CANDID CONFESSION

Actor Shruti Hassan says she has undergone therapy when she was young and still feels inadequate on many days LEISURE P2

CATASTROPHIC FLOODS

44 people have died and dozens have gone missing due to flash floods in Germany INTERNATIONAL P10



UNEXPECTED EVENT

The Bahrain Victorious team, competing at Tour de France, were raided by French police on the eve of Stage 18

SPORTS P12

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BHUBANESWAR | FRIDAY, JULY 16 | 2021

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9 fishermen killed as trawler capsizes in WB

NAMKHANA (WEST BENGAL): Bodies of nine fishermen from West Bengal's South 24 Parganas district were found Thursday morning inside the trawler that capsized in the Bay of Bengal, officials said. One person is still missing and a search is on to find him, they said. The trawler, capsized due to sudden high waves near Rakteshwari island Wednesday when it was returning to the shore. Two fishermen, Sankar Majhi and Saikat Das were on the deck when the trawler sank. They jumped into the sea and were rescued later by another fishing boat.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



car. It is just that its fuel tank is full!

JEE (Main) deferred

NEW DELHI: The fourth edi-

tion of engineering entrance exam

JEE (Main) has been postponed to

August 26-September 2 to give as-

pirants a four-week gap between

two sessions of the crucial exam,

Union Education Minister

Dharmendra Pradhan said

Thursday. The fourth edition of

JEE (Main) was earlier scheduled

to be held from July 27 to August

2. A total of 7.32 lakh candidates

have already registered for the

fourth edition of the entrance

exam. The minister said that the

students have been demanding

the postponement of the exams

and so the National Testing Agency

has heeded to their demands.

"Accordingly, the JEE (Main),

2021, session four will now be held

August 26, 27 and 31, and

September 1 and 2, Pradhan

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DOLLAR **74.90**

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SILVER

WEATHER

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informed.

INDEX

Sedition law colonial: SC HIKE IN FUEL PRICES CONTINUES UNABATED

FIGHTING NATURE'S FURY: An aircraft sprays retardant to extinguish the huge forest fire which broke out Wednesday at Feather River Canyon in California

APEX COURT QUESTIONS CONSTITUTIONAL VALIDITY OF SECTION 124A OF IPC

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 15: The Supreme Court said Thursday that it is 'concerned over enormous misuse' of the colonial era penal law on sedition. The apex court agreed to examine the constitutional validity of section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and observed that the sedition law is a serious threat to the functioning of institutions.

Chief Justice of India (CJI) NV Ramana asked the Union government whether the sedition law is still necessary after 75 years of independence. It observed that the Britishera law was used to 'silence' leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and to suppress the freedom movement. Agreeing to examine the pleas filed

by Editors Guild of India and former Indian Army Major-General (Retd) SG Vombatkere, challenging the constitutionality of section 124A (sedition) in the IPC, the bench headed by CJI Ramana said its main concern was the 'misuse of law' and issued the notice to the Centre.

"Mr Attorney (General). We want to ask some questions. This is the colonial era law and the same was

100 Haryana farmers charged with treason

CHANDIGARH: A few hours after the Supreme Court questioned the utility of the sedition law, more than 100 farmers in Haryana have been charged with sedition. Police have booked them for allegedly attacking and damaging the official vehicle of Haryana Deputy Speaker Ranbir Gangwa during a protest against the controversial new farm laws. The incident took place July 11 in Haryana's Sirsa district. The FIR was filed on the same day. Apart from sedition, the FIR also charges farmers with 'attempt to murder'. Two leaders -Harcharan Singh and Prahlad Singh - were among those named in the FIR.

used by the British to suppress freedom movement. It was used by British to silence Mahatma Gandhi and others. Is it still necessary to keep this in statute even after 75 years of independence?" asked the bench also comprising of justices AS Bopanna and Hrishikesh Roy.

The bench while observing that the provision on sedition has been put to 'enormous misuse', also referred to alarming misuse of section 66 A of the Information Technology

Act even after the top court set it aside long back . "It can be compared to a carpenter, asked to cut a wood, cutting the entire forest," the bench observed.

The bench also said: "We do not know why the government is not taking a decision. Your government has been getting rid of stale laws."

The CJI, on being told that another bench headed by Justice UU Lalit has been hearing a similar plea which has been fixed for further consideration July 27, said he would take call on posting of the matters and notify the date of hearing. Attorney General KK Venugopal, who was asked to assist the bench in dealing with the case, defended the provision and said it be allowed to remain in the statute book and the court may lay down guidelines to curb the misuse.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for the Editors Guild of India, said that a separate plea has been filed by the journalists' body challenging the validity of section 124A (sedition) of the IPC and that plea can also be tagged along with the present one. He said that besides challenging the validity, the Guild has also sought framing of guidelines to curb misuse

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Petrol price was hiked Thursday by 35 paise per litre and diesel by 15 paise, pushing rates to a new high across India. Petrol at the national capital now costs ₹101.54 a litre and diesel ₹89.87 per litre, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers. The increase comes after rates stayed the same for the last three days.

The latest increase neutralised the 16 paise price cut in diesel July 12. Prior to that, petrol and diesel prices were

CITY FUEL PRICES PETROL ₹102.42 (+0.36)

DIESEL ₹98.01 (+0.17)

last cut April 15. Prices have been increasing on a regular basis since May 4. Petrol prices have been hiked on 40

occasions while diesel rates have gone up 37 times and have been reduced on one occasion. The relentless price increase has pushed petrol rates above the ₹100-alitre mark in 15 states including Odisha.

Diesel rates have also gone past the ₹100/litre-mark in Odisha. People are also feeling the pinch as the prices of essential commodities are also on an upward trend with the hike in fuel prices.

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MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF ACF

Spouse, two others booked for murder



Bidya Bharati

DFO Sangram Keshari Behera

THE ACF HAD SUFFERED SERIOUS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, July 15: Paralakhemundi police booked Thursday wife Bidya Bharati and two others for murder in the mysterious death of Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra. The two others who have been booked are a cook and Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Sangram Keshari Behera. The ACF succumbed to 90 per cent burn injuries July 13 that he suffered on the

night of July 12. Earlier July 13, Soumya's father Abhiram Mohapatra termed the ACF's death as pre-planned murder over extra-marital affair. He had accused Bidya, the cook and the DFO and said they were involved in the ACF's death. He had demanded a thorough probe into the inci-

dent by the Crime Branch. Before being booked, Bidya had refuted the allegations levelled by the Soumya's father. She termed the death an accident. She also accused her in-laws of spreading rumours that she has lost her

12 AND DIED THE NEXT DAY ACF'S FATHER HAD

BURN INJURIES JULY

ALLEGED JULY 13 THAT HIS SON HAD BEEN MURDERED

mental balance. Bidya also rubbished allegations of the ACF's father and said she shared a very close relationship with Soumya.

Bidya also narrated Wednesday, how Soumya got burnt. She said she had gone to the kitchen to serve dinner. Few minutes later, when she came to call Soumya, she found his shirt on fire. She tried to tear off Soumya's shirt but failed and in the process she also suffered burns on her hands

Bidya then ran to the bathroom to get water, but slipped and suffered a heavy fall. Then she ran outside and screamed for help. Soon neighbours reached her house and found Soumya in a critical condition and rushed him to the hospital.

Lockdown till Aug 1 with more relaxations

GYMS, SPAS, PARLOURS, SALONS ALLOWED TO OPEN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: The Odisha government Thursday announced extension of the partial lockdown till August 1. However, along with it certain more relaxations were declared. Gyms, parlours, spas and salons will be allowed to open from Friday. Also intra-state bus services will resume Light rain all across Odisha. However, interstate bus services will remain suspended. Lockdown was first implemented in Odisha May 5 due to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Briefing mediapersons, Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra said the test positivity rate (TPR), which was five per cent earlier this month, has now come down to below three per cent. The daily rate of infections have come down to around 2,000 from the 3,000plus reported earlier in the month. Mahapatra however, said that the inSchools, malls, cinema halls, parks to remain closed

Restaurants to remain shut but allowed to serve takeaways

No bus service in Puri till July 25 due to Rath Yatra

Weekend shutdown to continue in all B category districts

fection rate in some districts, especially in Cuttack and Khurda continues to remain high. He informed that these two districts contribute more than 40% of the daily cases. So it is necessary that partial lockdown continues.

The prevailing categorisation of districts (A & B) will continue, Mahapatra said. However, even then some extra relaxations have been provided to Category B districts. Shops in the 'B' segment district which earlier remained open from 6.00am to 1.00pm will now do so till 5.00pm. Bus, auto-rickshaw and cab services will also be operational in all A & B category districts across the state from Friday.

Players ignored BCCI secretary's email asking them to stay away from Euro 2020, Wimbledon

Tokyo cases rise as Games come closer

TOKYO: New coronavirus cases surged Thursday to 1,308 here, a six-month high, as fears rise of a possible dramatic increase during the Olympics that start in eight days. The Japanese capital is under a fourth state of emergency, which began Monday. Thursday's tally is the highest since 1,485 were recorded January 21. Governor Yuriko Koike noted that people need to stay 'alert' and prevent the spread of the virus. New daily cases have been steadily climbing since mid-June.

Mixed response to Left-called bandh



Police personnel try to drag away a CPI (M) activist protesting against the rise in fuel prices in the city OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: The six-hour bandh called by the Left parties and supported by the Congress evoked mixed response from the people. The bandh was called to protest against the rise in fuel prices and es-

sential commodities. Activists of CPI, CPI(M), CPI(M-L) and the Forward Bloc blocked roads and railway tracks in different parts of the state. The protest disrupted train services at the Bhubaneswar railway station as bandh supporters demonstrated on the tracks.

The activists also blocked

that the 6.00am to 12.00 noon bandh was successful. "The bandh was a complete success.We received good response from the people of Odisha. They are against the continuous hike in fuel prices. The Union government should take notice of this and offer immediateprice cuts," CPI (M) leader Suresh Panigrahi said.

vehicular movement on the national highway (NH-16)

and on the main roads of the

state capital. Even though

most shops had their shutters

down, some were brave

enough to keep their doors

The Left parties claimed

open for the public.

Covid-19 strikes India's lethal weapon

New Delhi, July 15: Wicketkeeperbatsman Rishabh Pant has tested positive for Covid-19 in the ongoing tour of England and will not travel with the team to Durham as the players reassemble for next month's Test series against the hosts. Along with Pant, throwdown specialist Dayanand Garani has also tested positive for

Two others have also been placed in isolation for coming in contact with Garani. One of them is a member of the support staff while the other is Wriddhiman Saha. All the four

are currently in London while the rest reached Durham Thursday evening after reassembling from a 20-day break. The players were given the break after the World Test Championship final which ended June 23. During the break, the cricketers

went about their own ways. Pant posted pictures of him and his friends watching Euro 2020 games. Head coach Ravi Shastri and skipper Virat Kohli were seen watching Wimbledon matches sitting in packed galleries. This despite BCCI secretary Jay Shah's email asking players to stay away from the two events as crowds had been allowed in those events.



Pant and Saha will miss the practice match scheduled to start July 20 against a combined county side. "He (Pant) is in quarantine at an acquaintance's place and won't be travelling with the team to Durham, the source said with-

out divulging when the 23-year-old will join the squad. However, he is likely to undergo a Covid-19 test in the next couple of days.

'Yes, one player has tested positive but he has been in isolation for the last eight days. He was not staying in any hotel with the team, so no other player has been affected," BCCI vic-president Rajiv Shukla said. "No other player has tested positive," he added.

The Indian team are due to take on England in a five-match Test series starting August 4. The India-England showdown marks the beginning of the second cycle of the World Test Championships.

international



We need to take a long-term view, shift from emergency management to normal border management and control mechanisms, and prevent border-related incidents from causing unnecessary disruptions to bilateral relations WANG YI | FOREIGN MINISTER, CHINA

INDIAN SAILOR WINS \$1M

Ganesh Shinde, 36, an Indian citizen, who purchased his ticket online from Thane, won the \$1 million first prize in the latest Dubai Duty Free Millennium Millionaire draw. Indians have won the raffle 181 times out of 363 times since 1999





reach a peace Afghanistan and stem the current violence will lead to further displacement within the country, as well as to neighbouring countries and beyond

BABAR BALOCH | SPOKESPERSON, UNHCR We ask China

and open and to cooperate. We owe it to the millions who suffered and the millions who died to know what

transparent

TEDROS ADHANOM GHEBREYESUS DIRECTOR-GENERAL, WHO

We should let that number sink in: Within a decade, more than 2 million people will be waiting in line for vears or even

decades for employment-based green cards. Oh. Canada! How **Outdated US Immigration Policies** Push Top Talent to Other Countries

STUART ANDERSON | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN POLICY

SHORT **TAKES**

Dozens of students arrested by Israel

Ramallah: The Israeli army said Thursday it had arrested between 20 and 30 Palestinian students in the occupied West Bank it accused of being "terror operatives" of Islamist group Hamas, Palestinian sources told AFP that dozens of students from Birzeit University were arrested as they were returning by bus from the village of Turmus Ayya where earlier this month Israeli troops demolished the family home of a Palestinian American awaiting trial on charges of shooting a Jewish student in the West Bank earlier this year.

25K troops to curb unrest in S Africa

Johannesburg: The South African government Wednesday sought to deploy around 25,000 troops to curb unrest, now in its sixth straight day, amid fears of food and fuel shortages as disruption to farming, manufacturing and oil refining began to bite. Seventy-two people have died and more than 1,200 people arrested, according to official figures, since former president Jacob Zuma began a 15-month jail term, sparking protests that swiftly turned violent.

Two Pak soldiers killed in IED blast

Islamabad: Two Pakistani security personnel were killed during an improvised explosive device explosion in Balochistan province, an army statement said Thursday. The Army launched a search operation following the incident to apprehend the perpetrators, the military's media wing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in the statement. "Such cowardly acts by inimical elements, backed by hostile intelligence agencies cannot sabotage the hard-earned peace and prosperity in Balochistan," xinhua news agency quoted the statement as saying.

14 people trapped in China tunnel

Beijing: More than 1,000 rescuers have been dispatched to save the 14 people trapped in a tunnel following floods on Thursday in China's Guangdong Province. The construction site of the Shijingshan tunnel, part of the city's Xingye expressway, flooded at around 3.30 am, said the local emergency management bureau.

Taliban agree to ceasefire if 7K prisoners released

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Kabul, July 15: The Taliban have offered a three-month ceasefire in exchange for the release of 7,000 insurgent prisoners, an Afghan government negotiator said Thursday, as the group con $tinues\,a\,sweeping\,offensive\,across$ the country

"It is a big demand," said Nader Nadery, a key member of the government team involved in peace talks with the Taliban.

It was not immediately clear how the government would react

Berlin, July 15: More than 44 peo-

ple have died and dozens of people

were missing Thursday in Germany

and neighboring Belgium after

heavy flooding turned streams and

streets into raging torrents, sweep-

ing away cars and causing build-

Storms across parts of western

Europe in recent days caused rivers

and reservoirs to burst their banks, resulting in sev-

eral flash floods

overnight as rain-

soaked soil failed

to absorb any

Authorities in

German region of

Euskirchen said

eight deaths had been re-

ported there in connection

with the floods. Rescue operations

were hampered by the fact that

phone and internet connections

were down in parts of the county.

Officials said 18 people had died

in Ahrweiler county, south of

Euskirchen. Up to 70 people were

reported missing after several

houses collapsed overnight in the

which is southwest of Cologne.

western

more water.

ings to collapse.

Nadery's revelation came as Pakistan security forces used tear gas Thursday to disperse hundreds of people who tried to force their way across the border from Chaman to Spin Boldak in Afghanistan.

The border was closed Wednesday by Pakistan officials after the Taliban seized Spin Boldak and raised insurgent flags above the town.

"An unruly mob of about 400 people tried to cross the gate forcefully. They threw stones,

WORST IN A CENTURY

Western Europe deluged

"There

are people

dead, there

are people

missing, there

are many who

are still in dan-

ger," the gover-

nor of Rhineland-Palatinate state,

Malu Dreyer, told the regional par-

liament. "We have never seen such

a disaster. It's really devastating."

Across the border in Belgium, the

Vesdre river broke its banks and

sent masses of water churning

through the streets of Pepinster,

close to Liege, its destructive power

Several Belgian media reported

bringing down some buildings.



which forced us to use tear gas, said a security official on the Pakistan side. He said around

mation was immediately available

in the south and east of Belgium,

and the railway service said all

across the region was still unclear

after many villages were cut off

by floodwater and landslides that

made roads impassable. Many of

the dead were only discovered after

floodwaters began to recede again.

tivist, tweeted that the extreme

weather of recent days should not

be regarded as "the new normal."

a climate and ecological emergency.

and extreme weather events will

only become more and more fre-

'We're at the very beginning of

Greta Thunberg, the climate ac-

traffic was stopped.

Major highways were inundated

The full extent of the damage

1,500 people had gathered at the border Wednesday waiting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, July 15: Top defence of-

ficials from India, Sri Lanka and the

Maldives participated in a virtual

trilateral table top exercise where

they discussed best practices and pro-

cedures for countering common

trans-national maritime crime like

curbing narcotics and assistance

The two-day exercise, TTX-2021,

from July 14 to July 15 aimed at en-

hancing mutual understanding

and exchange of best practices

procedures for countering com-

mon trans national crime was co-

ordinated by the Maritime Warfare

Centre, Mumbai, the Indian High

relevance in light of the success-

ful Operation Sagar Aaraksha 2

executed in support of MV X-Press

Pearl, the Singapore-flagged cargo

ship that caught fire May 21, the mis-

"TTX-2021 exemplifies the deep

trilateral engagement between

India-Maldives-Sri Lanka which

The exercise gains additional

Commission here said.

sion said.

in maritime search and rescue.

I MARITIME SECURITY

India, SL, Maldives

conduct trilateral

table top exercise

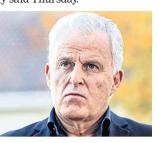
The insurgents also demanded the removal of their leaders' names from a United **Nations blacklist**

Jumadad Khan, a senior government official in Chaman, said the situation was now "under control". An Afghan Taliban source told AFP that hundreds of people had also gathered on the Afghan side, hoping to travel in the other direction.

Dutch crime reporter De Vries departs after Amsterdam shooting

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Hague, July 15: Peter R de Vries, a renowned Dutch journalist who fearlessly reported on the violent underworld of the Netherlands and campaigned to breathe new life into cold cases. has died at age 64 after being shot in a brazen attack last week, his family said Thursday.



"Peter fought to the end, but was unable to win the battle," the family said in a statement sent to Dutch media.

While the motive for De Vries' shooting remains unknown, the July 6 attack on an Amsterdam street had the hallmarks of the gangland hits taking place with increasing regularity in the Dutch underworld the journalist covered.

