



CHANGE OF PREFERENCE

Actor Zareen Khan wants to feature in content-driven projects rather than look glamorous on screens

LEISURE P2



DELTA+ SCARE

Yogi Adityanath issues fresh guidelines in Uttar Pradesh for handling the 'Delta+' variant

TWO STATES P8



DUTEE RECOMMENDED

Odisha government nominates ace sprinter Dutee Chand for the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award

SPORTS P12

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No! Please don't step out. It's not about corona. A VIP is in town!!

Class X offline exams in July

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: A day after Class X students and their parents staged protests across the state alleging discrepancies in evaluation of High School Certificate (HSC) exam papers, the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) Tuesday said offline examinations for these students will be held in July.

Form fill-up for the offline Class X exam will start July 5 and continue till July 15. The examination schedule

SECOND CHANCE

- Form fill-up for the offline Class X exam will start July 5 and continue till July 15
- The examination schedule will be declared keeping in view the Covid situation

will be declared keeping in view the Covid-19 situation.

BSE president Ramashis Hazra said the online marking system is scientific and based on a mathematical calculation. "The assessment was done on the basis of an analysis of results of four years. Following this, the marking was done in a graded manner. The Class IX and pre-board marks were considered for preparation of the merit list," the BSE president clarified. Hazra said the Covid-19 situation is improving in the state. "We are planning to complete form fill-up and conduct the exam in offline mode as soon as possible," he added. He clarified that the BSE had talked to its CHSE counterpart that all students will get a chance to complete the necessary formalities for Plus II admissions.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	52549.66 ↓ 185.93
NIFTY	15748.50 ↓ 66.20
DOLLAR	74.75 ↑ ₹0.07
EURO	88.36 ↓ ₹0.19
GOLD	₹46,392 ↓ ₹616
SILVER	₹66,959 ↓ ₹1182

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.8°C	35.0°C
TEMP MIN	27.5°C	26.4°C
Humidity	80%	75%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Party cloudy sky	



AN EYEFUL: Visitors holding an umbrella roam around the Taj Mahal on a hot summer day in Agra, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

Draft Indian Ports Bill riles state govt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Coming down heavily on the highhandedness of the Centre which tried to intrude into the state's power on regulation of non-major ports, the state government Tuesday urged the Centre to make necessary modifications in the draft Indian Ports Bill, 2021.

State Transport and Commerce Minister Padmanabha Behera has written a letter to Union Minister for Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Mansukh Mandaviya in this regard, Tuesday.

The Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW) has drafted the Indian Ports Bill, 2021 and circulated it among concerned states including Odisha. The proposed Bill will supersede the Indian Ports Act, 1908. At present, the coastal states or the State Maritime Boards have been authorised to make regulations for non-major ports. However, the Centre through Maritime State Development Council (MSDC) seeks to appropriate this authority of the state through the proposed Bill.

"We object to this proposed appropriation of state authority by the Union government. The proposed provision instead of making India a strong maritime nation, through its centralisation of authority, will stunt the growth of port-led development in the nation. Also, this proposal is against the very spirit of cooperative federalism and empowerment of states," Behera said in his letter.

The MSDC has been in existence as a notified advisory body since 1997, focusing on integrated planning and development of ports and inland waterways.

State Transport and Commerce Minister seeks modification in the Bill

There is no provision in the proposed Bill for State Maritime Board

THE CENTRE IS TRYING TO HIJACK THE STATE'S POWER THROUGH MARITIME STATE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

We object to this proposed appropriation of the state authority by the Centre. The proposed provision instead of making India a strong maritime nation, through its centralization of authority, will stunt the growth of port-led development in the nation. Also, the proposal is against the very spirit of cooperative federalism

PADMANABHA BEHERA | STATE TRANSPORT AND COMMERCE MINISTER



Welcoming the step to give a statutory status to MSDC, the minister suggested to constitute the body on the lines of the GST Council.

The MSDC should only comprise of ministers of coastal states and Union minister for shipping on the lines of the GST council. The concerned officials of the Union government and coastal states may be made invitees to the council, he stated.

Moreover, the draft Bill mandates centralization of many routine functions to MSDC like conducting inquiry, deciding tariff structure, among others. Behera said, "MSDC's role should continue to be recommendatory and advisory as before."

The state government is in the process of constituting the Odisha State Maritime Board. The Bill was passed in the Assembly in February last and now awaiting the assent of

the President of India.

However, there is no provision in the Indian Ports Bill, 2021 to include a State Maritime Board. Therefore, the state government has demanded addition of a provision in the proposed Bill for inclusion of the State Maritime Board.

Behera further requested the Union minister to hold proper deliberations with concerned states to bring in effectiveness to this important legislation, which can make India a true powerhouse amongst the maritime nations of the world.

The minister, however, welcomed the inclusion of matters relating to safety and security of ports, prevention and containment of pollution of ports, compliances with the country's obligations under the maritime treaties and international instruments in the draft Bill.

Fuel prices rise sharply again

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: Global cues pushed fuel prices to increase again across the country Tuesday, adding more misery for the common man already grappling with rising food prices amid shrinking income.

The retail prices of petrol and diesel rose by a sharp 35 paise and 28 paise per litre Tuesday to touch new high of ₹98.81 and ₹89.18 per litre respectively in Delhi.

With the rise, petrol price has reached very close to hitting the century mark all across the country extending the scope of historic high prices that had already made the fuel rate cross the ₹100 per litre mark in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

In the city of Mumbai, where petrol price crossed ₹100 per litre mark for the first time May 29, the fuel price reached new high of ₹104.90 per litre on Tuesday. Diesel price also increased in the city to reach ₹96.72 a litre, the highest among metros. Across the country as well petrol and diesel prices increased Tuesday but its retail prices varied depending on the level of local taxes in different states.

Petrol prices in three other metros apart from Mumbai have also

CITY FUEL PRICES	
PETROL	₹99.65 (+0.35)
DIESEL	₹97.25 (+0.25)

reached closer to ₹100 per litre mark and the Oil Marketing Company officials said that if international oil prices continue to firm up, this mark could also be breached in other places in a couple of days. Petrol price in Chennai is now ₹99.80 a litre, just single increase away from hitting century mark.

With Tuesday's price hike, fuel prices have now increased on 32 days and remained unchanged on 28 days since May 1.

No vaccination in 11 dists today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The Covid-19 vaccination drive will be badly affected in the state as the Centre is unable to provide adequate amounts of vaccine doses to Odisha.

The Centre had made tall claims that it would supply enough vaccines to states free of cost for vaccinations of all people above 18 from June 21. However, the reality seems to be a far cry. Odisha, which saw administration of over 3 lakh doses June 21, gave less than half (1.18 lakh) of that Tuesday. No vaccination drive was conducted in Kendrapara and Balasore districts Tuesday while there will be no vaccination in 11 districts Wednesday.

According to health department officials, there will be no vaccination in Ganjam, Bolangir, Balasore, Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Jharsuguda, Kendrapara, Koraput and Sonepur districts Wednesday.

Since June 21, the lowest number of sessions will be seen Wednesday (June 30) due to stock out situation of Covishield vaccine in the state. Odisha is now having only 38,380 doses of Covishield and the next allocation is expected July 2. Till the next allocation by the Centre, vaccination drives will be hit hard in the state.

DCGI NOD FOR MODERNA'S VAX

NEW DELHI: India's drug regulator DCGI has granted permission to Cipla to import Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for restricted emergency use in the country, official sources said Tuesday. Moderna's vaccine will be the fourth COVID-19 jab to be available in India after Covishield, Covaxin and Sputnik. "Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has granted permission to Cipla to import Moderna's COVID-19 vaccine for restricted emergency use in the country as per the provisions of the New Drugs and Clinical Trial Rules, 2019," a source said. Moderna June 27 informed DCGI that the US government had agreed to donate COVID-19 vaccine through COVAX to India for use here and sought an approval.

The state is unable to conduct vaccination to its full capacity due to shortage of Covishield which is being given in all areas of the state excluding Bhubaneswar city.

The state health officials and the health minister often requested the Centre to allocate at least 6 lakh doses of Covishield immediately for smooth conduct of the vaccination programme. However, the Centre is yet to allocate the vaccines.

Implement '1 nation, 1 ration card' by July 31

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, June 29: The Supreme Court Tuesday directed states and Union Territories to implement the 'one nation, one ration card' scheme by July 31, while asking the Centre to provide dry ration for free distribution among migrant workers till the COVID-19 situation continues.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and MR Shah issued a slew of directions on a plea of three activists seeking directions to the Centre and states to ensure food security, cash transfers and other welfare measures for migrant workers who faced distress again due to curfews and lockdowns in various parts of country during the second wave of COVID-19.

The bench has said ONORC scheme is for welfare of poor citizens as it allows migrant workers to get ration at the place of their work in other states as well where their ration cards are not registered. The bench directed the Centre to develop a portal with the help of the National Informatics Centre (NIC) for registration of unorganised sector workers for granting them the benefits of welfare schemes by July 31.

It also directed the states, UTs to run community kitchens for migrant workers till the COVID pandemic continues. It asked the Centre to keep allocating foodgrains to the states, UTs for distribution among migrant workers for free till the pandemic situation exists.

The state governments and the UT administrations shall bring a scheme to provide dry ration to migrant workers by July 31 and such a scheme will remain till COVID situation continues, the top court said. The bench directed states and UTs to register all establishments and contractors under the Inter-state Migrant Workmen (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service Act) 1979. Activists Anjali Bharadwaj, Harsh Mander and Jagdeep Chhokar had filed a plea seeking implementation of welfare measures for migrant workers and the judgement was reserved on June 11 by the bench.

Ex-SA Prez Zuma gets 15 months in jail for contempt

ZUMA HAS REPEATEDLY SAID HE WOULD RATHER GO TO JAIL THAN COOPERATE WITH THE COMMISSION

AGENCIES

Johannesburg, June 29: The apex court in South Africa Tuesday sentenced the country's former president Jacob Zuma to 15 months' imprisonment for contempt of court after he walked out of hearings of the Commission of Enquiry into State Capture in November last year and refused to return to it.

The court also said that the sentence could not be suspended. The

Commission, which is investigating the allegations of corruption and bribery at state and parastatal institutions, had asked that Zuma be sent to prison for two years.

Zuma has repeatedly said that he would rather go to jail than cooperate with the Commission.

In a strongly worded majority judgment handed down Tuesday morning by Justice Sisi Khampepe of the Constitutional Court, she described Zuma's statements as "out-



landish" and "intolerable".

"The Constitutional Court holds that it is disturbing that (Zuma), who twice swore allegiance to the Republic (of South Africa), its laws and the Constitution, has sought to ignore, undermine and in many ways destroy the rule of law altogether," the judge said.

"The Constitutional Court went to great lengths to safeguard Zuma's rights. Consequently, there is no sound nor logical basis on which Zuma can

claim to have been treated "unfairly or victimised", the judge said.

"His attempts to evoke public sympathy through unfounded allegations fly in the face of reason and are an insult to the Constitutional dispensation for which so many women and men fought and lost their lives.

The majority finds itself faced with little choice but to send a resounding message that this kind of defiance is unlawful and will be punished," Khampepe said.

leisure



GOOD MEMORY IS ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL: ANTHONY HOPKINS

Veteran Hollywood star Anthony Hopkins, who played a dementia patient in *The Father*, says his memory is the single most important tool in life. "Once you lose your memory, it must be a living hell to have no anchors left," adds Hopkins.

BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH JOINS CAST OF DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS ADAPTATION

English star Benedict Cumberbatch has been roped in for the adaptation of *Dungeons and Dragons*. The 44-year-old joins the cast of the upcoming big screen project that includes Chris Pine, Michelle Rodriguez, and Rege-Jean Page, reports *aceshowbiz.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
Today, you may be stumped by some mysterious and wonderful event. That, or you may encounter an unexpected yet advantageous incident. It may not exactly be path-breaking, but it is sure to make you take stock of things. Also, you may find it difficult to meet deadlines today. Nevertheless, let people know how important your work is, says Ganesh.

TAURUS
You are likely to be become too ambitious today and strive to outdo others. So says Ganesh. You will be over eager to do some thing big, lay your hands on something precious and valuable. Though you are quite likely to succeed to some extent you over enthusiasm may land you in serious problems that may affect your persona; and private life.

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

CANCER
You will labour more to finish pending tasks. You will give priority to career compared to personal chores. So you will be caught up in your career and business riddles. By evening, however, you will have cheerful moments as Ganesh sees you having cherishing time with your beloved.

LEO
You will be able to meet all challenges and obstacles successfully. Your ultimate goal is to come out victorious from any situations. There is a possibility that you will have to face severe competition in business or trade. Personal life will proceed without any hiccups though, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Your renewed enthusiasm for life will bring about a radical change in you. Ganesh says today is a good time to let others see how important and how brilliant you can be. Your intelligence will become very evident as you demonstrate how things should be done.

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

SCORPIO
The ground beneath you seems a bit shaky; watch your steps. A time would come when your confidence would be shattered, however, don't let set-backs and failures affect you. Adapt the attitude of 'this too shall pass' and the rest would fall in place, says Ganesh.

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

CAPRICORN
You are a die-hard romantic and with every plan to please your sweetheart, you are taking him/her closer to the cloud nine. But, don't live in fantasy world, warns Ganesh, as problems are going to follow you everywhere. If you are a businessman, your rivals may give you a hard time. Take proper care of your health, advises Ganesh.

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

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

Zareen eyes content-driven projects

MUMBAI: Actress Zareen Khan gave content-driven performance a serious shot in her latest release *Hum Bhi Akele Tum Bhi Akele*. She now hopes to get meaningful roles rather than just put make-up on and look glamorous. "I have been offered a couple of different types of roles, I am keeping my fingers crossed," she says.

She hopes that people now see her in a different light after *Hum Bhi Akele Tum Bhi Akele*, an off-beat, OTT-released film about a gay man and a lesbian woman, and their self-discovery on a road trip.

"I hope people see me in a different light and they do offer me roles that I really want to do - meaningful roles rather than just putting on make-up and looking hot. I want to do much more than that," she said.



Rhea's bid to spread optimism

MUMBAI: Actress Rhea Chakrabarty, who was under the spotlight last year after the death of her boyfriend, actor Sushant Singh Rajput, shared a selfie Tuesday morning spreading a message of hope.

In the image, the actress is seen dressed in a black blouse with floral embroidery. She completes her look with hoop earrings and keeps her hair open. "Rise and shine," Rhea wrote as caption.

Rhea made headlines after she was accused by Sushant's family for abetment to his suicide and also siphoning off funds from the late actor. She was also named in a Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) chargesheet along with her brother Showik in a drug-related probe into Sushant's death case.

She was arrested last year and spent a month in Mumbai's Byculla jail in September.

Talking about her work, the actress is part of the film *Chehre* starring actors Amitabh Bachchan and Emraan Hashmi. This is her first film after Sushant's death.



Kubbra opens up on her int'l show Foundation

Mumbai: The trailer of Kubbra Sait's international web series *Foundation* dropped Monday and the actress is not surprisingly excited.

Kubbra apart, the sci-fi show has an international cast including Jared Harris, Lee Pace, Lou Llobell, Leah Harvey, Laura Birn, Cassian Bilton and Terrence Mann, with David S Goyer as showrunner.

"I am excited to be a part of *Foundation* and cannot wait to see the audiences reaction to the show. The trailer has dropped and it looks amazing. Rest all, don't want to share any spoilers apart from saying that I am very happy to be a part of it," said Kubbra, on being a part of the Apple TV show.

Last month, the *Sacred Games* actor, revealing her perfect idea of old age, said that in her sixties or seventies, she would like to have a tiny home with a little garden probably growing cabbages. "Oh yeah, if it faces the beach, then that will be amazing," quipped Kubbra.

India Couture Week 2021 to kick off August 25

NEW DELHI: India Couture Week 2021 will be held in a virtual format, starting August 25, the Fashion Design Council of India (FDCI) announced Tuesday.

The 14th edition of the five-day fashion event will be streamed on all the FDCI's digital platforms - Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and FDCI website, with a preset show schedule.

This is the second year when the annual event will be held in digital format in view of the pandemic. Last year, the first-ever digital India Couture Week 2020 was held from September 18 to 23, and saw 12 top couturiers launch their collection virtually through a fashion film.

This edition will witness designers present their fashion films,

displaying their mastery over compelling storytelling, at a time when it has become the most influential means of communication. Archana Aggarwal Timeless Jewellery is the jewellery partner.

"We are delighted to announce the dates for India Couture Week 2021, and even though there is no doubt, the way we consume fashion has changed, but what hasn't is the desire for special occasion ensembles.

"To encapsulate this regal experience, our designers have adapted to the digital format, which is both engaging and relevant. We will have the best of the best couturiers, narrating tales, effortlessly bridging the gap between the two worlds - reel and real," said FDCI Chairman Sunil Sethi.

Odia painter earns Golden Visa in Dubai

BHUBANESWAR: Odia artist Biswarupa Mohanty has been granted Golden Visa of the UAE for 10 years owing to her artistic exploits. A native of Baripada in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, she is the first Odia painter to earn the coveted facility.

A Golden Visa enables foreigners to live, work and study in the UAE without the need of a national sponsor and with 100 per cent ownership of their business on the UAE's mainland. The Golden Visas are issued for five or 10 years and get renewed automatically.

Biswarupa, who has been living in Dubai since 2007, initially worked in education sector and design industry for about eight years. But in 2016, she quit her designing job to become a painter.

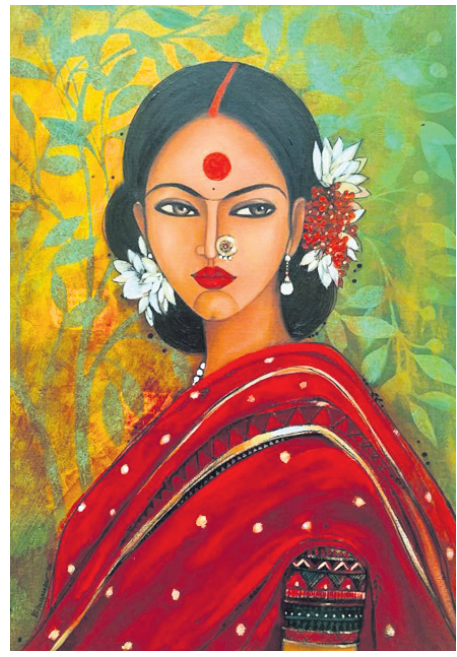
The self-employed art practitioner has been registered with the Dubai Economic Department. Earlier, she earned her Bachelors degree in Fashion Designing from NIFT, New Delhi, Masters in Fashion and Textile Design from IED, Milan (Italy) and Diploma in Fine Arts from School of Art and Crafts, Baripada.



