear and uncertainty of remote and mobile work-

forces navigating corporate networks from home.

"There is no code of conduct when it comes to cybercriminals, their methods of attacks and the selection of their targets," said Conner.

The findings showed that there was a 62 per cent increase in ransomware globally, and a 158 per cent spike in North America.

It suggests that cybercriminals are using more sophisticated tactics and more dangerous variants, like Ryuk, to earn an easy payday.

First identified in August 2018, Ryuk did not appear outside of North America, Europe or Asia as late as January 2020.

The following month, Ryuk began climbing the charts, eventually overtaking top-ranking Cerber ransomware.

With 109.9 million cases detected worldwide, Ryuk was logged nearly every eight seconds in September alone, said the report.

The research shows the shift to employees working from home full-time could be directly linked to the increased utilization of Office files and PDFs as malicious vehicles armed with phishing URLs, embedded malicious files and other dangerous exploits.

New SonicWall data indicates a 67 per cent increase in malicious Office files in 2020.

Once thought to be a dying attack vector after the industry's major mining operation boarded its online service, cryptojacking is back thanks to rising cryptocurrency values and its appeal of concealed payouts.

'Mutual friend' rapes nurse

Noida: The Noida Police Thursday arrested a man here for allegedly raping a 23-year-old nurse, who hails from Kerala, on the pretext of helping her find a job in Delhi-NCR, officials said. The accused, who was held from his home in the morning, also hails from Kerala and is a mutual friend of the complainant, the officials said. The complainant had approached the local Sector 24 police station Wednesday following which an FIR was lodged and the accused arrested, they said.

of the day quote

Today, continuous efforts are being made to remove every small and big impediment in the way of the farmers' journey from the 'seed to market' and to ensure their prosperity and progress of agriculture



Thank you Didi (Mamata Banerjee) for supporting people of Delhi against Centre's unconstitutional step



Among the 30 most polluted cities in the world, ten are from Uttar Pradesh and the capital Lucknow is at the ninth spot in the world



AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

9 sentenced to life in gangrape case

Patna: A civil court in Gaya Thursday awarded life sentence to nine persons in connection with the gang-rape of a mother-daughter duo in 2018. The accused had committed the crime June 18, 2018, after intercepting a doctor, his wife and daughter, who were returning home on a motorcycle from Gaya, at Sondiha village in the district. After tying the doctor's hands and legs with towels, the accused persons had raped his wife. A total of 13 persons were present during the commissioning of the crime, one of whom also raped the minor daughter.

Online sex racket busted, 4 held

New Delhi: The Delhi police has busted an online sex racket which was operated through 150 WhatsApp groups in Delhi and NCR. The gang used to kidnap girls and later sell them to pimps who supplied the girls in 5-star hotels in the Capital. Four pimps including two women have been arrested and a minor kidnapped girl rescued from Delhi's Majnu ka Tila. Working on a kidnapping case of a minor girl who was abducted January 22, the Delhi police busted the online sex racket after it rescued the girl.

Cop found murdered

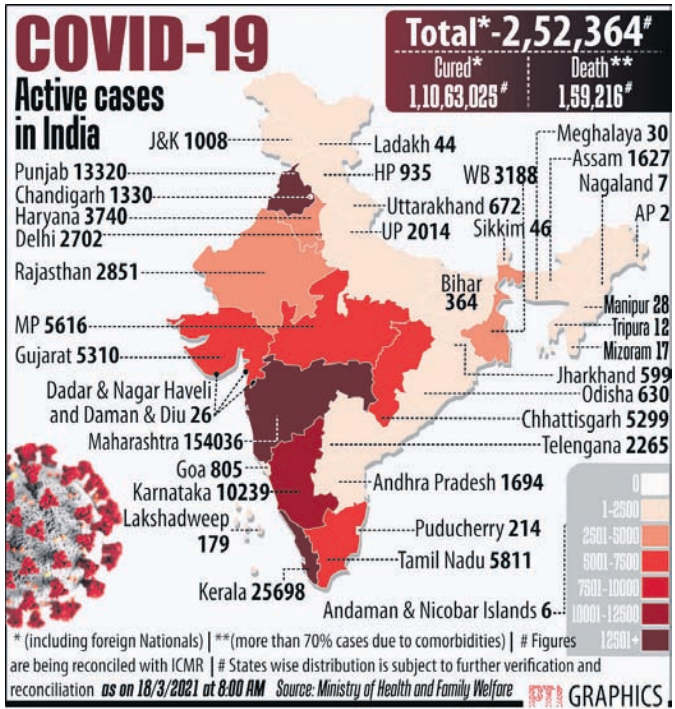
Patna: A police sub-inspector has been found murdered in Bihar's Saran district, an official said Thursday. The deceased, Rana Ravi Ranjan Pratap Singh was deployed in the Mufassil police station in Samastipur district. He was on leave at the time of visiting his native village Naraon in Saran district, police said.

Maha top contributor to new Covid-19 cases

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 18: With India Thursday recording highest single-day rise since December, the cases in Maharashtra accounted for 63.21 per cent of the daily new cases, followed by Kerala and Punjab. The country recorded 35,871 new Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours. A single-day spike of 36,011 new infections were recorded December 6. According to the Health Ministry, Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, Gujarat and Tamil Nadu continue to report a surge in the COVID daily new cases. 79.54 per cent of the new cases are from these five states. Maharashtra has reported the highest daily new cases at 16,620, accounting for 63.21 per cent of the daily new cases. It is followed by Kerala with 1,792 while Punjab reported 1,492 new cases.

A rising trajectory of daily new cases is also visible in eight states. These are Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi, Gujarat, Karnataka and Haryana. Kerala is reporting a consistently declining trend over last one month. With death of 172 people in the last 24 hours, the fatality toll has reached 1,59,216 in India. The active caseload in country has mounted to 2,52,364, rising by over 17,958 cases from previous day. Five States account for 84.88 per cent of the new deaths. Maharashtra saw the maximum casualties (84). Punjab follows with 35 daily deaths and Kerala reported 13 deaths in the last 24 hours. Health Ministry



400 INFECTED WITH UK, SA, BRAZIL MUTANT

Amid surge in Covid-19 cases, the Health Ministry on Thursday said that 400 patients have been found to be affected with UK, South Africa and Brazil mutant variants of the coronavirus. On March 4, the country had recorded 242 cases with these variants. The cases increased by 158 in merely two weeks.

