



URVASHI LEARNS TAMIL

Actor Urvashi Rautela is leaving no stones unturned for her Tamil debut. She says she has even learned the language

LEISURE P2



US' 'IRAQ MISSION' ENDS

US Prez and Iraqi PM seal agreement formally ending the US combat mission in Iraq by the end of 2021

INTERNATIONAL P10



INDIA BEAT SPAIN

Rupinder Pal Singh helps Indian men's hockey team return to winning ways beating Spain at Tokyo Games

SPORTS P12



₹16,597cr of unclaimed deposits with PSBs

NEW DELHI: State-run banks have unclaimed deposits worth ₹16,596.90 crore, the Parliament was informed Tuesday. Unclaimed deposits are those deposits where proceeds or maturity amount has not been claimed for a period of at least 10 years. Data provided by Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad, in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha, also showed the unclaimed deposits in public sector banks (PSBs) is spread across over 5.47 crore accounts. Unclaimed deposits with private banks, as of December 2020, was ₹2,963.54 crore, in 88.67 lakh accounts. A total of ₹3,577.56 crore worth of unclaimed deposits were present with the SBI, the data showed. P11



Krunal Pandya Covid +ve, second T20 off

COLOMBO: Krunal Pandya has tested positive for COVID-19, forcing the second T20 International between India and Sri Lanka -- scheduled for Tuesday in Colombo -- to be postponed by a day. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) took to Twitter to reveal the news. The BCCI also added that the entire Indian contingent is undergoing RT-PCR tests to ascertain any further outbreak within the squad. The third T20I will be played July 29 as scheduled. The entire contingent is undergoing RT-PCR tests Tuesday to ascertain any further outbreak in the squad. The medical teams have identified eight members from the Indian contingent as close contacts.

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TEA BREAK: Hand-rickshaw pullers drink tea as they wait for passengers at a stand in Kolkata

State yet to get ₹2,738 crore GST

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: The Centre has implemented the Good and Services Tax (GST) since July 1, 2017 with a promise to states that it would provide compensations for their shortfall in revenues. However, the state government is yet to receive the promised compensation of ₹2,738 crore.

As per the provisions of GST (compensation to states) Act, 2017, if the states' GST revenues do not grow by at least 14 per cent over the base year (2014-15), the Centre has to pay the shortfall amount on a bi-monthly basis for the first five years from the implementation of the GST Act.

In a written reply (question No 836) in Rajya Sabha, Minister of State (MoS), Finance Pankaj Chaudhary said his ministry is yet to release ₹1389 crore to Odisha as part of the GST compensation payable for the financial year 2020-21 and ₹1349 crore for the first two months of the current fiscal.

The compensation for financial years 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 has already been paid to the states/UTs including Odisha, he said.

He further said that the Centre has released a total amount of ₹14,077 crore to Odisha as part of GST compensation.

As per his reply, the Centre has released GST compensation of ₹2348 crore in 2017-18 while ₹4241 crore was sanctioned in 2018-19. Similarly, ₹5332 crore was released by the Centre during 2019-20. Due to Covid-19 pandemic, the ministry sanctioned partial compensation



- ▶ The Centre has already released a total amount of ₹14,077 crore to Odisha as part of GST compensation
- ▶ GST dues of ₹91,000 cr has been released to all states/UTs to partly meet the compensation payable for 2020-2021

of ₹2156 crore during the last financial year (2020-21). No amount has been released to any state during 2021-22.

"The economic impact of the pandemic has led to higher compensation requirements due to lower GST collection and at the same time lower collection of GST compensation cess," Chaudhary said.

GST compensation of ₹91,000 crore has been released to all states/UTs to partly meet the compensation payable for the period 2020 to 2021 as the amount in GST compensation fund was not adequate to meet the full compensation re-

quirement, he said.

As per the decision taken by the GST Council, in FY 20-21, the Centre had borrowed ₹1.1 lakh crore under a special window and passed it on to states as back-to-back loan to help them meet the resource gap due to short-release of compensation on account of inadequate balance in the compensation fund.

Subsequently, the Centre is borrowing ₹1.59 lakh crore from the market through a special window in current FY and is passing it on to states/UTs as a back to back loan in appropriate tranches as was done last year, he added.

In addition to this, depending on the amount available in the compensation fund, the Centre has been releasing the regular GST compensation to states to make up for the GST revenue shortfall.

"The states will be paid full GST compensations as per GST (compensation to states) Act, 2017 for the transition period by extending the levy of compensation cess beyond five years to meet the GST revenue shortfall as well as servicing the loan borrowed through special window scheme," he added.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



He knows there's a vaccine shortage!

Odisha sees fall in LWE menace

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 27: With adequate security measures, development initiatives and ensuring rights of local communities, the number of Naxal attacks has declined by a big margin in Odisha.

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs, in response to a written question asked by BJP MP Nitesh Ganga Deb and other MPs, informed the Lok Sabha that there has been a decrease in the Naxal activities in the country over last three years. The state of Odisha had suffered 75 Naxal attacks in 2018 which resulted in 12 deaths.

The number of Naxal incidents declined by a big margin in 2020.

According to the ministry, Odisha faced 50 Naxal incidents in 2020 that resulted in nine deaths. However, the incidents of Red-menace were 45 in 2019, even lower than the figures of 2020.

Minister of State for the Ministry of Home Affairs Nityanand Rai said that the Left Wing Extremist Groups have also resorted to extortion from industrialists, businessmen and contractors. The LWEs have also targeted the economic infrastructure during last three years. These include attacks on mobile towers, mining infrastructure, railway properties, government buildings, schools, roads and bridges.

Odisha had suffered six attacks on economic targets in 2018. The at-

tacks on economic infrastructure were increased in 2019 to nine and then saw a significant decline in 2020 with just one incident reported last year. In order to combat the LWE menace, the Union government has formulated a National Policy and Action Plan in 2015, which consists of a multi-pronged approach comprising security measures, development initiatives and ensuring rights and entitlements of local communities. Beside paramilitary support to the states, the Centre is also providing funds under Modernisation of Police Force, Security Related Expenditure Scheme and Special Infrastructure Scheme (SIS) for modernisation and training of State Police.

| MARKET WATCH | | |
|--------------|----------|----------|
| INDEX | | VIATION |
| SENSEX | 52578.76 | ↓ 273.51 |
| NIFTY | 15746.50 | ↓ 78.00 |
| DOLLAR | 74.72 | ↑ ₹0.04 |
| EURO | 88.16 | ↑ ₹0.46 |
| GOLD | ₹47,510 | ↑ ₹49 |
| SILVER | ₹65,920 | ↓ ₹1201 |

| WEATHER | | |
|----------|------------------------|--------|
| | BHUB | CTK |
| TEMP MAX | 29.4°C | 29.0°C |
| TEMP MIN | 26.3°C | 26.6°C |
| Humidity | 91% | 88% |
| Rainfall | 0.5mm | 2mm |
| Forecast | Light rain very likely | |

22 districts record spurt in daily Covid cases

AGENCIES

Delhi, July 27: In the past few weeks, there has been a slowdown in the rate of decline of average daily Covid cases, which is a cause of concern, the Union health ministry said Tuesday. It also said that there are 54 districts in 12 states and Union Territories, which reported over 10 per cent Covid positivity rate for the week ending July 26.

"The average daily new cases declined from 3,87,029 cases between May 5 and May 11 to 38,090 cases between July 21 and July 27.

In the past few weeks, there has been a slowdown/reduction in the rate of decline, which remains an area of concern," joint secretary in the health ministry, Lav Agarwal, said.

Twenty-two districts in seven states have reported an increasing trend in daily Covid cases for the last four weeks and this is also a cause of concern, the ministry said. There are also eight districts, which were witnessing a decline in positivity rate, but are now seeing a rise in Covid cases, it said, adding that "we cannot take the situation for granted". A study by the Armed

KHURDA DISTRICT IN RED ZONE

BHUBANESWAR: Odisha's COVID-19 tally rose to 9,70,814 Tuesday as 1,629 more people tested positive for the infection, while 60 fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 5,634, a health official said. Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at 532, followed by Cuttack (160) and Puri (96). The state now has 17,746 active cases, while 9,47,381 people have recovered from the disease to date, including 2,204 on Monday. With Odisha's daily positivity rate falling below 5 per cent and the average infection ratio standing at 2.59 per cent, the entire state is now a green zone, the official said. In terms of active cases, only one district (Khurda) is in the red zone, while three districts (Cuttack, Jaipur and Balasore) are in the yellow zone, and the remaining 24 districts are in the green zone.

Forces Medical College looked at 15 lakh doctors and frontline workers and found that Covishield gives 93 per cent protection while there was 98 per cent mortality reduction, the government said. India recorded less than 30,000 fresh cases after 132 days while its active case-load fell below 4,00,000 after 124 days Tuesday, ministry data showed. The data updated at 8 am also showed that as many as 29,689 new coronavirus infections took the country's tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,14,40,951 while 415 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 4,21,382.

Bomma next Karnataka CM

AGENCIES

Bangalore, July 27: Bangalore, July 27: The Karnataka BJP legislature party Tuesday elected Basavaraj Bommai as its new leader and he will succeed outgoing Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa.

According to party sources, Bommai, a Lingayat leader from North Karnataka, had the backing of the outgoing chief minister Yediyurappa to succeed him. Basavaraj Bommai is the son of former chief minister, the late S R Bommai.

The 61-year-old leader was Minister for Home Affairs, Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Legislative in Yediyurappa's council of ministers which was dissolved Monday. "The new leader proposal was made by senior leader BS Yediyurappa and was supported by Govind Karjol, R Ashok, KS Eshwarappa, B Sriramulu, ST Somashekar, Poornima Srinivas, and the newly elected legislature party leader and new Chief Minister will be Basavaraj Bommai," BJP's central observers and Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan said after the meeting.

Soon after the announcement, Bommai sought the blessings of Yediyurappa, and he was greeted by other party leaders. The legislature party meeting to elect the new leader took place in the presence of Union ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and G Kishan Reddy who were sent as central observers.

Won't ban beggars from streets, rules Supreme Court

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 27: Making clear it will not take an "elitist view" that no beggars be allowed on the streets, the Supreme Court Tuesday asked the Centre and Delhi government to respond to a plea seeking vaccination and rehabilitation of beggars and vagabonds in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The apex court said begging is a "socio-political problem" and people are compelled to beg on the streets to eke out some elementary livelihood in the absence of education and employment.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and MR Shah told the

counsel appearing for the petitioner that it would not consider one part of the prayer which sought direction to the authorities to restrain beggars, vagabonds and homeless persons from begging at public places or traffic junctions.