Two suspects have been detained. Dutch police said the suspected shooter is a 21-year-old Dutchman. and a 35-year-old Polish man living in the Netherlands is accused of driving the getaway car. They were arrested not long after De Vries was wounded.

Caretaker Prime Minister Mark Rutte led the tributes to De Vries in the Netherlands.

Dutch King Willem Alexander last week called the shooting of De Vries "an attack on journalism, the cornerstone of our constitutional state and therefore also



maritime domain over the past vears. Interaction between the three neighbouring countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) has also grown significantly in recent years, in consonance with India's policy of 'Neighbourhood First' and vision of 'Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR)', the release said.

The exercise came as a follow up to India, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives agreeing to focus on ways of enhancing maritime security cooperation in the IOR at the fourth National Security Adviser (NSA)level trilateral meeting held in Colombo in November last year with the participation of India's National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and the top defence brass from Sri Lanka and the Maldives.

an attack on the rule of law."

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

cannot be ruled out.

PAK BUS BLAST

Traces of explosives

indicate terror attack

Islamabad, July 15: Pakistan Thursday said traces of explosives were confirmed in a preliminary probe into a bus blast that killed 13 people, including nine Chinese nationals, and an act of terrorism

Information and Broadcasting Minister Fawad Chaudhrv's comments came a day after the allweather allies, Pakistan and China, offered conflicting views on the possible causes of the fatal crash While China termed the mishap as a bomb attack, Pakistan stated that the blast was caused by a gas leak.

The incident took place Wednesday in Dasu area of Upper Kohistan district of the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province where Chinese engineers and construction workers are helping Pakistan build a dam, which is part of the USD 60 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)

Initial investigations into Dassu incident have now confirmed traces of explosives, terrorism cannot be ruled out, Prime Minister (Imran Khan) is personally supervising all developments, in this regard govt is in close coordination with Chinese embassy we are committed to fight menace of terrorism together, Chaudhry tweeted.

village of Schuld in the Eifel, a volcanic region of rolling hills and that four people died in eastern small valleys southwest of Cologne. Verviers. No independent confir-\$10M rewards bolster **US** anti-ransomware bid

of the devastating floods in

Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg and the Netherlands and those who have lost their homes.

The EU is ready to help

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | PRESIDENT, EU

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Boston, July 15: The Biden administration will offer rewards up to \$10 million for information leading to the identification of foreign state-sanctioned malicious cyber activity against critical US infrastructure — including ransomware attacks — and the White House has launched a task force to coordinate efforts to stem the ransomware scourge

US is also launching the website stopransomware. Gov to offer the public resources for countering the threat and building more resilience into networks.

Another measure being announced Thursday to combat the ransomware onslaught is from the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network at the Treasury Department. It will engage banks, technology firms and others on bet-

The administration official would not comment on whether the US government had a hand in Tuesday's online disappearance of REvil

ter anti-money-laundering efforts for cryptocurrency and more rapid tracing of ransomware proceeds. which are paid in virtual currency.

Cybersecurity experts say REvil may have decided to drop out of sight and rebrand under a new name, as it and several other ransomware gangs have done in the past to try to throw off law enforcement.

Another possibility is that Russian President Vladimir Putin actually heeded President Joe Biden's warning of repercussions.



A member of an exiled Cuban community attends a march as the community reacts to reports of protests in Cuba against the deteriorating economy in North Bergen, New Jersey

NEXT BIG CONCERN

UN warns against fall in child vaccines in 2020

UN has said that 23 million children missed out on basic childhood vaccines as health services were hit by restrictions aimed at restricting Covid-19

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Geneva, July 15: The UN warned Thursday that a "perfect storm" was brewing, with a raging pandemic disrupting access to routine vaccinations, leaving millions of children at risk from measles and other deadly diseases.

A full 23 million children missed out on basic childhood vaccines last year, as routine health services were hit worldwide by restrictions aimed at controlling Covid-19.

It marks the highest number in over a decade and 3.7 million more than in 2019, according to data published Thursday by the World Health Organization and the UN's



children's agency UNICEF.

This has the potential of not only driving up Covid transmission, but also of allowing otherwise vaccine-preventable diseases to begin spreading.

That is because the restrictions in many countries have until now also provided a buffer protecting unvaccinated children against exposure to childhood diseases.

"In 2021, we have potentially a perfect storm about to happen," Kate O'Brien, head of the WHO's vaccines and immunisation department, told reporters.

'Ringing the alarm' The data published Thursday

revealed that rising numbers of children across all regions missed first vital vaccine doses last year while millions more missed later

Compared with 2019, 3.5 million more children missed their first doses of the three-dose diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine (DTP) while three million more children missed their first measles dose, the data showed.

Even more concerning perhaps, as many as 17 million children, mainly living in conflict-affected communities or in under-serviced remote areas or in informal slum settings, likely did not receive a single vaccine in 2020.

'Catastrophic'

Global coverage for all three DTP doses had for instance stalled at 86 percent over recent years, but then slumped to 83 percent in 2020, meaning 22.7 million children missed out.

As for measles, which is highly contagious and requires vaccination uptake of at least 95 percent to avoid spread, the first-dose vaccination rate slipped from 86 to 84 percent last year.

In India, which has been ravaged by a devastating second Covid wave, the number of children who missed their first DTP dose morethan doubled to over three million last year from 1.4 million in 2019.

business



India's EV revolution begins today as we open reservations for our electric scooter. With its incredible performance, technology, and design along with aggressive pricing, it will help accelerate the transition to sustainable mobility

BHAVISH AGGARWAL | CHAIRMAN AND GROUP CEO, OLA

BEZOS DONATES \$200MN

Amazon and Blue Origin founder Jeff Bezos will donate \$200 million to the Smithsonian, the largest gift in the history of the institute, a statement said. \$130 million of the donation will launch a new education center to be named after Bezos





megatrends are disrupting business strategies, and impelling greater adoption of emerging technologies such as AI, RPA (Robotic Process Automation) and blockchain

ARPINDER SINGH | GLOBAL MARKETS AND INDIA LEADER, FORENSIC & INTEGRIT SERVICES, EY

India's

investment in

Bangladesh is huge and wil exponentially due to three reasons; first is competitive labour cost in Bangladesh, which is 1/3rd of Indian labour cost. Secondly, Indian investors get a huge market of 1.70 million. And the third is, Bangladesh being a LDC country

ABDUL MATLUB AHMAD | PRESIDENT, IBCCI

has duty free access to 39

countries, including India

India's annual trade volume with Zambia declined 64 per cent from USD 1.1 billion in 2019-2020 to USD 395 million the following year owing to the global

Covid-19 pandemic

VIJAY KALANTRI CHAIRMAN, WTC MUMBAI

SHORT **TAKES**

'Phenomenal growth recorded'

New Delhi: Digital transactions through UPI recorded phenomenal growth during the pandemic year 2020-21 and several countries have evinced interest to learn from Indian experience so that they could replicate the model, Financial Services Secretary Debasish Panda said Thursday. The Covid-19 pandemic, he said, has encouraged people to use digital means for financial transactions and "the growth during the pandemic is phenomenal".

'2 million Indian accounts banned'

New Delhi: WhatsApp banned two million Indian accounts while it received 345 grievance reports between May 15 and June 15, the company said in its maiden monthly compliance report as mandated by the IT rules. The new IT rules require large digital platforms -- with over five million users -- to publish compliance reports every month, mentioning the details of complaints received and action taken.

optimism: CBDT

New Delhi: The Income Tax Department is charting the nath of "cautious ontimism" as it is witnessing robust growth in tax collections at one hand with different variables at play in the economy on the other amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, CBDT chairman JB Mohapatra said Thursday, He was speaking at 'The Chairman Speaks' session communication webinar 'Samvaad' with various

R Power allots **59.50 cr shares**

New Delhi: Consequent to approval from shareholders through postal ballot, Reliance Power, has allotted 59.50 crore equity shares and 73 crore warrants convertible into equivalent number of equity shares of the company by conversion of debt, to Reliance Infrastructure, a listed promoter company. Post allotment, the holding of Reliance Infrastructure and other promoter group in Reliance Power increased to 24.98 per cent.

Tapering 2nd wave brightens eco prospects: RBI

Mumbai, July 15: The tapering of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic coupled with aggressive vaccination has brightened the near-term prospects of the Indian economy, though a solid increase in aggregate demand may take some time, said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on the state of

Attributing the rise in inflation to the supply side disruptions on account of the pandemic and hardening of commodity prices in the international market, the RBI article opined that these factors should ease over the year as supply-side measures take effect.

"The tapering of the second wave, coupled with an aggressive vaccination push, has brightened near-term prospects for the Indian

"While several high-frequency in-

dicators of activity are recovering, a solid increase in aggregate demand is yet to take shape," said the article written jointly by RBI Deputy Governor MD Patra and other officials.

The RBI, however, said views expressed in the article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Reserve Bank of India.

On the supply side, agricultural

conditions are turning buoyant with the revival in the monsoon but the recovery of manufacturing and services sectors has been interrupted by the second wave.

"The economy is struggling to regain the momentum of recovery that had started in the second half of 2020-21 but was interrupted by the second wave

"The pick-up in inflation is driven largely by adverse supply shocks The tapering of the second wave, coupled with an aggressive vaccination push, has brightened near-term prospects for the Indian economy, said the article written jointly by RBI **Deputy Governor MD** Patra and other officials

due to disruptions caused by the pandemic, including increases in margins and taxes," it said.

There are also specific demandsupply mismatches as in the case of protein-rich food items, edible oils and pulses, which are being addressed by specific supply-side measures, the article said.

But more needs to be done, it

said, and added elevated international commodity prices, especially of crude, are also imparting costpush pressures.

These factors should ease over the year as supply side measures take effect.

"Furthermore, a solid increase in aggregate demand is yet to take shape. Even with a 9.5 per cent GDP growth in 2020-21, there will be substantial slack in the economy and demand pressures may take some more time to become evident." it said

Inflation ruled above the tolerance band during June-November 2020 and has again moved above the upper tolerance threshold in May and June 2021.

The sense is that inflation will persist at these elevated levels for some months before easing in the third quarter of 2021-22 when the kharif harvest arrives in markets,

CM inaugurates HDFC Bank's 160th branch in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Thursday, inaugurated the 160th branch of HDFC Bank at Badaposhi located in Keonjhar district through a virtual ceremony to mark the successful completion of two decades of the bank in the state.



HDFC Bank, now has a established network of 160 branches and 317 ATMs across Odisha. Nearly 63 per cent of the branches are located across semi-urban and rural regions of the state.

During its 20 years journey, the bank has provided direct and indirect employment to over 4,000 people across the state and expects employment generation to increase as the bank establishes newer branches and business correspondents.

On completion of 20 glorious years of service in Odisha and to provide further financial assistance to its citizens. Deepak Kumar Singh (Circle Head, HDFC Bank-Odisha) launched the 'Banking on Wheels' facility which will move to 15 district Head Quarters in western and southern Odisha.

Under HDFC's 'Parivartan' initiative, undertaken through various social initiatives like rural development, education, skill development, healthcare, hygiene, financial literacy and inclusion, the bank has impacted the lives of over 31 lakh people across the state. It also plans to establish nearly 100 smart classrooms and renovate seven schools during the 2021-22 fiscal.

GST COMPENSATION

Centre releases ₹75,000 crore to states, UTs

This release is in addition to normal GST compensation being released every 2 months out of actual cess collection

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: The government Thursday said it has released ₹75,000 crore to the states and Union Territories to compensate them for the shortfall in GST revenue

The GST Council in its meeting May 28 had decided that the central government would borrow ₹1.59 lakh crore and release it to the states and UTs with the legislature on a back-to-back basis to meet the resource gap due to the short release of compensation on account of inadequate amount in the compensation fund.

"Ministry of Finance has released today ₹75.000 crore to the States and UTs with Legislature under the back-to-back loan facility in lieu of GST Compensation. This release is in addition to normal GST compensation being released every 2 months out of actual cess collection," the ministry said in a statement.

It further said that all eligible states and UTs (with the legislature) have agreed to the arrangements for the funding of the compensation shortfall under the back-to-back loan facility.

"For effective response and management of COVID-19 pan-

Ultra in City

Bhubaneswar: Xiaomi

India's Bhubaneswar

city distributor Urmila

Enterprises unveiled

the first superphone

Mi 11 Ultra in Saheed

priced at ₹69,999. City

own laver of MIUI 12.

Nagar, Thursday,

Xiaomi unveils Mi 11

Distributor Ramachandra Dash and Xiaomi City

General Manager Ajay Dal Behera were present

at the event. High-end Mi 11 Ultra is powered by

internal storage. The smartphone runs Android

11 operating system topped with the company's

an octa-core Qualcomm Snapdragon 888

processor paired with 12GB RAM and 256 GB



THE GST COUNCIL IN ITS MEETING MAY 28 HAD DECIDED THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WOULD BORROW ₹1.59 LAKH CRORE AND RELEASE IT TO THE STATES AND UTS

FOR ASSISTING THE STATES/UTS IN THEIR **ENDEAVOUR, MOF HAS FRONT-LOADED** THE RELEASE OF ASSISTANCE UNDER THE BACK-TO-BACK LOAN FACILITY DURING FY 2021-22 ₹75,000 CRORF RFI FASED TODAY IN A SINGLE INSTALMENT

demic and a step-up in capital expenditure, all States and UTs have a very important role to play. For assisting the States/UTs in their endeavour, Ministry of Finance has front-loaded the release of assistance under the back-to-back loan facility during FY 2021-22 ₹75,000 crore (almost 50 per cent of the total shortfall for the entire year) released today in a single instalment," the ministry added. The balance amount will be released in the second half of 2021-22 in steady instalments.

BIZ BUZZ

'Financial inclusion priority for sustainable recovery'

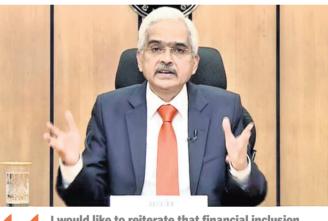
Mumbai, July 15: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das Thursday said that financial inclusion will remain a priority of the central bank to achieve sustainable post-pandemic economic recovery.

Speaking at a Financial Inclusion Summit, Das noted that considering the complementary role played by microfinance in bridging the gaps at the last mile; a consultative document for harmonising the regulatory frameworks for various regulated lenders in the microfinance space was issued recently.

The primary objective is to address the concerns relating to overindebtedness of microfinance borrowers, enable market mechanism to rationalise the interest rates, and empower the borrowers to make an informed decision by enhancing transparency of loan pricing.

"In order to make the post-pandemic recovery more inclusive and sustainable, financial inclusion would continue to be our policy pri-

ority," he said. To measure the extent of nancial inclusion in the country, the central bank Governor said that "Financial Inclusion Index" (FI Index) will be constructed and periodically published. The Index will have parameters across the three dimensions of financial inclusion -- Access, Usage and Quality.



I would like to reiterate that financial inclusion promotes inclusive growth by way of making financial services including credit and other safety nets available to the bottom of the pyramid. Experiences gained during the pandemic clearly indicate that financial inclusion and inclusive growth reinforce financial stability

June Y-o-Y exports, imports

SHAKTIKANTA DAS I GOVERNOR, RESERVE BANK OF INDIA

Work on FI Index is underway and the index will be published shortly by the RBI, Das said.

"I would like to reiterate that financial inclusion promotes inclusive growth by way of making financial services including credit and other safety nets available to the bottom of the pyramid. Lessons from the past and experiences gained during the COVID-19 pandemic clearly indicate that financial inclusion and inclusive growth reinforce financial stability."

He was of the view that greater financial literacy and education, together with sound consumer

protection mechanisms will ensure that people at the bottom of the pyramid are empowered to take informed financial decisions.

This will also enable banks, NBFCs. MFIs and others to enhance their customer base and products and diversify their balance sheet. He emphasised that efforts must continue for greater financial inclusion in pursuance of the goal of sustainable future for all.

There is need for accelerated universal reach of bank accounts along with access to financial products relating to credit, investment, insurance and pension, he added.

Mercedes-Benz strengthens AMG portfolio in India



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 15: Luxury automobile manufacturer Mercedes-Benz has strengthened its performance based - AMG - portfolio in India by launching 'AMG E 53 4MATIC+' and 'AMG E 63 S

According to the company, the Mercedes - 'AMG E 53 4MATIC+' is priced at ₹1.02 crore, while 'AMG E 63 S 4MATIC+' is priced at ₹1.70 The 'AMG E 53 4M+' is only the

second 'AMG 53 series' product introduced in India, and the first ever in a sedan body shape.

"The powerful AMG E 63 S 4M+ on the other hand reiterates Mercedes-AMG's renewed focus on 'One Man One Engine' philosophy and providing the AMG brand promise of 'Driving Performance' to all performance purists."

"The 63 series models still constitute Mercedes-AMG's core model series, and delight car enthusiasts around the world", a company statement said.

Chasing cautious

that is part of a maiden public stakeholders involved in direct taxes administration.

Dr Batra's launches PRP hair fall treatment

New Delhi: Dr Batra's, leaders in natural and homeopathic hair fall treatments, introduces a first of its kind noninvasive natural plant based Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) treatment, Dr Batra's new hair. Combing homeopathy and biological growth factors, this bio-engineered, FDA approved hair fall solution is guaranteed to give visible results in just six sessions. Hairfall patients will now get access to a bio-engineered hair follicle treatment that stimulates hair follicles for new

hair growth and thickens existing hair. This non-invasive and painless hair regrowth solution also treats dandruff and decreases hair loss using plant plasma that possesses a variety of growth factors.



surge as world trade recovers

New Delhi, July 15: India's merchandise exports last month rose to \$32.50 billion, higher by 48.34% over \$21.91 billion recorded in June 2020, official data showed Thursday. Similarly, exports last month recorded a growth of 29.85% growth over the June 2019 mark of \$25.03 billion. The country's merchandise exports in May 2021 had risen to \$32.27 billion.

As per the data, the value of non-petroleum and non-gems and jewellery exports in June 2021 was

\$25.65 billion, as compared to \$18.48 billion during the corresponding month of 2020, registering a positive growth of 38.84%.

"As compared to June 2019, nonpetroleum and non-gems and jewellery exports in June 2021 registered a positive growth of 33.42%," an official statement on foreign trade said.

Similarly, India's merchandise imports last month grew by 98.31% to \$41.87 billion over \$21.11 billion in June 2020. In parallel, imports rose by 2.05% over June 2019 when imports stood at \$41.03 billion.

'Indian OTT entertainment industry to hit \$15bn by 2030'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 15: Driven by the spurt in smartphone usage with affordable data, especially in smaller cities and towns amid the pandemic, the OTT entertainment industry is likely to become a \$15 billion market in India by 2030, a report showed Thursday. India's OTT entertainment industry is cannibalising on the established bastion of traditional television, radio and cinema forms of media and en-

The size of the OTT market in the financial year 2020 was around \$1.7 billion (both video and audio), and in the next 9-10 years, this industry has the potential to grow to

tertainment.

become a \$15 billion opportunity, according to homegrown independent transaction advisory firm RBSA Advisors.