A couple of works of Biswarupa (inset)



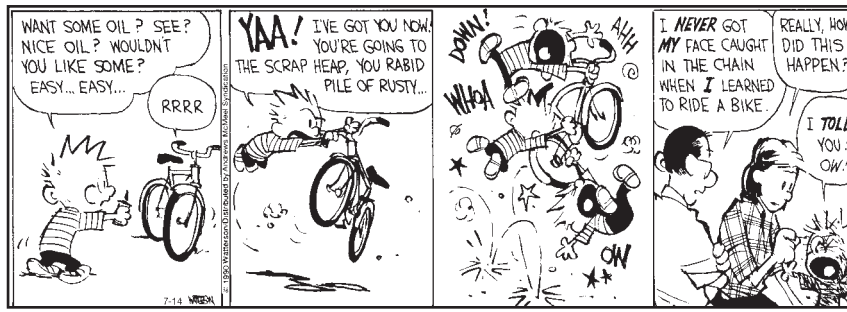
An overjoyed Biswarupa says, "I am grateful to the UAE government for granting me with a Golden Visa. Such developments reassure that if you follow your heart and put your soul into your passion, eventually you will be rewarded in more ways than you can imagine."



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

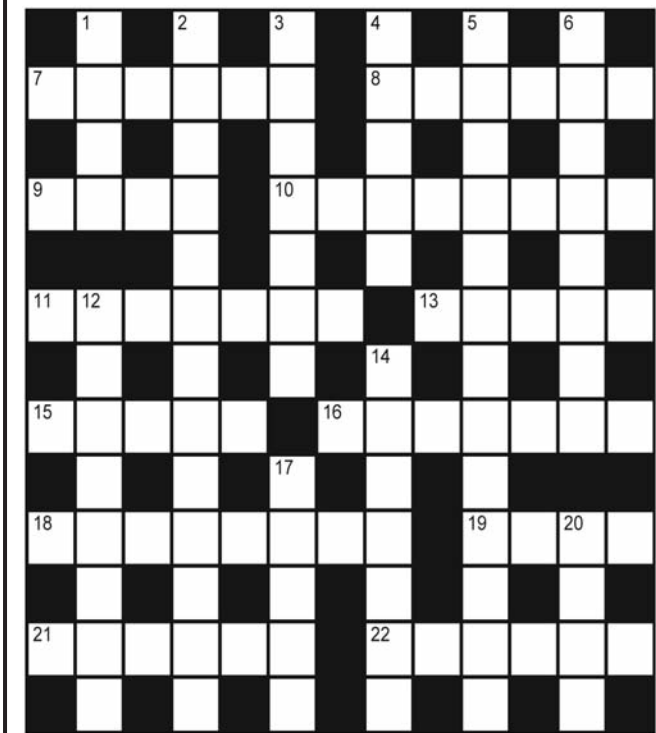


BREVITY



FUN post

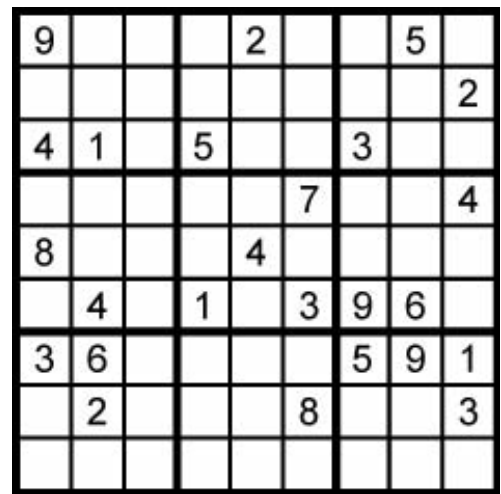
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Academic award
 - 8 Medicinal syrup
 - 9 Cafeteria carrier
 - 10 Imports and exports difference (5,3)
 - 11 Metalworks
 - 13 Roughly
 - 15 Destiny
 - 16 Horse-drawn carriages
 - 18 Complain (5,3)
 - 19 Place holders
 - 21 Dowse
 - 22 Woodwind player
 - 2 Long-bodied large-eyed insect (7,6)
 - 3 Motion
 - 4 Competitor
 - 5 Echo
 - 6 Asuncion locale
 - 12 Handel work
 - 14 Muggins
 - 17 Decrease
 - 20 In use
- Down**
- 1 Orbital period

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



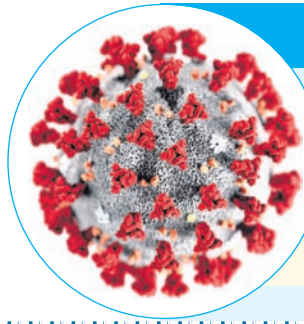
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



SHIELD AGAINST RAIN

A vendor sells umbrellas in Chandini Chowk area of Cuttack, Tuesday, as the city witnessed heavy rainfall recently



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,23,64,236	16,69,05,942	39,48,804
India	3,03,16,897	2,93,66,601	3,97,637
Odisha	9,06,429	8,74,307	3,970

Tighten Covid norms in high TPR dists: CM

VACCINATION WILL BE THE TOP PRIORITY OF THE GOVT FOR THE NEXT FEW MONTHS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Expressing concern over high test positivity rate (TPR) in certain districts of the state, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday asked officials concerned to ensure strict enforcement of Covid-19 norms in these districts.

Holding a high-level meeting to review Covid-19 situation in the state through video conferencing, Naveen told Police department and other officials concerned to focus on the high TPR districts.

He also directed the officials to expedite door-to-door survey programmes in such districts for early tracing, identification and treatment of Covid infected persons and other patients.

While state's TPR remained 4.14 per cent Tuesday, a few districts of coastal and north Odisha including Puri, Cuttack, Balasore, Khurda, Mayurbhanj and



Nayagarh are reporting high TPR.

Regarding preparation for a possible third wave, the Chief Minister suggested that all arrangements for the treatment of paediatric diseases and the required training of doctors should be given top priority.

In an attempt to manage future wave of Covid-19, the state government will continue to give emphasis on quick vaccination of all eligible people, Patnaik said. He advised Collectors to personally

The Chief Minister directed the officials to expedite door-to-door survey programme in high TPR districts for early tracing, identification and treatment of Covid infected persons and other patients too

Regarding preparation for a possible third wave, the Chief Minister suggested that all arrangements for the treatment of paediatric diseases and the required training of doctors should be given top priority

look into the vaccination programme. Similarly, he asked the officials to ensure timely commencement of the medical oxygen plant in various hospitals. The Chief Minister further directed the officials to continue awareness drives to educate people about Covid-appropriate behaviour.

During the meeting, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra said the situation remained under control in 17 districts of southern and western

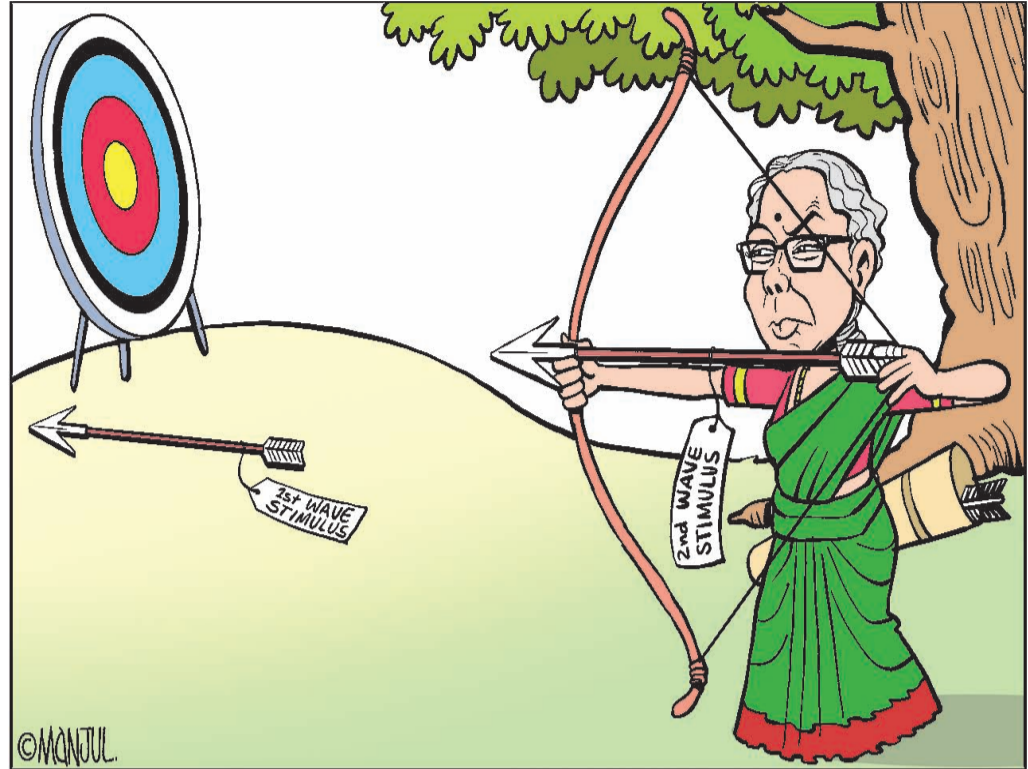
Odisha as there is substantial increase in the TPR. However, coastal and northern districts like Cuttack, undivided Puri, Balasore and Mayurbhanj are reporting high TPR. Therefore, special focus is being given on these districts, he said.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health, PK Mohapatra said the infection rate in Ganjam and Jharsuguda districts was below one per cent, while it was 9-15 per cent in Khurda and Puri districts.

Special measures like enforcement of micro-containment zones, testing and others along with lockdown restrictions are being taken up in high TPR districts, Mohapatra said. "The situation is expected to improve by July 15," he said.

While 5T Secretary VK Pandian coordinated the programme, DGP, district Collectors and superintendents of police (SPs) along with senior officials attended the meeting.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Naveen unveils 100-bed Covid hosp at Deogarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Tuesday inaugurated a 100-bed Covid hospital at Deogarh to bolster the efforts of the state government in fight against the pandemic.

The Chief Minister said that efforts were taken to provide oxygen facilities in all districts of the state besides boosting the health infrastructure.

The hospital has come up with the support of Vedanta Group. Naveen said that to combat Covid-19, the contributions of all sections of the society were needed and the hand-holding support of the corporate sector for the construction of Covid hospitals and by PSUs had been a good sign of collaborative approach to boost healthcare.

The Covid hospital at Deogarh has dedicated paediatric ward, 12 intensive care unit (ICU) beds, 32 oxygen beds and independent paediatric ward with state-of-the-art infra-

structure. The government has decided to bear the treatment costs, expenses on foods and medicines of Covid-infected persons admitted to the hospital.

Deogarh already has a 140-bed Covid hospital. The CM said that the second wave of the pandemic has not ended yet and threats of the third wave looms large. At this juncture, he said, the steps taken today was one of the significant interventions needed to strengthen the health infrastructure in the state.

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan was also present in the meeting. He lauded the efforts of the state government regarding anti-Covid vaccination.

He also said that the cases of Covid-19 have been declining in the state and the disease in Deogarh and other districts of western Odisha has been under control. He said that one more Covid Hospital would be needed in Sambalpur to combat the pandemic effectively.

Govt hosps to offer PCV from today

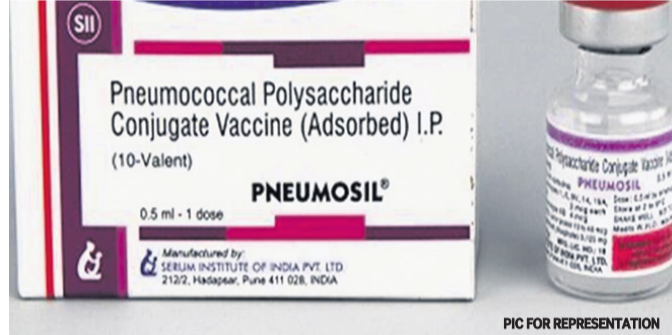
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Government hospitals in the state will start offering pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV) for infants from Wednesday, months after the Union Budget made provisions for rolling out the prophylactic measure under the government vaccination programme.

The vaccine was earlier available at private health institutions and it had not been included in government vaccination programme due to high costs. However, some state-run hospitals had offered the vaccine in a pilot project mode.

The state government has upgraded the health infrastructure for mass vaccination and claimed that the inclusion of the PCV in the government hospitals is likely to reduce child mortality and check pneumococcal infections among children.

The vaccine prevents kids from the bacterial infection caused by Streptococcus pneumoniae (pneumococcus). The bacterium caus-



THE VACCINE WAS EARLIER AVAILABLE IN PRIVATE HEALTH INSTITUTIONS AND IT HAD NOT BEEN INCLUDED IN GOVERNMENT VACCINATION PROGRAMME DUE TO HIGH COSTS

THE STATE GOVERNMENT HAS UPGRADED THE HEALTH INFRA FOR MASS VACCINATION AND CLAIMED THAT THE INCLUSION OF THE PCV IN THE STATE-RUN HOSPITALS IS LIKELY TO REDUCE INFANT MORTALITY

ing pneumonia affects central nervous system, triggers sepsis and infects ear and lung tissues in kids. According to UNICEF, one among six under-five childhood deaths is caused by this pneumococcal infection.

The Health Department Tuesday said that the kids below five years

of age, especially those who are below two years, are more prone to the disease while bouts of earlier viral infection and malnourishment can also increase the risk factor among the kids.

According to the immunisation schedule for the PCV, kids below two years need to get the first two

primary vaccine doses at 1.5 months (6 weeks since birth) and 3.5 months (14 weeks) respectively while the third dose which is a booster dose needs to be taken in 9 months.

"The state government will launch the PCV June 30 and it will be available at all levels of government hospitals including Primary Health Centres, Community Health Centres and others. This is a very safe vaccine. Under the government immunisation programme, 10 valent PCV vaccine will be given to the kids," Bijay Panigrahy, State Health and Family Welfare Director, told **Orissa POST**.

Panigrahy said the vaccination at government hospitals will be free of cost.

The government has also trained the grassroots workers and healthcare workers for vaccinating the kids. Anganwadi workers and ASHA workers have also been trained to motivate lactating mothers to get their kids vaccinated, sources said.

Extend free visa deadline: HRAO to Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Odisha (HRAO) has urged the Centre to extend the deadline for granting five lakh free tourist visas till March, 2023 while thanking the latter for announcing a stimulus package for the hotel and tourism sector which has been facing severe crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We are grateful to you for allowing 5 lakh free tourist visas till March 2022. But, the pandemic is yet to be contained. So, we request you to extend the deadline for granting free tourist visas to March 2023," said chairman of the association, JK Mohanty, in a letter to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, Tuesday.

The Centre had Monday announced that it would grant 5 lakh free tourist visas within March 2022

The Centre had Monday announced that it would grant 5 lakh free tourist visas within March 2022 to boost the tourism sector.

The association also urged the Centre to provide some grants to the travel and tour operators and tourist guides in this moment of crisis.

"The Centre has announced to provide loans up to Rs 10 lakh to the travel agents and tour operators and Rs 1 lakh to the tourist guides. But granting loans in this critical time and charging interest may not be very attractive for the travel trade. The travel trade is expecting some sort of grants as relief for revival of the business or interest free loans up to a period of three years to enable the travel trade to revive. A limit of Rs 10 lakh for travel agents and tour operators may not help the sector to survive. The amount may be fixed as per the revenues of the companies by analysing their balance sheets for the last three years," Mohanty said in his letter. Besides, the association urged the Centre to extend the moratorium period on the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Schemes (ECLGS-1 & ECLGS-2) for revival of the hotel industry.

FOR LORD'S MEDICATION



The authorities of Maharshi Vishwamitra Ashram at Kakatpur and Hati Akhada mutt in Puri provide varieties of fruits to Srimandir while the pontiff of Bada Odia mutt in the Holy City and his disciples carry Phuluri oil for the Anasara ritual of Lord Jagannath and His siblings, Tuesday

Thrust on intelligence sharing at DGPs' meet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: A high-level meeting involving Director Generals of Police (DGPs) and other senior police officials of various eastern states was held virtually Tuesday. The top cops at the meeting agreed upon the importance of intelligence sharing to check the activities of interstate criminal gangs and the ultras.

Police sources claimed Odisha DGP Abhay has convened the virtual meeting of Eastern Regional Police Co-ordination Committee that includes Odisha, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Chhattisgarh.

Odisha police informed through a press note that the senior police officials of all the states had a threadbare discussions over the increasing cooperation among the police forces in operations against



left wing extremists (LWE). The officers also agreed upon the importance of intelligence sharing to check the activities of interstate criminal gangs and the ultras. The officials also discussed the need to share various details with each other in connection with any internal security matters involving LWEs, narcotic gangs and terrorists. The officers stressed on the co-operation during the investigation process related to cybercrimes, or-

ganised crimes, drug and human trafficking cases.

Summarily, the officials decided to hold regular meetings at ADG level on different themes for increased cooperation.

Apart from Abhay, the officers who also took part in the virtual meeting are: West Bengal DGP Virendra, Chhattisgarh DGP DM Awasthi, Jharkhand DGP Neeraj Sinha and Bihar DGP Sanjay Kumar Singhal.

Mandatory gold hallmarking in 8 districts

PNN/ AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 29: State Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain Tuesday said that mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery has been implemented in eight districts of the state.

The districts are Cuttack, Balasore, Bhadrak, Ganjam, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj, Sambalpur and Khurda, of which Bhubaneswar is a part, he said.

Gold hallmarking, a purity certification of the precious metal, had been voluntary so far.

The minister took to Twitter to make the announcement.

"Jewellers will be allowed to sell only 14, 18 and 22 carats of gold



jewellery. Gold of additional 20, 23 and 24 carats will also be allowed for hallmarking. Consumers should check hallmarking before purchasing jewellery," Swain tweeted.

The Centre had said that mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts would come into force

in a phased manner from June 16, starting with 256 districts across the country. The Union government has exempted jewellers with an annual turnover of up to Rs 40 lakh from mandatory hallmarking.

It has also been exempted for those who export and re-import

The mandatory hallmarking will protect people against lower caratage and get the purity as marked on the ornaments

jewellery according to the government's trade policy, jewellery meant for international exhibitions, as well as for government-approved B2B (business-to-business) domestic exhibitions.

The mandatory hallmarking will protect people against lower caratage while buying gold jewellery and get the purity as marked on the ornaments.

Lowest daily nCoV cases in 3 months

10 DISTRICTS OF ODISHA HAVE TEST POSITIVITY RATE ABOVE 5 PER CENT, SAYS HEALTH DEPT

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Odisha reported 2,640 fresh Covid-19 cases Tuesday, its lowest in the last three months, a Health official said.

Forty more people died in the state in the last 24 hours, taking the toll to 3,970, he said.

So far, the state has reported 9,06,429 Covid-19 cases.

The dip in the numbers may pave the way for relaxing the restrictions, which is in place at present till 5am of July 1, the official said.