The bench said it would issue notices to the Centre and the Delhi government seeking their responses on the prayer made in the petition for rehabilitation, vaccination and providing food and shelters to beggars and vagabonds amid the pandemic. "As the Supreme Court, we would not want to take an elitist view that no beggars should be there on the streets," the bench said.

While referring to a part of the



people from begging on the streets.

"This is a socio-economic problem of poverty. The idea is to rehabilitate them, give them and their children education," it said, adding that such people have no choice and nobody wants to beg.

The bench said it is a "wider issue" of social welfare policy of the government and the apex court

As the Supreme Court, we would not want to take an elitist view that no beggars should be there on the streets

cannot say that such persons should be kept away from our eyes.

The counsel appearing for the petitioner said the object and purport of the prayer is to rehabilitate them and ensure that they are provided vaccination, food and shelter amid the pandemic situation.

The bench asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to assist it

in the matter and posted it for hearing after two weeks.

At the outset, the petitioner's counsel told the bench that issue raised in the plea is regarding rehabilitation of beggars as the impending third wave of Covid-19 pandemic poses a serious threat.

The bench noted in its order that it has indicated to the petitioner that it is not inclined to countenance a prayer seeking directions to restrain beggars and vagabonds from the streets.

"The reason why people are generally required to take to the streets to beg is to eke out some elementary livelihood in the absence of education and employment.

This is a socio-economic problem and can't be remedied as sought in prayer A," the bench observed.

It noted that petitioner's counsel has said that he is not pressing the prayer seeking directions to restrain beggars and vagabonds from the streets. "In view of the clarification issued, we are inclined to issue notice," the bench said, while granting liberty to the petitioner to amend the prayer.

It said since the immediate issue which needs to be attended is that of vaccinating these persons, it would expect the Centre and Delhi government to apprise it about the steps which are being taken to deal with this human situation.



SHAKIRA WANTS HER CHILDREN TO HAVE NORMAL CHILDHOOD

Singer Shakira says she is trying to give her children a normal childhood and that she avoids playing her own music. "I don't make my kids listen to my music. I try to avoid playing my own music in my house. I try to give them as much normalcy as I can," Shakira told ET Canada, reports *femalefirst.co.uk*.

MENA SUVARI ON 'MIRACULOUS' EXPERIENCE OF BECOMING MOTHER

Actress Mena Suvari, who is known for portraying the character of Heather in the *American Pie* franchise, welcomed her first born, a son named Christopher Alexander with husband Michael Hope in April. She says that becoming a mother was "wonderful and it's everything miraculous you can think of."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Curl, massage, clip, tweeze, polish, gloss, condition... today, will you attempt to shed your old skin. A dream date may have you in jitters but Ganesh suggests that you take it easy. True relationships are not sealed by glossy kisses alone!

TAURUS
You need to be very and practical and realistic in all that you do today, urges Ganesh. You are known to be pretty emotional and sensitive and generally go by your feelings. Your mind, your reason do not normally feature in your decision making. Even minor problems, complications get you worked up.

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

CANCER
Control your anger, counsels Ganesh. Or else, it will sadden your near ones. Writers may display creative output of high order. The day augurs well for artists, too. This is the time to take up new challenges, says Ganesh.

LEO
You will not be in the mood to take up significant tasks today. You will want to throw your responsibilities to the wind and pursue leisurely activities. However you will still need to tackle some pressing issues. It is easier to swim with the tide, than against, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
You will be bubbling with ideas today. You may face a dilemma between your obligations and present duties, which could prove to be very perplexing. New contacts turn out to be very useful. Ganesh says blood is thicker than water, and family and friends will cement their relationship with you.

LIBRA
Ganesh says you will learn a lot from your past experiences for a shining future. You will be slightly possessive about some costly item that you own. There will be small concerns during the day about different matters, which will give you mental stress. On the whole the day will pass by nicely.

SCORPIO
No matter how rich and successful you become, it is very important to stay grounded. Never let your success go to your head, advises Ganesh. Rudeness and overconfidence may take away everything from you and may leave you empty handed.

SAGITTARIUS
You become your own judge today. Through introspection, you try to find you the various causes that lead to troubles in your life. Though it may take time, eventually you achieve what you want and try to find reasonable solutions for the same.

CAPRICORN
Mounting pressure of work and responsibilities during the day may drain your energy, but not your enthusiasm, feels Ganesh. The second half of the day will be tiring, as you will be fighting a tough battle with your competitors.

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

PISCES
You need to nurture your personal relationships carefully today, and give them the attention they are due. You need to control the outbursts of your temper and stop arguing with your partner or spouse over insignificant matters. Personal life will be smooth sailing as long as neither of you attempt to dominate over the other, says Ganesh.

Nidhhi's dream comes true

Mumbai: Actress Nidhhi Agerwal will soon be seen with actor Sonu Sood in a music video, directed by Farah Khan. The actress is thrilled with the opportunity of working with the choreographer-director.

The song is being shot in Punjab and will see Sonu play the character of a farmer becoming a cop.

Sharing her excitement, Nidhhi tells IANS: "I had a great time shooting for the song with Farah Ma'am and Sonu Sir. It is always a dream for any actor to be choreographed by Farah Khan but I was in for a double treat since she was directing it as well."

For Nidhhi, being directed by Farah is also very special because it was the latter's directorial *Om Shanti Om*, which nudged the *iShankarSmart* actress in the direction of acting.

"I had a blast while shooting for it, considering I watched *Om shanti Om* and knew I wanted to be an actor! I can't wait for you all to see it," says Nidhhi.

On the movie front, Nidhhi will be seen in Pawan Kalyan's next *Hari Hara Veera Malli*, and Udhaynidhi Stalin's untitled next.



Arjun on body transformation

Mumbai: Actor Arjun Kapoor, who recently opened up about his body transformation, says he is working towards bettering himself every day.

Arjun Tuesday morning treated his fans to a then-and-now picture.

The first image features Arjun from his younger days, when he was voluptuous. In the second photograph, Arjun is seen flaunting his perfect jawline and a toned muscular physique.

Alongside the image, he wrote: "Pehle main bohota mota bohota pareshan tha (I was obese before)...No no this is not one of those posts. Just putting it out there that I love every chapter of my life."

He added: "Those days and even now, I have always been myself at every step of the way. I cherish every bit. I'm a work in progress like anyone and everyone else."

The actor quoted his mother and said that he will always be a constant work in progress.

"My mother told me every stage of your life is a journey and you will always be a constant work in progress. I understand the meaning of that now more than ever and I'm loving that I'm working towards bettering myself...every damn day," he concluded.



Sona first Indian independent musician to make it to Times Square billboard

New Delhi: Artist and producer Sona Mohapatra made her debut appearance on the iconic Times Square billboard in New York Monday.

She is one of the first independent musicians to be given this place as a pop-culture milestone.

Sona said: "To be woken up in the middle of the night to see photographs of my face on a billboard covering a skyscraper in one of my favourite cities New York was a surreal feeling. To be one of the first independent musicians to be given this place is a pop culture milestone because it paves the way for artistic expression of various hues and colours free from cookie-cutter formulas in musical mainstream success."

Sona appeared on Times Square billboard as part of the Spotify *EQUAL* global campaign leading the Indian leg. Her single track 'Aise Na They' is being featured on the 'EQUAL' playlist for the entire month.

The soundtrack for *Aise Na They* has been composed by Ram Sampath with lyrics by Amitabh Bhattacharya and distributed by Paris-based music distribution and marketing service Believe. The song's narrative revolves around a relationship that has lost its fizz, but a sense of optimism is infused in the track through the lovely sound of the hills with pop rock blended with ethereal flutes and tingling mandolins.

She said: "I have been consistently releasing original music for many years, have fought many battles for IP & residuals for artists and it has been exhilarating, exhausting too but now, with my indie label Omgrown Music partnering with a global name like Believe, I truly feel optimistic about the future of the music scene in India and more so for other independent voices like mine."

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I can speak Tamil fluently: Urvashi

Mumbai: Actress Urvashi Rautela is leaving no stones unturned for her Tamil debut film. She says she has even learned the language and shared that the yet-untitled movie will always hold a special place in her heart.

Urvashi shared a glimpse from the shoot of her upcoming film on Instagram, where she could be seen coming out of a luxury yellow coloured sports car.

Urvashi told IANS: "This film is very special to me as it's my Tamil debut film which is also multilingual and it's going to be releasing in all the major languages like Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Hindi and Kannada."

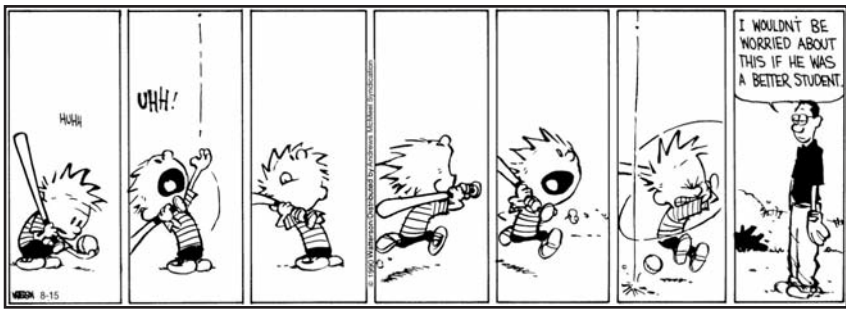
Talking about her character, Urvashi said that she will be seen essaying the role of a microbiologist. "Additionally, I also appear in the film as an IITIAN and Microbiologist conducting a study: I am totally excited about this second schedule because this is the first time I have properly shot it in Chennai after the first schedule occurred in Himachal Pradesh," the 27-year-old actress said.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