Currently, apart from top favourites like Disney+ Hotstar, Amazon Prime Video and Netflix. space is seeing many local and regional OTT players, such as SonyLIV, Voot, Zee5, Eros Now, ALTBalaji, Hoichoi and Adda Times, to name just a few.

"Covid-19 has changed the way audience consume media. The growing market and consumer appetite for content of choice available on OTT platforms fuelled this spurt," RBSA Advisors MD and

forward OTT disruption, which would, otherwise, have taken minimum half a decade," he added.



The average monthly data usage per user in the country increased 20 per cent (year-on-year) to 13.5GB

media. The growing market and consumer appetite for content of choice available on OTT platforms fuelled this spurt. Covid has accelerated the shift in consumers' behaviour, pulling forward

Covid-19 has

changed the way

audience consume

RAJEEV SHAH | MD AND CEO, RBSA ADVISORS

OTT disruption

'Smartphones with affordable data have also brought the vibrant native speakers base of 22 schedmassive opportunity," the findings showed

'India is the next bastion after the US for boosting the subscriber base of international OTT players, given the highly regulated environment of international OTT players in China," NV Capital Co-Founder and Managing Partner Vivek Menon said

Many international entrants like Comcast owned "Peacock" and HBO are sitting on the fence, waiting to make their mark in India.

'Looking at this trend as well as the rapid rise of home-grown OTT providers, this industry will continue its strong growth mo-



Uncapped trio looks to imbibe Dravid's traits



OrissaPOST FRIDAY | JULY 16 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

Devdutt Padikkal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, July 15: The uncapped trio of Devdutt Padikkal, Nitish Rana and Chetan Sakariya is looking to imbibe the traits of Rahul Dravid – the player, person and coach-during the tour of Sri Lanka. As many as six uncapped play-

ers are part of the India squad for the series beginning here July 18. NCA chief Dravid is head coach on the tour with the Test team currently in the UK

"Being from the same school, the first time I actually met him was in one of our sports day events, where I had to present him with a bouquet – that is when I spoke to him for the first time," Padikkal re-

called on Star Sports The elegant left-handed bats-



Nitish Rana

man has been awestruck by Dravid's down to earth nature.

"I have always been awestruck by how incredibly calm and gentle a human being he is. To have achieved so much in cricket and to be so down to earth, humble and kind towards everyone is incredible to watch," added the 21-year-old, who plays for Karnataka.

"To have him (Dravid) as our coach, you couldn't ask for anything more and to have a mentor like him beside you, it's just a great feeling, and hopefully, I can pick up a lot of things from him," said

Another southpaw Nitish Rana is also looking forward to working with Dravid. "I have heard that Rahul Dravid as a coach is similar



Chetan Sakariya

I could bring even one per cent of the patience he has within me; it will be a big achievement for me," said Rana, who plays for Delhi in domestic cricket.

Even rookie Saurashtra pacer Chetan Sakariva wants to be as determined as Dravid. "I would want to learn how he was so determined when the opposing teams like Australia and England played dominant cricket.

"I want to understand how he troubled them and how he could achieve so much with sheer determination. I want to learn and understand the process which goes behind that mindset," said Sakariya.

India will take on Sri Lanka in the limited overs series, comprising three ODIs and as many T20Is,

Police raid Bahrain Victorious team

Washington, July 15: The Bahrain Victorious team competing at the Tour de France said it was raided by French police on the eve of Thursday's stage.

The team said in a statement that riders' rooms were searched by officers at the hotel it stayed in the southwestern city of Paul Judicial officials in Pau confirmed "judiciary actions" took place at the team hotel, without further de-

They said the Marseille prosecutor was in charge of the investigation. The Marseille prosecutor's office did not immediately respond to a request for comments from this news agency.

About 25 officers from a special public health unit (OCLAESP) were involved in the search as part of the operation carried out by French authorities, according to po-

"Despite being unaware of the investigation reasons, the team was also requested to provide all training files which were compiled and presented to the officers as re-



quested," the team said.

'We were greeted by several French police officers. We were not given a warrant to read through. but the team complied with all the officers' requests," technical director Vladimir Miholjevic said.

"The process had impacted our riders recovery and meal planning, and as a professional team the wellbeing of our team is a key pri-

Ahead of Thursday's stage in the Pyrenees, Peio Bilbao of Spain

is the the team's top-placed rider in the general classification, lagging nearly 13 minutes behind Tour de France leader Tadei Pogacar, Team leader Jack Haig crashed out early in the race, breaking a collarbone.

Pogacar juggernaut continues

Luz Ardiden (France), July 15: The peerless Tadei Pogacar edged closer to retaining his Tour de France title as he claimed another landmark victory in the 18th stage, a 129.7-km mountain ride from Pau to Luz Ardiden, Thursday.

The 22-year-old Pogacar took the stage victory in yellow for a second day running at the Tour de France to underline his dominance in this year's race.

The Slovenian's brutal acceleration 500 metres from the line, at top of Luz Ardiden, could not be matched by his rivals as Denmark's Jonas Vingegaard and Ecuador's Richard Carapaz finished two seconds behind in second and third, respectively.

Overall, Pogacar now has a massive advantage of five minutes 45 seconds over Vingegaard with Carapaz in third place overall, a further six seconds behind.

Colombian Rigoberto Uran, fourth overall at the start, cracked in the penultimate ascent to the



the top 10. Australian Ben O'Connor

days before Saturday's final indi-

Anand starts 'No-Castling' meet with win

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dortmund, July 15: Former world champion Viswanathan Anand defeated Russian Grandmaster Vladimir Kramnik in the first game of their four-game match for the Sparkassen Trophy here.

Playing with white pieces, Anand needed 66 moves to beat Kramnik late on Wednesday in a match played as part of the 'No-Castling Chess devised by the Russian GM.

Castling is not allowed in this format in an effort to make the game more interesting. Castling is a special move to protect the king and activate the rook? It's the only time in chess a player can move two pieces in one move.

The Indian maestro will take on Kramnik, also a former World Champion, in the second game Thursday night.

Padmini held to draw SOCHI (RUSSIA): Odisha chess star

Padmini Rout shared honours with

Sarasadat Khademalsharieh in the

first match of the second round of the women's category at the FIDE World Cup here, Thursday, Indian Grandmasters R Praggnanandhaa and B Adhiban registered wins in the first game of the two-game mini match in the second round. and Aravindh Chithambaram were held to draws in the first game of the second round. In the women's

Barcelona to build first cricket ground

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Barcelona, July 15: The crack of leather on willow is not a sound one be a connection from 2022, however, when Barcelona builds a cricket ground thanks to an upwelling of public support for a women's team.

Barcelona's city hall asked citizens last month to choose an initiative as part of a 30 million euro (USD 35 million) investment package in new facilities and improvements to public spaces.

The plan to spend 1.2 million euros (USD 1.4 million) on a cricket pitch finished first in the voting



among 184 proposals.

The big win for a sport largely unknown in Spain is thanks to a campaign led by a group of young women, mostly first-generation Spaniards, some of them Indian and Pakistani immigrants living in working-class suburbs of Barcelona.

What started by word of mouth soon generated traction once it caught the attention of the local

media. "It's a dream come true to have won the vote after all the effort we put in," said cricket player Nadia Mustafa, an 18-year-old uni-

people to vote for our project so we could win. And in the end, we were able to get the first cricket field in Barcelona for us to play and train.

"We spent weeks encouraging

Besides the pitch, the project includes changing and storage rooms, lights, and other amenities specific to cricket.

Barcelona has large Pakistani and Indian communities, and there are some 400 cricketers in Barcelona divided among 25 men's and women's teams

But the Mediterranean city doesn't have facilities for this still exotic sport. Instead, an empty parking lot or field has to do for those looking to show their batting and bowling skills.

Now, players will have their own pitch, right next to Barcelona's Olympic Stadium on a hill over-

looking the city. "We are happy. Soon, in a year or a year and a half, we will have our own field here in Barcelona." said team coach Shahbaz Shauqad, a 30year-old greengrocer: "We won't have to think of getting cars and means of transportation to play elsewhere. We will have our field here."

The 1904 Games

were the first

Olympics held

The current three

medal format

at in these

was introduced

made their debuts.

Games, the first to hand out gold

Sports like boxing, dumbbells,

freestyle wrestling and the decathlon

American gymnast George Eyser, who

lost his left leg as a youth after it was

prosthetic leg. Despite his disability, he

won six medals, including three golds.

Due to the difficulty of getting to St.

Louis in 1904, and European tensions

caused by the Russo-Japanese War,

Americans accounted for 523 of the

630 total athletes, and more than half

run over by a train, took part with a

worldwide

outside of

Europe.

ENGLAND WOMEN SECURE T20I SERIES AGAINST INDIA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chelmsford, July 15: Opener 89 off only 56 balls to overshadow an elegant 70 by Smriti Mandhana as England claimed an easy eightwicket victory over India Women in the third T20 International to wrap up the series 2-1 here.

Having already lost the threematch WODI series by the same margin, the Indian women under Mithali Raj and Harmanpreet Kaur have now lost four successive whiteball series with two at home against South Africa.

India posted 153/6 in their 20 overs after winning the toss and England chased the target down in 18.4 overs to clinch the rubber.

With the series locked at 1-1, it was Indian vice-captain Mandhana. who was at her graceful best during the 51-ball knock which had eight fours and two sixes

She added 68 runs with skipper Harmanpreet (36), who looked in some sort of form. Young Richa Ghosh's 13-ball-20 took the score past the 150-run mark.

While India had defended 148 in the previous game, their spinners were taken to task by Wyatt. She got fantastic support from ICC's No.1 ranked all-rounder Nat Sciver, who chipped in with a 42 after having bowled well to take 1/16 in four overs.

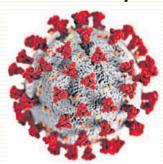
Chennai lad Praggnanandha got the better of the experienced Gabriel Sargissian (Armenia) and Adhiban posted a crushing win over Neuris Delgado Ramirez in just 22 moves in the men's event. GM P Inivan lost the first game to higher-rated Evgeny Tomashevsky and Nihal Sarin settled for a draw in the opening game against Sanan Sjugirov (Russia). P Harikrishna, Vidit Santosh Guirati

event. D Harika scored a win over

Medina Warda Aulia (Indonesia)

in 48 moves.

Covid cases surge; fears rise in Tokyo



TOKYO: New coronavirus cases surged to 1,308 here Thursday, a six-month high, as fears rise of a possible dramatic increase that could flood hospitals during the Olympics that start in eight days. Tokyo is under a fourth state of emergency, which began Monday and requires restaurants and bars to close early and not serve alcohol through the Olympics, which start July 23. Thursday's tally is the highest since 1,485 were recorded January 21, when Japan was under an earlier state of emergency, and is also a jump from Wednesday's 1,149. Tokyo Gov. Yuriko Koike noted that the largest increase in serious cases and hospitalisations was among people in their 50s and younger who are largely unvaccinated. New daily cases have been steadily climbing since mid-June and experts say they could hit several thousand during the games.

IOC guidelines for medal ceremony

TOKYO: Athletes, presenters and volunteers will not pose for group photographs and wear masks on the podium during Tokyo Olympics medal ceremonies, the International Olympic committee said Thursday, announcing a series of health-safety measures keeping in mind the COVID-19 pandem ic. That athletes and medal presenters would be required to wear masks was made clear in the guidelines released in June. According to the new guidelines, additional podium modules will be placed between gold and silver medallists and gold and bronze medallists to allow for social distancing. "All the presenters will be vaccinated, and there will be only one IOC member and one International Federation representative at each event." IOC president Thomas Bach had Wednesday said that athletes at the Tokyo Olympics will have to put their medals around their necks themselves to protect against spreading the virus.



Biggest ever contingent at an Olympic Games



BEIJING: China will send 431 athletes, including 24 Olympic champions, to the Tokyo 2020 Olympics following the unveiling of the delegation in Beijing. The team will have 298 female athletes and 133 male athletes competing in 225 events in Tokyo, 293 athletes will be making their Olympic debut. This is the largest delegation that China has ever sent to an Olympics. The 14-year-old Ouan Honghcan, competing in women's diving, is the youngest athlete while the 52-year old Li Zhengiang competing in equestrian event is the oldest.

Less than 1000 VIPs at opening ceremony

TOKYO: The Tokyo Olympics opening ceremony is likely to be attended by less than 1000 VIPs and foreign dignitaries in person, a sharp reduction from the previously decided figure of 10,000 amid rise in COVID-19 cases here, the local media reported Thursday. 'Kyodo News', quoting sources, reported that the organisers have been attempting to cut the number of people physically attending the ceremony at the National Stadium July 23.

BLAST FROM PAS



of the events were contested entirely monies were not St. Louis Games, 1904 until July 13, the by homegrown competitors. 1908 Games USA won a total of 239 medals -- the opened on April largest ever haul in a single Olympics. 27 with the rac-The swimming events took place in an quets competiartificial lake on the fairgrounds. tion and ended The marathon track was a dirt road,

heat, kicking up dust as they went and there was only one water station. It was the first year South Africa com-

which runners slogged down in intense

peted in the Games. Two of their eight athletes were runners Len Tau and Jan Mashiani. The former was chased a mile off course by dogs in the middle of the race.

London Games, 1908

Originally scheduled to be held in Rome, the Games were relocated to London on financial grounds following the violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 1906 which caused widespread devastation to the city of Naples.

The Games spanned 188 days. Although the formal opening cere-



ever, a stadium was built espe-

final.

cially for the Olympics. The White City Stadium became the centrepiece of the Games and featured not only a running track but also a swimming pool, cycling oval and platforms for wrestling and gymnastics.

It was also the first time that Olympic swimming events were not held in open water, allowing fans packed into the 66,000-capacity stadium the chance to cheer on their favourite swimmers like never before. For diving there was a special folding tower. Athletes paraded behind their national flags during the opening ceremony for

the first time during the London

Games. It was attended by King

Edward VII on July 13, 1908.

The marathon was extended by 195 metres so that the race could start under the window of the nursery at Windsor Castle and finish in front of the stadium's royal box. This new distance of 42.195km would eventually become the official distance from the 1924 Games onwards.

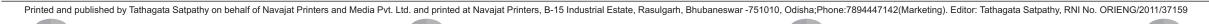
John Taylor became the first black Olympic gold-medallist. He was part of the gold-winning 4x400-metre USA

The men's single-shot 100-metre running deer competition was introduced in the 1908 Games. The event consisted of a deer-shaped target that made 10 75-feet runs. Depending on the code of the event, shooters took one or two shots at the target during each run. The athletics events included for the

relay'. The athletes ran 200m, 200m, 400m and 800m.

first time, a relay, called 'the Olympic

Australia and New Zealand were represented by a single delegation, under the name of Australasia.





leisure



MARKLE TO PRODUCE ANIMATED

Meghan Markle, Duchess of Sussex and wife of Prince Harry, is to produce an animated adventure series for Netflix about a 12-yearold girl who is inspired by historical female figures. The couple signed a deal with Netflix

MICHAEL B. JORDAN TALKS ON PROJECT IN INDIA

Hollywood star Michael B. Jordan has expressed his interest for working in a Hindi cinema. "India is some place I never had the opportunity to go to. But I would love to work on a project over there. I think that would be pretty cool," the actor said.





accuracy • reliability • trust

Today is an ordinary day, it is business as usual, but there will be some progress You can while away your time doing petty chores. And, Ganesha says, while daydreaming think about that coveted home, as that's how the first plans materialise

TAURUS

Religious sentiments will be ruling your thoughts today, says Ganesha. This is a great day for making a trip to a temple or a popular religious destination. You should take your parents and other family members along on this auspicious journey. Your parents are sure to pray shower their love and blessings upon you and pray for your well being.

GEMINI

You will be faced with household problems and worries about your children today You will need to help your children with schoolwork in the morning. In the evening vou will likely head out to dinner with family and friends and relax, says Ganesha

CANCER

Ganesha says that you will feel tiredness and weakness but in the office or business you will be relaxed, with less tension. Ganesha suggests that you should be entrusted to you. You will spend on travel

LEO

You will attempt to reschedule your daily routine to be able to make the most of your day. While it is easy to make plans, implementing them and sticking to them depends on your own discipline and determination. You will become more aware about health issues and pay closer attention to your diet.

VIRGO

Today is a day for introspection and you will find yourself in a pensive mood. Ganesha advises you to search for the inner peace that you want. Stay calm to discover the hidden treasures within you. In the evening you will be glad to help someone who is in need of it.

Ganesha says you will be able to spend ample time with

LIBRA

your loved ones and may even taken them out for lunch or dinner which will bring you more closer to them. ing them with gifts and presents today.

SCORPIO

There's always a first time, and today is the day when you would seal a profitable deal for your new business venture. However, close the deal only if it is beneficial for a long term. Be cautious and watch your steps carefully to avoid any unfortunate situation.

SAGITTARIUS

A fresh and renewed you, today all your focus is on your kith and kins. This includes sneaking some time off for your beloved as well! Romantic conversations and intimacy will add some spark to the day. After family, friends too come to take their share. An exciting evening in store for you!

CAPRICORN

Mark this date on the calendar as today is going to be one of the most important days of life, the reason being you are going to meet somebody who is will stay with you through out your life. Though it may some time bore you, but your relationships will keep you busy today.

AQUARIUS

You will try everything to bosses, but they will still have something negative to say about your performance. In order to be in the good books of everyone you end up hurting your own interests, feels Ganesha. The second half of the day promises to be relaxing, thanks to your sweetheart who will make special efforts to lighten your burden of work.

PISCES

You will have difficulty in interpreting the behaviour of your life partner today. It is better to bring transparency in your relationship rather than to doubt it. Speak freely about your problems and communicate with your spouse. Business relationships will also face rough weather



'You are as good as

your last release'

New Delhi: Actress Raima Sen

says she has realised over her

years in Hindi film industry that

one is as good as one's last re-

lease. The actress adds that

'You are as good as your

the film industry is all about

the survival of the fittest.

last release in this indus-

try. So, you will always be

noticed for your last work

but I guess that is fine

and that is the way it is.

You just have to deal with

it positively because

there are a lot of ups

and downs," Raima

She says it is

only natural that

success and fail-

ure should co-

are always high.

exist in an industry

where survival stakes

"There will always

be failure where there

is success, and the in-

dustry is about sur-

vival of the fittest. So,

obviously the show that

does well will get you recog-

nised and the show that

does not do well will not

The actress' last out-

ing, the web series The

Last Hour, was well received and she feels

such judgements happen in every sphere.

get vou recognised."