As the restrictions depend on the test positivity rate (TPR) at the district level, the curbs are likely to continue in Balasore, Cuttack, Khurda, Mayurbhanj and Puri where it is over 5 per cent, he said.

Balasore reported the highest TPR in the state at 11 per cent, followed by Cuttack (10.6 per cent), Mayurbhanj (8.7 per cent), Khurda (8.3 per cent) and Puri (7.9 per cent).

"These five districts are the cause of concern for the administration," he said.

Moreover, 10 districts – Balasore, Malkangiri, Puri, Nayagarh, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Khurda, Mayurbhanj, Jagatsinghpur and Bhubaneswar – have positivity rate above 5 per cent.

Besides, Khurda has the highest number of active cases at 5,293, followed by Cuttack (3,921), Jajpur (2,692) and Balasore (2,988).

There is no difficulty in relaxing the restrictions in the districts that have less than 5 per cent TPR, said Director of Health Services Bijay Mohapatra.



BALASORE DISTRICT REPORTED THE HIGHEST 397 NEW CASES. KHURDA REGISTERED 365 CASES AND CUTTACK 266

TWENTY-TWO OF THE STATE'S 30 DISTRICTS REPORTED LESS THAN 100 NEW CASES. THE LOWEST WAS RECORDED AT DEOGARH WHERE FOUR PERSONS TESTED POSITIVE

Of the new infections, 1,517 were detected at quarantine centres while the rest 1,123 were local contact cases.

Balasore district reported the highest 397 new cases. Khurda registered 365 cases and Cuttack 266.

Twenty-two of the state's 30 districts reported less than 100 new cases. The lowest was recorded at Deogarh where four persons tested positive.

Khurda district, where state capital Bhubaneswar is located, accounted for the highest number of deaths at seven.

There are 31,619 active cases in the state at present.

So far, 8,70,787 patients have recovered, including 3,385 Monday.

The new cases were detected after testing 63,695 samples.

Thunderstorm, lightning warning for 2 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The regional office of the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) Tuesday issued warning of bad weather for the next two days.

The department issued Yellow Warning of thunderstorm and lightning for Wednesday and asked the district administrations to remain alert. It said that 11 districts are likely experience lightning Wednesday.

"Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places in Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Bargarh, Sonepur, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh," the IMD warning for Wednesday said.

The met department also said that light to moderate rain and thundershower could also occur



Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places in Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Bargarh, Sonepur, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and Sundargarh

at a few places in interior Odisha and coastal areas of the state.

The weatherman, however, said that heavy rains are likely to lash different parts of the state Thursday. "Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two in Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Cuttack, Koraput and Malkangiri

districts," the department said in its warning for Thursday.

It also added, "Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati,

Sambalpur, Deogarh, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Boudh, Koraput and Malkangiri Thursday."

The department said that Tuesday the state saw scanty rainfall across the state. Only Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj witnessed some rainfall. While Baripada saw 3.4 mm of rainfall between 8:30am to 5:30pm Tuesday it was followed by Keonjhar which saw 0.3mm rainfall. Boudh reported the maximum temperature of 38 degree C while the minimum temperature of 19 degree C was reported in Phulbani.

The department has not issued any warning for the fishermen. The state capital is likely to remain a bit hotter Wednesday as the maximum temperature may go upto 35 degrees C. Moderate rain and thunderstorm could also occur in the Capital city during the day, the IMD said.

Pahadsingh, the majestic voice of AIR, falls silent



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Former newsreader of All India Radio (AIR) Upendra Kumar Pahadsingh, 84, Tuesday breathed his last at a private hospital in Delhi, family sources said.

Pahadsingh suffered a stroke, said his son Dillip Kumar Pahadsingh. In 1980s, Pahadsingh was a household name in Odisha for his unique style of presenting Odia news bulletins. He had also edited several Odia programmes of the AIR. Pahadsingh, a native of Khurda district, had retired from service in 1995, sources said.

The popular newsreader was unwell for last several months. He was in ICU for more than a month. He is survived by his spouse Bijaylaxmi Pahadsingh, a son and two daughters.

7 liquor shops sealed in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Seven liquor shops under north and south zones of the Capital city were sealed for violation of Covid-19 guidelines by BMC and BDA enforcement squad Tuesday.

The places where the raids were conducted are: Rasulgarh, Damana, Jayadev Vihar, Acharya Vihar, Babuji Nagar and Sahid Nagar.

As per information, a liquor shop at Babuji Nagar was fined Rs 10,000 for offline sales. One customer was also found at the shop during the raid. The enforcement squad also imposed a penalty of Rs 20,000 on a liquor store at Sahid Nagar for offline sales. Another liquor bar at Sahid Nagar was also fined Rs 10,000 for violation of Covid-19 guidelines.

1 held for sexual harassment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Commissionerate Police Tuesday arrested a 32-year-old youth on charges of sexually harassing a lady doctor in the city. The accused was identified as Bhabani Shankar Panigrahi of Golanthara in Ganjam.

According to sources, the accused, who was staying at Badagada area, had come across a video of the doctor on Swasthya plus, a YouTube channel. He later contacted the lady gynaecologist over phone impersonating an Odia film director. He requested the doctor to appear for an interview on various gynaecological issues which she did accordingly. However, he later started sending lewd messages to the victim's mobile phone. The victim lodged a complaint with Nayapalli police Monday. Police registered a case (311/21) and arrested the accused.

Suwendu takes charge as CPMG



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Senior Indian Postal Service (IPoS) officer Suwendu Swain took charge as the Chief Post Master General (CPMG) of Odisha Postal Circle here Monday, an official said Tuesday.

A 1990-batch IPoS officer, Swain has served the department in various key capacities in many states, including in Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, before being elevated to the post of the CPMG of Odisha Postal Circle.

He had also served in the Army Postal Service wing where he went on deputation for four years and served in the capacity of Colonel.

Earlier, he had served in Odisha Postal Circle as the director of Postal Services.

Hailing from Bhatana village in Jagatsinghpur district, Swain had his higher education in Delhi.

He is known for his passion for art, culture and education.

GANG SELLING SIM CARDS TO CYBERCRIMINALS BUSTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The twin city Commissionerate Police Tuesday busted a gang that procured SIM cards with forged documents and sold them to cybercriminals outside the state, with the arrest of seven members of the gang.

The accused were identified as Maheswar Barik, 38, Rajanikant Panigrahi, 30, Subrat Kumar Panigrahi, 24, Sukant Kumar Das, 30, Srinibas Ghadai, 21, Rajesh Kumar Sethi, 29, and Mangalamaya Mishra, 27.

Police seized 16,147 illegally pre-activated SIM cards of Vodafone-Idea, BSNL, Airtel and Jio and 110 mobile phones and demo SIM cards used for SIM card activation.

Speaking on the issue, DGP Abhay said the Commissionerate Police succeeded in unearthing a gang that facilitated pre-activated mobile SIM cards to criminals, mostly involved in cyber frauds. "The officials found that a gang in Odisha was acquiring mobile SIM cards by submitting fraudulent identity documents. The gang further sold the same SIM cards to criminals outside the state. The users' identity data fetched through SIM cards helped the police officials in successful crime detection."

Subsequently, she shared her identity details and an OTP with the fraudsters who withdrew around Rs 2.50 lakh from her bank account.

FIGHTING PANDEMIC



Bhubaneswar Development Authority officials queue up to give swab samples for RT-PCR test at a special drive on the premises of the civic body office in the City, Tuesday

BJP threatens statewide stir over paddy procurement

PNN/ AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The state leadership of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Tuesday threatened to launch a statewide agitation July 1 on the issue of alleged irregularities in paddy procurement.

Revealing details about the agitation plan at a presser here, party's state president Samir Mohanty Tuesday said that BJP workers along with the farmers would sit on dharna July 1 and 2 in front of all mandis, block roads and will hold demonstrations in front all civil supplies offices across the state in support of the demand.

Mohanty said, "Large stocks of paddy of thousands of farmers are lying in several mandis across the state. They are not procured due to faulty token system adopted by the state government. The government has fixed the validity of the tokens for 12 days only. This has resulted in distress sale of paddy and the produce is sold away at throwaway prices - Rs 900 to 1,100 per quintal," he said.

The BJP leader said though the authorities of the State Civil Supplies Corporation assured the BJP Krushak Morcha members,



who held a demonstration in front of its head office here June 25, that they would procure all the paddy from the farmers by June 30 next but no steps have been taken in this regard so far.

The millers, the BJP president alleged, were deducting 8 to 10 kg of paddy per quintal while procuring paddy from farmers. The saffron party leader said a Central team of the Union Consumer Welfare Ministry has pointed out that the 151-day time period fixed by the Union government for paddy procurement has been ignored by

the state government pushing the farmers into misery.

The team had visited Bargarh, Bolangir, Sonepur and Nayagarh from March 22 to 25 to make an on-spot assessment of the situation and found several irregularities in the paddy procurement system, he said.

The party, he said, also decided to organise a protest in front of all block offices across the state July 7, 8 and 9 demanding allotment of pucca houses to all eligible beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

3.5K tonne medical O2 sent to Telangana, AP

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, June 29: In a bid to help the states breathe easy amid oxygen crisis in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic, the Indian Railways has supplied 7,347.37 tonne Liquid Medical Oxygen (LMO) to Telangana and Andhra Pradesh till June 29. Out of these, 3,501.77 tonne has been sent from Odisha, sources in the Railways said Tuesday.

Apart from Odisha, about 80 tonne LMO was transported from West Bengal, 684.5 tonne from Chhattisgarh, 1,288 tonne from Jharkhand and 1,793.10 tonne from Gujarat.



TELANGANA HAS RECEIVED 3,719.05 TONNE MEDICAL OXYGEN THROUGH 40 TRAINS

ANDHRA PRADESH RECEIVED HAS RECEIVED 3,628.32 TONNE LMO THROUGH 56 TRAINS

Telangana received the first consignment of medical oxygen May 1, 2021 with delivery of 63.06 tonne LMO. Since then, the state has received 3719.05 tonne medical oxygen through 40 trains, a South Central Railway release said Tuesday.

Andhra Pradesh received the

first consignment of LMO May 15, 2021 with delivery of 40 tonne of LMO. Since then, the state has received 3,628.32 tonne medical oxygen through 56 trains.

In order to meet the medical oxygen requirement of the states in an effective manner, Oxygen Express trains were operated from

both the eastern and western parts of the country.

To meet the medical oxygen requirements of the state in fastest possible manner, Indian Railways has been operating these trains along the Green Corridors to ensure minimum transport time.

Multi-disciplinary teams have also been formed to ensure that the oxygen trains reach the destinations in least possible time. As a result, the average speed of running for these trains has been over 60 kmph.

SCR General Manager Gajanan Mallia complimented the officers and staffers for excellent work being done towards delivering LMO during these critical times.

THROWING COVID NORMS TO WINDS



Train travellers flout social distancing norms at Bhubaneswar railway station, Tuesday

OP PHOTO

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92 years on: No land settlement in 9 Jajpur villages

POST NEWS NETWORK

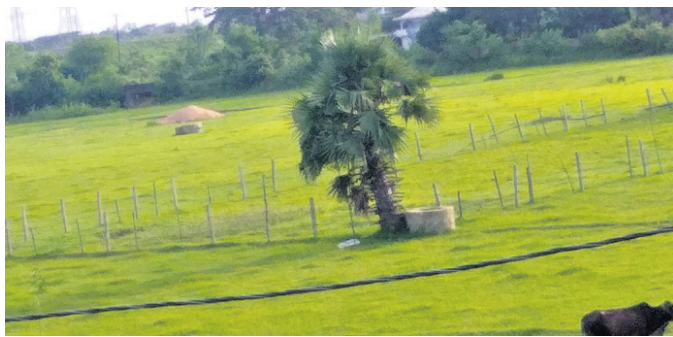
Chandikhole, June 29: Even as 92 years have passed, residents in nine revenue villages under Darpan tehsil near here in Jajpur district are yet to get land pattas (Record of Rights-RoR) due to lack of any fresh settlement works, a report said.

The settlement work which was done decades back is still prevalent in these villages. No fresh settlement or consolidation works have been taken up in these villages following which the lands of the residents are yet to be demarcated. As a result, they failed to get pattas on their lands.

In Sunguda, Darpan, Patrajpur, Charinangal, Kalsri, Panasudha, Matakatur, Palei, Barada and other villages under Darpan tehsil, the land settlement operations were carried out for the last time in 1926 under Land Reforms Act during the British colonial period. Later, the residents were issued hand written land pattas in 1929.

Since then, no fresh settlement works have been carried out in these villages. Generations have passed but the residents are yet to get fresh land pattas on their lands.

The British rulers left India in 1947 but the laws and systems they introduced during that period are still prevalent in many parts of the country and are yet to be abolished.



In Sunguda, Darpan, Patrajpur, Charinangal, Kalsri, Panasudha, Matakatur, Palei, Barada and other villages under Darpan tehsil, the land settlement operations were carried out for the last time in 1926 under Land Reforms Act during the British colonial period.

Members of over 15,000 families in these nine revenue villages were not issued with any fresh land pattas as the administration continued with the earlier land pattas issued to them by the British government.

The absence of land pattas with the residents has deprived them of various government benefits. As they do not have land pattas, the residents have failed to get caste certificates, residence certificates as well as bank loans or any other services

The Indian government introduced a new Land Reforms Act and abolished the Zamindari system in the country which was present during the colonial era. People in the state were issued fresh land pattas instead of the hand written land pattas issued by the British.

However, members of over 15,000 families in these nine revenue villages were not issued with any

fresh land pattas as the administration continued with the earlier land pattas issued to them by the British government.

The settlement works conducted by the British 92 years back is still prevalent in these nine revenue villages out of 259 villages falling under Darpan tehsil. The lands in these nine revenue villages are yet to be demarcated as the adminis-

tration is yet to carry out any fresh settlement or consolidations works in these areas. As a result, the residents in these villages have not received any fresh land pattas.

Later, land reforms were taken up in 250 villages in 1962 and completed in 1988. However, the administration failed to demarcate the borders of these nine revenue villages and stopped the settlement works in these villages under Section-9(1) and Section-13(1) of Land Reforms Act. Consequently the land owners in these nine villages failed to get land pattas on their lands.

The absence of land pattas with the residents has deprived them of various government benefits. As they do not have land pattas, the residents have failed to get caste certificates, residence certificates as well as bank loans or any other services. They have been facing innumerable problems due to absence of land pattas which are required in various stages of life to avail various services and benefits.

Even during natural calamities like floods, cyclonic storms and droughts, they have failed to get any compensation from the government due to lack of land pattas.

Many of the lands in these villages have been sold for eight to nine times since they were last issued with hand written land pattas. All those who are purchasing the lands in these villages are also

facing a similar situation. Unavailability of land pattas has also hindered any corrections and changes on their lands.

They have also failed to carry out the conversion of their land due to the same reason. Many of the irrigated and non-irrigated lands are no more being used as farmlands and buildings have come up on them.

However, the land owners have failed to convert the lands into homestead (Gharbari) lands in the tehsil office. The banks refuse to give any loans to them when the land owners approach the banks for a loan for construction of a house on the land. Moreover, land acquisition for any projects has become a problem in these areas. The government is laying stress on the land pattas issued in 1929 during land acquisition works but it has serious problems for the residents.

Residents have demanded the state government to intervene and issue them fresh land pattas by carrying out settlement works in these villages.

When contacted, Pradeep Kumar Sethy, Darpan tehsildar admitted to the charges stating that his office has sought land records from the Settlement office at Jobra in Cuttack. He said that the land reforms in these nine villages will be carried out after the records are available to them.

Talcher Fertilisers gets CISF cover

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: The CISF Tuesday took charge of the security of the Talcher Fertilizers Limited (TFL) campus in Angul district with the induction of a counter-terrorist unit of 120 armed personnel at the facility.

The Union home ministry had recently sanctioned the cover to the facility spread over 520 acres with an estimated 1,000 employees. It is located about 123 km from state capital Bhubaneswar.

In light of the increased threat perception to the fertilizer companies situated across the country, TFL is inherently vulnerable to threats from anti-nationals and saboteurs.

The CISF will provide round-the-clock armed security cover to the facility, a CISF spokesperson said here.

A formal induction ceremony was held at the facility where a ceremonial key of the premises was handed over to the force and the CISF flag was hoisted in the presence of senior CISF and TFL officers, he said.

A 120-personnel contingent under the command of an assistant commandant-rank officer has been deputed for the task, the spokesperson said.

TFL is a consortium of four state-run companies GAIL, CIL, RCF and FCIL and was established in December, 2014 to revive the Talcher fertilizer unit in Angul district of Odisha.

The unit was established at Talcher due to the abundance of coal that is being used as feedstock, the spokesperson said.

TFL has been mandated by the government to revive the erstwhile Talcher plant of FCIL by setting up a new greenfield coal gasification-based urea plant with an installed capacity of 12.7 lakh tonne per annum at an estimated project cost of Rs 13,277.21 crore.

The force will now control access to the facility and its armed troops will be stationed at vantage positions, including in a vehicle-borne quick response team (QRT), to counter any terrorist attack or sabotage.

With this induction, the CISF has 352 units and vital installations under its cover across the country that includes 64 civil airports, historical monuments like the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort, the Delhi Metro and corporates like Infosys, Reliance IT Park and Jamnagar refinery and the Hyderabad campus of vaccine manufacturer Bharat Biotech International Limited.

Rape of minor: Tutor arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Patana, June 29: Police Tuesday arrested a youth for kidnapping and raping a minor girl here in Keonjhar district.

The accused has been identified as Gatikrushna Sethi (28), a resident of Udaypur village under Patana police limits. According to the victim's family members' allegation, the victim (15) was receiving tuition from Gatikrushna. Taking advantage of her innocence, he managed to ensnare her in his false love affair.

Taking all by surprise, they eloped to Baripada May 18. Later, he took her to his aunt's house at Matiarhar village. During the stay there, he sexually assaulted her on several occasions.

Meanwhile, the victim's family members had lodged a report with Patana police station. Acting on the report, the police launched an investigation. Subsequently, the accused's family members brought the victim and produced before the police.

"The police had the girl's medical test done at Patana community health centre (CHC). The accused tutor who had been in large was arrested from his aunt's house at Matiarhar village Tuesday and was produced in a local court," said the investigating officer sub-inspector Sibashankar Alada.

Man brutalised, murdered over sorcery; 14 arrested



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, June 29: In a savage act, a man was forced to eat human excreta and asked to pull out his teeth before being allegedly murdered by a group of villagers over suspicion of witchcraft practice and sorcery at Rameyapalli village under Chamakhandi police limits in Ganjam district.

The matter came to the fore after a video of the incident which occurred June 19 went viral in various social media platforms.

Meanwhile, with the arrest of one more person the total number of arrests went up to 14 in this connection. In the latest develop-

ment, police arrested a person B Shankar Rao and produced him in court.