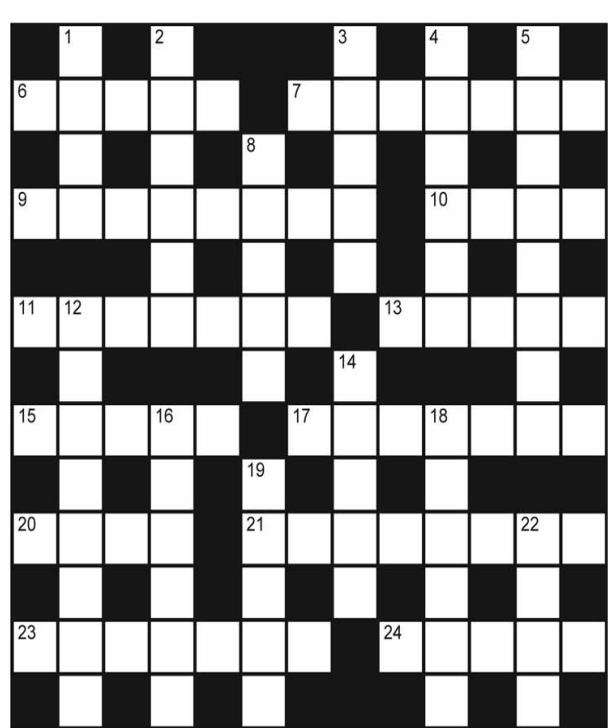


BREVITY



FUN post

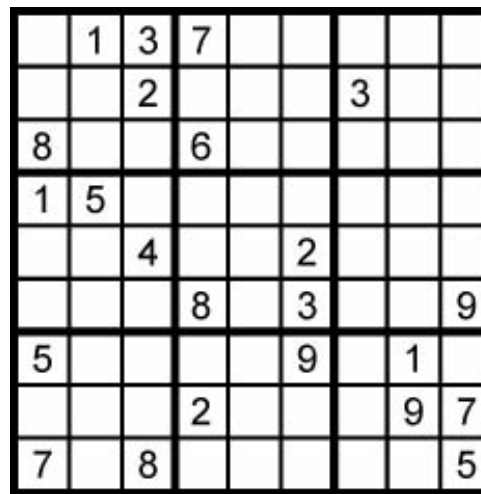
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 6 Stratagems
 - 7 Pie fillers
 - 9 Long-legged carrion-eating hawk
 - 10 Mah-jongg piece
 - 11 Pertinent
 - 13 Jostle
 - 15 Sharp narrow ridge
 - 17 Small bag
 - 20 Forearm bone
 - 21 Snail, for one
 - 23 Bakery buy or pet name
 - 24 Argus-eyed
 - 4 Savage
 - 5 Steak order (4,4)
 - 8 Eagle's claw
 - 12 Fraught with danger
 - 14 It holds water
 - 16 Hypnotic state
 - 18 Baby's bed
 - 19 Chinese boats
 - 22 Diversify
- Down**
- 1 Dog biter
 - 2 Go-getter
 - 3 Fit for a king

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



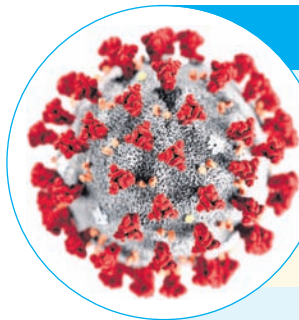
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



FOUNDATION DAY FETE

School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash and other dignitaries at the 58th foundation day celebration of Nimapara Autonomous College in Puri district, Tuesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

| | INFECTED | RECOVERED | DEAD |
|--------|--------------|--------------|-----------|
| World | 19,56,79,269 | 17,74,40,443 | 41,88,802 |
| India | 3,14,40,951 | 3,06,21,469 | 4,21,382 |
| Odisha | 9,70,814 | 9,49,350 | 5,634 |

Hi-tech traffic surveillance, free internet for denizens by Sept

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: The Capital city is likely to have a robust security system while its citizens can avail free internet service at public places by September this year as the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) has decided to complete the second phase fibre optic cabling work by August end.

As part of the BSCL's smart solution projects, the second phase development will see more than 500 hotspots across the City that will provide about 1,500 access points. First 30 minutes of data will be available free of cost and no user charge will be levied while accessing government websites.

Wi-Fi network uses a wireless band of 2.4 GHz and 5 GHz available for use, based on the handset capability of the users. Each hotspot point will be able to handle as many as 150 users at a given point of time and speed will be available at 2 mega bytes per second (MBPS). However, a user will have to be within 100-300 metres range of the access point to login to the network. First 30 minutes of data will be available free of cost and no user charge will be levied while accessing government websites.

"We are aiming to promote use of online services for government agencies especially during Covid. While 30 minutes will be given free to every user, affordable data plans will be made for further use. This will also help in generating revenue for the Smart City," the official said.

Smart libraries in all dists on the cards

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: For the development of Odia language, literature and culture, the state government has decided to transform all district libraries into smart libraries.

This decision was taken at a meeting held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra to review implementation of the decisions taken by the Heritage Cabinet.

It was decided at the meeting to provide broadband connection and computers to all district libraries in the state. Each district's smart library will be connected to the library of the Odia Virtual Academy.

Many Odia books have been digitised by the Virtual Academy. At present, more than 200 books are

Land acquisition for the establishment of Odia University has already been completed and ₹62 crore has been earmarked for the construction of the university

being digitised daily, said IT secretary Manoj Kumar Mishra.

Mahapatra directed to list out the most-read books stored in the district libraries for digitisation.

He also instructed officials concerned to prepare an integrated action plan in coordination with various departments for the de-

velopment of the Odia language, literature and culture. A sub-committee was formed under the chairmanship of Development Commissioner Pradeep Kumar Jena for this purpose. Mahapatra emphasised the need to develop Suando village, the birthplace of Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das as a tourist spot. Officials said that construction of Utkalmani museum at the village is at last stage. Works have been expedited for renovation of the old temples in the village.

Land acquisition for the establishment of the Odia University has already been completed and an estimated cost of Rs 62 crore has been earmarked for the construction of the university, said Works Secretary Krishan Kumar. Mahapatra directed to start work for the university

Woman found hanging; father alleges murder

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: A man Tuesday lodged a complaint with Chandrasekharpur police alleging that his daughter's in-laws have murdered his daughter here.

According to sources, the victim, identified as Rajaswini, had married Bimbadhara Das of Mandapa Basti area in April 2019. Das works as a salesman in a hardware and paints shop in Chandrasekharpur area. The couple has a 7-month-old daughter out of their wedlock.

The victim's father, Brajabandhu Mahala, alleged in his complaint that Rajaswini called him when he was in his shop early Monday morning. She requested him to take her back from her in-laws immediately. However, Brajabandhu, who was busy then, told Rajaswini that he would call her back.

Later, Brajabandhu was informed by his daughter's neighbours about her death. Brajabandhu alleged that Rajaswini's husband, in connivance with his family members, has killed his daughter and later hung her body from the ceiling fan of the bedroom in order to prove the death as suicide. The complainant alleged that Rajaswini was being tortured by her in-laws for which she had requested him to take her back home.

The police began an investigation on the basis of the complaint lodged by Brajabandhu.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Warrior-horse statue to stay at Master Canteen Square

The sandstone sculpture will remain at the Master Canteen Square and there will be a slight realignment in the design of the road

PNN/ AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, July 27: The iconic warrior-horse statue at Master Canteen Square here will not be relocated, a senior official said Tuesday.

Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) Commissioner SK Singh, who is also the chief of the Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL), said that the sandstone sculpture will remain at the Master Canteen Square and there will be a slight realignment in the design of the road.

The statue is a replica of the original warrior-and-horse sculpture found at Konark Sun Temple.

The BSCL had planned to relocate the statue to the Raj Bhawan Square to make way for a multi-modal hub at the Bhubaneswar railway station.

The warrior-horse is the official emblem of the state administration.

The opposition BJP, Congress, academicians, and sculptors had been opposing the relocation of the statue, even as the BSCL's decision to shift the warrior-horse



replica had been approved by the Culture department.

Officials said that Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik intervened and directed the authorities of the BMC and the BSCL to change the decision and rather beautify the surroundings of the iconic statue.

Meanwhile, a team inspected the statue and detected some cracks and scratches which will be repaired soon, an official said.

The Smart City authorities have been given the responsibility to hire skilled artisans for the protection and restoration of the iconic statue.

The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) had installed the sculpture at Master Canteen Square in 1988. It was created by noted sculptor Raghunath Mohapatra.

Meanwhile, several intellectuals and activists thanked the state government for withdrawing its decision to relocate the statue.

"The decision shows that better sense finally prevailed in the government level. The government should take steps to preserve the existing roundabout at Master Canteen Square. The statue and the roundabout are the identity of Bhubaneswar and they are the heritage structures of the city," said urban planner Piyush Ranjan Rout. Utkal Sammilani office bearer and social activist Dilip Dashsharma said, "The statue is a symbol of the great history of Bhubaneswar and Odisha. We thank Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for intervening into the issue."

Researcher and social activist Hemant Rath, meanwhile, urged the state government to take immediate steps to improve the surroundings of the iconic statue.

BJD: Extend PMAY-G registration by 1 month

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, July 27: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu Tuesday urged the Union government to consider the request of the state government to re-open the window of Aawas+ mobile app for one more month for registration under Pradhan Mantri Aawas Yojana (Gramin) PMAY-G.

While raising the issue in the Lok Sabha under Rule 377, the BJD MP from Berhampur said that a large number of poor and tribal people in western and southern regions

have not been able to register themselves in PMAY-G when the window of Aawas software was open.

He said that though the Union government had opened the window in two phases till March 2019, Odisha Chief Minister has requested the Prime Minister to re-open the window of Aawas+ mobile app for the entire state for a period of one more month to migrate the data of identified eligible households to Aawas+ mobile App, which, he had said, would be a pragmatic step towards achieving the objective of safe housing for all.

PIL in High Court for CBI probe into ACF death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 27: A public interest litigation (PIL) was filed in the Orissa High Court (HC) Tuesday seeking a probe by an independent agency like CBI into the sensational death of Paralakhemundi assistant conservator of forests (ACF) Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra.

In his PIL, Bharatiya Bikash Parishad chief Surendra Panigrahy said that the 32-year-old ACF has died under suspicious circumstances. Hence, investigation into the sensational case by an independent agency like CBI or a specially constituted committee, headed by a HC judge, could

help unveil the truth and deliver justice to the departed soul, Panigrahy said.

Union Home Secretary, state Chief Secretary, state Home Secretary, state Director General of Police, Gajapati superintendent of police and Paralakhemundi inspector in-charge were made parties to the case.

On Monday, the ACF's post-mortem report confirmed the reason of his death as burn injuries but police are yet to reach a conclusion about the circumstances which led to the fire incident.

The autopsy report stated that Mohapatra died due to 95 per cent burns which have been described

as ante mortem in nature. The autopsy was carried out within six hours of the ACF's death and kerosene smell was coming out of his body and scalp, it added.

Notably, Soumya was rescued from his government quarters in Paralakhemundi with severe burns July 12 night and admitted to a private healthcare facility in Cuttack where he succumbed to his injuries July 13.

Paralakhemundi police had registered a murder case based on the complaint of Soumya's father Abhiram and booked the ACF's wife Bidya Bharati Panda, Gajapati DFO Sangram Keshari Behera and cook Mammath Kambha.