Raima added.

ADVENTURE SERIES FOR NETFLIX

after quitting their royal duties in Britain.

Mithun's cameo in



Chakraborty in Hindi film industry. Director Santoshi shared: "Mithun Da is a legend. Having him in the song will only add that pinch of extra tadka. The movie is produced

by Sajid Qureshi and also features the producer's daughter Amrin Qureshi. Mithun will be seen performing in the song titled Janab-

e-Ali. Namashi is emotional about sharing screen space with dad Mithun. "Today I worked with my idol not only on screen, but also offscreen. The greatest actor of all time with an experience of 360 films and three national film awards blessed me and my debut film. What else can a newcomer with dreams ever ask for?." Namashi said.

Amrin added: "I am so glad to be working with the legend. Mithun uncle is an epitome of dance and has been my favourite. It is in-



RAY'S CINEMA SHAPED THE ENTIRE APPROACH OF INDIAN FILMMAKING. SAYS BHUPENDRA KOINTHALA, THE DIRECTOR OF FTII-PUNE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Department of Journalism & Mass Communication, Central University of Odisha (CUO) organised a webinar titled Indian Cinema-Ray & After Thursday.

Sourav Gupta, Assistant Professor, DJMC & convener of the webinar explained Satyajit Ray's importance in world cinema by quoting greats like Kurosawa and that the purpose of the webinar was to discuss the impact of Oscar award winning film director Satvaiit Rav's film making on Indian Cinema on the occasion of



Attending the event, Bhupendra Kointhala. Director, Film & Television Institute of India, Pune, spoke

shaped the entire approach

of Indian film making. Prof Akshay Rout, Visiting Professor, DJMC chaired the inaugural session and compared creative genius of Ray with the works of William Shakespeare.

Ashoke Viswanathan, a National Award winning film maker and the dean of Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute, Kolkata underlined that Ray's films were not only about telling stories rather it went beyond the origi-

Gadadhar Puty, eminent film maker from Odisha and an FTII alumnus described the impact of Ray's filmmaking style on regional cinema.

SHRUTI'S tips on mental health Chennai: Actress Shruti Haasan has often spoken about the need to look after mental health, especially in the time of the pandemic. Stressing on the need for professional guidance in such cases, the actress says she has been in therapy when she was younger and yet, being a part of an industry that can frequently be high on the stress factor: she still feels inadequate on many days. Shruti feels it is im-

portant to be aware if someone needs help over mental health and not brush the issue under the carpet with an 'I am fine' attitude.

"Mental health is really simple and complex at the same time. The cracks start happening and usually I see people have what I call 'mild breakdowns'. Usually, people don't even realise what they are going through," she says. "I believe people world

over are a lot more aware and, especially in India, people are a lot more speaking about it. I genuinely believe that mental health awareness has come to the forefront. I was always doing therapy long distance because my therapist was based out of London. So, I always knew that it is possible once you have made that initial connection," adds the Luck actress.

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a

manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains

2 9

4

4

9

3

1

6

LEAF CHESSSET

1 8

3

6

the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any

8

2

SUDOKU

5

9

8

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

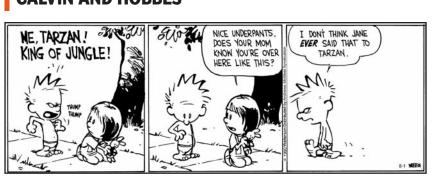
9

3

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBES

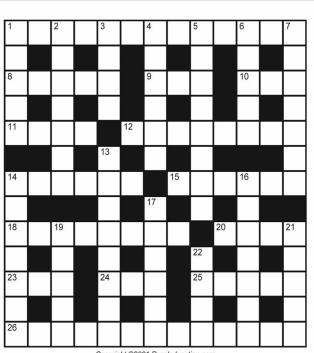


BREVITY



FUN DOST

CROSSWORD



Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com 20 Straddling

25 Stream

26 Means of

(8,5)

23 Needing a lift

24 Cygnet's father

advancement

Across 1 Ready to jump on

- a good deal
- 8 Melee (3-2)
- 9 Cloak-and-dagger
- 10 Coal container 11 Hourglass
- contents
- 12 Macabre
- 14 Free of charge
- 15 Breakfast place,
- maybe

18 Living room piece

desert

Down

2 Fluted funnel-

3 Mouth part

- 1 Haven in the

- 16 Like a busy
 - beaver (2,3,2) 17 Lesser ape
 - 19 Gnatlike insect

4 Stomach woes

13 Bedtime drink

14 Champagne

flutes

6 Off-limits

7 Yield

5 Queen of Castile

- 21 Black tea
- shaped flower 22 "Hamlet" has five
- SUDOKU

1 9 5 2 5 1 4 8 6 9 7 3 2 7 9 6 4 5 7 6 3 2 5 1 4 9 8 8 7 2 5 4 9 3 6 6 1 9 8 7 3 2 4 5

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



downtown



BANDH EFFECT

BANDH EFFECT	200	COV	/I D-1 9 '	TRACK	ER
Cuttack Malgodown witnesses low footfall due to the six-hour bandh called by the Left parties, Thursday, to protest against the frequent hike in			INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
		World	18,94,53,278	17,29,42,326	40,78,057
		India	3,09,87,880	3,01,43,850	4,11,989
fuel prices		Odisha	9,47,859	9,23,209	4,861

CUV	ID-12	IKACK	EK
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	18,94,53,278	17,29,42,326	40,78,057
India	3,09,87,880	3,01,43,850	4,11,989
Odisha	9,47,859	9,23,209	4,861

Integrate helplines with 112 by August end: Chief Secy

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra Thursday asked the officials to ensure integration of existing emergency numbers with 'Dial 112', a unified emergency response support system (ERSS), by August end.

This was revealed at a high-level review meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary on a digital mode. Existing emergency numbers like 100 (Police) and 101 (Fire) have already been integrated with the 112 toll-free number, it was learnt.

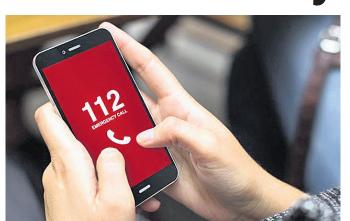
Mahapatra asked the Home department to sensitise people about functioning of the unified number so that a maximum of the citizens can benefit from the initiative.

Apart from 100 and 101, existing emergency numbers in the state include 102 (Janani Express), 104 (Covid), 108 (Ambulance), 181 (Women helpline) and 1098 (Child helpline). Besides, dedicated helpline services are also available for the senior citizens and the differently-abled.

The Chief Secretary directed the officials to work towards making ERSS more responsive and prompt. He emphasised upon reducing the response time, the duration between receipt of a call and the vehicle reaching the service delivery point, it was learnt.

The officials were also asked to deploy more manpower and vehicles for immediate response. The parallel helplines would gradually be closed with full functioning and stabilisation of the ERSS, it was learnt.

According to Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Sanjeev Chopra,



EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Mahapatra emphasised upon reducing the response time, duration between receipt of a call and the vehicle reaching the service

Out of 20,811 calls received by SERC between March 19 and May 31 this year, 73% cent were regarding police and the rest regarding fire events

The state govt has allocated Rs 157.12 crore and sanctioned 2,500 posts for the project

the State Emergency Response Centre (SERC) has been functioning roundthe-clock with 60 call takers, 12 computer-aided systems, 151 vehicles and 400 Fire Service vehicles.

Out of the 20.811 calls received by SERC between March 19 and May 31 this year, 73 per cent were

regarding police and the rest 27 per cent pertain to fire events. The response centre received 5,415 calls regarding ambulance services in

the period, Chopra said. Moreover, out of the 8,807 calls received by SERC in June, 93 per cent sought police intervention, while the remaining 7 per cent related to fire incidents. During the month, 1,821 calls for emergency ambulance service were received and attended to, Chopra pointed out.

Notably, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had launched the 'Dial 112' ERSS wherein people can call the toll-free number for all emergency services, including police, fire and health, March 19 this year. Patnaik had also inaugurated the SERC and flagged off the emergency response vehicles fitted with mobile data terminals on the day.

The state government has allocated Rs 157.12 crore and sanctioned 2,500 posts for the project. The single-number service aims to benefit people, especially women and

Mo Bus service to resume July 19

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Following relaxation in the lockdown norms by the state government, the Capital Regional Urban Transport (CRUT) Thursday said it will resume Mo Bus service for all routes of the Capital city July 19.

"Regular Mo Bus service will resume July 19. We will also transport the passengers from railway station to Cuttack and Khurda during the weekend shutdowns. Shuttle service will be available from airport to railway station," CRUT informed through a tweet.

The announcement from the CRUT came after the state government allowed intra-state bus services as part of gradual unlocking process. However, interstate bus services will remain suspended till August. Moreover, bus service to Puri town will also remain suspended till the midnight of July 25 in view of the Rath Yatra.

As per the relaxed guidelines, buses have been barred from taking standing passengers. All private and public buses will carry passengers as per the seating capacity only, said the guidelines. Tax waiver for buses

The state Transport department Thursday exempted stage/contract carriages and buses of all educational institutions from payment of taxes till the month of July.

The department, in a notification issued Thursday, said that the government had earlier suspended movement of interstate buses owing to the lockdown while intra-state movement of buses was also affected. Thus it exempted stage/contract carriages and buses of all educational institutions in the state from payment of taxes and additional taxes for the month of April, May and June 2021

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Heavy rain likely from July 18

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: The regional office of India Meteorological Department (IMD) Thursday said that heavy rain is likely to lash several districts from July 18.

While thunderstorm and lightning could be seen in parts of the state till July 17, heavy rain is likely to lash several districts of the state from July 18, said the MeT department.

The department, while issuing warning for Friday, said, "Thunderstorm along with lightning is very likely to occur at one or two places in Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Boudh, Bolangir, Sonepur, Angul, Dhenkanal, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj dis-



It also added, "Light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at many places in south interior Odisha and at a few places over the remaining districts of Odisha."

Lightning, thunderstorms and light to moderate rain are likely to be seen in several parts of the state

The weatherman, however, said that seven districts of the state would witness heavy rain July 19. "Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places in the districts of Nuapada, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Koraput, Keonihar, Mayurbhanj and Sundargarh," the department said while issuing warning for July 18.

It said the highest rainfall was recorded in Parlakhemundi which saw 32.8mm rain while it was followed by Sundargarh which recorded 18mm rain during the last 24 hours.

The highest temperature was recorded in Sambalpur at 35.9 degrees Celsius while the minimum of 18 degrees Celsius was recorded in Phulbani Thursday

Repair of Puri chariots in full Submit HC orders in Pari case: SC swing; southward turn July 17

A TOTAL OF 45 RAILWAY TECHNICIANS ALONG WITH MAHARANA AND OTHERS HAVE BEEN PRESSED INTO SERV

Puri, July 15: Two days before the Dakhina Moda (southward turn) ritual, cracks were Thursday noticed on the wheels of the three chariots 'Taladhwaja' 'Darpadalana' and 'Nandighosha'.

Sources said large cracks appeared on the brake wheel of the 'Taladhwaja'. Besides, some minor cracks were also found on the 'Prava' of Nandighosha and Darpadalana.

A technical team has already been pressed into service for repair of the cracks. The team comprises of senior railway engineers, Maharana servitors, Bhoi servitors and Kamar servitors. Sources said that the work will be completed by Friday before the ritual, scheduled to be held July 17.

The Rath Construction Committee (RCC) led by supervisor Sudarshan Mekap is engaged in the repairing work.



The front wheel of 'Taladhwaia' has slightly been dented and bent due to the crack according to information provided by senior Railway technician Rabi Narayan

"An axle of the front wheel of 'Taladhwaja' has been damaged partially. It is being repaired on war footing using clamps. There is also a gap in the axle which is being repaired," Pani said. "We are confident of completing the repair work within a few hours,'

he added.

However, there is no major damage to the wheels of Nandighosha and Darpadalana chariots, the technician added.

A total of 45 Railway technicians along with the carpenters (Maharana servitors) and others have been pressed into service to repair the chariots at the earliest.

Officials of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) were also present on the spot to monitor the repair works.

New Delhi, July 15: The Supreme Court (SC) Thursday sought the orders pronounced by the Orissa High Court in connection with Nayagarh Pari case.

The SC was hearing a petition filed by Saudamini Sahoo, the mother of 5-year-old girl Pari, who was allegedly kidnapped, raped and killed in July last year.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices AM Khanwilkar and Sanjiv Khanna asked the counsel of the petitioner to place on record the two orders of the Orissa High Court in the case and adjourned the matter for hearing for Friday.

"Please place the two orders of Orissa High Court before us for perusal in the case," Justice Khanwilkar asked petitioner Sahoo's lawyer

During the hearing, counsel for the petitioner Mahesh Jethmalani submitted to the SC that the issue in this case is whether this is a case of organ harvesting or a case of rape and murder. The facts of this case completely contradict the second possibility, said Jethmalani.

Significantly, petitioner Sahu had knocked the door of SC seek-



ing an inquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) into the death of her daughter in July last year at Jadupur in Nayagarh district. The petitioner also sought a direction to the CBI to investigate all missing children cases in the

Sahoo also contended that rampant organ smuggling is the cause of murder of her minor daughter. The petitioner also contended that the police are treating the parents of Pari as criminals. The police are completely insensitive towards the family members of Pari.

She also submitted that pre-

liminary investigation conducted by the state police, the Crime Branch and special investigation team (SIT) illustrates that all of them have made all attempts to sabotage the investigation into the alleged incident and attempted all kind of subversion tactics to influence the complainant and her relatives to discard the aforesaid allegations as false and frivolous

The petitioner also contended that the SIT has not investigated the role of local Inspector In-charge, who has hand in glove with the accused person and was shielding the real culprit and the local MLA,

Gold trading racket busted;

ORGAN TRADING

SC that the issue in this case is whether this is a case of organ harvesting or an incident of

The facts of this case completely contradict the Jethmalani

Pari's mother had knocked the door of SC seeking an inquiry by the CBI into the death of her minor daughter

has also not been interrogated by the SIT.

Notably, the High Court had earlier disposed of two petitions seeking enquiry in Pari case by an independent agency. One petition was filed by the father of Pari while the other was filed by a social organisation. According to the counsel of Sahoo, the High Court had disposed of the petition citing that a petition, filed by the mother of Pari, is already pending with the

Supreme Court.



Carpenters with the help of railway employees repair a chariot in Puri, Thursday

₹3.23L penalty for GST fraud

Cuttack, July 15: The Commissionerate Police Thursday claimed to have busted an illegal gold trading racket and seized huge quantities of low caratage gold ornaments. The racket was involved in interstate transport of gold by evading goods and services tax (GST), police said.

Members of the racket were transporting low caratage gold ornaments and gold-plated imitation jewellery from Punjab to the Silver City through trains, said Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Prateek Singh.

The police seized around 2 kg low caratage gold ornaments and 27,800pieces of gold-plated imitation jewellery from the racketeers. The market value of the seized gold ornaments could be around Rs 53 lakh, sources said.

On a tip-off, a team of Malgodown police carried out a raid at Station



The seized gold ornaments in Cuttack, Thursday

Bazar in the city here Wednesday evening and caught three persons-Gurjeet Singh, Manpreet Singh and Ranjan Sahoo—for illegal transportation and sale of gold ornaments, said the DCP.

Gurjeet and Manpreet used to transport low caratage gold ornaments from Amritsar to Cuttack through trains while Sahoo was selling the jewellery to the locals. They were evading the GST, added the DCP.

Preliminary enquiry revealed that there was tax evasion in the transport of gold. The GST officials have collected Rs 3, 23, 118 as tax and penalties from the trio, said Malgodown police in-charge Trupti Ranjan Nayak.

ENERGY SOURCES

Coal-based energy 5,433.98 MW

Source: Central Electricity Authority

far behind many states including

several coastal states which tapped

the potential of clean energy and

installed clean energy sources in

12th among 36 states and union

territories when it comes to clean

OREDA secretary Nikunj Dhal,

when contacted, did not respond to

this reporter's request to discuss

the issues related to clean energy.

energy capacity installation.

According to MNRE, Odisha is

Hydro electricity 2,150 MW

Renewable Energy 549 MW

INSTALLED

CAPACITY

(Till June 30,2021)

8,134 MW

SOURCES

good numbers.

State may miss renewable energy goal

MANISH KIIMAD OD

Bhubaneswar, July 15: The Odisha government's ambitious plan to cut down emissions and shift to clean energy seems unlikely to maintain its course.

The state government had planned to cut down emissions in the state and boost the renewable sources of energy like solar energy, biogas, small hydro energy, wind energy and others up to 2.2 giga watt (GW) by the end of 2022.

However the progress of installation of clean energy seems to be going on a low pace. According to the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), by the end of June 30, 2021, Odisha had a total installation capacity of 8,134 mega watt (MW) of power.

Majority of the electricity in the state, which was around 5,433.98 MW, was made from coal-based thermal energy alone while 2,150 MW of hydro electricity got the second slot in the energy distribution. Energy produced from renewable sources stood only at 549 MW till June 30,2021, as per the CEA data.

According to experts, a lion's share of renewable energy in the state is from solar energy as wind energy remains a non-starter while only a small portion of the re-

Vaishnaw reviews

NEW DELHI: Union Railway Minister

Ashwini Vaishnaw Wednesdav night

ongoing railway projects and future

development aspects of Odisha, an

official said. Vaishnaw reviewed the

projects that include Angul-Sukinda

Khurda Road-Bolangir new line and

doubling projects being undertaken

US outfit donates

O₂ concentrators

of America, a US-based nonprofit

organisation, donated 26 oxygen

concentrators to rural healthcare

facilities in three districts of Odisha

In support of the US Embassy, New

Delhi in partnership with two global

Association of Human Values (IAHV)

and the American India Foundation

(AIF), Spirit of America - is sending

320 oxygen concentrators to

medical facilities fighting the

pandemic on the frontlines.

organisations - the International

others. He also reviewed 19 track

railway projects

reviewed implementation of

implementation of around 25

new railway line (coal project),

Haridaspur-Paradip new line,

in the state, sources said.

Bhubaneswar: Spirit



5,472.58 MW

4,403.48 MW

4,068.30 MW

3,996.50 MW

3,936.36 MW

2,463.21 MW

2,289.97 MW

1,667.50 MW

947.10 MW

407.83 MW

401.72 MW

Source: Ministry of New &

Renewable Energy

newable energy is through biogas.

state. The state has been using Orissa Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) and Green Energy Development Corporation of Odisha Ltd (GEDCOL) for the same sector. Another disadvantage the state has is the lack of dedicated solar parks to ensure large solar grids," a source from the energy department told **Orissa POST**.

Although the state government talked about incentives to the developers of clean energy in its solar policy of 2016, unlike the Union government, it hardly offered subsidies.