My 2 minute silence for the farmers who died during the agitation is not acceptable to the BJP. I will pay my tributes to the sacrifices of my farmers and labourers again and again. I am not afraid of those who fear my silence

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER



MATTER OF CONCERN

Over 42,000 government schools across the country do not have drinking water facilities, while more than 15,000 schools have no toilets, Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said Thursday



CENTRE BATS FOR AIJS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: A "properly framed" All India Judicial Service (AIJS) on the lines of other all-India services such as IAS and IPS is important to strengthen the overall justice delivery system, Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad told Rajya Sabha Thursday.

The service will give an opportunity for induction of suitably qualified fresh legal talent selected through a proper all-India merit selection system as well as address the issue of social inclusion by enabling suitable representation to marginalised and deprived sections of the society, he said in a written reply.

A comprehensive proposal was formulated for the constitution of AIJS and the same was approved by a Committee of Secretaries in November, 2012. The proposal was included as an agenda item in the conference of Chief Ministers and Chief Justices



of the High Courts held in April, 2013, he noted. He said it was decided that the issue needs further deliberation and consideration. The views of the state governments and the high courts were sought on the proposal. "There was divergence of opinion among the state governments and among the high courts on the constitution of All India Judicial Service. While some state governments and

high courts favoured the proposal, some were not in favour of creation of AIJS, while some others wanted changes in the proposal formulated by the central government," he observed. The proposal to constitute AIJS with views from the high courts and state governments received thereon was included in the agenda for the Chief Justices conference held in April 2015, he recalled.

Stop spreading Covid fear: Farmers to Govt

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 18: The farmers agitating against the three contentious farm laws at the borders of Delhi are not perturbed by the surge in the Covid cases, rather they have asked the government not to spread fear to end the agitation.

On Wednesday, in a meeting with the Chief Ministers amid growing alarm over the resurgence of Covid-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged them to act fast against the emerging "second peak" of the pandemic, warning "if we do not stop this now, a country-wide outbreak

can occur". Amid the rising Covid cases, Section 144 has been imposed in Ghaziabad.

Talking about the Covid-19 surge, Ghazipur border protest committee spokesperson Jagtar Singh Bajwa told IANS, "Farmers are here from the last four months but not a single Covid-19 case has been reported from here. The government is spreading the fear so that people don't come here to participate in the protest. This is a conspiracy to end the protest. We condemn this act of the government." Bharatiya Kisan Union president of Uttar Pradesh Rajvir Singh Jadaun said, "We

started the protest amid the pandemic outbreak and now when we have vaccine then why the government is spreading the fear. Rather than sending the vaccine to the foreign countries, for free, the government should provide it to its citizens."

"The Prime Minister's concern about the villages is fine but Covid-19 surge is not the only concern in the villages. Not a single farmer has been infected while working on the farms. Instead of spreading fear, the government should proactively think about saving the lives of the people," he added.

DAILY GRIND



Women labourers pull a cart laden with waste building material in Ahmedabad

45% mobile users introduced to gaming by pandemic: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 18: The onset of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown resulted in a significant shift in mobile usage and consequently has been a catalyst in boosting mobile gaming in India.

InMobi's 2021 Gaming Report, India found that during this period, 45 per cent of Indians started playing games on their smartphones. This also resulted in a spike in the amount of time spent on mobile gaming as well as the number of apps they experimented with. Among the committed gamers, 40 per cent spent more time on gaming apps while 38 per cent of them increased the variety of games they played.

During Covid-19, on an average day, time spent on gaming apps surged through the day as people played a lot more often starting as early as 7.30 a.m. till 11.30 p.m. The sharpest surge in the use of gaming apps occurred at 11.30 a.m., with a 6.6x increase in gameplay. Commenting on the changing gaming pattern in India, Vasuta Agarwal, Managing Director, Asia Pacific, InMobi,



said, "Mobile gaming accelerated due to the lockdown in India as people continued to shelter at place and work from home. What was seemingly an emerging trend is now a lasting behavior with a 1.5x growth in gaming users. With over 80% of mobile gamers playing every day, it has evolved to become an integral part of the connected consumer's life!" Gaming in India is no longer restricted to young men. Majority of Indians are committed gamers

who play at least once or more every day. Accessibility and affordability of smartphones and high-speed internet are some of the factors which have made mobile gaming a popular source of entertainment for people regardless of age and location.

The report highlights that women constitute 43 per cent of the Mobile Gaming audience in India of which 12 per cent are in the age group of 25-44 and 28 per cent are over 45 years.

RS adjourned four times amid uproar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: The Congress and other Opposition parties Thursday forced adjournments of Rajya Sabha proceedings for four times during the post-lunch sitting as they insisted on referring to a standing committee a bill on raising the FDI in the insurance sector to 74 per cent from the current 49 per cent.

After Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman moved the Insurance (Amendment) Bill 2021 for passing in the Upper House, Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge said it will put the people of country in "trouble". He said the Insurance Act 1938 is being amended for the third time under the BJP.



The Act was first amended during Atal Bihari Vajpayee's tenure when 26 per cent FDI was allowed in the insurance sector, he said, adding later in 2015, the law was amended further to allow 49 per cent FDI and now the amendment is for allowing 74 per cent FDI. "I want the bill scrutinised to address the gaps and it should be referred to a standing committee," the Congress leader said as his party colleagues rose in support of the demand and began shouting slogans.

Amid sloganeering, BJP leader Bhupender Yadav said Kharge's statement was "factually incorrect". Firstly, the Opposition has not given a motion to refer the bill to a select committee under Rule 71 and 72, he said.

Secondly, he added, this is the only bill which has been examined by a standing committee, the Law Commission and the Narasimhan Commission and even a select committee of the Upper House.

"The bill has been brought after full scrutiny," he said, and added that the Congress had also brought a similar bill in 2008 and, thereafter, it was sent to a standing committee. Neither the motion nor the point of order raised by Opposition is correct, he added.

'Sticky bombs' pop up as fresh security challenge in J&K

THE THREAT, SUSPECTED TO BE AN IDEA OF PAKISTAN'S INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE (ISI) OPERATIVES WHO PUSH TERRORISTS IN THE VALLEY, CAME TO LIGHT AFTER VARIOUS RAIDS AND OPERATIONS SAW SECURITY FORCES RECOVER SUCH BOMBS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, March 18: Inputs about 'sticky bombs' to use on vehicles by terrorists have emerged a new concern for security agencies in Jammu and Kashmir with the CRPF, Jammu and Kashmir Police and the Army gearing up to tackle this probable threat which could add a new dimension to insurgency in the region.