Puri DM inspects Sun Temple beautification



POST NEWS NETWORK

Konark, July 27: Puri Collector Samarth Verma along with senior officials of the district administration Tuesday inspected the beautification work at the Sun Temple here.

The state government has taken up a host of projects to beautify the surroundings of world famous Sun Temple as part of its initiative to attract more tourists to the iconic structure.

Verma, Puri Additional Collector Binoy Kumar Dash and other officials inspected the road widening work near the 13th century structure. This apart, the officials took stock of the arrangements for rehabilitation of 179 vendors who would be evicted from the entrance of the Sun Temple.

"These vendors usually sell handicrafts goods to tourists. They would be evicted from the entrance of Sun Temple to facilitate the beautification work. The vendors would be rehabilitated elsewhere. Steps are being taken to make all arrangements in this regard by August 15," said an official of the district administration.

The district administration

would rehabilitate the vendors and expedite the work for Sun Temple beautification, Verma said.

It is worth mentioning here that the state government has decided to execute two plans - Transportation Plan worth Rs 50 crore and Konark Heritage core Area Redevelopment Plan worth Rs 150 crore - for preservation of the Black Pagoda and development of its surroundings.

The existing road connecting Chandrabhaga beach with Kakatpur junction in Konark and Konark ring road would be expanded and made 6-lane. This road will help provide better access to Sun Temple as well as Chandrabhaga beach. The total length of this road is 7.93 km and a detailed project report (DPR) has been prepared for the same. The estimated project cost is Rs 50 crore, official sources said.

Similarly, the government has also planned to build an entrance plaza to the Sun Temple and adjoining Haat which would accommodate existing shops and information centre. This area would be under wi-fi network and digitally enabled, the sources said.

SUSPECTED DENGUE DEATH IN CITY

BMC SAYS THERE IS NO CONFIRMATORY EVIDENCE ABOUT DEATH OF A DENGUE PATIENT IN BHUBANESWAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: The state Capital Tuesday reported its first suspected dengue death but the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) was quick to deny it.

Purandar Nanda, Zonal Deputy Commissioner of BMC, said that the department has sought the details of the patient and that it would analyse the case based on the medical records. "Our team is in touch with the family of the deceased. We have to find out if the patient had conducted the test at private hospital or government hospital, what was the method of testing done. His medical history, medications and earlier diagnosis would be analyzed before arriving at a conclusion," he said.

BMC Commissioner Sanjay Singh said that he had not received the facts related to the case



BJP workers take out a rally in Chandrasekharpur area of Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, seeking immediate steps to check dengue cases in the locality

but claimed that measures were taken to control the disease.

"There is no confirmatory evidence about death of a dengue pa-

tient. We're taking steps towards better surveillance and tackling of these cases. I'll hold talks with the Health department and vet the

"Our team is in touch with the family of the deceased. We have to find out if the patient had conducted the test at private hospital or government hospital, what was the method of testing done"

PURANDAR NANDA | BMC ZONAL DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

case. We're conducting door-to-door campaign to spread awareness about dengue. We're identifying the sources and acting on it," he said.

The Health department, however, said that the cases of dengue are on a plateau now and are likely to see a decline within a month.

State's TPR falls below 5%

IN TERMS OF ACTIVE CASES, ONLY KHURDA DISTRICT IS IN THE RED ZONE, WHILE THREE DISTRICTS-CUTTACK, JAJPUR AND BALASORE-ARE IN THE YELLOW ZONE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 9,70,814 Tuesday as 1,629 more people tested positive for the infection, while 60 fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 5,634, a Health department official said.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at 532, followed by Cuttack (160) and Puri (96). Sundargarh district recorded the highest number of fresh fatalities at 14, followed by Khurda (eight), and Angul and Cuttack (six each). Fifty-three coronavirus patients have died due to co-morbidities to date. The state now has 17,746 active cases, while 9,47,381 people have recovered from the disease to date, including 2,204 Monday.

The coastal state's daily positivity rate (TPR) has fallen below 5 per cent and the average infection ratio stands at 2.59 per cent, the official said.

In terms of active cases, only one district (Khurda) is in the red zone, while three districts (Cuttack, Jajpur and Balasore) are in the yellow zone, and the remaining 24 districts are in the green zone.

Districts having more than 2,500 active cases come under the red zone, those housing more than 1,000 active cases are in the yellow zone, while the ones with less than 1,000 active cases are in the green zone, he said. Entire western and

Cannot unlock sans assessment: DMET



Bhubaneswar: The state Health department Tuesday said that a final decision on the unlocking of the state can be taken only after a thorough assessment of local conditions.

Director of Medical Education and Training (DMET), CBK Mohanty said, "When we frame unlock norms, we do not confine our efforts only on the local cases

The world has already seen the devastating impact of sudden opening of all activities and areas

CBK MOHANTY | DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, ODISHA

but we also keep in mind other details. A final decision on next unlocking orders will be taken after

proper assessment of local conditions. It can't be taken in haste and based on only few parameters otherwise we would be in trouble."

He also said that there would be demand for opening of many banned activities from different sectors but the world has already seen that sudden opening of all activities and areas have had devastating impact on caseload.

"The number of Covid cases in the state is now heading downwards. Bhubaneswar still reports higher cases as it has a higher mobile population. We have increased the surveillance," he said.

The DMET director said that the state is far from the impact of any third wave going by the decrease in cases.

"By third wave, we mean escalation of Covid cases. The cases coming down can't hint towards a third wave. No one knows when the third wave comes," Mohanty said.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at 532, followed by Cuttack (160) and Puri (96)

The state has thus far tested over 1.57 crore samples for Covid-19, including 62,686 Monday

The cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.17 per cent

southern Odisha are in the green zone both in terms of TPR and active cases, while the coastal districts need further improvement,

he said, adding that Khurda, Cuttack, Balasore, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara are witnessing fluctuating TPR.

The state has thus far tested over 1.57 crore samples for Covid-19, including 62,686 Monday. The cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.17 per cent.

The state has administered 1.55 crore doses of Covid vaccines to date, including 2.18 lakh Monday. As many as 25,112 pregnant women have been inoculated so far, the official added.

STIR OVER FARM LAWS



BKMU activists hold a demonstration at Raj Mahal Square in Bhubaneswar, Tuesday, seeking repeal of the new farm laws

Trains cancelled for modernisation work

Bhubaneswar: In view of safety related modernisation work between Belsonda-Lakholi-Arang Mahanadi railway stations under Titilagarh-Raipur Railway Section, several trains from Odisha will be affected and cancelled for a few days. The trains that will be affected and cancelled include Visakhapatnam-LTT Special, LTT-Visakhapatnam Special, Puri-Surat Special, Surat-Puri Special, Tirupati-Bilaspur Special, Bilaspur-Tirupati Special, Puri-Gandhidham Special, Gandhidham-Puri Special, LTT-Puri Special, Puri-LTT Special, Visakhapatnam-Raipur Special and Raipur-Visakhapatnam Special.

City cops arrest two accused of group clash



Police removing vending stalls from Master Canteen Square

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: Capital police Tuesday arrested two persons including the prime accused for their involvement in the violent group clash at Master Canteen square of the capital city, Monday.

The arrested persons are Raja Behera (26) of Falikia Basti under Capital police station, and Paritosh Mali (30) of Balughat in South Bilaspur district of West Bengal. Mali is currently residing near Master Canteen Square of the City.

Police arrested the duo by registering a case (432/21) under sections 323, 326, 307, 294, 506 and 34 of the IPC. The duo was later sent to judicial custody by the court.

Meanwhile, police have launched a manhunt to arrest other accused individuals involved in the group clash.

On the other hand, police Tuesday evicted all the makeshift stalls including three shops of Raja in Master Canteen area.

Notably, two groups, wielding sharp weapons and iron rods, had clashed over past enmity at busy Master Canteen Square here in broad daylight Monday.

According to sources, the prime accused, Raja Behera, who has a tea stall in Master Canteen area had engaged in a heated argument with some youths of Masjid Colony that later turned violent around eight days ago. Sources claimed that the miscreants from Masjid Colony brutally assaulted Behera for allegedly overpricing some paan masala products.

The two groups again engaged in violent fight Monday over the past brawl. Three persons including one Sayeed sustained severe injuries in the clash.

HC summons 4 Collectors on wetland conservation

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 27: The Orissa High Court Tuesday directed the Collectors of Kendrapara, Khurda, Ganjam and Puri to depose before it August 14 in connection with a case pertaining to conservation of wetlands.

A bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice BP Routray pronounced the order and asked the Collectors to depose before the HC through videoconferencing.

Earlier, the HC had directed the four Collectors to file separate affidavits regarding steps taken by the district administrations to remove prawn enclosures (gherries) from Bhitarkanika in Kendrapara district and Chilika lake that spreads over Khurda, Ganjam and Puri districts.

The Collector of Ganjam Tuesday submitted his affidavit in the HC while his counterparts in three other districts did not do so.

Expressing displeasure over the non-submission of affidavits, the HC directed the four Collectors to depose before it and furnish all data regarding the eviction of prawn enclosures from Bhitarkanika and Chilika.

The bench also sought to know from Kendrapara Collector as to why the district administration did not go for satellite verification of Bhitarkanika wetlands despite an order in this regard from the HC.

Notably, the HC had taken up the issues related to the conservation of wetlands suo motu and directed the Collectors to submit the affidavits.

IMD predicts heavy rain today



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Tuesday said that heavy to very heavy rainfall could be seen in different parts of the state Wednesday.

In its evening bulletin, the met department said, "Heavy to very heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Deogarh,

Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak and Jajpur: Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Angul, Dhenkanal, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Puri, Khurda and Sambalpur."

It also added, "Light to moderate rain or thundershower may occur at most places over the districts of North Odisha and at many places over the districts of South Odisha."

The department claimed that the spate of heavy rainfall is likely to continue for the next three days at least, as per the weather forecast as of now.

Heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected Thursday too at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Deogarh, Jharsuguda, Sambalpur, Bargarh, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj while heavy rainfall could be seen at one or two places over the districts of Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Dhenkanal, Angul, Boudh and Sonepur Thursday.

The department has also warned the fishermen not to venture into deep sea off Odisha and North Bay of Bengal July 28 to July 30.

The weathermen in its rainfall report said that during Tuesday, the highest daytime rainfall was reported at 31 mm at Hirakud followed by Titilagarh which saw 20 mm of rainfall.

Centre to revive Talcher fertilizer plant

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: The Union government has decided to revive Talcher unit of Fertilizer Corporation of India Ltd (FCIL) by setting up an Ammonia Urea plant.