He was remanded to judicial custody after his bail plea was rejected. The arrests were made after one of the injured victims P Bhimaraju, 50, lodged a complaint in the Chamakhandi police station after the incident.

Reports said that a man N Venkataraman, 50, was beaten to death by the villagers while P Bhimaraju, 70, and P Dhableswar Reddy of Lanjipalli main road in Berhampur sustained critical injuries in the attack, June 19.

In the disturbing video, the deceased, N Venkataraman along with

two others P Bhimaraju and P Dhableswar Reddy were seen being brutally assaulted by a mob in the presence of hundreds of villagers.

Later, a critically injured Venkataraman was given pliers and asked to pull out his own teeth. A hapless Venkataraman was seen making desperate attempts to pull out his teeth. Subsequently, the attackers got his teeth pulled out by another victim.

However, the brutality did not stop there as Venkataraman was subsequently killed by the irate mob while the other two escaped death by a whisker but were rendered critical in the attack.

The incident occurred after Venkataraman and Dhableswar of Berhampur visited the house of Bhimaraju on his invitation to perform some rituals at his residence on the fateful day.

They were performing some rituals when over 30 villagers barged into Bhimaraju's house and assaulted the trio and dragged them outside. The brutality went until Venkataraman was killed in the attack and Bhimaraju and Dhableswar sustained critical injuries.

A senior police official said that more people might be arrested if their involvement in the incident is established in the probe.

Vax camp for tribals of hilltop villages

Situated on a hilltop in Sukinda block, about 100 km north of Bhubaneswar, Nagada is divided into three parts -- Tala Nagada, Upara Nagada and Majhi Nagada. Around 60 households comprising 320 people belonging to the Juanga tribe reside in the three hamlets



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jajpur, June 29: A Covid vaccination drive has begun in Nagada village of Odisha's Jajpur district after reports around a fortnight ago that many tribals were suffering from fever in the backward hilltop villages that had hogged headlines for a series of child malnutrition deaths in 2016.

The district administration kick-started the drive in the village as a precautionary measure even as no Covid case has been detected in the tribal hamlet yet. The camp was organised at the Tala Nagada Anganwadi centre.

It had set a target of vaccinating around 250 adults -- 200 in Nagada and 50 from neighbouring hamlets Tumuni and Guhiasal. A total of 176 tribals or 70.4 per cent of the target got the first jab in a peaceful and smooth manner Monday, of which 106 are men and the rest women, officials said.

Though the residents of Nagada were initially reluctant to take the vaccine and avoided coming to the camp, they later cooperated, said Sukinda community health centre (CHC) superintendent, Jayadev Nanda.

We persuaded them with great difficulties by convincing them that nothing harmful will happen if they take the jab. After a great effort by the medical staff, they decided to take the vaccine at the camp, Nanda said.

Desa Pradhan, 28, of Tala Nagada village was the first person to take the jab at the camp, agreeing to take the shot after much persuasion by Nanda. The official himself administered the vaccine on Pradhan, following which others agreed to go to the booth.

I was scared before taking the vaccine, Pradhan said. However, when the doctor 'babu' gave me assurance that he would administer the vaccine to me, I built confidence in myself and agreed

to take it. Situated on a hilltop in Sukinda block, around 100 km north of Bhubaneswar, Nagada is divided into three parts -- Tala Nagada, Upara Nagada and Majhi Nagada.

Around 63 households comprising 320 people belonging to the Juanga tribe reside in the three hamlets. Juanga is one of the 13 particularly vulnerable tribal groups in the state.

After reports of fever two weeks ago, a special medical team was pressed in to conduct screening and health check-up of the inhabitants. It had collected 51 blood samples from those suffering from fever. Five children were diagnosed with malaria, while 17 were found to have viral fever.

Last week, the district administration had launched an awareness programme to educate the tribals about Covid-19, the use of masks and maintaining social distance as a precautionary measure against the virus.

FIGHTING PROWESS



Members of the Odisha Adivasi Dalit Sena holding bow and arrows stage a demonstration in front of the Sambalpur collectorate demanding permission for sale of tribal land, Tuesday

FEMALE DOCTOR RAPED IN ANGUL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhendipada, June 29: A doctor was raped by the son of a hotel owner on the premises of her official quarters here in Angul district late Monday night.

The matter came to the fore after a complaint was filed in the Chhendipada police station, Tuesday. Police registered a case

and launched an investigation by detaining the accused, IIC Susant Singh said.

Police said the survivor was staying with her brother in her official quarters.

She was in her quarters after duty hours while her brother had gone outside for food, Monday night. The incident occurred when the son of a local hotel owner

knocked at her door to deliver a food packet at her residence at about 12.05am.

The accused barged inside when the survivor opened the door and raped her over there.

He even threatened her of dire consequences if she dares to lodge a complaint in the police station. The accused fled the scene after her brother arrived.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender No. MCSW-Buffering-21-22-09

Name of the Work: BUFFING AND POLISHING OF SS WASH BASINS, SS PANS & SS WALL PROTECTORS IN RAILWAY BG COACHES ALONG WITH BUFFING AND POLISHING OF SS SIDE PANEL & SS OVEN IN PANTRY CARS AT CARRIAGE REPAIR WORKSHOP, MANCHESWAR.

Advertised Value: ₹ 38,50,271.60, Period of completion: 24 months.

Bidding start date: 02.07.2021, **Tender closing date & time:** at 15:00 hrs. of 16.07.2021.

Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.irps.gov.in

Dy. Chief Mechanical Engineer (POH)/CRW/PR-176/M/21-22

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, SUNDARGARH
E-Mail-rwsundargarh@yahoo.co.in
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. ONLINE-EESNG-03 of 2021-22

No. O-387/- 1. Name of the work: Road & building works. 2. Total No. of works: 01 No. Road & 06 Nos. Building. 3. Estimated cost: Rs. 1.33 lakhs to Rs. 44.25 lakhs. 4. Class of contractor: 'D' & 'C', 'B' & 'A'. 5. Period of completion: 01 & 02 calendar months. 6. Type of tender: Single cover. 7. Other details:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding	
		From	To
1	2	3	4
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Sundargarh	Online-EESNG-03 of 2021-22	05.07.2021 10.00 A.M.	19.07.2021 05.30 P.M.

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Sd./-Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Sundargarh
OIPR-25046/11/0008/2122

ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଉନ୍ନୟନ କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷ
ଆକାଶ ଶୋଭା ବିଳାଡ଼ି
ପଞ୍ଚିତ କବାହରଲାଲ ନେହେରୁ ମାର୍ଗ, ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର - ୭୫୧୦୦୧
ପତ୍ର ସଂଖ୍ୟା: ୨୨୭୭୧/ଭୁ.ଉ.କ., ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ତା.୧୪.୦୬.୨୦୨୧
KNM-617/93

ସୂଚନା

ଏତଦ୍ୱାରା ସର୍ବସାଧାରଣଙ୍କ ଅବଗତ ନିମନ୍ତେ ଗଣରାଜ୍ୟ ବିଧାନ ସଭା ନଗର ପୁରୀ ଜିଲ୍ଲା ପୁରୀ ଉପଖଣ୍ଡ ମି.ପ୍ଲଟ ନଂ. K8-631କୁ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୋବର୍ଦ୍ଧନ ପୁରୀ, ପି.ପା: ସର୍ବତ୍ର ଲାଲୁକିଶୋରୀ ପୁରୀ, ଗ୍ରାମ: ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ପୋ.ଅ.: ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର, ଆନା: ଭେଦେଇ, ବିଳା: ବରଗଡ଼, ଉତ୍ତରାଞ୍ଚଳ ନଗର ଆବେଦନ କରାଯାଇଥିଲା । ଆବେଦନ ଗ୍ରାହୀ ଶ୍ରୀ ଗୋବର୍ଦ୍ଧନ ପୁରୀ ଗତ ୦୪.୦୬.୨୦୨୧ରେ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ବରଣ କରିଅଛନ୍ତି । ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ମୃତ ଆବେଦନଗ୍ରାହୀଙ୍କ ବିବାହିତ ଝିଅ (୧) ଅଭିସା ଦାଶ, (୨) ଅଭିସିତା ପୁରୀ ଏବଂ (୩) ଶର୍ବତୀ ପୁରୀ ଉପରୋକ୍ତ ପୁରୁଷ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ନାମରେ ଭରତୀୟାଦାରୀ ସୂତ୍ର ମାଲିକାନା ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଜରଜର କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷପାଠରେ ଆବେଦନ କରିଅଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି ଉକ୍ତ ପ୍ରକଳ୍ପ ପୁରୀ ଭରତୀୟାଦାରୀ ସୂତ୍ର ମାଲିକାନା ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ ଯଦି କାହାର ବିକଳ ଦାବି/ଆପତ୍ତି ଥାଏ, ତା'ହେଲେ ଏହି ସୂଚନା ପ୍ରକାଶନର ୧୫ (ପନ୍ଦର) ଦିନ ମଧ୍ୟରେ ନିମ୍ନ ସ୍ୱାକ୍ଷରକାରୀଙ୍କୁ ଲିଖିତରୂପେ ଜଣାଇବେ । ତତ୍ପରେ ଏ ସମ୍ପର୍କରେ କୌଣସି ଆପତ୍ତି/ଅଭିଯୋଗ ଶୁଣାଯିବ ନାହିଁ ଏବଂ ପୁରୀ ଭରତୀୟାଦାରୀ ସୂତ୍ର ମାଲିକାନା ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ଆଇନ ଅନୁଯାୟୀ ସମ୍ପାଦନ କରାଯିବ ।

ସା./- ଆବେଦନ ଅଧିକାରୀ - ୧
ଭୁବନେଶ୍ୱର ଉନ୍ନୟନ କର୍ତ୍ତୃପକ୍ଷ

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, SUNDARGARH
Phone No. (06622)-272247; E-mail: eemisundargarh@yahoo.co.in
'e' Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No. EE MID SNG04/2021-22
eemisundargarh@yahoo.co.in
No. 1077 // MID // date. 24.06.2021

No. A-243/- Bid documents consisting of Work, Estimated cost, Cost of tender paper, time of completion, Class of Contractor, the set of terms and conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal <https://tendersodisha.gov.in>.
** Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement market place <http://tendersodisha.gov.in>

1	Name of the works:-	Civil Construction work
2	No. of Works:-	01 (One) No.
3	Estimated Cost:-	Rs 17.86 lakh (Approximately)
4	Period of completion:-	03 (Three) Calendar months
5	Date and Time of availability of bid documents in the portal:-	From dt.02.07.2021 at 10.00 AM to dt.13.07.2021 upto 5.00 PM
6	Last date / time of receipt of bids in the portal:-	Dt. 13.07.2021 upto 5.00 PM
7	Date of opening of Bid:-	Dt. 14.07.2021 at 11.00 AM onwards
8	Name and address of the OIT:-	Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Sundargarh.

Sd./- 24.06.2021, Executive Engineer
M.I. Division, Sundargarh
OIPR-32124/11/0003/2122

In each heart, the Divine's Presence is the promise of future and possible perfections.

THE MOTHER



Drone War

There is ample reason to be worried over the use of weaponised drones for cross-border terrorist activities after the first ever drone attack by suspected terrorists in Jammu. This sort of a serious drone attack might surprise many in India. However, for the rest of the world, warfare based on drones or unmanned flights have become commonplace for more than a decade. Countries like the US and China have a 24/7 fleet of drones controlled by people sitting thousands of kilometres away. During the peak pandemic time in 2020, drones were used in the UK for delivering physical mail and other goods. The multiple usage of drones cannot be ignored because they are the weapons of the future. Take for example the attack on the Saudi Arabian Aramco refinery by Yemeni Houthi rebels in March 2020. Six bomb-laden drones could cripple the refinery for months, thereby impairing oil exports by the richest kingdom of the world.

Explosives carried by drones were dropped into the Indian Air Force station at Jammu airport June 26-27. The fact that the two aerial strikes in the gap of a few minutes missed the 'target' or caused minor damage is no cause for comfort or complacency. The terrorists could have been testing India's counter-drone capabilities. If that be so, the drone attacks open a new and alarming chapter in the history of cross-border terrorism in India's north-western frontier. For, the operators could merrily achieve their mission of breaking through the security cordon, violate India's airspace undetected and return to safety leaving no evidence of the actors perpetrating the terrorist acts. Drones will be able to re-enact many 26/11s without leaving trace of a Kasab. It will also be difficult to blame any neighbouring country since proof to back such a claim may not be available. Unlike the previous 'handlers' who operated from Pakistan, today's drone technicians could be sitting in a cafe with a command module anywhere in the world.

The timing of the attack is intriguing. It occurred two days after the Prime Minister held the first ever meeting with 14 leaders of political parties of J&K in a supposed attempt to restart the democratic process and find a political solution to the Kashmir tangle. This drone attack could be construed as a warning to the government of India. Highlighting the weaknesses of the armed forces might be a strategy of interests inimical to India. The drone attacks have also given a lie to the government's claim that the abrogation of Article 370 would bring down terrorism. Now it is no more limited to just across the border. This should compel India's military strategists to reassess the threat perception to the country. Excessive dependence on conventional fighting capabilities may actually be hampering the defence forces. While much talk is being heard about the present government strengthening the military, this one single drone attack on the IAF base has burst the bubble of security that was being fed to the countrymen.

Latest reports suggest the terrorists seem to have been so emboldened by the success of their adventure that they operated drones again during the early hours of June 29. The flying machines were reportedly spotted thrice at Ratnuchak-Kunjawani area - first around 1:08 am at Ratnuchak and then at 3:09 am and 4:19 am near Kunjawani. Reports say, the area was immediately cordoned off but it is difficult to understand how cordoning off an area on the ground would help to dissuade drones from attacking.

On the intervening night of June 26-27, two explosive devices were air-dropped through drones at the Air Force Station, injuring two persons and damaging the roof of a building. The drone activity over defence installations in areas on the outskirts of Jammu city should not surprise anyone. The government appears to have been so rattled that the Special Secretary (Internal Security), Ministry of Home Affairs, VSK Kaumudi said at a UN General Assembly conference June 28 that "another add-on" to "existing worries" is the use of drones. This shows how dated are India's defence strategies.

He was at pains to explain to the global forum that the low-cost and easy availability of the drones make the "aerial platforms" handy weapons for terrorist groups to carry out tasks such as intelligence collection, weapon and explosives delivery and targeted attacks. The government's complaints about "misuse" of information and communication technology such as internet and social media for terrorist propaganda and abuse of new payment methods and crowdfunding platforms for financing terrorism now sound pathetic. It should have been aware of these tools at the disposal of terrorists before claiming reorganisation of J&K would eliminate terrorist activities and destroy terror network.

WISDOM CORNER

Our knowledge is a little island in a great ocean of nonknowledge. ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER

The home is the chief school of human virtues. WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING

Progress was all right. Only it went on too long. JAMES THURBER

WORDSWORTH

Nut-crack night

This is an old Scots and Northern English name for Halloween, the night of 31 October, otherwise called The Oracle of the Nuts. As the chill of autumn pervaded their homes, people would sit around their fires, eating newly harvested hazelnuts or chestnuts. Several fortune-telling customs grew up that involved throwing nuts into the fire, hence these names for the night. A young man might give each nut the name of a possible sweetheart and watch to see which burned the brightest in the flames. This is evoked in John Gay's poem, *The Spell: Two hazel-nuts I threw into the flame, And to each nut I gave a sweetheart's name: This with the loudest bounce me sore amazed, That in a flame of brightest colour blazed; As blazed the nut, so may thy passion grow, For 'twas thy nut that did so brightly glow!* Robert Burns recorded several related customs about this day, one of which was a fortune-telling game for a young couple in which two nuts were put in the fire. Their future was predicted depending on whether the nuts burned quietly together or jumped apart. An elaborated description appeared in an American publication of 1912, *Games for Hallow-e'en*, by Mary E. Blain: "A maid and youth each places a chestnut to roast on the fire, side by side. If one hisses and steams, it indicates a fretful temper in the owner of the chestnut; if both chestnuts equally misbehave it augurs strife. If one or both pop away, it means separation; but if both burn to ashes tranquilly side by side, a long life of undisturbed happiness will be their lot."

LOL

GOOD NEWS & BAD NEWS

Patient: I'm in a hospital! Why am I in here?
Doctor: You've had an accident involving a train.
Patient: What happened?
Doctor: Well, I've got some good news and some bad news. Which would you like to hear first?
Patient: Well... The bad news first...
Doctor: Your legs were injured so badly that we had to amputate both of them.
Patient: That's terrible!
What's the good news?
Doctor: There's a guy in the next ward who made a very good offer on your slippers.



Kailash Satyarthi

EVERY CHILD MATTERS. AS WE HEAL AND MOVE FORWARD FROM THE PANDEMIC, WE MUST TAKE ALL OF THEM WITH US

GLOBAL SCOURGE

FOCUS CHILD LABOUR

For the first time in two decades, the number of child workers has increased. The shocking rise - from 152 million to 160 million worldwide, according to recent United Nations data - occurred in the four years that preceded the COVID-19 pandemic.

There can be absolutely no excuse for this. The world took its eyes off the target - namely, the promise we made to end child labour by 2025. Today, we have made a mockery of that promise. What is even more outrageous is that the increase in child labour occurred during a period when global wealth rose by \$10 trillion. The pandemic has revealed how fundamentally unequal our world has become. According to Forbes, a new billionaire has been created every 17 hours during the pandemic. Meanwhile, an estimated 200 million adults globally will have lost their jobs by the end of 2022, and the International Labour Organisation warns that the COVID-19 crisis could push 8.9 million more children into child labour by then. And, given current trends, this number will only increase.

The world is thus facing not only a health crisis, but also a crisis of equality, justice, and morality. There is more than enough wealth for every child to be able to go to school instead of having to work to survive. The question is how we choose to share that wealth, and with whom. So far, we have not given our children their fair share.

But we can start to do so now. In view of the immediate crisis, world leaders must allocate to the poorest and most marginalised children their fair share of global wealth, channeling it through government budgets and official development assistance (ODA). They must also introduce and bolster targeted policies (including law enforcement and legislation aimed at ending child labour) and social protection (including healthcare, education, access to clean drinking water, sanitation,



The world is facing not only a health crisis, but also a crisis of equality, justice, and morality. There is more than enough wealth for every child to be able to go to school instead of having to work to survive. The question is how we choose to share that wealth, and with whom. So far, we have not given our children their fair share

and housing).

Social protection must emphasise direct child benefits that can provide immediate and effective support to move millions of children out of danger and into school. Programmes such as the Bolsa Familia in Brazil, Midday Meals in India, and Child Grants in Zambia have demonstrated the positive impact of such payments. And child-focused social protection should complement greater investment in upholding the universal right to education and health, the rule of law, and decent work for adults - all of which remain critical to ending child labour.