However, this new method of attack has not been used so far anywhere in the Union Territory. The use of sticky bombs first came into light during questioning of some arrested terrorists and their home-grown linkmen in the Kashmir Valley. Central Reserve Police Force's

(CRPF) newly appointed Director General Kuldip Singh had Thursday revealed the new threat.

"We have heard about sticky bombs. It is really a challenge but there is not a single input about seizure of any such bombs from any vehicle in Jammu and Kashmir. Neither we noticed any such incident in which such bombs were used," he said.

"Based on inputs from some accused, a few sticky bombs have been recovered from some particular places. These bombs were not even used on any vehicle," he reiterated. The Jammu and Kashmir Police earlier this month recovered around two dozen sticky bombs from the Jammu region,



based on inputs received from some accused, prompting security agencies to amended procedures to deal with the new threat. There have been some instances in which "sticky bombs" were dropped by terrorists sitting across the border in Pakistan using drones, and these explosives were seized from Samba sector of Jammu region along the International Border earlier this month.

The sticky bombs are improvised explosive devices (IEDs) with magnetic properties, and their use has been seen in war-ravaged Afghanistan where Taliban used them against US-led coalition forces and in Iraq and Syria where IS terrorists have triggered them

against the government forces.

In India, "sticky bombs" were used by suspected Iranian terrorists in February 2012 to injure the wife of an Israeli diplomat. These inputs came at a time when the security forces till March 17 neutralised 226 militants, including "top" Jaish-e-Mohammed Commander Sajjad Afghani, in Jammu and Kashmir in the last 15 months.

The CRPF said that 215 of the 226 militants were neutralised in 2020 while 11 have been killed this year in 275 "encounters/attacks" conducted by a joint force of the paramilitary force, the Jammu and Kashmir Police and the Indian Army.



Beijing has an interest, a clear self-interest in helping to pursue denuclearisation of North Korea because it is a source of instability. It is a source of danger and obviously a threat to us and our partners

ANTONY BLINKEN | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

DISNEYLAND TO REOPEN APRIL 30

American entertainment giant Disney has announced that its flagship theme parks in California are slated to reopen with limited capacity April 30 after more than a year of closure due to Covid-19



of the day quote

We have already declared our stand that no North Korea-US contact and dialogue of any kind can be possible unless the US rolls back its hostile policy toward North Korea

CHOE SON HUI | FIRST FOREIGN MINISTER, NORTH KOREA

They're destroying our country. People are coming in by the hundreds of thousands. And, frankly, our country can't handle it. It is a crisis like we have rarely had and, certainly, we have never had on the border

DONALD TRUMP | FORMER US PRESIDENT

We feel it is time to bury the past and move forward. The Kashmir issue is at the heart of this. It is important to understand that without the resolution of the Kashmir dispute through peaceful means, the process will always remain susceptible to derailment to politically motivated bellicosity

QAMAR JAVED BAIWA | PAKISTAN ARMY CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Tanzania's Prez dies at 61

Nakuru: President John Magufuli of Tanzania, a prominent COVID-19 sceptic in Africa whose populist rule often cast his East African country in a harsh international spotlight, has died. He was 61. Magufuli's death was announced Wednesday by Vice President Samia Suluhu, who said the president died of heart failure. Magufuli was one of Africa's most prominent deniers of COVID-19. He had said last year that Tanzania had eradicated the disease through three days of national prayer.

Afghan chopper crash claims 9

Kabul: An Afghan military helicopter crashed in Wardak province, killing all nine people on board, officials said Thursday. According to a statement by the Ministry of Defence, the Mi-17 helicopter crash landed in Hesa-e-Awal Behsud district, reports dpa news agency. The statement said the victims comprised four crew members and five security personnel, adding that an investigation was underway. According to local officials, the helicopter was en route to evacuate a wounded soldier from the highly-contested province when the incident took place.

Ebola kills 15 in Guinea, DRC

Addis Ababa: The Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said Guinea and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have reported 30 Ebola virus cases and 15 related deaths so far. In an update Wednesday, the Africa CDC reported a fatality rate of 50 per cent in the two countries, reports Xinhua news agency. Official figures reported to the agency showed that the DRC had 12 cases and six deaths while Guinea had 18 cases and nine deaths, according to the update.

Total lockdown in Poland

Warsaw: The Polish government said that it will reintroduce a full nationwide lockdown from Saturday onwards in the wake of a resurgence of new coronavirus cases. In the last 24 hours, a total of 25,052 additional people tested positive for the virus, the highest since November 7, 2020, when 27,875 new cases were confirmed in a single day.

It takes one to know one: Putin retorts after Biden's 'killer' remark

IN AN APPARENT REFERENCE TO BIDEN'S AGE (78), PUTIN SAID HE SINCERELY WISHED HIM GOOD HEALTH

AGENCIES

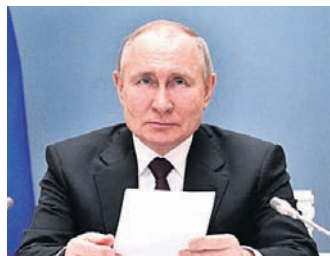
Moscow, March 18: President Vladimir Putin retorted Thursday that it takes one to know one after US President Joe Biden said he thought the Russian leader was a killer and already poor relations between Moscow and Washington sank to a new post-Cold War low.

Putin was speaking on television after Biden, in an ABC News interview that prompted Russia to recall its Washington ambassador for consultations a day earlier, said "I do" when asked if he believed Putin was a killer.

Biden also described Putin as having no soul, and said he would pay a price for alleged Russian meddling in the November 2020 US presidential election, something the Kremlin denies.

Russia is preparing to be hit by a new round of US sanctions in the coming days over that alleged meddling as well as over an alleged hack. In a highly unusual move following Biden's interview, Moscow recalled its ambassador to the United States for consultations.

Putin, responding to Biden's characterisation of him, said he knew the US leader personally, and, in an apparent reference to Biden's age (78), said he sincerely wished him good health.



I remember in my childhood, when we argued in the courtyard with each other we used to say: it takes one to know one. And that's not a coincidence, not just a children's saying or joke. The psychological meaning here is very deep

VLADIMIR PUTIN | PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA

Suggesting Biden was hypocritical in his remarks, Putin said that every state had to contend with "bloody events" and added Biden was accusing the Russian leader of something he was guilty of himself.