Data accessed from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) claimed that Odisha is **MLAS HOLDING OFFICE OF PROFIT**

Guv shall dispose of petition by Nov 8: HC

AGENCIES

Cuttack, July 15: The Orissa High Court has ruled that the Governor of Odisha should expeditiously dispose of a petition seeking disqualification of several MLAs by November 8.

A bench comprising Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice SK Panigrahi was adjudicating a plea wherein it was contended that a post-election petition dated May 28, 2019 filed before the Governor seeking the disqualification of concerned MLAs had not yet been disposed of in accordance with law.

In the post-election petition filed under Article 192 of the Constitution, disqualification of the concerned persons was sought for being MLAs under Article 191 (1)(a) of the Constitution at the time of their election.

The Odisha Offices of Profit (Removal of Disqualifications) Amendment Act, 2016 had been enacted with retrospective effect from January 18, 2016. Consequently, the Governor had appointed chairpersons to 30 District Planning Committees with Minister of State rank and status August 9, 2019.

As a result, a fresh petition was filed by the petitioner before the Governor September 27, 2019 under Article 192 of the Constitution seeking the disqualification of the appointed legislators.

Thereafter, the petitioner had filed a writ petition before the Supreme Court for relief which was disposed of by granting the petitioner the liberty to approach the concerned High Court. Consequently, the present writ petition had been filed.

Taking into consideration the grievance raised, the HC said, "This Court directs that petitioner's two petitions dated 28th May, 2019 and 27th September 2019 shall be disposed of by the Governor of Orissa, after obtaining opinion from the Election Commission of India, not later than 8th November, 2021."

"The decision of the Governor of Odisha shall be communicated to the Petitioner not later than 15th November, 2021,"the HC said in its ruling.

City sees 113 dengue cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: The surge in dengue cases in the City has led healthcare experts to urge people to take preventive measures like observing 'dry day' a week to curb breeding of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes.

The City has reported at least 113 dengue cases this season. While only 10 cases were detected between January and June 29, as many as 103 persons tested dengue positive between June 30 and July 15.

Even as dengue is spreading its tentacles in the Capital city, Public Health director Niranjan Mishra claimed that the situation is under control and that all the dengue patients are under home treatment.

"Areas where water can accumulate like flower pots and air coolers should be emptied and cleaned once a week. It will help curb breeding of Aedes aegypti mosquitoes—the vector that causes dengue and chikungunya," Mishra advised.

ECMO facility starts at AIIMS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Bhubaneswar Thursday launched its first ever ECMO machines, used for patients with compromised lung functions like in cases of Covid-19.

The premier central government

hospital is soon slated to get few more ECMO machines operational. The machine has been installed in the Cardiothoracic department. The hospital has recruited three perfusionists for operating it.

Earlier, patients needed to visit other hospitals outside Odisha to avail treatment from such highend machines. The AIIMS claims that nursing staffers and other paramedical staffers have already been trained to handle the machine and its usage, "AIIMS Hospital is having faculty members from CTVS, Anaesthesiology & Pediatrics who have expertise of ECMO machine. The Hospital has constituted a committee to screen the patients who may need the ECMO treatment," AIIMS, Bhubaneswar said in a statement Thursday.

According to experts, the ECMO machines are important life support systems for patients whose lungs are affected due to diseases. The machines can artificially undertake the work of human lungs in severe conditions. In Covid-19 cases, these machines are used in severely ill patients.

"One of the major challenges (MNRE) claimed that Odisha is ₹385 crore Covid aid for 26L construction workers

AGENCIE

Raiasthan

Gujarat

Telangana

Tamil Nadu

Andhra Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh

Maharashtra

Uttar Pradesh

Puniab

Haryana

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday released Covid-19 assistance to the tune of Rs 385 crore for 26 lakh construction workers in the state.

Under this package, every construction worker will get an assistance of Rs 1,500, an official press release said. The state government had also paid a sum of Rs 1,500 to each construction worker in the state during the first wave of the pandemic last year.

Describing the construction worker as "Biswakarmas" who sacrifice their happiness for the comfort of others, Patnaik said, "No one can deprive poor people of their rights. The poor have every right to live with dignity. They build big buildings with their backs exposed to the scorching Sun. They build good houses for others while staying in inhospitable conditions. On every page of our progress lies a story of the sacrifice and hard work of the workers."

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister said, the financial



Earlier, Patnaik had announced Covid-19 assistance packages for landless farmers, dairy farmers, street vendors, and other poor people

assistance will help alleviate the plight of the construction workers during the pandemic. Construction workers from all the 314 blocks of the state participated in the programme through video conferencing. Earlier, Patnaik had announced Covid-19 assistance packages for landless farmers, dairy farmers, street vendors, and other poor people.

DENOUNCING FUEL PRICE HIKE



Workers of several Left parties stage a demonstration in front of a stationary train at Bhubaneswar railway station, Thursday, as part of their six-hour bandh condemning the skyrocketing prices of fuel and essential commodities

CLASSIFIED

LOST

The given below original ROR has been lost from our Branch. Kindly inform us any information regarding this original ROR to Punjab National Bank, Jharsuguda Branch, Beheramal. Schedule of the land: Khata No. 561, Plot No. 3209/3892, Mouza: Jharsuguda, P.O. + Dist.-Jharsuguda area of land 0.335 acres in the name of Mr. Ratan Lal Agrawal.

By virtue of an affidavit before the Executive Magistrate, Mahanga, I, Akshava Kumar Sahoo. S/o.- Late Dushasan Sahoo, At/P.O.: Lalitagiri, P.S.: Mahanga, Dist.: Cuttack declare that the RSD No. 1823/dtd. 23.8.1993 which was issued to me by the S.R.O., Mahanga has been lost from my custody on 14.6.2021 on transit and it could not be traced out. The scheduled of land is Mouza-Purusottampur, Khata No. 183, Chaka No. 329, Plot No. 976, A0.160 dec. This fact is true and necessary to the concerned authority.

2,110 fresh Covid cases in 24 hours Handled vaccine ALS AMBULAN

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Odisha's Covid-19 caseload Thursday mounted to 9,47,859 after 2,110 more people tested positive for the infection, while 66 fresh fatalities pushed the toll to 4,861, a Health department official said.

Of the 2,110 new cases, 1,213 were reported from quarantine centres, and the rest detected during contact tracing, the official added.

Five districts logged more than 100 fresh cases each. Khurda district, of which the state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the maximum number of new infections at 458, followed by Cuttack at 323, Balasore at 168, Kendrapara at 132, and Puri at 113. Nuapada district recorded the lowest number of new infections at two.

The coastal state has been registering over 60 fatalities in a day since July 11. Khurda reported 21 fatalities, followed by Bargarh and Sundargarh at 10 each, Balasore at eight, Sambalpur at seven, and Bhadrak and Mayurbhani at two each.

One each succumbed to the disease in Bolangir, Cuttack, Ganjam,

Jagatsinghpur, Kalahandi and Puri. This apart, 53 Covid-19 patients in the state have died due to co-

morbidities, the official said.

Taking to Twitter, the Health department said, "This (fatality) list does not reflect deaths occurring on a particular day. It gives details of past deaths for which the audit process has been duly completed and



Centre has agreed to allocate for Odisha 15.92 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine and 1.48 lakh doses of Covaxin for the second half of July

Odisha will be getting 18,54,830 shots of Covishield and 3,81,490 of Covaxin in July if the Centre makes the allocation, as promised

As of Wednesday, the state was left with 2,62,060 shots of Covishield and 2,32,530 of Covaxin

the cause identified as Covid-19." Odisha currently has 22,299 active cases, while 9,20,646 patients, including 2,605 Wednesday, have recovered from the highly infectious disease.

Over 1.48 crore sample tests have been conducted in the state thus far, including 72,322 Wednesday. Odisha's positivity rate stands at 6.38 per cent

per cent.

Meanwhile, sources in the health department said that the Centre has agreed to allocate for Odisha 15.92 lakh doses of Covishield vaccine and 1.48 lakh doses of Covaxin for

the second half of July. Odisha will be getting 18,54,830

2 more containment zones come up in City

The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC)
Thursday declared two residential complexes, one at Khandagiri and another at Rasulgarh, here as containment zones after detection of Covid

cases from their premises.
According to BMC sources,
Satyasai Enclave at Lane 3 in
Khandagiri area and Gunjan
Palace in Rasulgarh area of the
Capital city have been declared

containment zones.

"In a bid to curb the spread of infection, entry and exit of people in these containment zones have been restricted until further orders," the civic body said, adding essential items and medicines for those within the containment zones will be supplied

by the civic body.

The Capital city has witnessed seven containment zones within a month, said an official.

shots of Covishield and 3,81,490 of Covaxin in July if the Centre makes the allocation, as promised, a senior official stated

ior official stated.
As of Wednesday, the state was left with 2,62,060 shots of Covishield and 2,32,530 of Covaxin, he said.

and 2,32,530 of Covaxin, he said. More than 1.36 crore shots have been administered in Odisha so far, he added.

hesitancy in tribal areas: Health dept

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Medical officers appointed at several tribal dominated districts admitted Thursday that the workers faced problems while vaccinating several tribal communities.

The officials, however, claimed that the Health department was committed to go extra mile to vaccinate people in such areas. This came after an orientation programme was held virtually with media professionals from tribal areas jointly by state Health department, UNICEF and the Press

Information Bureau (PIB).
Dr Pranatini Nayak, Additional
Director Public Health Officer,
Keonjhar admitted that during
the vaccination drive in Banspal
block, several villagers fled to
forests in fear of vaccinations
when health professionals visited
their areas.

She said that special measures are now being taken to tackle such issues.

"Such things happened initially in tribal areas in Banspal block but we roped in the district administration and intensified awareness drives. Slowly we have been able to counter such issues," she said

The Health department said that the vaccination coverage had been on the upside.

ALS AMBULANCE FOR CARE HOSP



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 15: Bajaj Allianz General Insurance in collaboration with Jankidevi Bajaj Gram Vikas Sanstha donated an advanced life support (ALS) ambulance to city's Care Hospital, Thursday.

Under the Saving Lives Initiative, the insurance company is distributing 17 advanced life support ambulances in as many as 17 cities across the country. For Bhubaneswar city, the company donated one advanced life support ambulance to Care Hospital.

"The ambulances will be utilised to carry trauma patients to our hospital, provide free services to patients from BPL category, training services to corporate and government establishments on basic life support, and conduct other CSR

activities like skill development program as designed by state and central government," said HCOO of Care Hospital Bhubaneswar Kislay Anand

On this occasion, Anand expressed his gratitude towards the initiative.

He said that the ambulance has added another feather to the unit and it would speed up the team's response in reaching out to the poor and those in need of immediate medical assistance.

medical assistance.

The inaugural ceremony was flagged off by chief guest Ramakant Pradhan (Zonal Manager – Union Bank of India), Anand himself, Lokanath Dash (General Manager), Madhumita Pradhan (AMA), Soumya Ranjan Mohanty (Manager-BD), Kunal Hota (PRO)

and others.

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GREEN RAY CHIT FUND SCAM

CBI arrests CMD's brothers



CBI officials arresting the accused at their house in Jaleswa

OrissaPOST

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaleswar, July 15: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) intensified its investigation into a multi-crore chit fund scam in the state. After a hiatus of seven years, a six-member CBI team from Bhubaneswar led by DSP Ashok Kumar conducted a raid in Jaleswar of Balasore district Wednesday and arrested two accused from their house in connection with the fraud committed by Green Ray International Ltd (GRIL).

The duo was identified as Mir Jamir and Kalo. They are brothers of Mir Sahiruddin alias Gora, the CMD of GRIL.

They were arrested for their alleged involvement in the chit fund case. Some properties of Sahiruddin were also seized during the raid, CBI official said.

The company CMD, Sahiruddin, had been arrested in 2017 by the central probe team in connection with the scam.

It may be noted here that the company was set up in Jaleswar in 1998 and later spread its network in parts of Odisha, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Pondicherry, Goa, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

The company used to run 105 branches across the country while 57 branches were in Odisha alone. It had allegedly collected over ₹2000 crore and duped gullible investors to the tune of around ₹1.000 crore.

The company ran 105 branches across the country out of which 57 branches were in Odisha. It had allegedly collected over ₹2000 crore from people

invested the money in various businesses like garments. pharmacy and even in foreign countries. The company has bought 50 acres of land at different places

of the company's CMD were seized during the raid. Sahiruddin had been arrested from Kolkata in 2017 by the central probe team in connection with

Sahiruddin had invested the money in various businesses like garments, pharmacy, education sectors and even in foreign countries. The company has bought 50 acres of land at different places. The company had collected around ₹500 crore from people in Odisha.

The Odisha Crime Branch had earlier probed the chit fund case and frozen dozens of bank accounts of the prime accused, apart from seizing huge quantities of gold and silver coins from his possession.

The CBI officials took the two to a police station first and then to the Bhubaneswar office. After the CBI action, other scamsters involved in it are scared of.



A teacher applying brushstrokes to a painting drawn on the wall of Karatali UP School in Bipulingi panchayat of Chhatrapur block. The painting aims at

Tehsildar makes filling station man do sit-ups



POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, July 15: An employee of a filling station in Ganjam district was forced to do sit-ups by a senior administrative official for not wearing a mask, a report said. The Ganjam tehsildar was drawn into a controversy after a video of the incident went viral in social media

The incident occurred when Ganjam tehsildar Arun Kumar Nayak in an official vehicle was passing by a filling station near the National Highway in Huma-Purusottampur area July 14.

He found that neither the emplovees nor the two-wheeler riders, who were at the petrol pump, were wearing masks. He stopped

Dhenkanal, July 15: Sabyasachi

Nanda (28), an engineer from

Beltikiri village in Dhenkanal dis-

trict, is reportedly stranded in

South Africa. His family members

have sought the help of both the

state and the central governments

to bring him back to the country.

According to reports, Sabyasachi

had gone for a 3-month long project

at a private farmhouse in South

Africa in 2020. However, as Covid-19

struck the world, he was stranded in

the country. His passport and visa had

POST NEWS NETWORK

and immediately directed the filling station employee to do sit-ups as a punishment instead of imposing a fine on him.

The filling station staff followed the tehsildar's directive and did sit-ups in public. The CCTV cameras installed at the filling station and onlookers captured the incident.

The incident has raised eyebrows after a video of the incident went viral. Locals alleged that even though the tehslidar has been delegated power to take action against Covid guideline violators, he cannot force someone to do sit-ups in public.

When contacted, tehsildar Na termed the viral video fake and rejected the charge.

Odia techie stranded in S Africa, kin seek help

As Covid-19 struck the

world, Sabyasachi was

stranded in the country

while his passport and

also expired during that period.

Sabyasachi had informed the

Indian embassy there about it

and they had assured to arrange

his return once the situation

STATUE UNVEILING

visa expired during

that time

turns to normal.

Long-awaited ILS at VSS Airport starts functioning

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharsuguda, July 15: With Instrument Landing System (ILS) becoming operational at the Veer Surendra Sai Airport from midnight July 14, the problems aircraft faced while landing during inclement weather have ended.

ILS is an electronic guidance system designed to provide short range guidance to pilots for landing aircrafts during bad weather.

The Veer Surendra Sai Airport had been devoid of this facility. Because of this, fliers would face problems as the scheduled flights were either cancelled or delayed. Local people had long demanded the ILS facility at

"Keeping this in mind, the airport authorities installed the facility at ₹26 crore. The same was made functional from Wednesday midnight," informed director, Veer Surendra Sai Airport, Kishore Senapati. Pilots would no longer face the problems they faced during landing, he added.

Prior to installation of ILS facil-

February 19, some masked youths

had entered the farmhouse where

Sabyasachi was working. The mis-

creants murdered the owner's son.

Following the incident, police had

in the case.

back his son.

ity, planes were landing under Doppler Very High-Frequency Omni Range (DVOR) and Distance Measuring Equipment (DME) procedure. Under DVOR procedure, small aircrafts and big planes required at least 1,500 metre and 2,100 metre visibility respectively. As of now, planes will be able to make landing even if the visibility is 800

Notably, the airport has been deeloped by the Airports Authority of India (AAI) in collaboration with the state government at an estimated

metre, it was learnt.

ernment chipping in with ₹75 crore. An MoU between the AAI and the

state government was inked July 30, 2014. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) gave the airport a 4C category licence in August 2018. The VSS Airport is the second commercial airport in Odisha after Biju Patnaik International Airport in Bhubaneswar. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had inaugurated the airport September 22, 2018. It is spread over 1,027.5 acres with a 2,390metre long runway

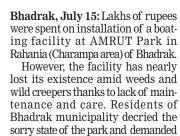
AMRUT YOJANA COMES CROPPER

BHADRAK BOATING POND BURIED UNDER WEEDS



POST NEWS NETWORK

its renovation.



In 2019, the park was built under the AMRUT Yojana at Rahania. The municipality authorities invested about ₹70 lakh for excavation of the boating pond near the park. The park was inaugurated by then MLA Jugal Kishore Patnaik and municipality chairperson Manas Mohanty July 18, 2019.

A boating club was also set up for this. Since the Covid swept across the state last year, the facility was left unused due to entry restrictions. The premises of the boating club were abandoned. It was alleged that the municipality has no dearth of funds, but it has failed to maintain the facility.

In 2019, the park was built under the Atal Mission for **Rejuvenation and Urban** Transformation scheme at Rahania. The municipality authorities spent about ₹70 lakh for excavation of the boating pond near the park

It was learnt that the municipality had received over ₹1 crore while ₹7 lakh was allocated for renovation of the boating pond. An SHG had been awarded the renovation work. However, the renovation was allegedly botched up. The pond is now full of weeds. Three boats are lying unused in the park.

Locals have demanded that the civic body authorities pay attention to the park's maintenance.

Executive officer of the municipality, Devi Prasad Rout, said the renovation of the pond could not be done due to the Covid situation. It will be renovated soon, he added.

Couple found hanging in home

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 15: A couple was found hanging inside their house at Sundarpur village under Binjharpur block of Jajpur district Thursday.

The deceased have been identified as Deepak Kumar Nath and Anita Nath. It is suspected that they committed suicide over a family dispute. According to

reports, Deepak used to work in a private company outside Odisha but had been staying in the house after the lockdown.

Locals said that the lockdown induced finanical problem for couple, who used to squabble often.

Binjharpur police have seized the bodies and initiated a probe to ascertain the reasons behind the incident.