Public services and welfare schemes helped to end child labour

in wealthy countries decades ago. Today, social protection for citizens is a high priority in these countries and accounts for the largest share of domestic government expenditure. Extending such policies to the children most in need should thus also be a high priority in the advanced economies' ODA budgets.

This year, the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, the world's wealthiest countries should establish a well-resourced global social protection fund, with the key element being direct assistance to the most marginalised and at-risk children. The International Financing for Development Conference in September this year presents the

perfect opportunity to announce this. Among G20 members, Argentina, France, and the European Union have already put their weight behind the proposal, and other countries must not miss this opportunity to stand on the right side of history. Our children do not want to listen to good intentions anymore. They need urgent and bold action now.

Less wealthy countries also have a responsibility to increase budgetary allocations to establish and strengthen social-protection floors. They should ensure that every child is protected by a safety net of education, healthcare, clean water, sanitation, and adequate housing. In doing so, policymakers must put children of agricultural and migrant workers first, as well as children on the move who already are at heightened risk. We must bring the last child to the front of the line.

That means understanding a child's life, freedom, and future holistically. The perpetuation of child labour results in poor education and healthcare, leading in turn to intergenerational poverty. It is well established that in certain countries, every one per cent increase in poverty leads to an increase in child labour of at least 0.7 per cent.

Ending child labour is achievable. We know the solution to child labour, and we have the wealth and knowledge to implement it. What we currently lack is political will.

Today, 160 million children - kids just like yours and mine - are working at the cost of their education, freedom, and future, and millions more are at risk. But a childhood without exploitation should not be a privilege. Every child matters. As we heal and move forward from the pandemic, we must take all of them with us.

The writer, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, is the founder of Laureates and Leaders for Children.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

IN JEST THIS

Give yourself an edge in the job market



Melvin Durai

IF YOU ARRIVE TEN MINUTES EARLY FOR THE JOB INTERVIEW, YOU WILL BE RELAXED. IF YOU ARRIVE TEN MINUTES LATE, YOU WILL BE AXED

These are tough economic times in many parts of the world. If you're like me, you're saving money any way you can. I've cancelled my cable, invested in a good pair of binoculars and started watching my neighbour's TV. Desperate times call for desperate measures.

In this harsh economic climate, it's important to have a job, any job. But finding a job isn't easy, especially since so many companies have lost money during the pandemic. Competition for jobs is so intense that World Chess Champion Magnus Carlsen has been flooded with applications, all because someone wrote that he has "good openings."

With all the competition, it's vital for job seekers to give themselves an edge. That's why I've decided to offer a few tips to help people stand out from the crowd. Some of these tips may seem obvious, but trust me, they're often overlooked.

Tip #1: Learn to speak the native language. If you're in Canada, don't speak Kannada. Learn to speak Canadian. It's almost like English, but with a few variations, such as the addition of "eh" at the end of every sentence. If you're in Odisha, learn to speak Odia. If you're in Punjab, learn to speak Punjabi. And if you're in Bangalore, learn to speak Bengali.



Too many people, unfortunately, dress for failure. Don't expect Barclays Bank to hire you if you're wearing a T-shirt that says "Go bonkers!" The least you can do is change the second 'o' to an 'a'

Tip #2: Go easy on the body art. This advice is especially pertinent in western countries. Two or three tattoos are OK, but when your entire body is green, the only job you're likely to get is on a farm, especially if the farmer needs another scarecrow.

Tip #3: Put your best foot forward at the job interview. This can be hard, especially if your feet look the same. Your friends can probably help you figure out which foot is better, but if you're still unsure, consult a podiatrist.

Tip #4: Dress for success. Too

many people, unfortunately, dress for failure. Don't expect Barclays Bank to hire you if you're wearing a T-shirt that says "Go bonkers!" The least you can do is change the second 'o' to an 'a'.

Tip #5: Groom yourself well. If you're a man, it's probably a good idea to trim your nails, mustache and any unruly locks of nose hair. If you're a woman, resist the temptation to dye your hair orange—unless you're applying for a job as a traffic cone.

Tip #6: Try to smell good. The most important thing you can do

to smell good is take a bath, even if you've already taken one this year. You can practice water conservation after the interview. A little perfume or cologne would also help, but don't empty the bottle, unless you want to spend your day reviving the interviewer.

Tip #7: Do some research. Employers are impressed when you know something about them. You might want to find out, for example, what they do. Don't ask the manager of Cracker Barrel how heavy the barrels are. And don't ask the recruiter at Samsung what exactly it was that Sam sung.

Tip #8: Don't do drugs. Most employers test for drugs and if you fail the test, you won't get a second chance, unless you're in the National Football League. If you like to get high several times a week, apply for a job as a flight attendant. It's safer and it won't deplete your bank account.

Tip #9: Be on time. If you arrive ten minutes early for the job interview, you will be relaxed. If you arrive ten minutes late, you will be axed. Remember: first impressions are important.

Tip #10: Don't tell lies. This applies to your résumé as well as your interview. If you don't know how to use a chainsaw, don't claim that you do. Otherwise you might soon be out of a job, as well as an arm.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Scintillating football

Sir, The Spanish Armada rolled on in Euro 2020, sinking Croatia in an eight-goal thriller. Enrique's men fell behind in the first half after an unexpected error from keeper Unai Simon who failed to control Pedri's backpass and watched helplessly as the ball rolled into the net. But, they got their act together with goals from Pablo Sarabia, Cesar Azpilicueta and Ferran Torres to march ahead. Yet Croatia produced another twist with Mislav Orsic and Mario Pasalic's strikes in the dying minutes, restoring parity. It needed a superb strike from under-fire Alvaro Morata and a goal from Mikel Oyarzabal in extra time to seal Croatia's fate. Scintillating football!
NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Vaccine hesitancy

Sir, The best possible solution for the government to eliminate vaccine hesitancy in both rural and urban India is to improve the efficacy of vaccines. No doubt, there are several people who under the influence of rumours like "death because of inoculation" or "vaccination leading to infertility or impotency" have become intolerant towards vaccines. But there are also people who are unwilling to inoculate themselves owing to the efficacy issues of the two indigenous vaccines. A recent study by healthcare workers in India suggested that Covishield has shown to produce more antibodies than Covaxin. But the same study also suggested that the cases of breakthrough infections are less in the latter. Therefore, for the people, it has become a case of Hamletian dilemma to choose any one of these two vaccines. As the newer variants of concern have shown to evade the immunity of even fully vaccinated persons, it is high time for Indian firms to improve the efficacy of their vaccines.
Tushar Anand, PATNA

Dowry deaths

Sir, The Kerala story on dowry deaths is appalling. Some laws in India have self-contradictions. The suggestion of former Chief Minister Oomen Chandy that government employees sign an affidavit stating that they would neither accept nor give dowry is in good spirit. But the suggestion seems to have the notion that only government employees are giving and taking dowry. There are people demanding dowry in other professions also and there are also government employees who do not demand or accept dowry. The laws should not be enacted or existing laws should not be strengthened keeping in mind only government employees. Any one demanding and accepting dowry should be dealt with an iron hand.
KV Seetharamaiah, HASSAN

Human-elephant conflict: A cause of concern in Keonjhar



The greatest cause of concern is that the ongoing fight for survival doesn't affect any one side only; rather it impacts both the sides as the man-elephant conflict also claimed many lives of jumbos and human beings in the last two years

During this pandemic, when people are in a dilemma of whether to save lives or livelihood, the elephant menace has only left them up against the wall

The animal lovers and environmentalists in the district have expressed concern over the ever-growing problem of man-elephant conflict. Local people have urged the forest department to come up with some permanent solution to save both the sides

to save lives or livelihood, the elephant menace has only left them up against the wall.

The animal lovers and environmentalists in the district have expressed concern over the ever-growing problem of man-elephant conflict.

Pointing out many reasons such as damage of elephant corridors, destruction of their natural habitats, mindless felling of trees etc that have given rise to the menace, the local people urged the forest department to come up with some permanent solution to save both the sides.

were killed and 38 were injured in elephant attacks in the year 2019-20. At the same time, the period also saw deaths of six jumbos due to one or the other reasons. During the same period, the marauding elephants damaged 315 houses and destroyed 904.71 acres of crops. And the menace affected a total of 3,581 people.

Similarly, in the year 2020-21, the conflict claimed six and seven lives of human beings and pachyderms respectively. During this period, the elephants caused damage to 139 houses and destroyed 836.49 acres of standing crops affecting as many as 3,859 people. This was the year when Covid-19 pandemic broke out and left people struggling for their livelihood.

During this pandemic, when people are in a dilemma of whether

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, June 29: The man-elephant conflict in this district is over three-decades-old and despite all efforts, the problem, instead of showing any sign of relenting, is only increasing by the day.

The greatest cause of concern is that the ongoing fight for survival doesn't affect any one side only; rather it impacts both the sides. Like several past years, the man-elephant conflict also claimed many lives of jumbos and human beings in the last two years. During this period, while as many as 13 elephants were killed, 15 people lost their lives to this ever increasing menace. At the same time, it has left as many as 92 people disabled.

According to the information available, as many as nine people

Encroachment woes plague Angul town

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, June 29: The ever-growing encroachment problem in Angul town has presently emerged as the bane of its existence.

Angul town is expanding and so are the markets. At the same time, this expansion has given rise to the encroachment problem as well. It has become a common scene to find shops and market complexes in the town encroaching upon roads and drains, narrowing the roads and obstructing the flow of water through the drains. The town dwellers alleged that the Angul municipality is hardly taking any steps to free the areas from encroachers.

There are over 2,000 shops in Angul municipality area. Of them, 733 are owned by the municipality itself and are let out for rent. Most importantly, over 300 shopkeepers who are running their businesses from these municipality-owned shops have expanded their shops, encroaching upon roads and drains.

According to some town dwellers, the civic body authority is aware of the fact but not taking any steps to free the areas from encroachment. Cashing in on the civic body being lenient against the encroachers, other businessmen are following the suit, considering little about the problems faced by the people.



They alleged getting stuck in traffic snarls and meeting with accidents have become regular affairs. The problem gets aggravated in rainy season. Since the drains and outlet points are obstructed, the rainwater stays on the roads for hours together, giving them a look of ponds.

The place near the Central Lodge needs mention. People passing by it have to wade through knee-deep water every year. The local people ascribe the problem to the encroachment.

Similarly, a jewellery shop in the town has encroached upon a drain. Instead of getting the drain free from the encroachment, the municipality has changed the drain's direction during repair and construction work.

Far from feeling ashamed for encroaching upon government lands, these shopkeepers are further occupying portions of the roads by spreading their articles. Consequently, the space for vehicles and pedestrians is getting squeezed, making it difficult even for ambulances to pass through the stretch.

Two kids drown

REDHAKHOLE: In a sad incident, two kids met watery grave while they were taking bath in a canal at Chudapurug village here in Sambalpur district, Tuesday. The two deceased kids have been identified as 6 years old Amit Khadia and 4 years old Ajit Khadia. As per reports, the two siblings had gone to the Surubali canal to take bath along with their mother Sunita Khadia when they drowned. Police reached the spot and sent the bodies for post-mortem.

Transparency in appointment of PDS contractors questioned

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, June 29: Contractors (L-2 contractor) to supply PDS articles like rice and wheat to dealers in eight blocks of Angul district have been appointed by ignoring rules, alleged some aspirants.

Alleging 'tender-fixing', some of the contractors who were hopeful of getting the contract this year said, "As per the rule, every year new contractors should be appointed. But, the same old contractors are learnt to be appointed this year too, ignoring the rule."

"Back-scratching is rampant in the civil supplies department here. In order to show favour to those who are in good books of the officials, no advertisement was published in any newspaper. When they completed the tender process we couldn't even get an inkling of it," alleged Tapan Pradhan, an aspirant.



Echoing the same, a local leader Rashmi Ranjan Sahu said such irregularities in the department were also reported in the past. There is a well-knit nexus between some employees of the department and the old contractors. These employees are showing undue favours to their favourite contractors, keeping aside the standing rule."

In this regard, Sudhir Ranjan

PADDY PROCUREMENT

Farmers file plaint in NHRC over unpaid dues

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, June 29: As many as 11 farmers have lodged a complaint in the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) over non-payment of ₹11 lakh dues towards paddy procurement in kharif season at Uchhkapatamandi under Bamra block in this district, Monday.

The farmers have alleged that they are yet to receive their payment towards sale of paddy at the procurement centre in last kharif season. A farmer leader Joga Bihari Parida, convener of a farmers' outfit Jay Kishan Adima Krushak Sangathan has filed the petition on behalf of the farmers in the national rights body.

According to the petition, the Food Supply and Consumer Welfare department procured paddy from the farmers of Uchhkapatamandi



through a women's self-help group in the mandi during the last kharif season.

Parida alleged that it has been over a year but 11 farmers are yet to be paid ₹11,94,287 lakh towards payment for 639.34 quintals of

paddy procured from them in the mandi. The concerned farmers have repeatedly lodged complaints with the local administration and the district food and civil supplies department but their pleas are yet to be addressed, he said.

The farmers have sold their paddy to the food and civil supplies department through an SHG and have valid documents in possession. The food and civil supplies department is required to clear the dues of the farmers through the concerned agency, he said.

However, neither the food and civil supplies department nor the district administration is lending a sympathetic ear to the pleadings of the farmers, he said. As a result, the farmers are finding it hard to manage their families and carry out cultivation works due to lack of money.

The farmer leader and the victim farmers have demanded immediate payback of their outstanding dues and action against the concerned agency and the concerned officials for harassment of the farmers.

Contractors (L-2 contractors) supply around 1,00,000 quintals of rice and wheat from several godowns of the civil supplies department to the dealers

As per the government rule, the department should publish the tender for appointment of contractors in two Odia dailies and an English daily. But, this year no advertisement in this regard was published, nor was any notice issued. The advertisement inviting tenders was issued through online, resulting in many aspirants not being able to participate in the process. The online advertisement was published May 13, 2021 and

the bids were opened June 23, 2021. Even as the rule debar the old contractors and their family members from participating in L-2, handling, miller and MDM tenders, the eight contractors who are said to receive the contract are the old contractors. They have not even tendered their resignations.

"If there are rules regarding appointment of contractors, how are the old contractors getting the contracts," some aspirants asked.

When contacted, district assistant civil supply officer Srinivas Mishra termed the allegation of "tender-fixing" as baseless. "All the government rules were followed. The advertisement matter was also given to the district information and public relations officer for publication. But we don't know in which papers they were published. Similarly, the tenders have also been awarded to new contractors," he added.

AWARENESS RALLY



ASHA workers and villagers taking out an awareness rally on social ostracisation of Covid affected persons at Udepur under Bheden block in Bargarh district, Tuesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

R Udaygiri, June 29: Seeing their mango trees laden with fruits, the farmers of Mohana, R Udaygiri and Nuagarh blocks in Gajapati district were hopeful of a bumper harvest and good profits. They do have bumper harvest this year but their hope of earning profits has dashed to the ground.

The farmers in distress alleged that the lockdown and shutdown restrictions have shattered their hopes of good earning and left them with no option but going for distress sale. "Had there been proper marketing facilities, or at least a cold storage, we would have never faced this precarious situation," they rued.

According to a source, there are several organisations in the district that have been asked to buy mangoes from the farmers. But these organisations haven't been procuring the yields on the alibi of lack of ancillary facilities. As a result, farmers with heaps of mangoes along the roadside waiting for customers here is a common sight.

Mohana, R Udaygiri and Nuagarh blocks are famous for the varieties of mangoes harvested there. There are over 10,000 mango



trees in Akili, Shikuliipadar, Pindiki and Malasapadar areas of Mohana block, Rumunda and Kankoda areas of R Udaygiri block and Atarsingh, Ghodakona and Liaba areas of Nuagarh block. According to the farmers, this year's yield has crossed the yields of last two years. "With a hope of earning some profits, we labored hard in orchards. But due to the ongoing pandemic-induced lockdown and shutdown restrictions we are not getting proper market facilities for our yields," rued some farmers.

According to some others, at a time when mangoes are being sold for ₹50 or so a kilogram in several markets in the state, they are forced to sell mangoes at ₹10-20 a kilogram.

"Five years ago, the mangoes from here were exported to other states including national capital Delhi with the help of Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS). It was possible because of the efforts of the then district Collector Manasi Nimal. Then we the mango farmers were able to earn some profits. With her transfer, we lost the encouragement as well as the market facility," said some farmers remembering the period wistfully.

The farmers said since traders are not able to come to their areas due to ongoing lockdown and shutdown restrictions and due to the fear of mangoes getting damaged, they are forced to sell their yields at throw-away prices alongside the roads.

"Besides the absence of market linkage, we don't have cold storage facility either. We grow not only mangoes but also vegetables. At times, we are also forced to resort to distress sale of vegetables. Had there been a cold storage in our locality, we could have preserved our produce till the situation improves," they added.

According to a source, a Parlakhemundi based organisation named Debagiri Producer has the permission to buy mangoes from the farmers. It has been five years since it received the permission. But this organisation has never purchased mangoes from the farmers, not even for a day.

Similarly, Taptapani Farmers Producer Company Limited located at Mohana has the license to buy mangoes from the farmers. The employees of the company when contacted said they are not able to procure the fruits due to infrastructure issues.

Despite the fact that the king of fruits grown in Mohana, R Udaygiri and Nuagarh areas are high in demand in other states, the farmers are facing distress sale. The local residents urged the administration to come to rescue of these farmers and find a way out to end the problem.

Delta+ scare: UP tightens curbs

ACCORDING TO EXPERTS, THIS VARIANT IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN BEFORE

AGENCIES

Lucknow, June 29: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath Tuesday issued a fresh set of guidelines for Team 9 – the core group that works for Covid management in Uttar Pradesh – for dealing with patients infected with the new 'Delta+' variant of the coronavirus.

The Chief Minister said: "We have to be very careful. All necessary steps should be taken as per the advice of experts without delay. The condition of the state is getting better every day in view of the corona pandemic. It is time to exercise extra vigilance and caution. A little carelessness can lead to a big problem."

According to the government spokesman, 2,37,783 tests were done in the last 24 hours. In the same period, 174 new cases have been reported and 254 people have recovered and discharged.

The daily positivity rate has come down to less than 0.1 per cent, while the recovery rate is improving from 98.5 per cent. At present, the total active cases have come down to 2,946 while 1,810 people are being treated in home isolation. So far, more than 5.75 crore Covid tests have been done in the state.

The genome sequencing facility is also being increased in the



state for in-depth study and testing of Corona virus. In the last 550 samples tested, Delta+ variant of the coronavirus was not confirmed in any of the specimen at IGIB, New Delhi.

Eighty per cent of the samples were found to be of the delta variant of the second wave of Covid. In collaboration with BHU Varanasi, KGMU Lucknow, and CDRI, IGIB, Delhi, the virus genome testing process is being further accelerated. This study report will be helpful in management and avoiding the Delta+ variant. The Chief Minister underlined that vaccination is the best protection cover to prevent Covid-19.