"I remember in my childhood, when we argued in the courtyard with each other we used to say: it takes one to know one. And that's not a coincidence, not just a children's saying or joke. The psychological meaning here is very deep,"

Russia recalls its ambassador to US

MOSCOW: Russia's Ambassador to the US, Anatoly Antonov has been recalled to Moscow for consultations to determine the next steps regarding the relations between the two countries. "Russian Ambassador to the US Anatoly Antonov will fly to Moscow for consultations March 20. He will hold meetings at the Russian Foreign Ministry and other government agencies to discuss ways of correcting the Russian-US ties, which are now in a crisis," TAAS News Agency quoted the embassy as saying in a Facebook post Wednesday.

Putin said.

"We always see our own traits in other people and think they are like how we really are. And as a result we assess (a person's) activities and give assessments," he said.

Shortly before Putin's remarks, his spokesman said Biden's comments showed he had no interest in fixing ties with Moscow, which are strained by everything from Syria to Ukraine to Russia's jailing of opposition politician Alexei Navalny.

UK vax disruption due to supply delays from India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, March 18: As the UK's National Health Service warned of a "significant reduction in weekly supply" of vaccines to protect against COVID-19 by the end of this month, the focus Thursday turned to 5 million doses that are expected to be delivered from India.

The Serum Institute of India (SII), which is producing the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccines under the label of Covishield as part of a tie-up, was contracted to supply a total of 10 million doses to the UK.

While five million of these have been received, the remaining batch is now held up with some reports indicating that the Indian government may be weighing up domestic needs before clearing exports.

"A number of global manufacturers are experiencing issues," UK Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick told BBC when asked if the delay had an Indian connection.

"We have learned from some of our manufacturers that there are going to be some supply issues in the last few days," he said.

Jenrick stressed that the government remains on track to meet its July-end target to vaccinate all adults in the UK.

But the main thing is we're still very much on course, we've still got line of sight to deliver the vac-



cines and to meet our targets, he said.

An SII spokesperson told BBC Five million doses had been delivered a few weeks ago to the UK and we will try to supply more later, based on the current situation and the requirement for the government immunisation programme in India.

Under UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson's roadmap for easing England's lockdown, more restrictions will be lifted at the end of this month before non-essential shops, hairdressers and gyms reopen April 12. Jenrick insisted there was no reason to believe the roadmap is affected by this temporary shortage in supply.

The concerns emerged this week when in a letter to local health authorities, NHS England's vaccine programme in-charge had issued a letter to local authorities to warn that they currently predict the shortage of doses will continue for a four-week period, as a result of reductions in inbound vaccines supply and therefore called for a strict delivery schedule only for the most vulnerable groups over-50.

NEW CORRUPTION CHARGES LEVELLED AGAINST SUU KYI

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Yangon, March 18: New corruption allegations against Aung Sang Suu Kyi, the detained former de-facto leader of Myanmar, were aired on national television Thursday, as the military seemed to seek to strengthen the case for its February 1 coup against her government.

In the broadcast, U Maung Weik, a business owner, is shown explaining how he handed over envelopes full of cash to Suu Kyi or her associates starting 2017, reports dpa news agency. In all, Weik said he had handed over a total of \$550,000 during four separate incidents.

A news reader said the businessman has been found guilty of bribery and that the country's anti-corruption commission is investigating.

After Suu Kyi was dislodged by the February 1 coup, the military has piled on charges against her, from illegally importing walkie-talkies to sowing disorder by inducing others to commit offences against the state to mishandling the government's response to the coronavirus pandemic.

When queried by DPA, Khin Maung Zaw, a lawyer for Suu Kyi, dismissed the new allegations.

"I am here not to tell this as her lawyer, but as a Myanmar citizen. We all believe her character. You can criticise her in many ways but you cannot criticise her such as silly ideas of corruption."

INDIAN-ORIGIN MAN CHARGED IN US FOR CYBERSTALKING

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, March 18: A 31-year-old Indian-origin computer security consultant has been charged in the US for allegedly engaging in cyberstalking campaign against a woman and threatening multiple people, including a deputy prosecutor and a police officer investigating him.

Sumit Garg from Seattle was indicted Wednesday by a federal grand jury for conspiracy to engage in cyberstalking in violation of criminal order, and two counts of cyberstalking. Acting US Attorney Tessa M Gorman announced.

Garg was transferred to federal custody last week and was ordered detained at the Federal Detention Center at SeaTac March 15, 2021, the US Department of Justice said in a statement. He will be arraigned on the indictment March 25.

According to a detailed criminal complaint and the indictment in the case, Garg has been involved in an extensive campaign of threats and sexually explicit messaging and posts about a woman who used to share an apartment with his spouse. Using her personal information, Garg threatened and tormented the former roommate in violation of court order.

He allegedly also used his computer skills to threaten multiple people in the former roommate's life, including her uncle who represented her in obtaining a civil protection order; her current boyfriend; the Seattle Police Detective who investigated the threats; and even the Deputy Prosecuting Attorney who filed charges against Garg for his illegal stalking conduct.

Spanish lawmakers okay Bill legalising euthanasia

REUTERS

Madrid, March 18: Spanish lawmakers Thursday legalised euthanasia and assisted suicide for people with serious and incurable or debilitating diseases who want to end their life, making Spain the fourth country in the European Union to take the step.



The new legislation faces staunch opposition from the hard right and religious groups. The far-right Vox party has said it will challenge the law before the Constitutional Court.

Euthanasia has long grabbed public attention in Spain, which has the world's fourth-highest life expectancy and more notably so since paralysed man Ramon Sampedro

Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands have already legalised euthanasia, Spain became the fourth country in the European Union to take the step

The lower house of parliament's vote in a final reading was 202 in favour, 141 against and 2 abstentions. Until now, helping someone end their life in Spain carried a jail term of up to 10 years.

"Today is an important day we are heading towards the recognition of human rights. We are heading towards a more humane and fair society," Health Minister Carolina Darias told lawmakers.

The law, available for adults with legal residence in Spain, will take force in three months to give time to set up regional control committees which will review and authorise requests. Outside the parliament, groups for and against the bill demonstrated during the debate and the vote.

recorded his assisted suicide in 1998 after being denied that right by courts.

His story was taken to the screen in the Academy Award-winning 2004 film "The Sea Inside".

Almost 90% of Spaniards are in favour of decriminalising euthanasia, according to a 2019 opinion poll.

Rafael Botella, a 35-year-old Spaniard paralysed from the neck down since a car crash at 19, told Reuters before the vote that he was relieved that the law would give him the option in case he needed it.

"If for some reason someone is tired of living, no one has the power to tell him, 'No, you will live because my voters or my ideology tell the contrary,'" Botella said.