REGIONAL OFFICE: 108 - B, Unit-VII, Surya Nagar, Gopabandhu Square, Bhubaneswar-751003

With reference to our Public Notice published in "Orissa Post

Narayan Roy the Mortgagor Name: Mr. Sangram Sahoo, S/o Late Lokanath Sahoo has not been published wrongly in the Newspaper. So, it is requested to the General Public that this Account may be read with this above mentioned mortgagor name. All other facts remain unchanged. Date: 15.07.2021 Sd/- Asst. General Manager



No.- 1475

OFFICE OF THE NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, KONARK

INVITATION FOR BID

E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

Bid Reference No. :- KNK NAC 2(2) 2021-22 Bld Identification No. :- 2021_ORULB_69764

No. C-584:- The Executive Officer, Konark N.A.C on behalf of Konark N.A.C invites bids on percentage basis on online mode for CONSTRUCTION OF SMART PARK AT KONARK NAC UNDER "UNNATI" from eligible contractors having experience of equivalent grade/class registered with State on production of definite proof from the appropriate authority. Bid documents consisting of work, estimated cost, Cost of tender paper, EMD, GST Registration No., Time of completion, Class of contractors and the set of terms and conditions of contract. Bids shall be received on online from Dt. 16.07.2021, 10.00 A.M up to Dt.27.07.2021 - 5.00 PM and shall be opened online on Dt.29.07.2021 at 11.00 A.M. Further details and necessary documents can be seen from the procurement Portal

OIPR-13174/11/0001/2122

i.e. www.tendersorissa.gov.in and www.nackonark.in Sd./- Executive Officer, KONARK N.A.C.

GOVT OF ODISHA OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER MINOR IRRIGATION DIVISION, BALANGIR

AT/PO:- BALANGIR, DIST:- BALANGIR MOBILE NO:- 9437435924, E-Mail-mid_balangir@yahoo.co.in No. 1631 Date: - 09.07.2021

IDENTIFICATION No.: Online/01/BGR MID/2021-22 No. A-307:- Bid documents consisting of works, estimated cost, cos of bid documents, time of completion, Class of contractor, terms and

conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal https://tendersodisha.gov.in. Name of the work:- Civil construction works.

No. of works:- 14 (Fourteen) Nos.

Estimated Cost:- Varies Approximately from Rs. 12.91 lakhs to Rs. 26.77 lakhs

Period of completion: - 04 (Four) calendar months Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal

From 19.07.2021 (10.00 AM) to 31.07.2021 (5.00 PM)

Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal: - 31.07.2021 (5.00 PM) Date of opening of Bid:- On dated 02.08.2021 at 10.00 AM onwards in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir.

Date of receipt of Bid Cost- 19.07.2021 (10.00 AM) to 31.07.2021

Date of Lottery (if cases arise) for the works on dated 24.08.2021 at 11.00 AM onwards in the Office of the Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir.

10. Mode of Payment of Bid Cost & Bid Security:- Online 11. Name of the Officer inviting Tender:- Executive Engineer, Minor

Irrigation Division, Balangir. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement porta https://tendersodisha.gov.in

Sd./- Executive Engineer,

OIPR-32118/11/0001/2122 Minor Irrigation Division, Balangir

Former Sambalpur MLA Raseswari Panigrahi unveiling the statue of Maharshi Parshuram at Baidyanath Square in Sambalpur, Thursday









Gratitude: A humble recognition of all that the Divine has done and is doing for you.

THE MOTHER



Putin's dangerous Ukraine narrative

Russian President Vladimir Putin is obsessed with Ukraine – or, rather, with pretending that Ukraine doesn't exist. In his annual call-in show June 30, he claimed that "Ukrainians and Russians are a single people." He then published an article aimed at justifying that "conviction," by tracing the two countries' shared history. It is a master class in disinformation – and one step short of a declaration of war.

Putin begins his tale in Ancient Rus, where Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians were united by one language and – after the "baptism of Russia" into the Orthodox religion – one faith until the fifteenth century. Even amid fragmentation, Putin writes, the people perceived Russia as their shared motherland.

According to this narrative, the Polish-Russian War of 1605-18 was, for the people, "liberating." Ukrainians were "reunited" with the rest of the Russian Orthodox people, forming "little Russia," and the word "Ukraine" was used to mean something like "on the frontier."

In Putin's story, the creation of Novorossiya in 1764 and the expansion of the Russian Empire also reflected the will of the people. "The integration of the western Russian lands into the common state was not only the result of political and diplomatic decisions; it took place on the basis of common faith and cultural traditions" and "linguistic affinity."

General Alexander Suvorov, who overcame tremendous resistance to secure Russia's expanded borders, would surely disagree. But Putin suggests that the shared language – separated only by "regional linguistic features and dialects" – all but nullifies the possibility that Ukraine could have developed its own culture. For example, while Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine's national poet, wrote poems in Ukrainian, he wrote prose mainly in Russian.

Similarly, Nikolai Gogol – born in the Poltava Governorate of Ukraine, then part of the Russian Empire – was a "patriot of Russia," and wrote in the Russian language. "How can this heritage be divided between Russia and Ukraine?"

Later, Putin condemns the "harsh Polonisation" that was carried out during the interwar period, when the Poles suppressed "local culture and traditions." He then credits the Bolsheviks for "developing and strengthening" Ukrainian "culture, language, and identity" through their policy of Ukrainisation.

The problem, Putin continues, is that "Ukrainisation was often imposed on those who did not consider themselves Ukrainian." The Russification of Ukrainians – which far exceeds anything the Poles did – goes unmentioned.

Anders Auslund

Russian President

Vladimir Putin has

lately been going to great lengths to

historical linkages

and Ukraine. In

has any right to

independence,

Putin is setting

the stage for war

between his country

denying that Ukraine

highlight the

Putin also presents the Soviet Union as the savior of Ukrainian reunification. "In 1939, lands that had previously been seized by Poland were returned to the USSR. Their main part was given to Soviet Ukraine." This is a bizarre depiction of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact between the Soviets and Nazi Germany. Yet Putin shamelessly concludes that "contemporary Ukraine was fully created by the Soviet epoch."

Putin does have his disagreements with the Bolsheviks, beyond their apparently excessive Ukrainisation. His problem is not with, say, the Great Famine that killed millions of Ukrainians in 1932-33. (Putin avoids mentioning Stalin at all, and says modern Ukrainian leaders are "rewriting history" when they present the "common tragedy of collectivisation and famine" as a genocide.)

Rather, Putin takes issue with the way the Bolsheviks treated the Russian nation: "as an inexhaustible material for social experiments." Their dreams of "world revolution" and the abolition of nation-states led them arbitrarily to "cut borders" and give away "generous" territorial gifts. "Russia was actually robbed."

Yet, even as the world condemns the "crimes of the Soviet regime," it does not regard the actions of the Bolsheviks to "tear away" historical territories – such as Crimea – from Russia as criminal acts. And Putin knows why: "this led to the weakening of Russia," so our "ill-wishers are satisfied with it."

Putin returns to the ill-wishers, but first he has a thing or two to say about economics. "Ukraine

and Russia have been developing as a single economic system for decades and centuries," achieving a "depth of cooperation" 30 years ago that today's European Union would envy. For example, from 1991 to 2013, he claims – not particularly credibly – that Russian gas subsidies saved Ukraine more than \$82 billion for its budget. He fails to mention the subservience Ukraine's leaders had to offer in return.

"Such a close relationship can...increase the potential of both countries,"

Putin writes. Yet the truth is that those decades of engagement left both economies underdeveloped. No matter: Putin blames Ukraine's "deindustrialization and economic degradation" on its efforts to separate itself from Russia since 2014.

Russia always treated Ukraine "with great love," Putin declares. That's not quite how I would describe imposing severe trade sanctions on a country in turmoil, as Russia did to Ukraine when President Viktor Yanukovych, a Putin crony, was ousted in 2014. Nor is it an apt representation of shooting down a passenger plane, as Russian forces did in July of that year, killing 298 people.

Yet, according to Putin's narrative, Ukrainian elites "squandered the achievements of many generations," justifying their country's independence "by denying its past." And they have been urged along by none other than the EU and the United States – the apparent villains of modern Ukraine's story, who are engaged in a comprehensive "anti-Russia" project.

This echoes Putin's claim during the call-in show: "The main issues concerning Ukraine's functioning are not decided in Kyiv, but in Washington and, partly, in Berlin and Paris." In Putin's view, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky's acceptance of "the full external management of his country" renders any attempt to meet with him futile.

Nonetheless, Putin says in his article, "Russia is open for dialogue with Ukraine." But, for such a dialogue to work, Ukraine must be representing its "own national interest," rather than attempting to "serve foreign interests." Of course, in Putin's view, Ukraine's only national interest must be to unite with Russia.

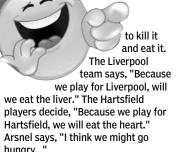
Make no mistake; by denying Ukraine's right to independence, Putin is setting the stage for war. The West must quickly decide what it is willing to do to prevent it.

The author is a senior fellow at the Stockholm Free World Forum. $$\tt @PROJECT SYNDICATE$$

LOL

Hungry footballers

Three football teams (Arsnel, Liverpool, and Hartsfield) are flying from England across Egypt for a match in the Middle East. Their plane crashes in the desert and they survive. After days of wandering, they are really hungry so when they come across a camel, the footballers decide





MESSY, IMAGE SULLIED

o sooner the new-look Union Cabinet with 43 fresh inductions took place, the country got a shock from a French court freezing residential properties owned by Government of India in the wealthiest central Paris, following a retrospective tax dispute with the British power and energy giant, Cairn Energy.

High taxation, retrospective tax and confusion on predating taxes are an unresolved quagmire, as recently mentioned by President Ramnath Kovind. While there is OECD move to have global minimum tax on corporate at 15 per cent or higher, no such view has as yet been moved for individuals. India hiked the personal income-tax to 42 per cent plus cess, taking it to almost 45 per cent. The UPA government introduced the controversial retrospective tax in March 2012. The NDA II was expected to make amends after 2014, but a bureaucrat-pressured system continued with the supposed oddity.

The French court's decision is unfortunate as it is feared to start a new diplomatic conflict as it also impinges on the sovereignty of the country. Plus, it sets a bad precedent and may create an image that India can be taken lightly by

MNCs and other private players. The decision will impact 20 properties valued at Euro 20 million (₹177 crore), as part of a guarantee of the debt owed to Cairn that exited India a few years ago. The company with market capitalisation of £755 million (about ₹7,800 crore) – has filed cases in several countries to pursue the unpaid international arbitration award of \$1.7 billion (₹12,750 crore).

In fact, January 20, 2012, in a similar case, the Supreme Court of India ruled in favour of Vodafone overturning a 2010 decision of Bombay High Court, which had ruled that Vodafone was liable to pay \$2 billion as income tax because of the Indian capital gains taxes (CGT) applied on the share transfers between two non-resident entities. The apex court ruled that CGT was not applicable and added that ₹2,500 crore which Vodafone has already paid should be returned. Shockingly, our smitten



The French court's decision is unfortunate as it is feared to start a new diplomatic conflict as it also impinges on the sovereignty of the country. Plus, it sets a bad precedent and may create an image that India can be taken lightly by MNCs and other private players

tax officials took a different route to circumvent the SC ruling by the introduction of retrospective tax in March 2012, allowing the government to levy CGT, a move that was piloted by the former Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee in 2012.

Thereafter, former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley in March 2018 had said the decision to tax Vodafone retrospectively by the UPA government was erroneous and also the "present government will not be going down that path". On July 18, 2014, he had said that India would not levy any tax with retrospective effect that creates additional burden. But he made no move to repeal the 2011 law, which creates policy uncertainty. Investors are wary of it and retroactive tax bill of \$2.6 billion.

The statements of Jaitley and Prime Minister Narendra Modi pledging not to use retrospective taxation to overturn on Cairn Energy were used by a three-member tribunal at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague December 20, 2020 to rule that the 2006 re-organisation of Cairn Energy's India business prior to listing on local bourses was not "unlawful tax avoidance" and ordered tax authorities to drop the tax demand. This didn't happen due to bureaucratic audacity. The NDA government has stuck to the stand and has now challenged the award arguing that bilateral investment treaties cannot override legislature's powers.

Cairn has moved for an arbitration award in other jurisdictions in different continents, including the US, the UK, Canada, Singapore, Mauritius, France and the Netherlands as the company intends to focus on high-value assets. It had filed cases in the Southern District of New York, seeking judicial confirmation that Air India can be classed as the alter ego of the Indian state and thereby jointly liable for the arbitral award

Cairn Energy has submitted

detailed series of proposals to Government of India for settlement of the case. But the NDA government is now opposing its own stand. And this is because of reticent officials, whose ego is hurt as also perhaps they apprehend action against them for the folly they have committed.

The Cabinet rejig is significant from the point of view of the corporate sector. There are many IAS, some IPS and other officials as also scions of the Scindia family Being ministers they grow in stature and influence but it's difficult to understand what changes they would make to citizens' lives. Some ministers that were dropped had a better rapport with the people and now many inducted are so steeped in "power" they are unwilling to extend access to the commoners. Instead it reserved for the monetarily or otherwise powerful. This obviously serves the corporate well. And if the Neera Radia Tapes and Vaishnavi scandals are instances, it means they have powers, perhaps more than the most powerful. Ministers can thus be in business but would they make a difference to mundane lives?

While many would be perceived as such, three ministers are learnt to be victims of different lobbies – IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad because of social media, which had banned him for 24 hours; Health Minister Harsh Vardhan because of pharma lobbies plus his own medical fraternity from AIIMS and ICMR and Labour Minister Santosh Gangwar due to industries, which didn't want a favourable labour code.

Ministers may be fine individuals, but political persons won't be able to function because of such hurdles. The French court decision on Cairn is of national concern. One company is sullying the image of the country across continents and topmost bosses are prevented from correcting it. India has to lead in smoothing the tax process as also reducing it, if the government wants a quick economic recovery. Modi has to ensure a Cairn or Vodafone is not repeated and bureaucrats do not muddy the waters.

- |

SPECTRUM JAPAN

Shivaji Sarkar

TAX AND

PREDATING

HIGH TAXATION,

RETROSPECTIVE

CONFUSION ON

TAXES ARE AN

UNRESOLVED

AS RECENTLY

MENTIONED BY

QUAGMIRE,

PRESIDENT

RAMNATH

KOVIND

Japan's Quiet Olympics



Takatoshi Ito

JAPAN'S STATE OF
EMERGENCY
DECLARATION IN
RESPONSE TO
COVID-19
CONCERNS HAS
ELIMINATED ANY
REMAINING HOPE
FOR A "NORMAL"
OLYMPIC/
PARALYMPIC
GAMES IN TOKYO
THIS SUMMER

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa POST

(200 words), articles and

requested to send their contact numbers and full

columns (between 750-1250 words). Contributors are

postal address/email ID. They may also

and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com

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send in their valuable comments, opinion

n July 8, the Japanese government declared a state of emergency in Tokyo until August 22, owing to the Covid-19 pandemic. That means the Tokyo Olympic Games (July 23-August 8) will be subject to strict limits on spectators for large events.

The new restrictions doubtless come as a disappointment to Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, who has been eager to showcase the Games as a symbol of Japan's ability to overcome the difficulties it has faced since the 2011 earthquake and Fukushima nuclear disaster. There will now be no roaring cheers at any of the races or other larger competitions. The festive mood in Tokyo has quickly evaporated, as has any hope of a boost to the local economy.

boost to the local economy.

True, a state of emergency in Japan is much softer than the lockdowns imposed in many Western countries over the past 16 months. People can still carry on with an almost-normal life of shopping and eating out, albeit with more restrictions on restaurants and large retailers' hours of operation. But this is the fourth declaration of a pandemic state of emergency in Tokyo since April 2020, and restrictions on serving alcohol in restaurants

have been added since the last one, because loud conversations without masks are a suspected source Covid-19 cluster spreading.

Although Suga's government has "requested" that people eschew unnecessary travel and work from home during the state of emergency, this admonition proved to be effective only during the first emergency in April-May 2020. Since then, the government has tried different approaches. Last fall, for example, it actually encouraged people to travel by offering subsidies to stimulate the tourism industry. But, following a big surge of infections toward the end of 2020, a second state of emergency was imposed, from January 8 until March 21, and that was soon followed a third, from April 25 to June 20.

third, from April 25 to June 20.

These stop-and-go emergency declarations indicate either a lack of will or an inability to learn from previous episodes. The Japanese experience thus stands in stark contrast with that of New York, which was regarded as a global epicenter of infections back in the spring of 2020. After maintaining an extended semi-lockdown, it was able to reopen gradually this year without backtracking.

Not surprisingly, the Japanese

critical of the government for its inability to forecast and control infections, and there is growing frustration with the slow pace of the country's vaccination rollout. The critics are right: the vaccination rate in Japan lags far behind most other advanced economies. As of July 11, Japan was administering doses at a rate of 49 for every 100 people, compared to 90 in France, 98 in Germany, 100 in the United States, and 119 in the United Kingdom. With television and YouTube images now showing the cheerful return to mask-free normal life in New York and other cities, many Japanese are envious. But the Japanese public has

been divided between those demanding a cancellation of the entire Olympic-Paralympic Games and those (particularly in the restaurant business) objecting to strong restrictions on social and economic activities. Obviously, the government cannot satisfy both sides at once, so it has settled on the narrow middle path of holding the games without spectators.

On the economic front, overall consumption has been dampened this year by the intermittent surges of infections in Tokyo and the stop-

and-go emergency declarations. In April-June of this year, the Nikkei 225 performed worse than any other major advanced-economy stock index. Given that a weak economy is always politically damaging to the ruling party, Suga is under immense pressure to achieve a strong reopening and recovery.

But to have resumed the full range of economic activities, and ensure that the Games would be a festive affair, new infections needed to remain low. The only way to do that was to roll out vaccinations early and rapidly, as happened in New York. Although procurement has been accelerating, Japan was late to secure vaccines, and Japanese authorities have now revealed that as of the end of June, the country had received only 13.7 million of an expected 40 million Moderna vaccine doses.

The writer, a former Japanese Deputy Vice Minister of Finance, is a professor at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and Senior Professor at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies in Tokyo.

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Benefits for vaccinated citizens

Sir, Although the government has not yet succeeded in providing the vaccines as required, state-owned banks have come up with new schemes for consumers. It is worth mentioning here that during the Covid-19 period, the amount of deposits in the bank decreased. Banks have come up with a new way to get rid of this anxiety, in which people will be encouraged to get vaccinated as well as reap some benefits. Some state-owned banks in the country have started offering special fixed deposit schemes for vaccinated individuals. The financial benefits aim to encourage more people to get vaccinated against the deadly virus. A few state-owned banks have decided to offer higher interest rates on fixed deposits to people who have got at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. The offers have been announced for a limited period. UCO Bank has announced that it is offering 30 basis points or 0.30 per cent higher interest rate on fixed deposits of 999 days for applicants who have received at least one dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. This is in addition to another offer announced by the Central Bank of India in April. The bank had recently launched the "Immune India Deposit Scheme" with an additional interest rate of 25 basis points above the applicable rate for those who have been vaccinated.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Population problem

Sir, The country's large population is affecting our Covid-19 control measures through vaccination. In spite of 38 crore doses being dispensed with, we are nowhere near vaccinating the entire population as the requirement is for nearly 220 crore or more doses. While all experts and the media talk of the failure of the Centre to make the vaccines available, they ignore the elephant in the room - our uncontrolled population. Even as advanced nations with a fraction of our population are struggling to give jabs to their entire population, the fact that our nation has dispensed 38 crore doses is indeed an achievement. The failure is the huge population we are saddled with as politics has prevented successive governments from taking any action to control the same. For India, population control is very important. Nobody can deny the fact that most of the problems faced by the nation can be solved relatively easily if the population is brought under control.