11 NEW LABS SOON

Uttar Pradesh will soon get 11 new labs to conduct RT-PCR tests for Covid. With this, 45 out of 75 districts in the state will now have an RT-PCR Lab. Officials at the medical education department said that efforts were on to develop labs in the remaining 30 districts as well.

So far more than 3.10 crore vaccine doses have been administered in the state. More than 44 lakh people have received both doses of the vaccine.

Rapid work is going on for self-reliance in the field of oxygen generation also. With the oxygen plants at Hapur, Siddhartha Nagar, and Kushinagar which became functional Monday, 121 plants have become functional so far. The process of establishing the remaining under-construction plants will be completed soon. The state government's '102' and '108' emergency ambulance services that have been serving as 'frontline warriors' to ensure 24x7 smooth and timely admission of patients across the state have geared up to protect children against a probable third Covid-19 wave.

The vehicles of '108', '102' fleet and 137 Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance services have been pressed into service by the state government which are equipped with oxygen cylinders and 'ALS', which includes both oxygen cylinders and ventilators.

The vehicles of '108', '102' and ALS ambulances have now been deployed in various districts in both rural and urban areas. The service can be availed by calling on '108' toll free number.

A 24-hour Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and a team of more than 23,000 people have been working day and night as part of the ambulance services.

UP sugar mills causing huge air pollution: NGT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Uttar Pradesh / New Delhi, June 29: Noting that huge air pollution is caused by sugar mills at various locations in Uttar Pradesh resulting in unchecked degradation of environment, the National Green Tribunal has directed the UP pollution control board (UPPCB) to undertake special drive for remedial measures.

A bench headed by NGT Chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel asked the UPPCB to give an action taken report to the Oversight Committee constituted by NGT which is headed by Justice SVS Rathore, former Judge of the Allahabad High Court.

The tribunal was hearing a plea filed by UP resident Saroj Kumar Mishra alleging violation of environmental norms by a sugar mill at Banda Road, Powayan in Shahjahanpur.

The plea stated that ash generated from the mill and the polluted air are resulting in diseases in the area.

"The pollution is also affecting the students of Didar Singh Rana School, Takiya Road, Powayan, Shahjahanpur. The mill is required to install requisite equipments including filters to



stop pollution," the plea said. Taking note of a report filed by UPPCB on the plea, the NGT said, "The State PCB may ensure that requisite air control device is installed in the interest of health of the students in the adjoining school.

"It is a matter of common knowledge that huge air pollution is caused by such units at various locations in the State of UP resulting in unchecked air pollution beyond the prescribed norms in violation of the Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981.

"There is thus need for a special drive by the State PCB to check the status of air pollution being caused by such units throughout the State and take remedial measures," the bench said.

The NGT said that if the Oversight Committee considers that any further direction is required, the Committee may give its recommendations to this Tribunal. The Registry may list the report of the Oversight Committee, if and when received, it said.

Warm home-stays favourite destination

HIMACHAL'S RURAL HOME-STAY CONCEPT, WHICH STARTED IN 2008, HAS VIRTUALLY GONE VIRAL

AGENCIES

Shimla, June 29: After a long period of lockdown to curb the spread of coronavirus, the Himachal Pradesh government has permitted Home-Stay to open their doors for tourists.

Members of the hospitality industry say amidst the scare of a possible Covid-19 third wave, tourists coming to the hill state prefer a home away from home by booking into home-stays.

The state government July 15, 2008, notified a scheme named the Himachal Pradesh Home Stay Scheme 2008.

At present, 1,657 home-stay units have been registered in the state. Out of these, Shimla district has 335 units. The Kullu-Manali region has 327, followed by Kangra 268, Lahaul-Spiti 258 while Chamba district has 106.

Under the scheme, the locals have converted their houses or cottages into a home-stay unit and are making available part of the residential accommodation, up to three rooms, for the stay of a tourist as a guest.

Hospitality industry experts admit that an upsurge in the popularity of home-stays has provided newer economic opportunities to remote communities, who previously banked only on growing crops and fruits, besides rearing livestock.

With increasing vaccination and easing of restrictions in many states, travel is picking up. The state is witnessing a steady rise in bookings over the past two weeks for the July to September quarter, say experts. However, travellers have become more cautious and prefer far-off Himachali houses with open spaces that allow insights into the life, culture, and traditions of the mountains. Away from Shimla town, tourists prefer to spend their holidays in secluded apple orchards home-stay spots like in Thanedar, Kotgarh, Narkanda and Fagu.

There is a local tradition to welcome the guests at homes with a garland of dry fruits and a round Kinnauri cap with a green flap. It's also known for legally brewing two popular drinks, 'angoori' and 'ghanti'. While the former is made from distinctively flavoured black grapes grown in high altitudes, the latter is made from locally grown apples and apricots.

At present, 1,657 home-stay units have been registered in the state. Out of these, Shimla district has 335 units. The Kullu-Manali region has 327, followed by Kangra 268, Lahaul-Spiti 258 while Chamba district has 106

Home-stays, still an unstructured segment in the state, are making a dent in the tourism market. A room at a home-stay is available for between ₹1,800 and ₹2,500 a night, while a room in a luxury resort costs between ₹15,000 and ₹20,000 a night.

Officials of the Tourism Department say that the rural home-stays are definitely attracting a class of tourists who want to stay away from five-star culture to which they are accustomed to at home.

"This is not only giving a boost to eco-tourism but also helps decongest the popular tourist destinations. Of course, the home-stay initiative is providing employment opportunities to the local people, thus strengthening the rural economy," he said.

Tourism, which plays an important role in revenue generation and livelihood, was hit the worst due to the lockdown. It saw a contraction of 81.33 per cent in 2020.

TRIP TO HIMACHAL



WELCOME PRESIDENT



Artists perform cultural dance on the arrival of President Ram Nath Kovind near Vidhan Bhawan in Lucknow. President Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone of a memorial to Dr B R Ambedkar Tuesday and stressed that equality is a prerequisite for the all-round development of society

Bipin Rawat visits forward areas along LAC

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Himachal Pradesh/ Lucknow, June 29: Chief of Defence Staff of the armed forces, General Bipin Rawat, Tuesday visited the forward areas along the Line of Actual Control with China in the central sector in Himachal Pradesh.

On arrival at the forward most post in the Sumdoh sub-sector, the Chief of Defence Staff was briefed on the operational preparedness of the forces towards safeguarding the territorial integrity of the nation. He interacted extensively with the Indian Army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police and General Reserve Engineer Force personnel deployed in the remote areas and appreciated their state of high morale. He en-



couraged all ranks to keep up the high state of alertness and professionalism displayed by them.

Later in the day, General Rawat visited the headquarters of the

Western Command of the Indian Army at Chandimandir, where he reviewed the operational situation along the western borders.

The CDS commended the for-

mation for their efforts to ensure force preservation and at the same time stepping forward to provide support in terms of establishing Covid hospitals in Chandigarh, Patiala and Faridabad, providing paramedical staff in aid of civil hospitals, assistance in vaccination of common citizens and revitalising oxygen plants at various places in the nation's fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

He stressed upon the need to focus on training hard and remaining vigilant to thwart the nefarious designs of our adversaries. He emphasised that all ranks must keep themselves abreast with the latest trends in information technology, emerging cyber threats and counter measures.

Himachal advocates cultivation of medicinal plants

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, June 29: With the surge in demand for natural products, Himachal Pradesh, bestowed with rich biological diversity, has been advocating the cultivation of medicinal plants to supplement farmers' income who largely hold small landholdings, officials said.

State's Medicinal Plants Board under the Ayush Department has been encouraging farmers to cultivate them to supplement their incomes. For this, the state is providing financial assistance for the cultivation of medicinal plants under the National Ayush Mission.

Various farmer clusters have been prepared for this purpose. To get the benefit of financial assistance, a cluster must have at least two hectares of land. Each cluster comprises three adjoining vil-

lages in a 15-km radius. Mortgaged land can also be used for the cultivation of medicinal plants.

As many as 318 farmers have been provided a financial assistance of ₹99.68 lakh for the cultivation of medicinal plants from January 2018.

The National Ayush Mission in 2019-20 has provided a financial assistance of ₹128.94 lakh for medicinal plants component in the state. Out of this, ₹54.44 lakh has been sanctioned for the cultivation of 'atis', 'kutki', 'kuth', 'shatavari', stevia and 'sarpagandha'.

The state has set up herbal gardens in Joginder Nagar in Mandi district, Neri in Hamirpur district, Rohru in Shimla district and Jungle Jhalera in Bilaspur district.

Different types of medicinal plants, catering to different agro-climatic zones, are being grown



GREAT INITIATIVE

THE STATE IS PROVIDING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR THE CULTIVATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS UNDER THE NATIONAL AYUSH MISSION

VARIOUS FARMER CLUSTERS HAVE BEEN PREPARED FOR THIS PURPOSE

at the Research Institute in Indian Systems of Medicine in Joginder Nagar. This centre is promoting the cultivation and conservation of medicinal plants in six neighbouring northern states – Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Himachal Pradesh.

To generate awareness among the public, plantation drive 'Charak

Vatika' was carried out by the Ayush Department. Under this drive Charak Vatikas were established in 1,167 ayurvedic institutions with the planting of 11,526 plants. The phase-II of Charak Vatika started June 7.

The state with diverse climatic conditions is home to 640 species of medicinal plants, distributed in the four agro-climatic zones. Tribal districts like Kinnaur, Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and a few pockets in Kangra and Shimla districts, located at an altitude of over 2,500 metres, produce enormously medicinal plants.

Some of these include 'patis', 'batsnabi', 'atis', 'tragen', 'kirmala', 'ratanjot', 'kala jeera', 'kesar', 'somalata', 'jangli heeng', 'charma', 'khursani ajwain', 'pushkar mul', 'hauver', 'dhop', 'dhanni', 'nechni', 'neri', 'kejavo' and 'buranshi'.

Mobile app for madrasa students

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, June 29: The Uttar Pradesh government has announced that it will develop a new mobile application for the Madrasa Board for teaching and other activities related to the madrasas in the state.

A government spokesperson said over 2.5 lakh students of the UP Madrasa Board will now study through the mobile application from the new session. The official said a proposal to develop the mobile app has been sent to the Board.

"After the declaration of the board exam results, work on the mobile app preparation will be carried out," he said. He added that the Board will make all possible efforts and arrangements so that students can do their studies on the

A government spokesperson said over 2.5 lakh students of the UP Madrasa Board will now study through the mobile application from the new session



mobile app from the new session. "The Board was planning to start online education of children from this session itself by developing a mobile app. However, that was not possible due to the Covid situation. But now the students will be able to study on the mobile app from the upcoming new session," said the official.

of the day quote

I recommend that vaccine stocks not lifted by private hospitals be procured and supplied for implementation of vaccination drive through government channels

Y S JAGAN MOHAN REDDY | AP CM

The BSP is not against setting up of any centre in the name of highly venerable Baba Saheb, but doing all this now for the sake of electoral interest is a gross deception

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

The Entrepreneurship Mindset Curriculum (EMC) is not a mere scheme or initiative but an indispensable subject in every Delhi school and will have a long-term impact

MANISH SIDODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Ch'garh demands 1cr vax doses

New June: Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging him to provide at least 1 crore doses of corona vaccines in the month of July. In his letter, the Chief Minister said, "At present only 9,98,810 doses of corona vaccines are left in the state which is sufficient for only 3 days."

12 Covid patients die within 24 hrs

Guwahati: Twelve Covid-19 patients have died at the state-run Gauhati Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) during the last 24 hours amidst allegations of doctors on duty being not present at night. Out of the 12 patients, nine were admitted to the ICU and three in the ward and the oxygen saturation level of all the deceased were below 90 per cent, GMCH Superintendent Abhijit Sarma said Tuesday. The other Covid patients and the family members of the deceased have alleged that doctors on night duty are not usually present. Health Minister Keshab Mahanta had visited the hospital late last night to review the situation and has called for a meeting Tuesday evening at the GMCH to discuss the matter with the senior doctors.

IJTC launched

New Delhi: In the run-up to UN climate summit named COP 26, New Delhi-based International Forum for Environment, Sustainability and Technology (IForest) Tuesday launched its India Just Transition Centre (IJTC). Its inaugural virtual session was attended, among others, by MPs Jairam Ramesh and Jayant Sinha and Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Coal, Vinod Kumar Tewari. At the event a new report titled 'Five Rs: A cross-sectoral landscape of Just Transition in India' was also released.

Liquor seized

Chandigarh: Haryana Police Tuesday confiscated a consignment of 1,060 cartons (12,720 bottles) of Indian Made Foreign Liquor (IMFL) from a container truck in Rewari which was being allegedly smuggled on a rice invoice from Chandigarh to Gujarat. The truck driver was arrested in this connection and was being questioned, a Haryana Police spokesperson said here. He said that a police party during patrolling received a tip-off about a container truck bearing Maharashtra registration number carrying a huge consignment of illicit liquor.



Violence continues to snatch away families from us, leaving behind pain and wounds which are irreparable

MEHBOOBA MUFTI | PDP PRESIDENT

KEJRI'S MISSION PUNJAB

Eyeing Punjab Assembly elections, slated for March next year, AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal Tuesday announced to provide 300 units of free power to every household in the state



TWITTER FACES MORE HEAT

Twitter had Monday removed the wrong map that showed the Union Territories of Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir outside India, following an uproar. Earlier, Twitter had shown Leh as part of China

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Lucknow, June 29: In more trouble for Twitter, an FIR was lodged in Uttar Pradesh against two senior officials of its India office over the social media platform putting up a distorted map of the country, while the Madhya Pradesh government said it will also initiate legal action against the microblogging giant over the issue.

The Delhi Police said it has registered a case against Twitter on a complaint by the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) for allegedly allowing access to child sexual abuse material on the social media platform.

It is the latest in the run-ins between Twitter and Indian authorities. While the social media giant is mired in a row with the central government over not following the new IT rules, Twitter India MD Manish Maheshwari was recently summoned by Ghaziabad police in UP in a probe into an objectionable video posted in connection with an assault on an elderly Muslim man.

The FIR in the wrong map issue was lodged at the Khurja Nagar police station in Bulandshahr district of Uttar Pradesh Monday evening against Maheshwari and News Partnerships Head Amrita Tripathi under Indian Penal Code section 505 (2) (public mis-

chief) based on a complaint by an office-bearer of right wing outfit Bajrang Dal.

"The world map does not show Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir as parts of India. This is not a coincidence. This act has hurt the sentiments of Indians, including me," Bajrang Dal's western UP convener Praveen Bhati said in the complaint.

Charges under Information Technology Act section 74 (publication for fraudulent purpose) have also been invoked in the case, according to the FIR.

Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra said he has directed the state's Director General of Police (DGP) Vivek Johri to investigate the matter related to distorted map and take legal action in this direction.

"These issues cannot be taken lightly. The governments at the Centre and the state have taken it seriously," he said in a statement posted on Twitter.

Mishra said such incidents of speaking against or doing something against the country are on the rise. In Delhi, the police have registered an FIR against Twitter under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the IT Act for allegedly allowing access to child pornography on the microblogging platform on a complaint by the NCPCR. This comes days after the NCPCR, the country's



apex child rights body, asked Deputy Commissioner of Police (Cyber Cell) Anesh Roy to explain why no action had been taken against In its letter, the NCPCR had asked the Delhi Police to book Twitter in the wake of the findings of its recent inquiry in which it had found that child sexual abuse material (CSAM) was easily available on the platform.

"Acting on a complaint received from the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights regarding the availability of child sexual abuse and child pornographic material on Twitter in the form of various accounts and links, an FIR under relevant sections of IPC, IT Act and POCSO Act has been registered by the Cyber Crime Unit, and investigation has been

taken up," Delhi Police Public Relations Officer Chimmoj Biswal said. The complaint was against Twitter Inc and Twitter Communication India Private Ltd, the police said.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka High Court, which was hearing Maheshwari's plea for relief in the Ghaziabad case, Tuesday adjourned to matter till July 5 after the Uttar Pradesh police urged it to defer the hearing.

Maheshwari, who lives in Bangalore in Karnataka, was issued notice by the Ghaziabad Police asking him to report at its Loni Border police station on June 24 to get his statement recorded in the case. The court had restrained the Ghaziabad police from initiating any coercive action against

him. In a video clip, which surfaced on social media June 14, the elderly Muslim man, Abdul Shamad Saifi, alleged he was thrashed by some young men and asked to chant 'Jai Shri Ram'. The Ghaziabad Police had June 15 lodged an FIR against Twitter Inc, Twitter Communications India, news website The Wire, journalists Mohammad Zubair and Rana Ayyub, Congress' Salman Nizami, Masqoor Usmani, Dr Sama Mohammad and writer Saba Naqvi for sharing the clip.

The police, which had ruled out communal angle in the incident, claimed the video was shared to cause communal unrest.

The government has confronted the US digital giant over deliberate defiance and failure to comply with the country's new IT rules, despite repeated reminders.

Notably, the microblogging platform has lost its legal shield as an intermediary in India, becoming liable for users posting any unlawful content. In October last year, Twitter came under heavy criticism and faced backlash after its geotagging feature displayed "Jammu & Kashmir, People's Republic of China" in a live broadcast from Leh's Hall of Fame, a war memorial for fallen soldiers in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

India had issued a stern warning to Twitter that time, making it clear that any disrespect of the country's sovereignty and integrity is totally unacceptable.

Compliance with new IT rules must: Parl panel to Facebook, Google

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: Facebook and Google representatives Tuesday deposed before the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology over the issue of social media misuse and safeguarding citizens' rights, with sources saying they were told to comply with the new IT rules, government instructions and court orders.

The panel, chaired by Congress MP Shashi Tharoor, had asked them to appear in-person at the parliament secretariat here.

The sources also said the representatives were conveyed that there are loopholes in their existing data protection and privacy policy mechanism, and that they need to put in place stringent safeguards to protect data privacy and data security of their users.

The agenda of the parliamentary panel meeting was to safeguard citizens' rights and prevent the misuse of social/online news media platforms.

The sources said that Tharoor expressed concern about the privacy of women users of social media platforms. He said he has also received complaints from several women MPs in this regard. Earlier, Facebook representatives had informed the parliamentary panel that their company policy does not allow their officials to attend in-person meetings because of their Covid-related protocol.

DAILY GRIND



Workers carry bricks on bicycles at Chitnan village of Vatora Island in Howrah

PTI PHOTO

7K women molested in WB post-poll violence

CENTRE PROMISED TO TAKE ACTION ON THE REPORT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, June 29: The Centre Tuesday promised to take action on the report of a fact-finding team which claimed that there were 15,000 incidents of post-poll violence in West Bengal in which 25 people were killed and 7,000 women were molested.