US House poised to pass immigrant protections for 'Dreamers'

A second measure would shield about 1 million immigrant farm workers from deportation with the goal of also granting them citizenship eventually

REUTERS

Washington, March 18: Young "Dreamer" immigrants living illegally in the United States would be placed on a path to citizenship under a bill to be voted upon in the House of Representatives Thursday, as Democrats try to reverse former President Donald Trump's hard-line immigration policies.

A second measure would shield about 1 million immigrant farm workers from deportation with the goal of also granting them citizenship eventually.

The measures coincide with Democratic President Joe Biden's efforts to contain a surge of undocumented immigrants arriving at the US-Mexico border, many of

them fleeing dangerous conditions in Central American countries.

The southwest border situation has hardened Republican opposition to helping Dreamers - around 1.8 million young immigrants who entered the United States as children. They made the dangerous journey on their own, with parents or hired hands, often to escape gang violence in Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador and other countries.

Many have spent most of their lives in the United States and have been educated in US schools.

House Republican leaders said they were urging their rank-and-file to vote against the bill. But Democrats were banking on garnering enough votes for passage even if Republicans do not help them.

In a first, baby born with antibodies against nCoV

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, March 18: Pediatricians have reported the first known case of a woman, who was given the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine during her pregnancy, giving birth to a baby with antibodies against the novel coronavirus.

According to the yet-to-be-peer-reviewed study, posted in the preprint server medRxiv, the mother had received a single dose of the Moderna mRNA vaccine at 36 weeks and three days of her gestation period.

Three weeks later, she gave birth to a vigorous, healthy, full-term girl, whose blood sample taken immediately after birth revealed the presence of antibodies against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the study noted.

"Here, we report the first known case of an infant with SARS-CoV-2 IgG antibodies detectable in cord blood after maternal vaccination," noted the co-authors, Paul Gilbert and Chad Rudnick from Florida Atlantic University in the US.

The woman, who has been breastfeeding the baby exclusively, received the second dose of the vac-

cine as per the normal 28-day vaccination protocol timeline, the doctors noted.

While earlier studies showed that the passage of antibodies from COVID-recovered mothers to their fetuses via the placenta was lower than expected, the current research suggests "potential for protection and infection risk reduction from SARS-CoV-2 with maternal vaccination."

However, Gilber and Rudnick note that further long-term studies are needed to quantify the antibody response in babies born to vaccinated mothers.



"There's no pathway for anything right now," Republican Senator

Lindsey Graham told reporters Tuesday when asked about Senate

prospects for the Dreamers bill.

The measure also would help a separate group of immigrants who came from countries that were devastated by civil wars and natural disasters and had qualified for temporary protections in the United States.

As president, Trump significantly rolled back the Temporary Protected Status program. In 2017 he also rescinded former President Barack Obama's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program aimed at shielding qualifying Dreamers from deportation.

Court rulings and the Biden administration have kept DACA alive at least for now.

Biden has expressed support for enacting wide-ranging immigra-

tion legislation to replace outdated 1986 laws. Some 11 million immigrants have been living in the United States illegally for years.

Democrats had hoped that the two more narrow measures up for House votes on Thursday might have the support of enough Republicans to win passage in the Senate, where a super-majority of 60 votes is needed for most legislation to advance in the 100-member chamber.

Democrats began pushing for Dreamer protections in 2001. But time after time, most recently in 2018, legislation sputtered in the House or Senate amid opposition from Republicans, many of whom argued illegal immigrants should not be rewarded, no matter their age.

of the day quote

2020 was truly extraordinary as we saw acceleration of digital adoption across sectors, which led to a continuation of trends seen over previous years, including strong deal flow, focus on consumer tech and SaaS and continued growth in start-ups

ARPAN SHETH | PARTNER, BAIN & CO.

The licensed telecom service providers are using diverse cellular mobile technologies viz., 2G, 3G, 4G and their combinations to provide voice and data services. The choice of technology for provision of telecom services are left to operators

SANJAY DHOTRE | MOS FOR COMMUNICATIONS

Fugitive businessmen Vijay Mallya, Nirav Modi and Mehul Choksi are coming back to India to face the law of the land. The government is pursuing extradition of Mallya and Modi from the UK while Choksi is believed to be in Antigua

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Subramanian steps down

New Delhi: Eminent economist Arvind Subramanian has resigned as professor from Ashoka University, two days after noted political commentator Pratap Bhanu Mehta's exit from the institution. Subramanian, former chief economic advisor, had joined Ashoka University as a professor in the Department of Economics in July 2020. "Dr. Subramanian has resigned," a senior faculty member of Sonapat (Haryana) based Ashoka University said. A query sent to Ashoka University regarding the resignation remained unanswered till the filing of the story.

AWS, Niti partner to train students

New Delhi: IT major Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Niti Aayog Thursday announced a tie-up to train students on the fundamentals of cloud computing through Atal Tinkering Labs. A statement of intent was signed between Niti Aayog and Amazon Internet Services Private Limited, which undertakes the resale and marketing of AWS Cloud services in India, to roll out the project.

Skoda unveils all new SUV Kushaq

New Delhi: Czech automaker Skoda Thursday globally unveiled its all new SUV Kushaq which would take on the likes of Hyundai Creta and Kia Seltos in the fastest growing mid-sized SUV segment in the domestic market. The model is the first production car as part of the company's India 2.0 project.

DPIIT to hold meeting on FDI

New Delhi: The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) will hold a meeting with industry associations like CII Friday on issues pertaining to FDI in the e-commerce sector, an official said. This would be the second meeting on the matter. A meeting with traders' bodies including the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) was held March 17. Similar deliberations with different ministries and departments are scheduled March 23 and with e-commerce companies March 25, the official said.