The announcement was made by the Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya through a written reply in the Lok Sabha Tuesday.

The 12.7 lakh metric tonne per annum capacity plant will be formed in a joint venture (JV) of nominated PSUs — Gas Authority of India Ltd (GAIL), Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Ltd (RCF), Coal India Ltd (CIL) and FCIL. Accordingly, a JV company named Talcher Fertilizers Ltd (TFL) has been incorporated November 3, 2015.

The plant will create over 5,000 employment opportunities. According to a report, direct employment opportunities would be about 510 and indirect employment opportunities would be 4,500 (during construction phase) for the Talcher Fertilizer Plant.

NCC Odisha concludes six-day online camp

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 27: NCC Group Cuttack concluded its online camp 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' Tuesday. A total of 250 cadets and Associate NCC Officers from the states of Odisha, Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, and Union Territory of Chandigarh had participated in the six-day camp.

The camp was conducted using Google Meet G suite platform. The theme was Kargil War 1999. The online camp was conducted by means of presentations, discussions, interactions etc to showcase the history, geography, tourism, cuisines and cultural heritages of the participating states and the Union Territory.

The aim of the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat Saptah' was to foster the spirit of national integration and solidarity overcoming cultural, religious, geographical, environmental and linguistic barriers evident in the enthusiastic participation of the cadets from these states. While the aspects of bonding, peer learning, team build-



ing and thrill of physically seeing the natural, cultural and geographical beauty was missing owing to the current difficult situation, the cadets showed keenness in knowing about other states during the presentations and screening of videos. The cadets also actively participated in online dance & song competition and poster making competition on Kargil War. Commodore Somen Banerjee, Dy DG Odisha Directorate, addressed the participants July 26. While highlighting the importance of conducting such camps, he exhorted the cadets to actively participate in all the events.

Cyber crooks siphon off ₹1 Lakh from woman's account

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: Unknown miscreants have withdrawn around Rs 1 lakh from a working woman's account without her knowledge. The victim lady, Rubi Naik, 30, a resident of Patra Sahi area in Mancheswar has lodged a complaint with Lingaraj police in this regard.

Naik claimed that she has a savings account at Lewis Road branch of the Union Bank of India in 2019. The complainant, who works as a sweeper in the office of a private company, used to deposit all her hard-earned money in the savings account. Recently, she was shocked to find that someone has withdrawn around Rs 1 lakh from her account in various installments on different dates during the last one month. Around Rs 40,000 was withdrawn July 5, 2021 while the miscreants took another Rs 38,000 two days later. She lost around Rs 1 lakh to the fraudsters in a series of transfers from her account.

According to Naik, she neither received any phone call nor shared any OTP with anyone.

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Child trafficking racket busted in Steel City, 9 held



AGENCIES/PNN

Rourkela, July 27: In a major breakthrough, Plant Site police in the Steel City busted a child trafficking racket as it arrested nine persons, including the mastermind and five women, for their alleged involvement in child sale, police said Tuesday.

The accused have been identified as Seema Agrawal alias Seema Garg, 45, held from Janata Niwas Lane, Sarita Agrawal, 50, a resident of a house opposite Krishna Hotel, Nita Agrawal, 44, of DAV School Lane, Asha Devi, 38, of Gurudwar Road, Nikhil Agrawal, 25, held from DAV School Lane, Sumit Agrawal, 21, held from Power House Road and Sheela Gupta, 38, Bishra Dahara Road. All were arrested Monday for running the racket.

The mastermind of the racket Jeetendra Agarwal and one of his associates were also arrested Tuesday. All the accused were produced in the court, Tuesday.

A case under the IPC has been registered against them, said Bikram

Keshari Bhoi, additional SP of Rourkela.

As per reports, the child trafficking gang was active in the Rourkela region and used to sell infants outside the state, especially to childless couples in Jharkhand and Raigarh of Chhattisgarh for lakhs of rupees.

The accused had managed to sell a girl child for ₹40,000 and a male child for ₹4 lakh. The accused used to contact poverty-ridden families in the city and would lure them to sell off their child in exchange of money. The mobile phones of the accused have been seized. The cell phones contain pictures of several newborn babies and infants.

Three days back, Sangeeta and Nita contacted a woman Seema Khuntia, living near Vaishnodevi temple in Timber Colony. They lured Seema Khuntia with money and convinced her to sell her one-and-half-year-old granddaughter.

Faced with poverty, Seema Khuntia agreed to hand over her granddaughter as the accused also promised the woman to ensure better living standards for the child.

A child sale trafficking gang was reportedly active in the Rourkela region and used to sell infants outside the state, especially to childless couples in Jharkhand and Raigarh of Chhattisgarh for lakhs of rupees

The accused were selling a girl child for ₹40,000 and a male child for ₹4 lakhs. The accused used to contact poverty-ridden families in the city and would lure them to sell off their child in exchange of money. The mobile phones of the accused have been seized and they contain pictures of several newborn babies and infants

The mastermind of the racket Jeetendra Agarwal and one of his associates were also arrested Tuesday. All the accused were produced in the court, Tuesday

The breakthrough came when, as per the plan, Seema Khuntia along with her one-and-half-year-old granddaughter reached Idgha Ground on Mahatab Road in the city at around 8 PM Monday. There she found Sarita, Seema and another youth instead of Sangeeta and Nita who had contacted her.

Angered at not finding Sangeeta and Nita, Seema Khuntia refused to hand over the child initially. She gave her granddaughter to Sarita and Seema after much persuasion.

Seema Khuntia asked for the promised amount, but the two women asked her to come to Janata Niwas Lane to collect the money.

However, she found none at the designated place and lodged a complaint at the Plant Site police station. Further investigations are underway to unravel the involvement of other persons in this racket.

TOURISM BOOST FOR RAKTATIRTHA

MLA, local leaders review development works at Eram

POST NEWS NETWORK

Basudevpur, July 27: A review meeting over various development works undertaken by the state government for Saheed Smruti Peetha (also known as Raktatirtha) at Eram in Basudevpur area of Bhadrak was held Tuesday.

According to reports, the Tourism department has sanctioned ₹40 lakh for the ongoing projects in the area.

In the current fiscal year too, the Culture and Tourism department has sanctioned an additional ₹50 lakh for the development of the Saheed Peetha.

MLA Bishnuabrata Routray and many local people's representatives said that all possible steps will be taken for development and beautification of the peetha.

It was proposed that beautification of Nana pond, a park at Eram, installation of statues of 29 martyrs, a



water foundation in Nana pond and other ancillary works will be undertaken with the fund provided by the government.

Notably, Eram is called the second Jallianwala Bagh in the country. The field where the memorial is located is also called Raktatirtha as 29 freedom fighters were massacred by police September 28, 1943 during the 'Quit India' movement.

A committee formed by local residents been battling for development of the peetha. A Saheed Smruti Bhavan has

been constructed at a cost of ₹8 lakh at the place.

During the Quit India Movement, the field at Eram was frequently used by freedom fighters for public meetings and agitations against foreign rule. A huge crowd gathered at the field to hold a peaceful protest against the British September 28, 1943. Police indiscriminately fired at the protesters. As the field was bound from three sides, no one could escape and 28 freedom fighters and a woman named Pari Bewa, were killed in the firing.

Wife refuses to pay money for liquor, youth hangs self

POST NEWS NETWORK

Buguda, July 27: A man committed suicide by hanging himself after his demand for ₹100 to consume liquor was turned down by his wife. The incident happened under Buguda police limits in Ganjam district, Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Nirakar Palei, 24, son of migrant labourer Bhaskar Palei of Golia Nuabandh village under this police limits. He was also working as a migrant labourer and had been married three months back.

He asked his wife Rashmita to give him ₹100 to consume liquor, but she refused to pay, Tuesday morning. He went inside a room and hanged himself. Family members rushed him to Buguda hospital where a doctor pronounced him 'brought dead'.

His mother Nisha Palei said that Nirakar ended his life after his wife refused to give him ₹100 to consume liquor. Police registered a case and sent the body for post-mortem. Buguda IIC Chitaranjan Behera said.

3 scribes held on charges of extortion

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, July 27: The Dharmashala police arrested three journalists of a Web channel on charges of extorting money from a truck driver near Jaraka in Jajpur district, late Monday night.

The arrested have been identified as Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Tushar Khuntia and Satya Ranjan Padhi.

According to sources, the truck with the permission from Khandagiri police was en route to Jharkhand from Bhubaneswar. It was reportedly transporting 18 heads of cattle.

The trio intercepted the truck on NH-16 and demanded money from the driver, accusing him of transporting cattle illegally. When the driver refused to give them any money,

they created a ruckus. Tension prevailed at the spot, leading to chaotic situation for some time.

On being informed, Dharmashala police reached the spot and tried to pacify them. Not in a position to hear anyone, they freed the cattle from the truck.

On the basis of a complaint lodged by Jeevan Das of People for Animals' Organisation, they were arrested.

Drivers' association observes 12-hour bandh in Bargarh



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, July 27: Bargarh district committee of Odisha Motor Chalak Sangha (a drivers' association) Tuesday observed a 12-hour dawn-to-dusk bandh in protest against the alleged negligence of the state government towards the demands of the local drivers.

The bandh threw normal life out of gear in Bargarh town as well as other places of the

district. Hundreds of protesters were seen visiting government and private offices persuading them to support the bandh and close their establishments. They were also seen picketing at several important junctions, including Gandhi Chowk of Bargarh town, blocking roads by parking their vehicles.

Educational institutions, markets, business establishments and shops downed their shutters amid the bandh call.

The association has nine demands, which include setting up a welfare fund for drivers, registration of drivers by the Labour department, pension facility, Corona warrior status, ₹50 lakh ex-gratia to the next of kin of drivers who lost lives to Covid-19 and financial support of ₹10,000 to each driver as they have lost earnings during pandemic.

WORSHIP FOR RAINS



Tribals dance during a procession on way to Kadali Jharan Peetha, a hilly shrine in Titlagarh area of Bolangir district, to worship the goddess for rain

GOVT YET TO ACT ON SMALL COLD STORES, FARMERS SUFFER

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sonepur, July 27: About 80 per cent of people in Subarnapur district solely depend on agriculture. Besides paddy, farmers also raise vegetables, potatoes, onions and other cash crops to supplement their income, but for lack of cold stores for vegetables, they have to go for distress sale most of the time, a report said.

The government has plans for setting up small cold stores to help farmers to preserve their agricultural produce, but no concrete step is being taken in this regard, it was alleged.