CK Subramaniam, MUMBAI



Koraput Collector Abdaal M Akhtar flagging off a vehicle meant to create awareness on Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, at Jeypore Thursday

5 INCLUDING SCRIBE ARRESTED FOR LOOT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 15: Police Thursday arrested five members of a dacoity gang including a scribe and the mastermind on charge of looting ₹8,71,000 from the soil conservation office in Mathili block in this district, the previous night.

The accused were identified as Prasant Kumar Sagaria, a native of Patraput village and the correspondent of a television channel Ratan Majhi and Anand Kashyap of Mendukuli village, Krushna Katia of Madkamiguda village and Ramachandra Nag, a collection agent of rainwater field development office and the mastermind of

A case was registered in this connection and the accused produced in court. This was stated here by SDPO Abhilash G at a presser, Thursday.

The SDPO said Nag who was working as a collection agent four months back had collected over ₹8,71,000 from villagers of Mendukuli. Doraguda, Ramaguda and Bamnaguda towards sale of saplings, fertilizers, seeds and agricultural implements. He left for Mathili to deposit the money in the soil conservation office when the deputy director Pramod Kumar Behera called him on phone.

He deposited the money and urged Behera to give him a diary to write the name of the beneficiaries. Behera was looking for a diary when four miscreants entered the office and decamped with the money by brandishing knives. Behera lodged a complaint at Mathili police station following which police launched a manhunt and arrested the miscreants. During interrogation, the accused revealed Nag, the collection agent was the

Cong sees scam in Saubhagya scheme

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabanrangpur, July 15: The Congress party has alleged largescale irregularities in rural electrification programme under the Saubhgya Yojana in the district. Addressing a pres meet here, president of the party's district unit, Muna Tripathy alleged many rich people have got electricity connections to their houses while scores of poor people have been left out. The party workers said

Saubhagya scheme is meant for providing electricity to the poor people on subsidized rates.

In Nabarangpur municipality area, 2,657 people have got benefits from the scheme, but many rich people have managed to get the benefits. The field official of the elec-



tricity distribution company was accused of showing favoritism to wealthy people in electricity supply to their houses.

In some cases, a beneficiary has more than one connection several connections for government quarters.

Congress leader Muna Tripathy pointed out that Brundabati Majhi, a beneficiary of Tapakariaguda, has 12 electricity connections in her name while Jagannath Jani has got 10 connections under different consumer IDs and meters.

Many consumers are not issued bills as the field staff do not collect dues from these consumers by taking cuts from them. it was alleged.

The Congress workers have demanded a Vigilance probe into alleged irregularities in Saubhagva scheme. The party has already got data about the irregularities under RTI and provided it to the executive engineer of the distribution company.

Passing vehicles spell doom for wildlife of Shalabhanga

BUILDING OF UNDERPASSES THROUGH WHICH ANIMALS C SAFELY PASS ACROSS THE ROAD CAN CHECK DEATHS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, July 15: Shalabhanga forest area under the Mahanadi Wildlife Division (Dasapalla block) in Nayagarh district is rich in wildlife. However, what poses dangers to their lives are speeding vehicles on the Bolangir-Khurda NH-57 while there is no provision of underpasses in the area, a report said.

Wildlife experts and environmentalists have pointed out that the wild animals face peril from speeding vehicles on the NH-57 as they do not have safe passage in the area in the absence of underpasses.

In the past, there are several instances of wild animals having come under the wheels of passing vehicles. In these areas, drivers have been cautioned for slow driving, but they do not abide by the warnings. It is alleged that reckless driving on this route has been the major problem for wildlife at night.

Recently, the issue came to the fore after a leopard was found dead in a road accident in Shalabhanga. Following the incident, the forest department put up a board with a warning against reckless driving.

'Just putting up a warning sign in the area will not guarantee safety of the wild animals, which are losing their lives. Drivers hardly care about speed of their vehicles,' wildlife experts say.

'There is a need for night patrolling in the area. What is more important is building of underpasses through which animals can pass across the road safely." they observed. The NH poses threat to the lives of the wild animals wandering freely in the reserve forest area. In view of the dangers to wildlife,



Farmers fume as reservoir

water fails to reach tail end

FARMING ACTIVITIES HIT FOR LACK OF WATER

IN THE PAST, THERE INSTANCES OF WILD ANIMALS HAVING COME UNDER THE WHEELS OF PASSING VEHICLES. IN THESE AREAS, DRIVERS HAVE BEEN CAUTIONED FOR SLOW DRIVING, BUT

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NHAI AND THE FOREST DEPARTMENT SHOULD COME OUT WITH A PLAN TO CONSTRUCT UNDERPASSES AT SOME PLACES SO AS TO PROVIDE SAFE PASSAGE TO THE WILD ANIMALS

IN VIEW OF THE DANGERS TO WILDLIFE, THE

PARTS OF NH-57 PASSING THROUGH SHALABHANGA FOREST ARE AN ELEPHANT CORRIDOR, THE DEPARTMENT HAS PUT UP A WARNING SIGN BOARD TOO. ELEPHANTS ARE AT THE RISK OF LOSING THEIR LIVES

the NHAI and the forest department should come out with a plan to construct underpasses at some places so as to provide safe passages to the wild animals.

A driver said as the area is dense with forest, there is a fear of loot and robbery. So they have to drive with speed in the particular area where police pa-

POST NEWS NETWORK

downstream worried.

left hundreds of farmers at the

Distressed farmers have warned

f intensifying their agitation.

Farmers even staged protests be-

fore the local irrigation office

Wednesday demanding immedi-

ate resolution of their problem.

With monsoon playing truant, agri-

cultural activities in many parts of

the state have been affected. Farmers have demanded that the trolling is required, he noted.

Parts of NH-57 passing through Shalabhanga forest are an elephant corridor. The department has put up a warning sign board too. Elephants are at the risk of losing their lives. The wildlife authorities need to ensure safety of the elephants

Bridge eludes villages courtesy babus' fault

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kesinga, July 15: Due to a faulty survey and carelessness on the part of the executive engineer, engineer and SDO of the rural development department here in Kalahandi district, the fate of Mashanibandh-Bhamarmal bridge over Deheren Jor, a rivulet, is hanging in balance.

To go to Kesinga town, around 10,000 villagers of Balsi and Paralsinga gram panchayats under Kesinga block face a lot of problems. During rainy season, when the rivulet is in spate, people take a detour through Rengali, Kachhar Padar villages to reach the town. School-going students have to stop going to their institutions.

In order to end the problem of the $\,$ villagers, a bridge across the rivulet was announced and subsequently



₹2,23,01,385 was sanctioned in 2018-19 fiscal. Through a tender, a contractor firm was engaged to construct the bridge. Laving up an approach road from Mashanibandh village, the bridge was constructed with three pillars. But what has dogged the project is that two out of the three pillars are constructed on private land that are yet to be acquired. So far, 75 per cent of the sanctioned money has been spent but the bridge has been lying half-con-

structed for three years now. Local residents wanted to know how the engineers let the contractor proceed with the work without ac-

quiring land for the project. "Before the construction of bridge, the executive engineer, engineer and SDO should have had a discussion with the farmers of Mashanibandh and Bhamarmal villages and then acquired land as per the project design. But they did not do that," the villagers alleged. Cashing in on the situation, the land owners are now asking for an exorbitant price for their land, it was learnt.

Meanwhile, the executive engineer has been transferred and his post is lying vacant, affecting all the development projects in

The land owners said they are ready to part with their lands but the officials seem to be dragging their feet. "I am ready to sell my land. I have also visited the concerned officers several times. But I received no assurance from them, observed Tuku Ram Sahu, the land owner, who is a farmer.

SDO Chittaranjan Naik admitted the fault, saying the bridge is lying half constructed due to land

acquisition problem. "We erred in planning which is why problems are arising," he added.

in a fix. He was told that the body

could not be kept in the mortuary

administration take immediate steps so that the reservoir's water reaches all downstream areas. According to reports, when the

and siltation.

release operation.

reservoir was built, the minor irrigation department had set a target to provide irrigation to 750 acres. However, over the years, the reservoir continued to lose its retention capacity due to various reasons - lack of renovation

Its coverage has come down to 425 hectares now. Earlier, the canal was looked after by Pani panchayat and after 2014, the minor irrigation department took over its maintenance and repair, apart from water

"At present, the area does not receive sufficient rain during monsoon. We are unable to carry forward our agriculture work. On the



end close the gates of the canal. We at the tail end have little water for irrigation," some famers lamented.

They alleged that this problem happens as staff of the minor irrigation department help large farmers in checking the water in the upper end.

"Agriculture is our main stay. If water is not made available to us how can agriculture sustain in the tail end area. Another problem is that deep bore wells are not allowed in the irrigated areas." they added.

Farmers like Rajendra Tripathy, Lingaraj Randhari, Parausram Sahani, Balaram Bhatara and Iswar Bhatara said farmlands have cracked for lack of water while paddy saplings have wilted. The saplings need water at this time.

At this time, if the department doesn't make provision of water to the tail end areas, farmers will agitate and gherao the office, they stated.

gineer Pradipta Nisika assured immediate step for release of reservoir water to the area.

When contacted, assistant en-

Loans from watershed projects help tribals of Malkangiri earn livelihood



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, July 15: Neighbourhood banking services through watershed projects have helped tribals earn their livelihood. They have brought in remarkable change in their financial condition during Covid pandemic in Malkangiri, a report said.

Tribals in 10 villages of Mathili block in the district no longer go to banks for loans or take loans from private money lenders as special banks established in their villages under the projects have come to their help.

They take loans from these banks and repay the amounts within the time frame without interest. The tribals have displayed remarkable behaviour in financial prudence and have become an example for others to emulate.

This remarkable change has come at a time when the pandemic has wreaked havoc in the lives of people by rendering them jobless. Establishment of these banks in their neighbourhoods has helped them to stand on their own legs and earn a livelihood for their families. These informal banks use revolving funds available under watershed projects to lend to the According to available reports,

these banks have so far sanctioned ₹1.5 crore to 1,086 tribals in 10 villages of three panchayats. Last year, over ₹70 lakh was disbursed to tribals from the revolving funds of the project. This has ensured food se-

curity and livelihood for the tribals Reports said these banks were established by forming special water conservation committees in the villages. These committees supervise the functioning of the banks and sanction loans to people. After their establishment, they have given away loans ranging from ₹15,000-₹20,000 to every family in all the 10 villages.

The loans have been sanctioned to the villagers for agriculture, small businesses, poultry farming and livestock farming. The tribals have invested the loans in their respective businesses and repaid them within six months without any interest.

Last year, during the first wave of the pandemic, funds over ₹15 lakh to ₹20 lakh from the revolving fund of watershed projects were pooled in Mathili, Kutanipalli, Dalapatiguda, Chaulamendi, Ambapada, Dhoudaguda, Chedenga, Kadapadar, Bayaguda, Sindhabeda and other villages of Mathili block to start the banks. The loans were sanctioned to tribals after making them sign a contract for repayment of the loans within a period of six months.

When contacted, Pramod Kumar Behera, assistant director of soil conservation, said over 1080 tribals taking loans had repaid the amounts within deadline. The scheme will be implemented in other villages in coming days and will be expanded to other blocks in phases. This has given us the hope that financial inclusion and livelihood enhancement can be achieved through community participation, he added.

Defunct freezer at Bargarh DHH; people fret the answer of the staff left the cop

Bargarh, July 15: The freezer of the mortuary at old district headquarters hospital (DHH) in Bargarh town has been lying defunct for a long time, causing a lot of embarrassment to people and police alike.

An incident July 14 laid bare this fact when police experienced problems as the freezer is out of order. Godbhaga outpost officer Bipin Bag had brought an unidentified body to the old DHH for post mortem July 14. In case of unidentified bodies, the rule mandates preserving them for 72 hours for their identification.

After autopsy, Bag asked the staff to keep the body in the mortuary. But, since its freezer was not functioning. With no options left, the Godbhaga police had to take the body to Burla. Informing about the case, Bag said an unidentified man was injured in a road mishap near Godbhaga Samaleswari temple Tuesday. Even though he was immediately rushed to the old DHH, the doctors there declared him received dead. Expressing their concern, local

residents urged the hospital authority to get the freezer repaired as soon as possible. When asked, chief district medical officer Dr Arun Patra said that the mortuary will soon start functioning.



Beneficiaries of MGNREGS demand immediate clearance of pending wages at Nuapada



TWOSTATES





FRIDAY | JULY 16 | 2021 | BHUBANESWAR

'FULL FREEDOM TO ASSAM POLICE'

Sarma had said that shooting at criminals "should be the pattern" if they attempt to escape from custody or try to snatch arms from the police to fire at them

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, July 15: Unfazed by critcent encounter killings, Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Thursday said the state police have "full operational liberty" to fight against the criminals within the ambit of law.

Replying to a Zero Hour discussion on the rising number of encounters initiated by the Leader of the Opposition Debabrata Saikia in the Assembly, Sarma appealed to all the MLAs to send a message that the House is against any form

"As a leader of the House, I thank and congratulate the Assam police for its work as whole and especially in my tenure. I want to tell the DGP that do not torture innocent people. You have full operational liberty as long as you fight against the criminals as per the law." he added

Sarma informed the house that in the last two months, 15 alleged criminals have died and 23 others were injured in police encounters when they snatched service weapons, tried to attack and attempted to escape.

The criminals must understand





As the chief minister of the state and with full sense of responsibility, I want to say that we have zero tolerance towards cow smuggling, drug trade, human trafficking, crime against women and children, and all crimes will be dealt with heavily and firmly irrespective of religion and caste HIMANTA BISWA SARMA I ASSAM CM

that there is a government, which is confident, resolute and has the

them if it is attacked or try to flee but within the ambit of the the Home portfolio.

Giving examples of the situations leading to encounters, he said that among the killed were six suspected Dimasa National Liberation Army (DNLA) terrorists and two alleged militants of United People's Revolutionary Front (UPRF) who were heavily armed and opened fire at police, which went to arrest the insur-

A total of 504 persons have been arrested in the last two months for their alleged involvement in cattle smuggling and only four of them were injured in police firing as they tried to escape, he added.

"It is the police which again take the criminals to hospital, treat them and then produce them in the court. Our main attempt is to get the criminals convicted and punished." Sarma said.

He said that the critics are citing laws and human rights, but the same law and the Constitution give power to a police person to defend himself and act against the criminals.

Claiming that such police encounters have been going on for decades, the chief minister said, "Sympathy is important, but mis-

gerous. If a message goes from here that the police did wrong, then they will sleep again."

Earlier, Saikia pointed out media reports and said no inquiry as per the law has been ordered in the encounters that resulted in deaths of the alleged criminals.

At the first ever face-to-face meeting with the Officers In-Charge (OCs) of all police stations of Assam July 5, Sarma had said that shooting at criminals "should be the pattern" if they attempt to escape from custody or try to snatch arms from the police to fire at them.

On Wednesday, the chief minister told the assembly that the Assam police will retaliate against criminals trying to snatch service weapons of its personnel and attacking them or fleeing from their custody, thereby defending the series of encounters in the last two

Taking suo moto cognisance the Assam Human Rights Commission (AHRC) had July 7 asked the state government to institute an inquiry into the circumstances that led to the death and injury of the accused in police encounters over the past two

I believe all our MLAs will give

their suggestions. We want to

start a tradition that we preserve

our history at the place where it

originated, not in the books,

faith and tradition of the indige-

nous communities are related to

nature and they taught the modern

people how much nature is im-

portant to mankind and how it is

However, with the advent of

modernisation of society, their be-

liefs, traditions and religions started

to become extinct, Sarma said

adding that many communities

lost their languages also. If we

had not considered ourselves as su-

perior, probably questions on na-

ture such as carbon emission or

ozone layer would have never come

The chief minister said that the

YSRC to raise Andhra special status, Krishna water dispute in Parl



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, July 15: The ongoing dispute with Telangana over river Krishna waters and implementation of promises made to the state under the AP Reorganisation Act are some of the main issues that the YSR Congress will raise in the ensuing monsoon session of Parliament.

The YSRC will also reiterate the demand for grant of special category status to Andhra Pradesh as per the promise made in Parliament.

Ahead of the Parliament session beginning July 19, Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy held a meeting with his party MPs to discuss the strategy to be adopted and the issues to be raised.

Talking to reporters at the end the meeting, YSRC Parliamentary Party leader V Vijayasai Reddy said they would raise the issue of illicit utilisation of Krishna water by the neighbouring Telangana government for power generation, depriving AP of water for irrigation and drinking needs.

The state has already filed a petition in the Supreme Court on the issue. We will raise the illegal projects being constructed on river Krishna by Telangana. We will also demand that the Centre immediately notify the jurisdiction of Krishna River Management Board. Vijayasai said.

Referring to the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, the Rajya Sabha member said the YSRC was strongly opposed to its privatisation.

We have already suggested various alternatives for turning the VSP around, instead of selling away the government stake. We will ask the Centre to take back its decision to divest its stake in VSP, the YSRC leader said.

YSRC Parliamentary Party leader V Vijayasai Reddy said they would raise the issue of illicit utilisation of Krishna water by the neighbouring Telangana government for power generation, depriving AP of water for irrigation and drinking needs

He said the Telangana government owed over Rs 6,100 crore in the form of electricity charges.

The Centre's intervention would be sought to prevail upon Telangana to clear the dues forthwith. Viiavasai maintained that they

would not compromise on the issue of securing special category status

We have raised the issue with the Centre at least a dozen times so far and we will continue to raise it. Also, all promises made to AF under the Reorganisation Act, 2014,

have to be fulfilled, he added. The Rajya Sabha member said the central government was yet to approve the revised cost estimates, amounting to over Rs 55,000 crore.

for the Polavaram project. This has been pending for over 29 months now. We will ask the Centre to do this expeditiously and also clear pending dues related to

the project, he added. YSRC leader in Lok Sabha P Midhun Reddy said they would request the Centre to clear the Disha Bill passed by the state Legislature, aimed at enhancing the safety and security of women and children.

We will raise several other issues related to the state, he said.