We have returned to overall pre-pandemic growth ahead of expectations while continuing to take market share faster than before the pandemic

JULIE SWEET | CEO, ACCENTURE

OMC PAYS INTERIM DIVIDEND

Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC), a state public sector undertaking, Thursday paid interim dividend of ₹1,000cr to the state government for FY 2020-21. Steel and Mines Minister Prafulla Mallick presented the dividend cheque, on behalf of the OMC to CM Naveen Patnaik through video conferencing



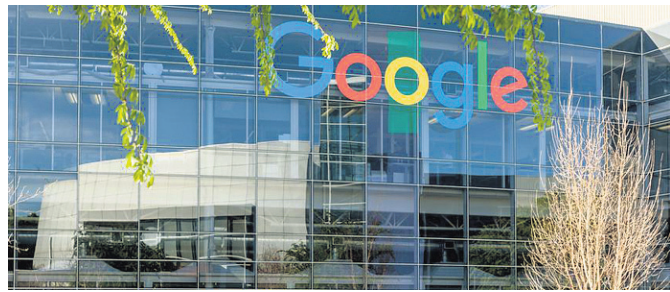
Google's privacy push draws US antitrust scrutiny

Investigators are asking whether Google is using Chrome to reduce competition by preventing rival ad companies from tracking users through cookies while leaving loopholes for it to gather data with cookies, analytics tools and other sources

REUTERS

Los Angeles, March 18: Google's plan to block a popular web tracking tool called "cookies" is a source of concern for US Justice Department investigators who have been asking advertising industry executives whether the move by the search giant will hobble its smaller rivals, people familiar with the situation said.

Alphabet Inc's Google a year ago announced it would ban some cookies in its Chrome browser to increase user privacy. Over the last two months, Google released more details, leading online ads rivals to complain about losing the data-gathering tool. The questions from Justice Department investigators



have touched on how Chrome policies, including those related to cookies, affect the ad and news industries, four people said.

Investigators are asking whether Google is using Chrome, which has 60% global market share, to reduce competition by preventing rival ad companies from tracking users

through cookies while leaving loopholes for it to gather data with cookies, analytics tools and other sources, the sources added.

The latest conversations, which have not been previously reported, are a sign that officials are tracking Google's projects in the global online ad market where it and No. 2

Facebook Inc control about 54% of revenue. The ad inquiry may not lead to legal action. Executives from more than a dozen companies from an array of sectors have spoken with Justice Department investigators, one of the sources said.

The government has been investigating Google's search and advertising business since mid-2019, and last October it sued Google for allegedly using anticompetitive tactics to maintain the dominance of its search engine. It has continued to probe Google's ad practices.

Investigators also have asked rivals whether they encountered behavior similar to or worse than the advertising-focused accusations that attorneys general from Texas and other states leveled against

Google in a lawsuit last December, the people said.

The Justice Department declined comment for this story.

Google defended its ad business, saying it was helping companies grow and protecting users' privacy from exploitative practices.

"The enormous competition in ad tools has made online ads more affordable, reduced fees, and expanded options for publishers and advertisers," the company said.

If the Justice Department sues over ads-related conduct, it could file a new lawsuit or join the Texas case, one of the sources said. But antitrust litigation experts said the department also still had time to amend its existing complaint to include the ad tech concerns.

PET bottles are safe for packaging of pharmaceuticals: NGT



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: National Green Tribunal's (NGT) recent order declaring PET bottles use safe for packaging of pharmaceuticals has finally given a rubber stamp on a scientific fact, endorsed by both the government, scientific community and the pharmaceutical industry.

An especially designed plastic - polyethylene terephthalate or PET is widely used for packaging water, medicines, beverages, edible oil, etc. across the world because of its safety, utility and economic viability for the packaging of products of mass consumption.

Recently, the principal bench of National Green Tribunal dismissed a litigation filed by Him Jagriti Uttaranchal Welfare Society in 2014 stating that Indian government has already ensured guidelines for safe and regulated use of plastics for packaging and as the industry is adhering to global guidelines formulated under Pharmacopoeia no further legislation changes is required.

The order comes after an expert Committee set up by the Health Ministry in 2015, led by former biotech secretary MK Bhan, submitted a report to the tribunal stating, "There is no conclusive evidence to suggest that use of PET or additive like antimony for pharmaceutical packaging may leach substances beyond limits that pose threat to human health".

'Google to invest over \$7bn in US, create 10K jobs'



REUTERS

Washington, March 18: Google will invest more than \$7 billion in the United States this year and create thousands of jobs, the tech giant's CEO said Thursday.

"We plan to invest over \$7 billion in offices and data centers across the US and create at least 10,000 new full-time Google jobs in the US this year," Sundar Pichai said in a statement.

Pichai said Google "wants to be a part" of America's economic recovery from the pandemic and is investing in some communities that are new to the company, as well as expanding in others across 19 states. The announcement comes as Google faces pressure from dozens of US states that accuse the internet giant of abusing its search dominance to eliminate competition.

Google will spend \$1 billion in its home state of California.

Outside of the San Francisco Bay Area, Google said it would add thousands of jobs in Atlanta, Washington DC, Chicago and New York.

RS approves Bill to raise FDI in insurance to 74%

Giving reasons for the decision to raise the FDI limit, Nirmala Sitharaman said, insurance firms are facing liquidity pressure & the higher limit would help meet the growing capital requirement



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: Rajya Sabha Thursday passed a bill to raise the foreign investment limit in the insurance sector to 74% with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying while control will go to foreign companies, the majority of directors and key management persons will be resident Indians who will be covered by law of the land.

"The laws of the land are fairly mature. They can control every operation which happens in this country. (No one can) take it (money) away and make us sit and watch," she said replying to a debate on the bill.

Giving reasons for the decision to raise the foreign direct investment (FDI) limit, she said insurance companies are facing liquidity pressure and the higher limit would help meet the growing capital requirement.

On change of definition of 'control' of the insurance company

with the hike in FDI limit, she said control means right to appoint a majority of directors, control the management of policy decisions including by virtue of their shareholding or management right or shareholder agreements or voting agreements.

By raising the FDI limit to 74%, the current provision of control being vested with Indian companies had to be dropped. But conditions have been attached to the control.

"Majority of directors in the board and key management persons to be resident Indians which means every law of the land will be applicable on them. And a specific percentage of the profits is to be retained as general reserves. It cannot be (taken away)," she said. These conditions, she said, should remove doubts that higher FDI would bring colonialism.

Replying to a debate on the Insurance (Amendment) Bill, 2021, Sitharaman said India received FDI worth ₹26,000 crore in the insurance sector after 2015 when the foreign investment limit was raised to 49 per cent from 24%.

'Economy projected to record stronger recovery'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, March 18: India's economy, estimated to contract by 6.9% in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, is forecast to record a "stronger recovery" in 2021 and grow by 5%, according to a UN report which said the country's current fiscal year budget points to a shift towards demand-side stimulus, with an uptick in public investment.

The report, 'Out of the frying pan...into the fire?' published Thursday as an update to the Trade and Development Report 2020 by UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said the global economy is set to grow by 4.7 per cent this year, faster than the 4.3% predicted in September 2020, thanks in part to a stronger recovery in the US, where progress in distributing vaccines and a fresh fiscal stimulus of \$1.9 trillion are expected to boost consumer spending.