During harvesting time, farmers have no preservation facilities to store their vegetables. As a result, traders cash in on the situation and buy their produce at throwaway prices, while prices of vegetable are soaring in towns and cities. Owing to this perennial problem, farmers fail to get the right price of their produce.

According to reports, vegetables are cultivated in 5,000 hectares in the Kharif season and 9,000 hectares in the Rabi season in this district.

Water resources that are available in the form of many rivers and creeks hold much potential for growth of agriculture and horticulture in this district, farmers said.

They lamented that there are no cold storage facilities in the district due to apathy of the government. As a result, farmers have to sell off their produce immediately after the harvest at very low prices.

They alleged that a few years back, the government had accounted to set up cold stores in each block. Leaders, in various meetings, had announced to set up a cold store at Tarabha area, but still there is no effort whatsoever to set up the project.

Reports said that huge quantities of vegetables like parbal, tomato, brinjal, long beans, lady's fingers, cucumbers, bitter guard, onion, garlic, potato, chilli and other vegetables are cultivated in Sonepur, Binika, Tarabha, Ullunda and Birmaharajpur blocks.



OFFICIAL APATHY

According to reports, vegetables are cultivated in 5,000 hectares in the Kharif season and 9,000 hectares in the Rabi season in Subarnapur district. Water resources that are available in the form of rivers and creeks hold much potential for growth of agriculture and horticulture in the district, farmers observed

Secretary of the Dunguripalli RMC, Udit Kumar Babu said that the state government is emphasizing on small cold stores. "There are plans to set up cold stores with total capacity of 600 tonnes at Garamahula under Tarabha block, Bisimunda and Kalapathar market yard under Sonepur block," he added

Some farmers pointed out that due to the shortage of cold storage facilities in district, most of them go for distress sale of their produce, apart from incurring additional expenditure on transportation.

Cold storage facilities are must for farmers in this agrarian district. The support that the government should provide to farmers is not available, they alleged.

In 2014-15, the state government launched the Potato Mission and encouraged farmers to take up onion farming too. But onion and potato rot for lack of preservation facilities. At that time, farmers had

no way but to sell the produce at throwaway prices.

Dunguripalli RMC had moved a proposal for a cold store. It was also approved by the Horticulture department. Land was acquired for the project at Garamahula. Then, the RMC prepared a detailed project report and sent it to the government. But it is yet to approve the DPR.

The then Collector Manisha Banerjee had written to the director of Odisha State Agriculture and Marketing Board in this regard, but no step was taken in this direction, it was learnt.

When asked, secretary of the Dunguripalli RMC, Udit Kumar Babu said that the state government is emphasizing on small cold stores. "There are plans to set up cold stores with total capacity of 600 tonnes at Garamahula under Tarabha block, Bisimunda and Kalapathar market yard under Sonepur block," he added.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No.: SBP-ELECT-2021-T-120
Date: 20.07.2021

Name of the Work: MISC MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR ELECTRICAL POWER LINE WORKS OVER SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR (01 YEAR).

Approx cost of the Work: ₹77,37,498.38
Completion Period of the work: 12 (Twelve) Months.

Tender Closing Date & time: At 1600 hrs. of 11.08.2021.

No manual offers sent by Post / Courier / Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.

Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-tender is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>

Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website (15) fifteen days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (G),
PR-234/M/21-22 Sambalpur

No.A-319 **GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA**
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
Left Canal Division No. -III, Duburi, Dist.- Jajpur
'e' Procurement Notice
AUCTION SALE NOTICE NO. EELCD-III-01/2021-22

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Name of the work:- | a) Auction sale of Diesel Ambassador Car No-OR-06C-1152. |
| 2. Offset Price:- | Rs.18,400/- |
| 3. EMD to be deposited | ₹2000/- |
| 4. Date & Time of Bidding | From 11AM of 22.07.2021 to 3.00PM of 05.08.2021 |
| 5. Last date & time for receipt of bid in the Drop box:- | 3.00 PM of 05.08.2021 |
| 6. Date, Time and place for opening of bid:- | 03.30 AM of 05.08.2021 at the O/o Executive Engineer, Left Canal Division No-III, Duburi, Dist.- Jajpur Executive Engineer, Left Canal Division No-III, Duburi, Dist.- Jajpur Odisha. e-mail :eelcd3@gmail.com |
| 7. Name & Address of the Officer inviting bid:- | |
| 8. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal, | https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in |

Sd./- Executive Engineer, Left Canal Division No. - III, Duburi, Dist.- Jajpur
OIPR-32227/11/0001/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
Office of the Superintending Engineer,
Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar
Email Address: semechcircle104@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice No.- SEM/MDB-4/2021-22

No. A-323:-

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. Name of the Work | : Mechanical Gate Works |
| 2. No. of Works | : 01 (One) |
| 3. Category of executors | : SSI Units registered under DIC/ NSIC/ MSME for Irrigation Shutters/ Hydro Mechanical Gates. |
| 4. Bid Identification No. | : SEM/MDB-4/2021-2022 |
| 5. Estimated Cost | : Rs. 14,59,627.00 |
| 6. Period of completion | : 30 (Thirty) Calendar days |
| 7. Date & time of availability of bid documents in the Portal | : From Dt.29.07.2021 (10.00 AM) to Dt.05.08.2021 (5.30 PM) |
| 8. Last date/time for receipt of bid in the Portal | : Dt.05.08.2021 (up to 5.30 PM) |
| 9. Date and Place of opening of Bid | : Dt.06.08.2021 (04.00 PM onwards in the O/o the undersigned) |
| 10. Name of the Officer inviting Bid | : Superintendent Engineer, Mechanical Circle, Bhubaneswar |

Further details can be seen only from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>
Sd./- Superintending Engineer, Mechanical Circle Bhubaneswar
OIPR-32405/11/0001/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
PR&DW DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, MALKANGIRI
e-Mail - eerwss_mal@nic.in, eerwssmlkg@gmail.com
INVITATION FOR BIDS / NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
Bid Identification No.: RWSS MKG ONLINE 02/2021-22 DATED: 26.07.2021

No. 0-474:- The Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Malkangiri on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites from bidders of eligible class registered with the State Government and bidders of equivalent Grade / Class registered with Central Government / MES / Railways according to the norm of 'e' Procurement system in online mode for the works detailed in the table below to be eventually drawn up on turnkey basis (i.e. with design and execution).

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Name of the work | : Execution of 02 (Two) Nos. retrofitting work to RPWS scheme in Malkangiri District under FHCT programme |
| 2. No. of Works | : 02 Nos. |
| 3. Estimated Cost | : ₹33.07 Lakhs to ₹60.71 Lakhs |
| 4. Tender Paper Cost | : ₹6,000/- to 10,000/- |
| 5. Class of Contractor | : Estimated cost up to ₹20.00 lakhs and within ₹40.00 lakhs 'D' & 'C' Estimated cost more than ₹20.00 lakhs and within ₹40.00 lakhs 'C' & 'B' Estimated cost more than ₹40.00 lakhs and within ₹300.00 lakhs 'B' & 'A' |
| 6. Period of Completion | : 06 (Six) to 10 (Ten) calendar months |
| 7. Critical Dates | |

| Procurement Officer | Bid Identification No. | Availability of Tender Online for Bidding From To | Last Date of seeking Tender Clarification | Date of opening of Technical Bid |
|--|-------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|
| Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Malkangiri | RWSS_MKG_ONLINE_02 of 2021-22 | 02.08.2021 at 09.00AM to 11.08.2021 up to 05.00PM | 09.07.2021 | 12.8.2021 at 11.00AM |

Further details can be seen in the bidding documents, which is available in the eprocurement portal <https://www.tendersorissa.gov.in>. Subsequent corrigendum if required shall be appeared in the website only. The Authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason therefor.
OIPR-25044/11/0005/2122 Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Malkangiri

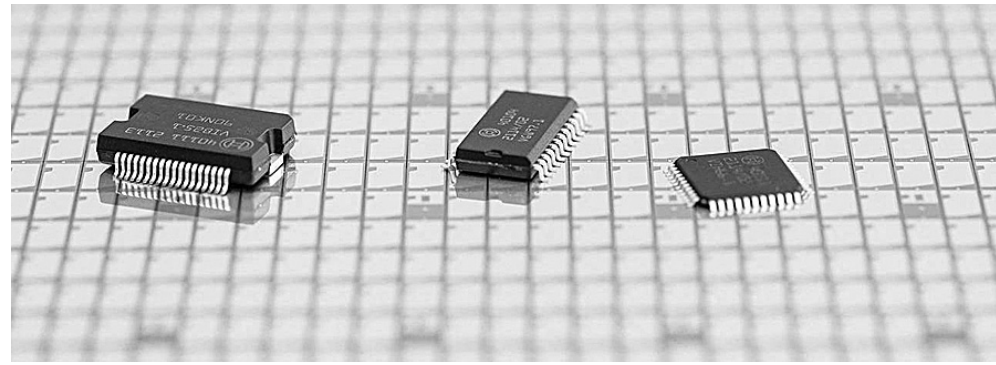
No. B-251 **WORKS DEPARTMENT**
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
ROURKELA (R&B) DIVISION, UDITNAGAR, ROURKELA
E-Mail Id - eepwrkl@gmail.com
Government of Orissa "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.: 20/2021-2022 Dated: 19.07.2021

| | |
|---|--|
| 1. Number of works: | 4 (Four) number of Works |
| 2. Estimated cost: | Rs.71.12 Lakhs to 98.63 Lakhs |
| 3. Period of completion: | 7 (Seven) to 9 (Nine) calendar months |
| 4. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal: | Dt 02.08.2021 at 11.00 A.M. |
| 5. Last date/ Time for receipt of bids in the portal: | Dt 13.08.2021 up to 05.00 P.M. |
| 6. Date of opening of Bid: | Dt.16.08.2021 at 11.00 A.M. |
| 7. Name and Address of the Officer Inviting Bid: | Executive Engineer, (R & B) Division, Rourkela, Uditnagar. |

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <http://tendersorissa.gov.in>
Sd./- Executive Engineer, R & B Division, Rourkela
OIPR-34068/11/0008/2021

FOCUS TECHNOLOGY

THE GLOBAL TECH SPLIT



Both the United States and China understand the central role of technology in driving their economies and global development. They also know that mastering it, as well as safeguarding relevant intellectual property, can bolster their national security and geopolitical influence, with important feedback effects for their sustained growth and resilience

H eightened US-China tensions have raised the prospect of a deep global technology divide, potentially forcing other countries to choose which camp to join. There are plenty of grim scenarios involving irreconcilable splits between core technologies that power a wide range of products and services, from aircraft and automobiles to precision engineering for robotics and payment systems for e-commerce. Should these scenarios materialise, the world's two largest economies will pour huge amounts of resources into a zero-sum race to control the cutting edge.