Directorates of museum, archaeology, historical studies to be merged

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, July 15: Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma Thursday said that three existing directorates -- archaeology, museum, and historical and antiquarian studies -- will be brought under the proposed Department of Indigenous Faith and Culture. Replying to a Zero Hour dis

cussion on the creation of the new department initiated by AGP MLA Ramendra Narayan Kalita and BJP MLA Bhubon Pegu in the Assembly, Sarma said that he has already prepared a roadmap for the proposed wing.

We have made a proposal that the Directorate of Archaeology, Directorate of Museum and the Directorate of Historical and Antiquarian Studies will be brought under the new department, the chief minister said.

The Assam Cabinet had July 10 approved a proposal to create the 'Department of Indigenous Faith and Culture' to protect the faith and



cultural practices of people belonging to tribal and other in-

digenous communities. The Assam government wants to give life to the expectation, cul-

ture and customs of the indige-

nous tribes that cannot compete in terms of strength and financial capacity with others, he added.

We are thinking of allocating Rs 100 crore for this new department in this year's budget. I will be happy if I can give Rs 500 crore to it in the fifth year, Sarma said. He informed the House that a

It is the duty of the society and the government to preserve the language, art and culture and the roadmap has been prepared and it will be discussed with the tribal peoliterature of the indigenous tribal ple and tribal MLAs.

EWS quota comes into force in AP Tea garden labourers to be



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Amaravati, July 15: The Andhra Pradesh government has issued fresh orders for the implementation of 10 per cent reservation for eco nomically weaker sections (EWS) in education and employment, in accordance with the Constitution 103 Amendment Act

The state government has, in fact, been implementing EWS reservation in education for the last two years following interim orders passed by the High Court in a writ petition.

Persons who are not covered under the existing scheme of reservations for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and socially and educationally backward classes, with a gross family income below Rs 8 lakh per annum, will get the benefit of EWS reservation, an order issued by Chief Secretary Aditya Nath Das said.

The latest order practically annuls two laws enacted by the previous TDP government in 2019 that split the 10 per cent EWS reservation into equal halves, with one The state government has, in fact, been implementing EWS reservation in education for the last two years following interim orders passed by the High Court in a writ petition

half exclusively for the Kapu community, making it a sub-category

The TDP government had sought to enact legislation in 2017 classifying Kapus as backward classes but the Bill did not receive the Centre's clearance. It is pertinent to note that the Bill (No.33) and Acts No 14 and 15 of 2019 are contradictory to each other. The Bill seeks to include Kapus in the list of BCs through a separate category BCF, taking the gross reservations for various categories to 55 per cent, the Chief Secretary said in Wednesday mid-

Das also noted that the Acts 14 and 15 sought to provide five per cent reservation to Kapus under EWS category, treating them as OCs by creating a sub-category within the overall 10 per cent reservation provided by the Constitution 103 Amendment Act, 2019.

Both the Acts were challenged before the AP High Court and the litigation was still pending, he pointed out.

Any decision taken by the state government should be in compliance with the Constitution 103 Amendment Act, 2019. Anything contrary, and leading to litigation, denies the benefits of reservation to the members of EWS community as mandated, the Chief Secretary said.

Das said the government decided to replicate the principles and guidelines issued in a July 27, 2019 order (for EWS reservation in education) in employment as well. The EWS reservation would be for appointments in initial posts and services in accordance with the Constitution 103 Amendment Act, subject to the

Income limit raised for OBC non-creamy layer

he Andhra Pradesh govern-ment Thursday raised the income limit for non-creamy layer of Other Backward Classes (OBC) in reservations from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh.

"It is reiterated that for issuance of OBC certificates to the noncreamy layer persons and sections among the OBCs, the income limit has been enhanced from Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh per annum," said special chief secretary G Anantha Ramu. Ramu directed all the district collectors and competent authorities to issue OBC certificates in the state following the new guidelines.

"Therefore, all the district collectors and authorities competent to issue OBC certificates in the state are required to note the same and take action accordingly," the special chief secretary added.

Meanwhile, the AP government has started implementing 10 per cent reservation for economically weaker sections (EWS) from Thursday for admission to educational institution and appointments

Āgriculture Minister Kurasala Kannababu Thursday lashed out at a Telugu daily for creating confusion on the eligibility criteria for EWS reservation and clarified that annual income of applicants should not exceed Rs 8 lakh

outcome of several petitions and public interest litigation pending before the High Court and the Supreme Court, he added.

employed under MGNREGS



CENT OF INDIA'S TEA, HAS MORE THAN 10 LAKH TEA WORKERS IN THE ORGANISED SECTOR, WORKING IN ABOUT 850 BIG ESTATES

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, July 15: The Assam government Wednesday decided to provide lakhs of tea garden labourers employment under the MGNREGS during the lean winter season when tea production is very less, officials said.

An official of the Chief Minister's

Office (CMO) said that the cabinet, in its meeting, decided that the tea garden workers would be provided work like pond excavation, road building and other jobs under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee

Valuable trees like Agar, Som etc would be planted for economic benefit of the rural people, and community ponds created in large numbers, the cabinet meeting, chaired by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, decided.

Assam, which produces roughly 55 per cent of India's tea, has more than 10 lakh tea workers in the organised sector, working in about 850 big estates. The tea belts of Brahmaputra and Barak valleys are home to more than 60 lakh people.

Besides, there are lakhs of small tea orchards owned by individuals.

Most non-permanent workers do not have jobs during the winter season as there are no tea leaves to be plucked.

The daily wages of the tea garden workers was a hotly debated issue in the recent March-April Assembly polls. After several months of legal and administrative tangles, the Assam government recently decided to increase the daily wage of around 10 lakh tea plantation workers by Rs 38. With this hike, the tea workers in Brahmaputra Valley, mostly in eastern Assam, would get Rs 205 from the previous Rs 167, and those in Barak Valley (southern Assam)would get Rs 183 from the earlier Rs 145.

national



I was listening to the Prime Minister's speech in Varanasi. He has appreciated the Uttar **Pradesh government for its successful** handling of the Covid situation in the state. I am not against the people of Uttar Pradesh, but I would like to remind the Prime Minister about the bodies that were floating in the Ganges MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

BIG INITIATIVE

With the detailed project report completed and land acquisition started, the work on building India's longest (11.80 km) road tunnel linking Thane-Borivali - passing beneath the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) - will start from March 2022, Maharashtra PWD Minister **Eknath Gaikwad said Thursday**



Earlier, during went up by a rupee or two, opposition leaders would launch agitations. During the BJP regime, liquor has become cheaper than fuel ASHOK CHAVAN | CONGRESS LEADER AND

I want to appeal to the government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi that environmentalist

MAHARASHTRA PWD MINISTER

Sunderlal Bahuguna should be honoured with the Bharat Ratna. This will inspire the youth of our country to realise the struggle he undertook in his life

ARVIND KEJRIWAL DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

India is deeply invested in the development of Africa and its assistance is guided by the policy priorities of the

governments and the needs of the people of Africa, within a framework of inclusive and transparent development

V MURALEEDHARAN | MINISTER OF STATE IN THE EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTRY

SHORT **TAKES**

Miscreants sever hand, leg of activist

Ramnagar, (Karnataka): In a horrific incident, a group of miscreants severed the leg and hand of an RTI activist in broad daylight Thursday on the outskirts of Bangalore and fled from the scene. The gruesome incident took place in front of the public. The RTI activist has been identified as Venkatesh. The incident took place in Tavarekere near Bengaluru, which falls under the neighboring Ramnagar district. Venkatesh, who was lying on the road bleeding profusely, was later shifted to a hospital where he is said to be undergoing intensive treatment.

Kerala: 5 more test +ve for Zika virus

Thiruvananthapuram: Amid concerns of identifying a cluster of Zika virus in the capital city, five more people, including four women, have tested positive for the infection in Kerala, taking the caseload in the state to 28. Of the fresh cases, two were natives of Anayara here, where a cluster of the disease had been identified within a three-kilometre radius, Health Minister Veena George said Thursday.

Dattatreya sworn in as Haryana Guv

Chandigarh: Former Union minister Bandaru Dattatreya was Thursday sworn in as the 18th governor of Harvana. succeeding Satyadeo Narain Arva, who moved to Tripura. Dattatreva was administered the oath of office by Punjab and Harvana High Court Chief Justice Ravi Shanker Jha in a simple ceremony at the Rai Bhavan here.

Choksi back in Antigua & Barbuda

New Delhi: Absconding diamantaire Mehul Choksi has returned to Antigua and Barbuda, his abode since 2018, after nearly 51 days of custody in neighbouring Dominica for illegal entry which his lawyers claim was a kidnapping plan, local media reported there. Choksi, 62, was given bail by Dominica High Court to travel back to Antigua for seeking medical help from a neurologist based there and return to face trial when given fitness clearance by his doctors. After depositing bail money of EC Dollars 10000, Choksi in a light green shirt and khaki shorts flew back to Antigua in a chartered plane, Antigua News Room reported.

rate edges up

Waning immunity, the emergence of a more transmissible coronavirus variant capable of escaping the immunity shield and lockdown relaxations can be the likely causes of a possible third wave of Covid-19, AIIMS Director Randeep Guleria said Thursday



New Delhi, July 15: A rise in India's Covid-19 infection rate is worrying authorities who are concerned that pilgrimages and tourism could prove to be "superspreader" events in the battle to douse a devastating second wave of infections that has killed thou-

In a pilgrimage this month, thousands of Hindus are set to walk hundreds of miles across northern cities, carrying pitchers of water from the Ganges, a river they consider sacred.

The pilgrims could act as "super spreaders" and set off a third wave of infections, a top medical body has

The Supreme Court this week questioned federal and state authorities in the most populous state of Uttar Pradesh why mass religious gathering should be allowed. The home ministry flagged the increase in the infective rate as a cause for concern in some states, urging officials nationwide to enforce social distancing and clamp down on overcrowding at tourist sites.

"We must guard ourselves against complacency and laxity, which creep in as positivity declines," Home Secretary Aiay Bhalla told them in a letter Wednesday, at a time when most cities have lifted strict lock-

INFECTIVITY JUMPS: The effective reproduction rate of the disease, which health experts call the "R" factor, now stands at 0.86 in the world's second-most populous nation, online publication Our World in Data shows, a jump of

more than 25% in a month.

Bhalla warned of the risk of a faster spread of infection when the rate exceeds 1. "You may be aware that any increase in 'R' factor above 1.0 is an indicator of spread of Covid-19," he added. Still, the website showed the 0.86 figure is off an April 9 peak of 1.47. By May, that had propelled India's daily cases to a staggering 400,000, leaving thousands in cities, including the capital New Delhi, scrambling for oxygen, hospital beds, ambulances and ultimately, morgues. Bodies washed up on the banks of the Ganges. States had largely lifted curbs as infections slowed, but the second wave has not yet ended, top officials have warned. India's tally of 30.99 million infections is second only to the United States, with 411,989 deaths. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has warned against overcrowding and called for vigilance against new variants, saying vaccination efforts needed to be sped up. India is trying to inoculate all 950 million adults by year-end. but vaccine shortages and logistics hurdles have meant just 8% have received both doses

Covid infection Aviation ministry issues draft drone rules

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: The civil aviation ministry Thursday issued draft rules to ensure ease of using drones in India on the basis of "trust, self-certification and non-intrusive monitoring", an official statement said.

Drones were used June 27 to drop explosives at the Indian Air Force (IAF) station in Jammu airport, causing minor injuries to its two personnel. On June 29, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had held a top-level meeting to discuss emerging security threats including

The number of forms to be filled to operate drones in the country has been reduced to six in the draft 'Drone Rules, 2021' in comparison to 25 forms mentioned in the Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Rules, 2021, the aviation ministry's statement said.

Industry body Drone Federation of India (DFI) commended the Centre's "bold" decision to liberalise the drone policy -- even after the Jammu incident -- by having a

Representative image balanced approach between the economic benefits and security

The fee for registration and approval has been reduced to nominal levels and de-linked from the size of the drone under the draft rules. the ministry said. The draft rules have also abol-

ished the requirement of various approvals, including certificate of conformance, certificate of maintenance, import clearance, acceptance of existing drones, operator permit, authorisation of R&D organisation and student remote pilot licence, it said.

The Drone Rules, 2021, once notified, will supersede the UAS Rules, 2021, which came into force on March 12.

Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said the draft rules mark a "stark shift" from the UAS Rules, 2021.

"Drones are bringing the next big tech revolution around the globe with reduced costs, resources and time taken for operations. It is upon us to ride on the new wave and facilitate its uptake, especially among our startups," he said on Twitter.

No flight permission, according to the draft rules, will be required up to 400 feet in green zones and up to 200 feet in the area between 8 and 12 km from the airport perimeter.

The draft rules have also prescribed easier process for trans-

fer and deregistration of drones. The draft rules have been built on a premise of trust, self-certification and non-intrusive monitoring, the ministry stated.

No pilot licence will be required for micro drones (for non-commercial use), nano drone and for R&D (research and development) organisations, the draft rules said.

Drone corridors will be developed for cargo deliveries and a drone promotion council will be set up to facilitate drone-friendly regulatory regime in the country, according to the draft rules.

The last date for public to submit their comments on the draft rules is August 5. The draft rules also stated that there would be no restriction on drone operations by foreign-owned companies regis-

Digital sky platform will be developed as a business-friendly single-window online system.



Farmers gear up for protest outside Parl

Around 200 farmers will hold protests outside parliament every day during the monsoon session

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 15: Farmers from 22 states will participate in the protests planned outside parliament from July 22 to demand scrapping of the contentious farm laws and for a legal guarantee on MSP, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) said Thursday.

"The Samyukta Kisan Morcha's call for Parliament March from July 22 till August 13 has received an overwhelming and enthusiastic response from across the country," it said in a statement. Besides Punjab and Haryana, a

large number of farmers from Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra, Telangana, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, Tripura, Manipur,



Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan will participate in the protest, SKM said

Special marches by women on July 26 and August 9 will also see huge participation from across India, including the northeastern states, it said.

The parliamentarians shall see farmers from all over India march in a disciplined manner to parliament to place their demands and have their voices heard," SKM said.

Extending their support to the farmers' movement, Punjabi artists, including Gul Panag, Amitoj Mann and Babbu Mann, performed Thursday for the protestors camping at the Singhu border, the statement said. Thousands of farmers from across the country have been agitating at the Delhi borders against the three farm laws that they claim will do away with the Minimum Support Price system, leaving them at the mercy of big cor-

'Amarinder Singh to lead Cong to victory in 2022'

Chandigarh, July 15: Denying reports of his resignation, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's media advisor Raveen Thukral said Thursday that the former would lead the Congress to victory in the Assembly elections scheduled early next year.

"Media reports of CM @capt_amarinder resigning are humbug," Thukral informed in a

"He has neither quit nor offered to do so. He'll lead @INCPunjab to victory in 2022 Assembly polls as he did in 2017. Urge media to stop speculating & spreading misinformation," he added. The speculation of the Chief Minister's resignation came in the wake of Punjab Congress in-charge Harish Rawat's statement that it may take some time, but to balance the equation in the state, the party is working on a formula to appoint Navjot Singh Sidhu in a prominent position, while asserting that Amarinder Singh has already said that he will abide by the party high command's decision.

"The party is working on a formula to appoint two working presidents and elections will be fought under the leadership of the Chief Minister," said Rawat. tered in India.

BENGAL VIOLENCE

Mamata hits back after NHRC's scathing report

AGENCIES

Kolkata, July 15: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Thursday flayed the NHRC for "disrespecting the court" and pursuing "political vendetta" of the BJP by leaking its report on alleged postpoll violence in the state to the

Banerjee also expressed surprise over the conclusion that the National Human Rights Commission arrived at in its report without taking into account views of the state government.

"The BJP is now using impartial agencies to settle political scores and malign our state. The NHRC should have respected the court. Instead of leaking the findings to the media. it should have first submitted the same to the court.

'What would you call it other than political vendetta of the BJP? It is vet to digest defeat (in the assembly polls) and that is why the party is resorting to such tricks." she told a press conference

Asserting that the situation in West Bengal is a "manifestation of law of ruler instead of rule of law", an NHRC committee probing alleged incidents of post-poll violence in the state, in a report placed before the Calcutta High Court, recommended a CBI probe into

and rape" Banerjee said she has the highest regard for the judiciary and her government will present "its

"grievous offences like murder

views and versions in the court". "The pre-poll violence when the election commission was in charge (of state affairs) is being presented as post-poll violence," the chief minister claimed.

She also wondered how many human rights commission teams were sent to Uttar Pradesh, which has reported cases of attacks on minorities over the last few years.

Criticising Modi for lauding the UP government for its fight against Covid-19, Banerjee said his statement is "biased" and untrue.

'Alcohol linked to over 62K new cancer cases in India last yr'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 15: Alcohol consumption was associated with 62,100 or five per cent of newly diagnosed cancer cases last year in India, according to a study published in The Lancet Oncology iournal which shows alcohol use is on the rise in the country.

The study estimates that men accounted for 77 per cent (568,700 cases) of alcohol-associated cancer cases, compared with women, who accounted for 23 per cent of cases (172,600).

Based on data from previous years, it shows that in 2020, there were more than 6.3 million cases of mouth, pharynx, voice box (larynx), oesophageal, colon, rectum,

liver, and breast cancer. These cancers have well-estab-

lished causal links to alcohol consumption, and the estimates of the direct associations with alcohol in the new study are the first of their kind for 2020

"Trends suggest that although there is a decrease in alcohol consumption per person in many European countries, alcohol use is on the rise in Asian countries such as China and India, and in sub-Saharan Africa," said Harriet Rumgay of the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), France.

"In addition, there is evidence that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased rates of drinking in some countries," Rumgay said.

The researchers call for greater public awareness of the link between alcohol and cancers and increased government interventions



to reduce its consumption in worstaffected regions

The study highlights the con-

tribution of even relatively low levels of drinking to rates of cancer, which is concerning, but also

GROWING THREAT

Globally, more than 740,000 or four per cent of new cancer cases in 2020 may be attributed to alcohol drinking

Cancers of the oesophagus, liver, and breast accounted for the largest number of cases

suggests that small changes to public drinking behaviour could positively impact future cancer rates.

Alcohol consumption has been shown to cause DNA damage through increased production of harmful chemicals in the body, and affect hormone production, which can contribute to cancer develop-

ment, according to the researchers. Alcohol can also worsen the cancer-causing effects of other substances, such as tobacco, they said.

In the new study, researchers established levels of alcohol intake per person per country for 2010, to allow for the time it takes for alcohol intake to affect possible cancer development.

They then combined them with new cancer cases in 2020 to estimate the number of alcohol-associated cancers in each country.

Moderate drinking was classed as intake of up to two alcoholic drinks, risky drinking as between two and six alcoholic drinks per day, and heavy drinking as more than six alcoholic drinks per day.

Globally, an estimated 4 per cent (741,300) of all new cases of cancer in 2020 were associatedwith alcohol consumption, the researchers said.