The report described the year 2020 as "Annus horribilis" saying although warnings about the spread of viruses have become more frequent in recent years, "nobody anticipated the arrival of Covid-19 or its dramatic global impact."

India is estimated to contract by 6.9 per cent in 2020 and then forecast to record a 5% GDP growth in



WHAT UN REPORT SAYS

India's current fiscal year budget points to a shift towards demand-side stimulus, with an uptick in public investment

According to the forecast, India is slated to record a 5% GDP growth this year

The UN agency added that the relief measures adopted by India were not only much smaller in scale, but also centered on easing supply-side constraints

2021, the report said. The September 2020 report by UNCTAD had said that India's economy was forecast to contract by 5.9% in 2020 and re-

cover to 3.9% in 2021.

"India's growth performance in 2020 fell below our mid-2020 expectations. Actual fiscal stimulus fell short of initial announcements that suggested a large increase of public spending for pandemic relief," UNCTAD said.

The UN agency added that the relief measures adopted by India were not only much smaller in scale, but also providing liquidity support rather than aggregate demand support.

"Also, restrictions to people's movement not only severely affected incomes and consumption, they also proved largely unsuccessful in containing the spread of the virus," it said.

Delhi HC restrains Future-RIL deal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: The Delhi High Court Thursday upheld the Singapore's Emergency Arbitrator's (EA) order restraining Future Retail Ltd (FRL) from going ahead with its ₹24,713 crore deal with Reliance Retail to sell its business, which was objected to by US-based e-commerce giant Amazon.

Justice J.R Midha directed Kishore Biyani-led FRL not to take further action on the deal and held that the group wilfully violated Singapore Arbitrator's order.

The high court directed the Future Group and its directors to deposit ₹20 lakh cost in Prime Minister's Relief Fund for provid-



ing Covid-19 vaccines to senior citizens of Below Poverty Line (BPL) category.

The court directed the presence of Biyani and others before it April 28 as also attachment of their properties.

The high court asked them to show cause as to why they be not detained for 3 months under civil prison for violating emergency ar-

bitrator's order.

The high court's order came on Amazon's plea seeking direction to order enforcement of the award by Singapore's EA October 25, 2020, restraining FRL from going ahead with its ₹24,713 crore deal with Reliance Retail.

Amazon, in its interim plea, has sought to restrain FRL from taking any steps to complete the transaction with entities that are a part of the Mukesh Dhirubhai Ambani (MDA) Group.

Future Group and Amazon have been locked in a battle after the US-based company took FRL into the emergency arbitration over alleged breach of a contract between them.

'GPS-based toll collection to be implemented in a yr'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: India will do away with toll booths and implement complete GPS-based toll collection within one year, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said Thursday. He said 93% of the vehicles pay toll using FASTag, but the remaining 7% have still not taken it despite paying a double toll.

"I want to assure the House that within one year all physical toll booths in the country will be removed. It means that toll collection will happen via GPS. The money will be collected based on



GPS imaging (on vehicles)," Gadkari said in the Lok Sabha during Question Hour.

The minister said he has instructed police inquiry for those vehicles which do not pay toll using FASTags.

There are cases of toll theft and GST evasion cases if FASTags are not fitted in vehicles.

'World may see peak of petrol, diesel demand by 2035'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 18: The world is likely to see peak demand for petrol by the late 2020s and for diesel by 2035, but auto fuels will continue to see growth in India as the economy expands, a senior petroleum ministry official said Thursday.

Speaking at the 'India Chem 2021' conference, Sunil Kumar, Joint Secretary (Refinery), Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said the country will see different energy systems co-exist through the next few decades as demand is expected to remain robust.

Fuel demand in years to come will be impacted by factors such as the availability of substitute fuels, the advent of electric vehicles (EVs) and the development of renewable fuels.

"Globally, demand for gasoline (petrol) is expected to peak in the late 2020s and of diesel by 2035," he said.

However, in India, different energy systems, including fossil fuel, will co-exist over the next few decades.

"Demand for petrol and diesel in India is expected to remain robust in the foreseeable future...at least up to 2040 because our pie is increasing," he said. "India's demand for petrol and diesel will continue to rise despite new sources."

The time till the demand peaks can be used by the country and the oil industry to prepare for future where crude oil can be converted directly into chemicals instead of the current practice of first it getting turned into fuel.

"Refining and petrochemicals have to have a synergy by sharing of streams and there is a lot of



thinking and planning in this regard," he said.

"Changing market dynamics clearly indicate that integration of refining and petrochemicals is more of a ne-

cessity than a choice" and is needed for improving margins and remaining competitive.

The International Energy Agency (IEA), he said, sees the biggest

growth coming from petrochemical feedstock such as ethane, LPG, naphtha, and jet fuel. "It is estimated these products will account for around 90 per cent of the net increase in total oil product demand through 2040.

This contrasts trends from 2000 when gasoline and diesel provided for two-third of growth in oil

product." Global petrochemical is growing at nearly 4 per cent per year, he said.

But, India is 40 per cent import-dependent on meeting its

chemical needs.

India spent ₹94,000 crore on the import of 35 petrochemicals alone in 2019-20. "This is when our per capita consumption is only 12 kg against the world average of 37 kg," he said, adding as the standard of living rises, the demand for chemicals and petrochemicals will continue to grow.

"And it is assumed as a thumb rule that consumption of petrochemical products grows at 1.5 times that of the growth of India's GDP," he said. "It is believed that India needs a cracker (to produce petrochemicals) every year in the foreseeable future for at least 10 years."

Kumar said India's oil refining capacity will rise from 249 million tonnes per annum now to 300 million tonnes by 2024-25 and 443 million tonnes by 2030.

Demand for petrol and diesel in India is expected to remain robust in the foreseeable future...at least up to 2040 because our pie is increasing

SUNIL KUMAR | JOINT SECY. (REFINERY), MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS

SkY illumines Men in Blue

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Ahmedabad, March 18: India survived some nervy late overs after Suryakumar Yadav's (57, 31b, 6x4, 3x6) blistering maiden fifty to register a series-levelling eight-run victory over England in the fourth T20I here, Thursday.

Asked to bat, India posted 185/8, their highest total in the series, thanks largely to Suryakumar, also known as 'SkY', and then restricted England to 177/8 to win the match and level the five-match series 2-2.

The visiting side were in the hunt till Ben Stokes (46, 23b, 4x4, 3x6) and Jonny Bairstow (25) were on the crease with the Indian bowlers leaking runs in the middle overs. The dew also created problems for the bowlers to grip the ball.