Both the United States and China understand the central role of technology in driving their economies and global development. They also know that mastering it, as well as safeguarding relevant intellectual property, can bolster their national security and geopolitical influence, with important feedback effects for their sustained growth and resilience.

In the medium term, the US faces a stiff challenge to its longstanding dominance in science and engineering, as well as to its capacity to produce critical components. For example, although US firms design cutting-edge semiconductors, America's share of global output has declined from 37 per cent in 1990 to only 12 per cent today.

Meanwhile, China, for all its progress, remains a long way from the technological frontier in many products such as computer chips and airplanes. True, the country has developed a deep ecosystem in many types of manufacturing, and has exceptional capacity to produce rapidly and at scale. It is also near the top of the global rankings for patents and research and development expenditure. But China is vulnerable in many areas. It imports about \$300 billion worth of semiconductors annually, with approximately half going into export manufacturing. Moreover, many services that are intertwined with goods need semiconductors to operate, as is true of the apps embedded in smartphones.

Other advanced economies with the capacity to design or manufacture critical components in semiconductor supply chains, including Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and the Netherlands, are caught in the crosshairs of US-

China tensions. For these countries, geopolitical considerations will inevitably play a role alongside commercial ones, necessitating careful calculations.

The likeliest medium-term outcome is that technology bifurcation will occur as countries intensify their efforts to reduce their vulnerabilities, but that it will remain contained. US companies are building several high-end semiconductor plants, while China is recruiting global talent and ramping up its R&D in semiconductors, as well as in the software, machinery, and equipment needed to produce them.

Meanwhile, other countries are pursuing various options. These include forging alliances to secure supplies of critical components, developing their capability to achieve interoperability between different technology standards, and strengthening their offerings of more sophisticated products and services to global markets, and thus their negotiating positions vis-à-vis the US and China.

But in the longer term, the world needs to be more ambitious, and step up multilateral efforts to boost global technological cooperation. Developed and emerging economies alike should therefore frame issues related to technology tensions in a broader context.

They should start by recalling that economic openness has boosted growth and welfare immensely. In Asia, mainland China's rapid economic development attests to that. South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Hong Kong, despite

having little or no natural resources, also managed to industrialise and modernise, partly through globalisation. And a growing number of developing and emerging economies across Africa, Latin America, and Europe are moving up the income ladder by finding niches and participating in global value chains.

Moreover, no economy – no matter how large or advanced – can turn away from globalisation and ensure that it will always occupy the leading position in all high-tech products, enjoy secure supplies of critical components, and have the capacity to operate an exponentially growing web of intricate production processes. Semiconductors are again a prime example: Their production chain is extraordinarily complex and relies on hundreds of inputs that are processed and produced by highly engineered tools sourced from around the world. Gaining even a foothold in this sector requires huge R&D and a long lead time.

True, a country can reduce its vulnerability to adverse external developments. But the costs could be immense, especially if the objective is to be fully self-sufficient and cost-effective in as many technology products as possible.

Given these constraints, countries should aim for globalisation based on multilateral agreements. One priority should be to disseminate technological advances faster and more widely to both developed and emerging-market economies in order to reduce their vulnerabilities and to enable more

newly emerging economies to advance, including via technology transfer. Policymakers should also expand the reach of trade and investment agreements to safeguard the interests of businesses, workers, and countries while minimising the negative externalities of protectionism. This could include expanding free-trade agreements to include dedicated chapters on technology issues and annexes on safeguarding the rights of lower-income and vulnerable workers.

Such developments will not unfold spontaneously. But the corporate sector may be able to help find a constructive way forward without undermining national-security interests. In March, for example, the Chinese and US semiconductor industry associations said they will form a joint working group. Representatives of 10 chip companies from each country will meet twice a year to discuss matters including export restrictions, supply-chain safety, and encryption technology.

The policies adopted by the US and China will of course be key to averting a major technological split. But the rest of the world, by staying above the Sino-American fray, can help to take the lead in forging a new trust-based consensus based on a common vision of shared technological progress.

Hoe Ee Khor is Chief Economist at the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO). Suan Yong Foo is Senior Economist at AMRO.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

Hoe Ee Khor & Suan Yong Foo

IN THE LONGER TERM, THE WORLD NEEDS TO BE MORE AMBITIOUS, AND STEP UP MULTILATERAL EFFORTS TO BOOST GLOBAL TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION

IN JEST THIS

Lift weights like Chanu: It's good for you

Mirabai Chanu is being celebrated all over India and deservedly so. She didn't just lift 202kg at the Tokyo Olympics, she also lifted everyone's spirits.

I was excited about Chanu's silver medal for two reasons. First, by winning a medal on the first day of the competition, she allowed us to breathe a collective sigh of relief. She allowed us to change the dominant question in our heads from "When will we win our first medal?" to "How many medals will we win?"

Second, by winning a medal in weightlifting, she will hopefully inspire more Indians to lift weights – not just for competition, but also health.

People of all ages can benefit greatly from lifting weights like Chanu. But please don't take me too literally. If you admire Chanu and try to lift like her at a public gym or fitness centre, you might fall backwards and crack a few skulls, not just your own. The newspaper headline would be quite embarrassing: "Weightlifting brings glory for Mirabai Chanu, ambulance for her fan."

Weightlifting is a little unbalanced: Women: 2; Men: 0.

That should be a challenge for all the young men in India: Remove the zero and become a hero.

Whether you're young or old, weightlifting offers a number of benefits to you. Here are just three:

1. It helps you increase muscle mass, as well as bone density. This is particularly important for older people like me. Any type of lifting is good for us, as long as it isn't shopping.

2. Weightlifting and other types of strength training have been shown to reduce the symptoms of chronic conditions such as arthritis, back pain, obesity, heart disease, depression, diabetes and laziness. I'm not sure if it actually helps with laziness, but ever since I started lifting weights in a gym, I've seen an amazing motivational change: My wife is considerably less motivated to call me "lazy guy."

3. Building muscle helps you burn more calories. Not only do you burn calories while you're ac-

tually lifting weights, the muscle mass that you build helps you burn more calories. You'll be in much better shape, but don't be surprised if the scale shows you to be heavier. Muscle weighs more than fat – at least that's what I tell my wife.

Me: "I'm heavier because of all this muscle mass I'm building."

Wife: "Yes, especially the muscle mass around your waist."

It's important to realise that you don't need to join a fitness club to lift weights. You can lift your own weight by doing pushups, pullups, lunges and squats. You can also lift objects around your home, as long as you're careful not to strain yourself with something really heavy, such as Vikram Seth's novel "A Suitable Boy."

If you're a grandparent, your grandchildren offer some ideal weightlifting opportunities. If they're infants, you can lift them off the ground. If they're teenagers, you can lift their textbooks off the ground. If they're adults, you can lift their wet grinders off the ground.

Me: "I'm heavier because of all this muscle mass I'm building."

Wife: "Yes, especially the muscle mass around your waist."

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Lord, give me perfect sincerity, that sincerity which will lead me straight to Thee.



THE MOTHER

Spyware & Ice Cream

The Indian government continues to be in denial mode over snooping on journalists, civil society activists, political leaders, ministers and key government officials with the help of the Israeli spyware, Pegasus. It will be interesting to know what the Israeli government is doing in this regard. French President Emmanuel Macron, whose cell phone number is among 50,000 listed to be under suspected surveillance by the spyware, telephoned Israel's Prime Minister Naftali Bennet, as was revealed July 24, to ascertain whether the Israeli government has started an investigation into the matter.

The Israel government has set up a commission to go into allegations that NSO Group's Pegasus surveillance software was misused in 10 countries across four continents. The announcement was made by the head of the Israeli Parliament's Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee in the wake of the global furore over the revelations that the Israeli firm's spyware appears to have been used by its clients – exclusively governments – to spy on their critics and political adversaries. This strikes at the root of the stated objectives of the sale of the cyber technology which are only to track terrorists and criminals. There are clamours for accountability and increased controls on the international sale of spyware technology produced by several firms in Israel, apart from the NSO. Israeli legislator Ram Ben-Barak, who was once deputy head of Israel's intelligence agency Mossad, told Army Radio in the country that once the report of the review commission is available, the government will assess the need for taking corrective steps.

The chief executive of NSO, Shalev Hulio did not waste time in welcoming the announcement of the investigation, terming it as an opportunity to "clear our name." He went to the length of alleging that this is a larger attempt "to smear all the Israeli cyber industry." NSO exports its spyware to 45 countries with approval from the Israeli government. Hulio has asserted that he is prepared to cooperate with any investigation by any government official. And there lies the rub.

For, the Israeli government is also in the dock since it issues licences to all spyware firms in the country to sell their products. Naturally, an inquiry by the government can't be expected to be fair and transparent. Hulio said his company cannot disclose the details of its contracts due to "issues of confidentiality," a standard alibi for all business firms indulging in malpractices, but assured he would be open and above board to any government seeking details.

Defence Minister Benny Gantz has already defended export licences for the hacking tools and put the onus of ensuring that the devices are not abused on countries that purchase the systems. The clients, he insisted, must meet the terms of the use.

On the other hand, free-speech and digital rights activists demand a moratorium on the sale and transfer of spyware technology till a transparent mechanism is evolved for monitoring these exports. Among the spyware companies in Israel there is one – Candiru – against which Microsoft has levelled the accusation of selling tools to hack into Windows. Critics say Israel needs to rein in its spyware sector and curb proliferation of technologies that operate like commercial intelligence services.

Some experts say there is nothing to be surprised about the growth of spyware in Israel which itself holds hundreds of Palestinians in administrative detention without trial and puts most Palestinians under surveillance all the time. The pioneers of cyber-technology in Israel are often graduates of military hi-tech surveillance units.

When Israel is bedevilled by the spyware controversy and its fallout, it is now facing an ice cream war launched by the Vermont-based iconic brand - Ben & Jerry's ice cream. It is a protest against the repression and alleged surveillance on Palestinians, especially in the West Bank. The company, founded by two Left-leaning Jewish Americans, has announced it would no longer sell its ice cream in the "Occupied Palestinian Territory" meaning, among other places, the West Bank, which is home to lakhs of settlers. It has a long history of social justice activism and supported the Black Lives Matter protests. Its statement said that continuing sales in the disputed territory would be "inconsistent with our values." The decision might be a symbolic one, but it seems to be rooted in Left-wing critiques of Israel's continued military occupation of the West Bank and the expansion of Jewish settlements in areas where an independent Palestinian state is supposed to be formed under a two-state solution. Ben & Jerry's decision to stop selling its ice cream in parts of Israel has provoked a backlash from Israel's political leadership. Prime Minister Naftali Bennet charged the company with branding itself as "anti-Israeli ice cream." The latter, however, has made it clear it has no plans to wind up its business from the entire Israel.