According to Union Minister of State for Home Kishan Reddy, the report of the civil society group - Call for Justice - headed by former

Chief Justice of Sikkim High Court Justice (Retd) Permod Kohli stated that the magnitude and reach of the post-poll violence touched many villages and towns all across West Bengal simultaneously beginning the night of May 2 when the results of the assembly elections were declared.

"This is a clear indication that most of the incidents are not sporadic but premeditated, organised and conspiratorial," the report stated.

The five-member team included two retired IAS and one IPS officers. "The Home Ministry will study the report and will try to implement its recommendations," Reddy told reporters after the group submitted it to him.

The report was prepared after the five-member team visited West Bengal and met a cross section of people there.

Citing the report, Reddy said 16 districts of the state were affected by the post-poll violence.

DEALING WITH EMERGING CHALLENGES

India to come out with new policy soon

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: Expeditious framing of a broad-based policy to deal with emerging security threats and futuristic challenges facing the country was a major focus of a meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi held with Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval Tuesday, people familiar with the development said.

The meeting took place two days after explosives-laden drones were used to carry out an attack on the Jammu Air Force station in the first such instance of suspected Pakistan-based terrorists deploying unmanned aerial vehicles to strike at vital installations.

"The government is coming out with a policy to collectively deal with the emerging challenges. It was decided to expedite the framing of the policy," one of the persons cited above said after the meeting. Various ministries and departments are working on the policy to effectively counter the new and emerging non-traditional security challenges facing the country. The defence ministry and the three services will play a leading role in the formulation of the policy as well as in its implementation by coordinating with all the leading

NIA TO PROBE DRONE ATTACK

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Tuesday took over the charge of investigation into the recent drone attack on the Indian Force station located at the Jammu airport, an official said. The decision to hand over the probe into the first-of-its-kind terror attack at the Indian Air Force station in the early hours of Sunday was taken by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

stakeholders and security agencies. It has also been learnt that the three forces are being told to adequately focus on bridging the gaps in effectively dealing with new-age challenges such as drone attacks and go for the procurement of the necessary hardware to contain those. The meeting also discussed various other aspects, including equipping the security forces with modern equipment and involving more youngsters, start-ups and the strategic community in the field.

The Army has already been working on incorporating artificial intelligence, cognitive sciences, robotics, drones as part of the efforts to deal with future challenges.

Lightning strikes claim 2K lives annually: Experts

INDIA HAS WITNESSED AN INCREASING DEATH TOLL AND DAMAGE DUE TO LIGHTNING BOLTS OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, June 29: Thunderstorm, accompanied by lightning strikes, is the single-biggest natural killer in the country causing more than 2,000 deaths each year, according to the experts from the IMD and the NDMA.

India has witnessed an increasing death toll and damages due to lightning bolts over the past few years, said Rajendra Singh, Member, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), while addressing a national-level workshop on the issue organised by the Indian Meteorological Society, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology and National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting. "Despite improved understanding,

monitoring and prediction capabilities brought about by scientific and technological progress, lightning and thunderstorms still cause widespread loss of life and property every year in the country," said Singh.

Termining lightning hits as "a serious threat", Mrutyunjay Mohapatra, the Director-General of India Meteorological Department (IMD), said this happens primarily due to increased exposure of people, especially farmers, fishermen and labourers who remain outdoors for reasons of livelihood.

"Among the reasons identified by the experts is a communication gap which does not result in last mile connectivity," said Mohapatra.

Addressing disaster experts and managers from Maharashtra,



Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and other states, Singh said that loss of human lives and property due to lightning

strikes is significantly higher, and it is more than the number of people killed in tornadoes or hurricanes globally. With the joint initiative of

scientists from the IMD, IITM and NCMRWF, a Lightning Warning System was developed in 2018, having a location-specific forecast of up to 48 hours about the occurrence of thunderstorms, lightning strikes, squalls, gusty winds or hailstorms.

Besides, the IMD has around 30 radars around the country which provide weather updates every 10 minutes along with the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) satellites relaying information about convective clouds every 15 minutes from INSAT-3DR, said Mohapatra.

The country is now capable of having 'real-time' information about lightning updated every 5 minutes to alert the people about the potential threats. The models developed by the Ministry of Earth Sciences

are very definite and utilised by forecasters around the country to provide detailed information for each district in the country every three hours.

Mohapatra said that the Damini App provides location specific data which remains valid for half-an-hour through 1,085 weather stations around the country, which shall be enhanced to reach out and cover every block and sub-blocks right up to the village panchayat level.

He said that economic losses occur with cultivated fields and buildings, infrastructure like communication networks, power plants and so on, which are often destroyed by lightning strikes, and occasionally even igniting potentially devastating wildfires.

international



I filed a criminal complaint today with the Supreme Court because of the serious accusation that the president took no action after being notified of a gigantic corruption scheme at the health ministry

USD 41 MILLION ADDITIONAL COVID ASSISTANCE TO INDIA The US has announced an additional USD 41 million assistance to help India and strengthen the country's preparedness for future emergencies, taking the total aid to more than USD 200 million



of the day quote

We also know that people and businesses need certainty, so we want every step to be irreversible. Make no mistake, the restrictions on our freedoms must come to an end. July 19 remains our target date

We have made and announced the decisions we should have made, and now it is the turn of the parties (in Vienna talks) to make their own decisions

If Russia continues to attack us, or to act as it did with the SolarWind attacks, the intrusions into our elections and the aggression against Navalny, then we will respond

SAJID JAVID | SECRETARY OF STATE, UK

SHORT TAKES

Russia logs record daily Covid deaths

Moscow: Russia Tuesday recorded its highest daily death count since the outbreak of the pandemic as the country grapples with a spike in infections spurred by the highly contagious Delta variant. An official government tally reported 652 Coronavirus fatalities over the past 24 hours, topping a record that was set in December last year. A record-high number of daily deaths - 119 - was also reported in Russia's second city Saint Petersburg that is due to host a Euro 2020 quarterfinal Friday.

Toll from condo collapse reaches 11

Miami: The death toll from the collapse of a residential building in Surfside, the US state of Florida has increased to 11, Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava said. During a news conference Monday evening, Cava said that the number of people accounted for now stands at 136, and that rescuers are still searching for 150 people who remain unaccounted for, reports Xinhua news agency. The numbers are "very fluid and they will change", she said.

Rocket fire targets US base in Syria

Damascus: Rocket fire targeted a US military base in Syria's eastern province of Deir al-Zour, state media reported Tuesday. The base was targeted Monday evening and is located in the al-Omar oil field in the eastern countryside of Deir al-Zour, Xinhua news agency quoted the state media report as saying, without providing further details. Meanwhile, the UK-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights watchdog group said the attack caused damage and burned cars in the base, without any mention of casualties.

Ethiopia announces unilateral ceasefire

Addis Ababa: The Ethiopian government has announced a unilateral ceasefire in the country's conflict-hit Tigray state. The Ethiopian government, in a statement published late Monday night by state-affiliated Fana Broadcasting Corporate (FBC), said the move followed a request by the Tigray regional state interim administration. The unilateral ceasefire is said to facilitate humanitarian assistance, peaceful livelihood in the region as well as agriculture activities amid the approaching rainy season.

Record heat blasts western Canada

TEMPERATURES HAVE SOARED WELL ABOVE SEASONAL AVERAGES FROM THE US STATE OF OREGON TO CANADA'S ARCTIC TERRITORIES, WITH FORECASTERS WARNING OF WORSE TO COME

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Ottawa, June 29: Canada braced Monday for its highest ever temperature as the country's west and swathes of the United States baked in an unprecedented heat wave, forcing schools and Covid-19 vaccination clinics to close and the postponement of an Olympic athletics qualifying event. The village of Lytton in British Columbia already broke the record for Canada's all-time high, with a



temperature of 116 Fahrenheit (46.6 degrees Celsius) Sunday.

"It's a desert heat - very dry and hot," David Phillips, a senior climatologist for Environment Canada, told AFP. "We are the second coldest country in the world and the snowiest," he said. "We often see cold snaps and blizzards but not often do we talk about hot weather like this." Because of climate change, record-setting temperatures are becoming more frequent. Globally, the decade to 2019 was the hottest recorded, and the five hottest years

have all occurred within the last five years. Oregon's biggest city, Portland, hit 114 F Monday, the US National Weather Service (NWS) said, breaking back-to-back records set over the weekend. Across the border in Canada, stores sold out of portable air conditioners and fans, while cities opened emergency cooling centers and outreach workers handed out bottles of water and hats as more than 160 local heat records were set, including in the ski resort town of Whistler.

Court denies bid by ousted Suu Kyi to disqualify testimony

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nay Pyi Taw, June 29: Myanmar's ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi suffered a legal setback Tuesday when a judge denied her lawyers' motion to disqualify prosecution testimony against her on a sedition charge, her defense team said. The court, however, said it would allow the issue to be referred to the High Court and would suspend testimony until a ruling is issued. Ousted President Win Myint and the former mayor of Naypyitaw, Myo Aung, her close political allies, are co-defendants in the charge. The court will continue to hear prosecution testimony on other charges Suu Kyi faces: that she illegally imported walkie-talkies for her bodyguards' use and used those radios without a license, and violated Covid-19 pandemic restrictions on two occasions during the 2020 election campaign. Suu Kyi went on trial June 14 in a closed court in Naypyitaw, the capital. The ruling military junta is widely seen as using the charges to discredit her and consolidate its control. Sessions are being held weekly Mondays and Tuesdays. Suu Kyi who has not been allowed a public appearance since her arrest, passed a message through her lawyers for the public to stay united during such times.

G20 Foreign Mins' first meet after pandemic

The meet will include debate on how to improve cooperation on an array of issues including global health, the climate emergency and international trade

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Matera, June 29: With the pandemic providing painful lessons on how interconnected the world is, ministers from nations accounting for more than half the world's population were meeting in Italy Tuesday to explore how to better cooperate, including on vaccines and climate change efforts.



Italian Foreign Minister Luigi Di Maio cited both as areas where it's imperative that countries pull together. He opened the appointment, attended by Foreign Ministers and development ministers from the Group of 20. Together the G-20 nations account for some 80% of the world's GDP. "In an interconnected world, multilateralism and international cooperation are the only effective instruments in facing global challenges," Di Maio said. "We have had an example of that with the vaccines." Blinken took the occasion to tout US contributions to COVAX,

the UN-backed program to get vaccines to needy nations, which include around 500 million Pfizer doses and 80 million other doses. While some wealthier countries are struggling to convince ever more segments of their populations to be vaccinated against the illness that has claimed nearly 4 million lives worldwide in confirmed death tallies, poorer nations, especially in Africa, are desperate to receive vaccine supplies, with only a tiny fraction of their people having access so far to the injections. Upon arrival for the talks, Germany's foreign minister sig-

naled urgency on the vaccine front. "I think the main thing now is to quickly create alternatives so that countries, regions like Africa, for example, are able to be supplied with more vaccine more quickly," Minister Heiko Maas told AP. The decision earlier this year by US President Joe Biden's administration to return to the climate change fight and help lead it has heartened advocates pressing for urgent tackling of climate change threats. Last year, under the then Trump administration, the United States became the only country to leave the 2015 agreement.

Covid catastrophe in Indonesia



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, June 29: Indonesia needs to urgently increase medical care, testing and vaccinations as the number of new infections in the country has rapidly increased and left it "on the edge of a Covid-19 catastrophe," the Red Cross said Tuesday. The group said its Coronavirus hospital in Bogor, outside of Jakarta, was "overflowing" and emergency tents had been set up to be able to house more patients. It was a similar scene at other hospitals near the capital, including in at the Bekasi city hospital that had 90% of its beds filled. "We are seeing record number

of infections, but every statistic is a person who is suffering, grieving or struggling to support the people they love," Sudirman Said, secretary general of Indonesian Red Cross, said in a statement. "Our medical teams are providing lifesaving care, with hospitals full to the brim and oxygen supplies critically low." The surge in Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous nation, is being blamed in part on the delta variant of the virus, which was first spotted in India and is thought to be more contagious. Indonesia reported more than 20,600 new cases Monday and more than 400 deaths. Indonesia has seen more than 2.1 million cases since the pandemic began and more than 57,500 deaths, both the most in Southeast Asia. Less than 5% of adults in the nation of 270 million people have been fully vaccinated. The Red Cross called for global action so countries like Indonesia can get the vaccines they need.

CENTENARY CELEBRATION



Performers rally around the Red Flag during a show commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China at the National Stadium in Beijing, China

SAVING AMAZON: LUNGS OF EARTH

Brazil to redeploy troops to fight deforestation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Brasilia, June 29: President Jair Bolsonaro signed a decree Monday to dispatch Brazilian soldiers to the Amazon in a bid to curb surging deforestation, just two months after withdrawing troops from the region and days after his Environment Minister resigned. The decree published in the country's official gazette said soldiers would go to the states of Para, Amazonas, Mato Grosso and Rondonia through the end of August. It didn't provide details about the number of troops to be deployed nor the cost of the operation. Vice-President Hamilton Mourao told reporters earlier this month that the deployment could be ex-



tended beyond two months with the arrival of the dry season, when people burn forest to clear land. Amazon deforestation has been ticking upwards for several years, but surged since the 2018 election of Bolsonaro, who repeatedly called for development of the rainforest.

The destruction has elicited an international outcry and, more recently, an effort by US President Joe Biden's administration to urge Bolsonaro to get tough on illegal logging

protected areas or carried out without requisite authorization, according to data released this month by the MapBiomass Project, a network of nonprofits, universities and technology companies that studies Brazilian land use. Brazil's environmental regulator levied fines in just 5 per cent of these cases, the group found. The decision to deploy troops is partially meant to demonstrate the government's good intentions to the US, one of the officials added. June 23, Environment Minister Ricardo Salles announced his resignation, giving up his post amid sharp criticism of his tenure and two investigations into his actions involving allegedly illegal timber operations. He has denied all wrongdoing.

military was ill-prepared and had limited efficacy. In 2020, deforestation in Brazil's Amazon reached a level unseen since 2008, according to official data. And 98.9 per cent of deforestation had indications of illegality, either done near springs, in pro-

Biden taking bipartisan infra deal on the road

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, June 29: US President Joe Biden will look to sell voters on the economic benefits of the USD 973 billion infrastructure package while in Wisconsin Tuesday, hoping to boost the bipartisan agreement that is held together in large part by the promise of millions of new jobs. White House officials issued an internal memo that highlights how the largest investment in transportation, water systems and services in nearly a century would boost growth. The memo notes that the total package is four times the size of the infrastructure investment made a dozen years ago in response to the Great Recession and the biggest since Franklin D Roosevelt's New Deal in the 1930's.



It also emphasises an analysis suggesting that 90 per cent of the jobs generated by the spending could go to workers without college degrees, a key shift as a majority of net job gains before the pandemic went to college graduates. "This is a blue-collar blueprint to rebuild America," the memo says. The eight-page White House memo comes from Brian Deese, di-

rector of the National Economic Council, and senior adviser Anita Dumm. It indicates that the USD 110 billion for roads and bridges would help relieve traffic and congestion that costs the economy over USD 160 billion annually. The memo justifies the USD 48.5 billion planned for public transit by citing studies that link light rail and buses to increased earnings and employment for workers. It defends the USD 66 billion for repairs and upgrades for rail lines by saying that current delays and disruptions weigh on growth. The bipartisan agreement also would help nurture the market for electric vehicles, improve broadband access, repair water lines and create resilience against damage from extreme weather events.

UN EXPERT BACKS PROBE INTO IRAN'S 1988 KILLINGS

AGENCIES

Geneva, June 29: The UN investigator on human rights in Iran has called for an independent inquiry into allegations of state-ordered executions of thousands of political prisoners in 1988 and the role played by President-elect Ebrahim Raisi as Tehran deputy prosecutor. Javahid Rehman said that over the years his office has gathered testimonies and evidence. It was ready to share them if the United Nations Human Rights Council or other body sets up an impartial investigation. He said he was concerned at reports that some "mass graves" are

being destroyed as part of a continuing cover-up. A probe was in the interest of Iran and could bring closure to families, he said, adding: "Otherwise we will have very serious concerns about this president and the role, the reported role in those executions." Raisi, when asked about the allegations told reporters: "If a judge, a prosecutor has defended the security of the people, he should be praised. I am proud to have defended human rights in every position I have held so far."

France to legalise IVF for lesbians, single women

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, June 29: France's lower house of parliament is to definitively approve Tuesday a law that will allow single women and lesbians access to medically assisted reproduction for the first time. The final vote on the wide-ranging bioethics law, presented by French President Emmanuel Macron's government, has been much awaited by LGBT groups, who had pushed for the reproduction measure since France legalised same-sex marriage in 2013.

The new law will expand access to fertility treatments such as artificial insemination and in vitro fertilisation (IVF), currently reserved only for infertile heterosexual couples. In France, fertility treatments are free — which would now include lesbian couples and single women. Health Minister Olivier Veran said French authorities are getting ready to apply the new law as quickly as possible, so that the first children could be conceived by the end of the year.

The vote marks the end of a protracted, two-year debate in parliament. The conservative majority in the Senate repeatedly rejected the measure, but the lower house of parliament, where Macron's centrist party has a majority, has the final say. The National Assembly has already approved the draft bill three times and is to definitively adopt it later Tuesday. The new law does not address France's ban on surrogacy arrangements in which a woman carries and delivers a baby for someone else.

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business

of the day quote

Some elementary truths: Credit guarantee is not credit. Credit is more debt. No banker will lend to a debt-ridden business



P CHIDAMBARAM | CONGRESS LEADER

There has been relatively low investment in the expansion of the health sector in the private domain. The stimulus announced yesterday provides us an opportunity to change this situation



VK PAUL | NITI AAYOG MEMBER (HEALTH)

The whole world now wants to invest in Indian industry and with an effective ratings system, MSMEs can get good investment from abroad



NITIN GADKARI | MSME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

RIL to invest in Abu Dhabi hub

New Delhi: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries has signed a pact to invest an undisclosed amount in a giant petrochemical hub being built in the UAE. The oil-to-telecom conglomerate will join the recently-formed Ta'ziz joint venture of Abu Dhabi state energy giant Adnoc and state holding company ADQ for developing the Ruwais Derivatives Park in western Abu Dhabi. A company statement said an agreement has been signed for Reliance to invest in the project but did not give details. Unconfirmed reports put the investment at about USD 1.5 billion. Ta'ziz is in discussions with potential partners at the park, which is slated to start operations in 2025. It is hoping to attract around USD 5 billion into Ruwais. Abu Dhabi National Oil Co (Adnoc), which pumps most of the UAE's 3 million barrels per day of crude oil, plans to spend USD 45 billion with partners to develop its downstream operations in Ruwais.