However, the home side made a fine recovery with Hardik Pandya (2/16) and senior pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar (1/30) leading the way. England needed 23 from the last over, bowled by Shardul Thakur (3/42), and Jofra Archer hit a four and a six but could not get the required runs in the end.

Earlier, India kept England on a tight leash by giving away just two runs in the first two overs and removing the dangerous Jos Buttler (9) in the third over. But Jason Roy (40, 27b, 6x4, 1x6) and Dawin Malan (14) guided England to 48/1 after the powerplay.

Earlier, Suryakumar, who couldn't bat on his debut (in the second T20I) was the star with the bat for India after the hosts were asked to bat first. India did not have a big partnership but quickfire knocks from Shreyas Iyer (37, 18b, 5x4, 1x6) and Rishabh Pant (30) took the hosts to their highest total of the series.

England again opened the attack with leg-spinner Adil Rashid but Rohit Sharma (12) clobbered



Suryakumar Yadav plays a shot during his innings; Shardul Thakur (inset) celebrates after dismissing an English batsman at Motera, Thursday

him for a six in the first ball of the match. But Rohit's promising innings was cut short in the fourth over as he was caught and bowled by Archer, who took career-best figures of 4/33.

Suryakumar hit Archer for a six in the first ball he faced in international cricket, picked up the gaps and found the boundaries to keep

the scoreboard moving, though the England bowlers were by no means wayward.

BRIEF SCORES: India 185/8 (Suryakumar Yadav 57, Shreyas Iyer 37, Rishabh Pant 30; Jofra Archer 4/33) beat England 177/8 (Ben Stokes 46, Jason Roy 40, Shardul Thakur 3/42, Hardik Pandya 2/16, Rahul Chahar 2/35) by 8 runs.

Chelsea, Bayern in CL quarterfinals

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, March 18: A goal combination featuring more than USD 200 million of summer signings symbolised the Chelsea revival under Thomas Tuchel. Kai Havertz and Timo Werner launched a counter-attack. Hakim Ziyech applied the finishing touch.

In Munich, Robert Lewandowski made sure it was a comfortable evening for Bayern Munich as the defending champion eased into the quarterfinals. Lewandowski netted in the first half to end Lazio's slim hopes of a comeback as Bayern beat the Italian club 2-1 at home Wednesday to seal a 6-2 aggregate win.

If only Frank Lampard had managed to get the best out of his lavishly-funded attacking recruits it might be him and not Tuchel leading Chelsea into their first Champions League quarterfinal in seven years.

Ziyech's goal after 34 minutes against Atletico Madrid built on Chelsea's 1-0 first-leg lead and Emerson Palmieri netted in stoppage time to seal a 3-0 aggregate win Wednesday.

While a goal from the defender



Hakim Ziyech (2nd from L) points skywards in celebration, Wednesday

is an more expected rarity — this was only Emerson's second in three years at Chelsea — a goal drought since October was a startling anomaly for Ziyech.

And yet Tuchel still entrusted the Morocco winger with being part of the front three against the Spanish leaders because of his experience of reaching the Champions League semifinals in 2019 with

Ajax, a year before before his 40 million euro transfer.

Havertz launched the breakaway after Kieran Trippier's cross was intercepted before releasing Werner to run down the left. Werner sent the ball into the penalty area for Ziyech, who placed the shot under goalkeeper Jan Oblak.

The goal meant the Spanish leaders needed to score twice but their

slim chances ended when Stefan Savic was sent off in the 81st minute for elbowing Chelsea defender Antonio Rudiger.

Two of Chelsea's substitutes then combined for the second goal in the fourth minute of stoppage time. Emerson had only been on the pitch a minute when he was set up by Christian Pulisic on the break.

The win further builds on the momentum the London club has built up in the two months since Lampard was fired, with Tuchel unbeaten in 13 matches with 11 clean sheets.

In Munich, Lewandowski gave Bayern the lead from the penalty spot in the 33rd minute for his 39th goal in all competitions this season, and his 10th in seven games. Lewandowski calmly sent his former Bayern teammate Pepe Reina the wrong way after Lazio's Vedat Muriqi was judged to have held Leon Goretzka as they jostled for position at a corner.

Choupo-Moting came off the bench to replace Lewandowski and soon scored Bayern's second off a defense-splitting pass from David Alaba in the 73rd, chipping the ball over Reina.

Lakshya, Sindhu enter All England C'ship last eight

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Birmingham, March 18: Lakshya Sen Thursday became the youngest Indian male shuttler to reach the All England Championship quarterfinals, where Olympic silver medalist PV Sindhu joined him with an easy win at the Super 1000 tournament here.

Sindhu, the reigning World Champion, recorded a dominant 21-8, 21-8 win over Denmark's Line Christophersen. She will next face Japan's third seed Akane Yamaguchi.

The 19-year-old Lakshya saw off France's Thomas Rouxel 21-18, 21-16. He will next face either Ireland's Nhat Nguyen or Netherlands's Mark Caljouw. Prannoy lost to World No.1 Kento Momota 15-21, 14-21.

ONTHHPC rout Jai Bharat

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 18: Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High Performance Centre (ONTHHPC) registered their second consecutive win 1st Hockey India Sub-Junior Women Academy National Championship at the Kalinga Stadium here, Thursday.

ONTHHPC completely overpowered Jai Bharat Hockey Academy 8-0. Captain Mummuni Das (16th & 56th), Elani Tuti (22nd & 37th) bagged two goals each whereas Ashima Rout (second), Babyrani Sandam (ninth), Priya Toppo (34th) and Supriya Kujju (50th) also chipped in with one goal each.

Rising Student Club (RSC) defeated Sports Hostel 4-2 in their match of the Odisha Women's League (OWL) football tournament



ONTHHPC players take a groupie after their win. PIC: BIKASH NAYAK

at the Kalinga Stadium here, Thursday.

Satyabati Khadia (eighth & 45th minutes), Jasoda Munda (55th) scored for RSC while Salega Majhi scored an own goal. Susmita Tanty (31th) and Sangeeta Das (60th) were on target for the losing side.

In other match, E.Co. Railway won the match by 3-0 goals. Supriya

Routray (70th), Sarojini Tirkey (39th) and Tara Khatoun (90th) found the back of the net for the winning side.

The match between Odisha Police and SAI-STC at the Capital Ground ended 1-1. Karishma Oram put Odisha Police ahead in the eighth minute before Eva Panna found the equaliser in the 73rd minute.

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