Walmart's Vriddhi to help MSMEs

New Delhi: Global retail major Walmart Tuesday announced the launch of Vriddhi Cares, to extend COVID-19 support to MSME employees and their family members in the country. Under this, the company will help micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to support employees and their family members with telecare services and health advice, according to a statement. It will also provide access to pandemic-related business advice and resources, the statement added. Walmart has tied up with non-governmental organisation Swasti to provide free telecare services that offer remote access to doctors, nurses and other healthcare workers via phone under Vriddhi Cares.

IndiGo reduces emissions by 5%

New Delhi: Airline major IndiGo has reduced emissions by about 5 per cent via its ground support equipment automation. Accordingly, IndiGo adopted various solutions in both passenger and freight services such as 'modified baggage BFL for cabin loading', battery swapping by monorail crane, using 10-tonne electrical tug instead of 20-tonne, amongst others. Besides, the airline converted old coaches to make portable cabins for staff at airports. These initiatives, implemented at Kolkata, Delhi, Hyderabad, Kochi and Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore airports, not only reduced 90 mins of man-hours per flight, but also brought in overall cost savings of about ₹15 crore over a year.



While the recovery is under way and the central scenario is relatively benign, we are not out of the woods yet

AGUSTÍN CARSTENS | BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS HEAD

S&P Global cuts India's growth forecast to 9.5%

REUTERS

London, June 29: S&P Global has cut its growth forecasts for some of Asia's top economies including India, the Philippines and Malaysia, offsetting upgrades to China and South Africa and much of Latin America.

The estimates, which feed into S&P's closely-followed sovereign ratings, saw India's growth projection chopped to 9.5 per cent from 11 per cent due to its COVID-19 outbreak, the Philippines 'lowered to 6 per cent from 7.9 per cent and Malaysia's downgraded to 4.1 per cent from 6.2 per cent.

In contrast, China's forecast was nudged up to 8.3 per cent from 8 per cent, Brazil's was hoisted to 4.7 per cent from 3.4 per cent, Mexico's to 5.8 per cent from 4.9 per cent while those of South Africa, Poland and Russia were lifted to 4.2 per cent, 4.5 per cent and 3.7 per cent, respectively, from 3.6 per cent, 3.4 per cent and 3.3 per cent.

"The top risk facing emerging market economies (EMs) is a slower-than-expected rollout of the vaccines," S&P's economists said in new



report, adding that the pandemic would only subside once vaccinations "reach a level consistent with herd immunity."

In Asia's emerging economies, vaccines are currently being administered at a rate of 0.2 doses per 100 people per day. At this rate, S&P estimated it would take another 23 months for 70 per cent of EM Asia's population to be fully vaccinated.

The second big risk facing emerging economies, it said, was if strong

US growth and inflation cause an early tightening of US monetary policy which then pushes up the dollar and makes servicing debt denominated in the US currency more costly.

"While EM policymakers can't control US inflation dynamics and the policy response, they can implement measures to influence domestic growth. In the context of the current pandemic, a key measure is stepping up vaccinations," S&P said.

Skoda Kushaq SUV launched at ₹ 10.49L



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: Skoda Auto launched its most anticipated SUV Kushaq under the India 2.0 Project. Skoda Kushaq will be offered at an ex-showroom price starting at ₹10.49 lakh nationwide.

The new KUSHAQ offers two advanced and efficient TSI engines. Thanks to their particularly low fuel consumption, the direct-injection petrol engines make them more efficient.

The three-cylinder 1.0TSI produces an output of 85 kW (115 PS). Power is transmitted to the front wheels via a 6-speed manual gearbox or a new-generation 6-speed automatic transmission. The SUV provides up to 26.2 litres of interior storage space in total along with a boot capacity of 385 litres that can be increased to 1,405 litres by folding down the rear seats.

Skoda Kushaq features first in segment, Electronic Stability Control as standard, along with Roll over Protection and Multi Collision Braking (MKB). Occupants are protected by up to six airbags, while all five seats feature three-point seat belts and height-adjustable headrests. ISOFIX and top-tether anchor ensure the greatest possible safety for the vehicle's youngest passengers.

The vehicle also comes equipped with brake assist features like ABS (Anti-Lock Braking), EBD (Electronic Brake force Distribution), along with varied segment first features like EDS with XDS & XDS+ (Electronic differential lock - advanced differential lock), HBV (Hydraulic brake-boosting), BSW (Brake disc wiping) that enhances the safety.

Fear & loathing: Pent-up demand expected to fizzle out

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, June 29: Predictions of a possible third wave of Covid-19 along with high inflationary pressure are expected to hamper the pent-up demand in 2021, economists said.

At present, India suffers from a resurgence of Covid cases. However, a sharp decline in new infection rate has triggered hopes of economic normalisation.

In contrast, low consumer sentiment as well as falling household income levels amid job losses will negatively impact the off-take of several sectors.

Consequently, the current situation has led various multilateral organisations to revise India's GDP growth rate downwards.

"Overall, we expect discretionary spending on consumer durables and areas such as home improvements may be limited in the near term, following the spending that took place last year," said ICRA's Chief Economist Aditi Nayyar.

"Moreover, revival of spending on contact-intensive services will take a cue from the vaccination progress," Nayyar added.

Besides, industry insiders portend that high inflation has coun-

tered the positive effects of ultra low interest rates.

Resultantly, in spite of re-stocking activities that have propped up GST collections, along with record low interest rates, might not sway many consumers to make discretionary purchases this time around.

Additionally, fears of a possible third Covid wave have kept purse strings tightened, the experts said.

"The fall in most high-frequency indicators was not as steep as last year, thus the pent-up release was also not as sharp. The quasi lockdowns were less stringent this time around, implying the supply constraints were not as tight unlike last time," said Madhavi Arora, Lead Economist, Emkay Global Financial Service.

"The recovery ahead (just as last year) may also be led by capital and profits and not by improving labour markets and wages. The top 20 per cent of the income bracket has not been impacted as much, which could still drive discretionary spending," Arora said.

Similarly, economy watchers said that despite healthy pick-up in luxury and FMCG segments, sequential growth will majorly depend on the rate of vaccination and the



government's efforts to mitigate another wave of the pandemic.

Even the recent ultra-high frequency led indicators have only shown a marginal turnaround in economic activity.

Furthermore, e-way bills, railway passenger movement, rail freight, traffic congestions appear to bottom out albeit in a more contained manner than in the year ago period.

"The sustainability of the pent-up demand, however, will clearly depend on the likelihood and severity of the third wave and importantly, the speed of vaccination in

Monetise reserves or get set for auction: Pradhan to ONGC, OIL

ONGC and OIL, which discovered and brought to production all of India's eight sedimentary basins, produce about three-fourths of the nation's oil and gas

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Tuesday put state-owned ONGC and OIL on notice saying oil and gas reserves they hold need to be monetised through joint ventures with domain experts or the government will take them away and auction them.

Speaking at BNEF Summit, he said state-owned firms cannot indefinitely sit on resources when the nation is a net importer of oil and gas. Despite India bidding out acreages to private and other companies since the 1990s, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL) hold a "sizeable number of acreage for years," he said.

"We have asked them to do two things - do it yourself, (produce oil and gas) through some joint venture (with domain experts and foreign companies) (and) through a new business model. But the government cannot permit you to hold resources for an indefinite time," he said.

ONGC and OIL, which discovered



and brought to production all of India's eight sedimentary basins, produce about three-fourths of the nation's oil and gas.

The two, especially ONGC, have faced criticism ranging from not being able to quickly bring discoveries to production to lower recovery.

Pradhan said India needs energy for its ambitious economic growth agenda. "We want to reduce import dependency. We want to monetise our own resources."

"So we have given policy guidance to our state-owned oil companies - either you do on your own through new partners and new economic model, (else) the government will after a particular period intervene and use its authority to bid out the resources," he said.

Oil prices 'very challenging': India to OPEC

AGENCIES

New Delhi, June 29: Ahead of a meeting of oil producers' cartel OPEC, India Tuesday said the current oil prices are "very challenging" and rates need to be a "little bit sober" lest they impact a consumption-led recovery of the global economy.

Oil Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who last week again urged OPEC to phase out its production cuts, said India is a price-sensitive market and it will buy oil wherever it gets competitive rates.



The rebound in international oil prices from lows hit last month on the back of demand recovery has led to a spike in petrol and diesel retail prices in India.

Fuel rates are at record highs across the country and petrol has crossed ₹100 a litre mark in about a dozen states and union territories, while diesel is being sold at over ₹100 a litre in Rajasthan and Odisha.

"Today's price is a very challenging one," Pradhan said at BNEF Summit. "I am persuading my producer friends" for a reasonable price of oil.

He said he had a very good discussion with OPEC Secretary-General Mohammed Barkindo last week. "OPEC meeting is supposed to be there in the next few days, and I hope the price will be a little bit sober; that is our expectation," he said.

ICAI vows to strengthen MSMEs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, June 29: The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has stated that, to reach the end users, there is a requirement of an enabled, simple and effective ecosystem which can help MSMEs get benefitted in a most optimised manner.

ICAI also stated that chartered accountants with close proximity to business, industry and entrepreneurs can work with the focus areas of MSMEs especially after being hit by the pandemic.

President of ICAI, Nihar N Jambusaria said, "ICAI is responsive to the emerging challenges faced by the MSMEs & startups. To address the issues faced by MSMEs and startups, the ICAI will be taking a number of initiatives to strengthen and develop their capacity in order to enhance their competence and improve their visibility amongst the business community. The institute will develop and provide capacity building measures for the enhancement of the portfolio of MSMEs & startups."

ICAI will launch three important initiatives for MSMEs - MSME EXCHANGE, ICAI MSME Portal and Certificate Course on MSME. The ICAI MSME EXCHANGE is conceptualised to facilitate a robust platform for value creation in various dimensions vital for the development and sustainability of MSMEs. ICAI will launch a dedicated portal www.msme.icai.org to provide an enabled ecosystem for networking, knowledge sharing, query resolution mechanism and exchange of services where any MSME can be benefited from the expertise of chartered accountants. Certificate Course on MSME is intended to equip chartered accountants to provide hand-holding to MSMEs to help achieve national objectives of Atmanirbhar Bharat.



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SWITZERLAND COME FROM BEHIND TO STUN WORLD CHAMPIONS FRANCE 5-4 ON PENALTIES AND SET UP A QUARTERFINAL FACE-OFF WITH SPAIN AT EURO 2020

SWISS DELIGHT



with his wife for the birth of their second daughter, made the biggest save of his life against one of the best players in the world.

That gave the Swiss a 5-4 penalty shootout victory over World Cup champion France Monday and a spot in the quarterfinals of a major soccer tournament for the first time in 67 years. The match had finished 3-3.

Sommer dived to his right to save the final penalty by Kylian Mbappe, the young France forward who became a superstar at the last World Cup by scoring in the final.

Sommer, who flew back to Germany after the team's 0-3 loss to Italy to be home when his daughter was born June 16, made the decisive save on the 10th penalty after the previous nine had all been successful.

The Swiss haven't reached the quarterfinals at a major tournament since they hosted the World Cup in 1954. This team also ended a run of three consecutive exits in the round of 16. They were knocked out by Poland after losing a penalty shootout 5-4 at Euro 2016.



The Swiss will next play Spain in the quarterfinals Friday in St. Petersburg. It was the third game in the round of 16 at Euro 2020 to go to extra time but the first to be decided by penalties.

Haris Seferovic put Switzerland in the lead with a header in the 15th minute as France struggled to work itself into the game. But that all changed early in the second half when the Swiss were awarded a penalty.

France goalkeeper Hugo Lloris, the team's captain, saved Ricardo Rodriguez's spot-kick in the 55th minute and that seemed to wake up his teammates. Karim Benzema scored moments later in the 57th, and then again in



Haris Seferovic wheels away in celebration after one of his goals; (inset) Mario Gavranovic reacts after finding the nets for Switzerland's last-gasp equaliser against France

Wembley witnesses history

London, June 29: England are unburdened by the weight of agonizing history: Germany have finally been beaten in a tournament again. No need to endure more penalty heartache or disallowed goals this time.

Just like in the 1966 World Cup final, England triumphed over a German team at Wembley Stadium Tuesday, winning 2-0 to reach the European Championship quarterfinals. It was for the first time ever when the Germans were beaten in a round of 16 tie at a major tournament.

And just like in England's two group wins, Raheem Sterling was on the scoresheet, breaking the tense deadlock in the 75th minute in a move he started and completed.

The round of 16 finally saw England net more than once at Euro 2020, and for Harry Kane to shed the pressure on his shoulders by finally scoring. The striker headed in Jack Grealish's cross in the 86th minute to give England only their second-ever win in the knockout stage of the European Championship.

With the goal, Harry Kane has now equalled Wayne Rooney for goals scored at major tournaments



Kane also has now scored 30 goals for England under Gareth Southgate. In England history, only Gary Lineker scored more under a single manager (35 under Bobby Robson).

Spain outwit Croatia in thriller

Copenhagen, June 29: Spain first gifted Croatia a bizarre own-goal, then threw away a late 3-1 lead. Alvaro Morata made sure it didn't matter in the end.

Morata and Mikel Oyarzabal scored in extra time Monday to give Spain a 5-3 win over Croatia and a place in the European Championship quarterfinals after a wildly entertaining see-saw match at Parken Stadium.

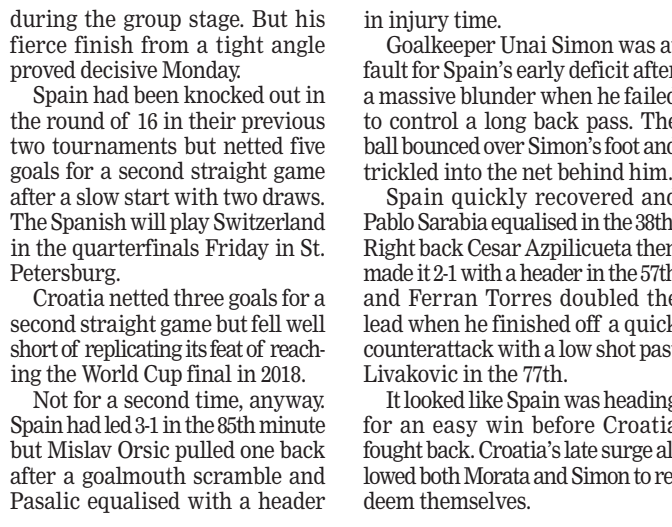
It was the second-highest scoring game in the history of the European Championship, trailing only Yugoslavia's 5-4 win over France in the opening game of the inaugural tournament in 1960. And it had nearly as many momentum shifts as goals.

After Croatia midfielder Mario Pasalic equalised in injury time to cap an improbable late comeback, the much-maligned Morata scored what proved the winner in the 100th minute.

The Spain striker controlled a cross with one deft touch and then sent a rising shot past goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic for his second goal of the tournament.

Oyarzabal doubled the lead three minutes later, receiving a pass in the middle of the area and holding off a defender before scoring.

Morata had received a torrent of online abuse — including death threats — after a string of misses



during the group stage. But his fierce finish from a tight angle proved decisive Monday.



Spain players celebrates Ferran Torres' goal against Croatia in injury time.

Odisha govt nominates Dutee for Khel Ratna



ministry, said an official here.

"I'm thankful to Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik for nominating my name for the Khel Ratna Award. May your blessing always be upon me," Dutee said on Twitter.

The Indian sprint ace broke her own 100m national record, clocking 11.7 seconds at the Indian Grand Prix 4 in Patiala last week to miss the automatic Olympic qualification time by 0.02 seconds.

She is, however, set to make it to the Tokyo Olympics on the basis of world rankings. The 25-year-old Dutee, who won a silver each in the 100m and 200m events in the 2018 Asian Games, was conferred with the Arjuna Award last year.

The Sports and Youth Services Department of Odisha government has also nominated Olympic-bound Indian hockey vice-captain Birendra Lakra (Arjuna Award), hockey coach Kalu Charan Choudhury (Dronacharya) and former sprinter and Olympian Anuradha Biswal (Dhyanchand) for National Sports Awards.

The state government also nominated KIIT Deemed University and Odisha Mining Corporation for Rashtriya Khel Prostanhan Puraskar for identifying and nurturing budding talents in the region.

WT20 TO BE HELD OCT 17-NOV 14: ICC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, June 29: This year's T20 World Cup, which has been moved to the UAE and Oman from India due to the COVID-19 pandemic, will be played from October 17 to November 14, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Tuesday.

The ICC statement came a day after BCCI intimidated the governing body that the event can be moved out of India. "The BCCI will remain the hosts of the event, which will now be held in Dubai International Stadium, the Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi, the Sharjah Stadium, and the Oman Cricket Academy Ground, from 17 October to 14 November 2021," the ICC stated.

The first round of the tournament, comprising the eight qualifying teams, will now be split between Oman and UAE. Four of these teams will then progress to the Super 12s round where they'll join the eight automatic qualifiers.

The upcoming edition will be the first men's World T20 played since 2016, when West Indies beat England in the final in India.

The eight teams competing in the preliminary stage are Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Ireland, Netherlands, Scotland, Namibia, Oman and Papua New Guinea, before the play-off stage and the final November 14.

"Our priority is to deliver the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2021 safely, in full and in its current window," said acting ICC CEO Geoff Allardice. "The decision gives us the certainty we need to stage the event in a country that is a proven international host of multi-team events in a bio-secure environment.

"We will work closely with the BCCI, the Emirates Cricket Board and Oman Cricket to ensure fans can enjoy a wonderful celebration of cricket."

Seema Punia qualifies for Tokyo



Patiala, June 29: Veteran discus thrower Seema Punia Tuesday qualified for Tokyo Olympics with

a best effort of 63.70m while winning gold on the final day of the National Inter-State Athletics Championships here.

The 37-year-old Punia, who had won

Uruguay put Chile in Brazil's path at Copa

Rio de Janeiro, June 29: Uruguay beat Paraguay 1-0 to finish second in Group A and move into a Copa America quarterfinal against Colombia. The result also left Chile to face defending champion and host Brazil in the next stage.

Edinson Cavani scored from the penalty spot in the 21st minute for the only goal of the match at the Nilton Santos Stadium here Monday.

In Monday's other match, Lionel Messi scored twice as an Argentina team split between frequent starters and substitutes beat last-placed Bolivia 4-1. Papu Gomez opened the scoring in the 6th minute.

Messi, who also broke Argentina's



all-time record with his 148th appearance for the national team, netted the two following goals. The first came from the spot in the 33rd and the second after a beautiful lob over Bolivian goalkeeper Carlos Lampe in the 42nd.

Erwin Saavedra scored for Bolivia but substitute Lautaro Martinez restored the three-goal cushion in the 65th from close range.

In the quarterfinals Friday, Brazil and Chile will meet and Paraguay will take on Peru. The winners of those matches will meet in the semifinals. Argentina will meet Ecuador in Goiania Saturday and Uruguay take on Colombia. The winners of those matches will play off for a spot in the final.