The development only shows the deep tension in Israel due to the policy of creating division between Jews and Palestinians of which surveillance, intolerance and repressive measures are key tools. A global consensus is needed to deal sternly with every form of overt and covert suppression of democratic protests against government policies and actions. Till such time, harsh critics of despotic governments worldwide need beware.

WISDOM CORNER

- The unexamined life is not worth living. - SOCRATES
- Hope is but the dream of those who wake. - MATTHEW PRIOR
- Laziness may appear attractive, but work gives satisfaction. - ANNE FRANK

WORDSWORTH

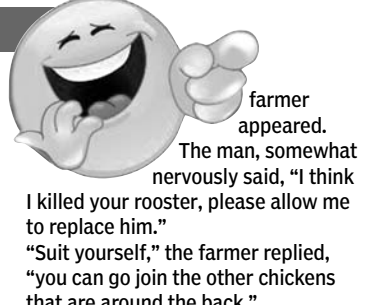
Onomatopoeia

This is not so unusual a term among those who write about words – though linguists today often prefer others, like echoism or imitation, to get across the idea of forming a word from a sound. The Greeks had a word for it, and we have borrowed it through Latin: onomatopoeia, the process of making words, which derives from onoma, a name, and poiein, to make. But we have extended the meaning beyond just making words to making words in a specific way – by echoing a sound that is linked to the thing we want to name. English is full of such terms. Among them are repetitive childish imitations like boo-hoo, choo-choo and bow-wow, and exclamations such as argh and ouch. But there's also a whole medley of nouns and verbs, some of them created in other languages and borrowed into English: bang, bash, bawl, beep, belch, blab, blare, bleat, blurt, bonk, bump, burble, buzz, clang, cheep, clank, clap, clatter, cuckoo ... life's too short to go right through the alphabet, but you will get the idea. It's not only single words that can be onomatopoeic. The effect is common in poetry, as in "The moan of doves in immemorial elms / And murmuring of innumerable bees" and "I heard the ripple washing in the reeds / And the wild water lapping on the crag", both of which are from poems by Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

LOL

Run over the rooster

A man was driving down a quiet country lane when out into the road strayed a rooster. Whack! The rooster disappeared under the car. A cloud of feathers. Shaken, the man pulled over at the farmhouse, rang the door bell. A



farmer appeared. The man, somewhat nervously said, "I think I killed your rooster, please allow me to replace him." "Suit yourself," the farmer replied, "you can go join the other chickens that are around the back."



Melvin Durai

ANY TYPE OF LIFTING IS GOOD FOR US, AS LONG AS IT ISN'T SHOPLIFTING

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Border row

Sir, The Assam-Mizoram border row took a violent turn with the trigger-happy police of the two states firing at each other. Five Assam police personnel have died in the clashes that ensued after Mizoram's civilians pushed the Assam police personnel from their post on the border. It is believed that the Mizoram police used automatic weapons, including light machine guns, in the attack. Ironically, while Assam has a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government, the ruling party in Mizoram is a National Democratic Alliance (NDA) ally. Therefore, the two warring northeastern states must heed the request of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to mend fences before the situation goes from bad to worse.

Military exercise

Sir, The Indo-Russia Joint Military Exercise, 2021 is going to begin in the city of Volgograd in Russia next month. Troops of 250 army personnel from each nation are going to come together to conduct the military exercise as a joint initiative against the threat of international terrorism. This exercise is an opportunity to learn from the respective contingents and prepare for the challenges posed by global terrorism. This exercise will also be a milestone in strengthening the bilateral relations and the security cooperation between the two nations.

Instruments of intimidation

Sir, The Union government is at pains to explain that the recent Income Tax department raids on two of the country's biggest media houses – Dainik Bhaskar and Bharat Samachar – were routine. However, one wonders how is it that such raids, carried out ostensibly on the basis of 'conclusive' evidence, target only those opposed to the Union government and its policies? And we hardly hear of such cases reaching their logical conclusion which further confirms our fears that the raids conducted are nothing but instruments of intimidation and a warning to all to fall in line. All credit goes to some of these beleaguered media houses that do not get cowed down by such threats and continue to uphold the Fourth Pillar's objectivity and independence.

Border row

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NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE; Shrey Siddharth, CUTTACK; Bhaskar Roy, NEW DELHI

Dams in bad shape; farmers cry for repair

POST NEWS NETWORK

Polsara, July 27: The state government has constructed check dams in various regions of Ganjam with a view to boost irrigation facilities, but in some cases, such projects are of no use for farmers. A case in point are some defunct check dams in Polsara area.

Farmers allege that the check dams are not coming handy for farming. On the other hand, one of them has rather damaged their farmlands.

They said that the check dam and its nullah need renovation. In fact, farmlands are getting sand-cast due to the check dam.

According to reports, hundreds of farmers depend on the check dam for irrigation in Daburua, Kainphulia, Balighai, Polsara, Ustapada, Siddhipur, Deulipada, Ranipada, Bandhapalli, Harichandampur, Patigada, and Mihirikana villages.

"Huge rush of water from the upland areas has damaged protective walls of the said check dam at Daburia and Kainphulia. Though



the check dam has been in bad shape since long, no step has been taken for its repair," farmers lamented.

Locals pointed out that there a five check dams in the area, but most of them require repair and restoration to make them useful for farming. They added that members of Rusikulya Rayat Mahasabha have drawn attention of the Chief Minister, the 5T Secretary, the

Revenue Divisional Commissioner (South), the superintending engineer of the Berhampur Minor Irrigation division and the officials of the Drainage department towards the need for repair of the check dams several times in the past, but to no avail.

Satyaban Pradhan of Rayat Mahasabha alleged that no step is being taken for restoration of dams. When contacted, executive en-

FARM WOES

Farmers said that the check dam and its nullah need renovation. In fact, farmlands are getting sand-cast due to the check dam

The cultivators alleged that huge rush of water from the upland areas has damaged the protective walls of the check dam. Though the check dam has been in bad shape since long, no step has been taken for its repair, they lamented

Locals said that the members of Rusikulya Rayat Mahasabha have drawn the attention of the Chief Minister, the 5T Secretary and other officials towards the need for repair of the check dams several times, but to no avail

gineer of the Drainage division, Sampad Ray said that cost estimates will be sent to the authorities and repairs will be done only after funds are available.

TRADITIONAL FEST



Tribals worshipping bundles of millet saplings as part of rituals of traditional 'Mandiarani Parav' for a better harvest at Tikiri under Kashipur block in Rayagada district, Tuesday
OP PHOTO

Youth hacked to death; cops suspect illicit affair

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 27: A youth was allegedly hacked to death by a couple, distantly related to the former, at Hariom Nagar under Dhanupalli in Sambalpur late Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Deepak Yadav (25). Police have registered a case of murder and started an investigation into the crime together with a scientific team, Tuesday morning.

According to police, the accused were identified as Binit Padia and Minati Padia.

From the preliminary investigation, police suspect that the murder could have been the fallout of an illicit affair or family feud.

Police said, Deepak had gone to Binit's house Monday. The two had arguments over some issue. Later Binit attacked Deepak with a sharp-edged weapon, wounding him critically. Binit was also injured in the attack.

Police rescued the two and rushed them to the district headquarters hospital. Doctors, however, declared Deepak "brought dead".

The accused are under treatment and their statements are yet to be recorded.

Jumbos play havoc; people seek damages in Mayurbhanj

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, July 27: In the last few days, elephants have caused extensive damages in various areas of Betanoti and Rasgobindapur blocks in Mayurbhanj district. Having lost their sleep over the persistent jumbo menace in some areas, the affected people have demanded compensation for the damages.

According to reports, many affected people met the DFO and demanded immediate steps to pay compensation within 10 days.

They also warned of agitation and sit-in protests outside the DFO office if their demands were not met.

The reports said, a herd of elephants has strayed from Similipal and are holed up in the area. As night falls, they enter human habitations and go on a damaging spree.

"They break houses and gobble up stored paddy and rice. Many people have been injured in elephant attacks," locals said.

Locals said, the animals get holed up in forests and come out at night



FILE PHOTO

MAN-ANIMAL CONFLICT

Many affected people met the DFO and demanded compensation within 10 days. They also warned of agitation and sit-in outside the DFO office if their demands were not met

A herd of elephants from Similipal are holed up in the area. As night falls, they enter human habitations and go on a damaging spree

The pachyderms break houses and eat stored paddy and rice. Many people have been injured in elephant attacks

to damage properties.

In a memorandum to the DFO, the affected people have sought assistance for the injured and the

bereaved families.

People have also appealed to the Forest department to drive away the animals.

Spurned lover tries to end life outside PS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, July 27: High drama was witnessed after a youth reportedly tried to end his life by consuming poison outside the Town police station here Tuesday, alleging that he was spurned by his lady love. He also alleged that police did not come out for assistance even though he had filed a complaint at the police station.

The youth was identified as Naveen Sharma of Bada Bazaar area under Khetrapur police limits. Police rescued him and admitted him to the district headquarters hospital (DHH) where his health condition improved after treatment.

According to reports, Sharma tried to end his life saying that a woman constable he was in love with since 2010 had rejected him. He repeatedly lodged complaints at the police station but the police refused to entertain his pleas. Frustrated, he tried to end his life outside the police station. Police, however, is yet to register a complaint in this regard.

Boudh locals seek closure of stone crushing units



POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, July 27: For the last one month, locals have been staging protests against stone crushing units and stone mines in Harbhanga block of Boudh district. Tuesday, hundreds of residents of Kharbhuin and Baisipada in Chhataranga panchayat staged protests in front of the Collector's office against the operation of stone crushers in the area.

During talks with villagers earlier, the tehsildar had allegedly misbehaved with the former and threatened them of action if they protested against the stone crushing units. The agitating villagers demanded immediate transfer of the tehsildar from the area for providing protection to the stone crushing units.

They clamoured for complete closure of the stone crushing units in the area. Hundreds of villagers, including women, took out a rally from the bus stand area and shouted slogans against the administration.

Stone quarrying is taking a heavy toll on the greenery with trees being felled to make space for the quarries. Stones are extracted using explosives. Explosion has been damaging the houses in the area.

A delegation of agitating people had earlier met the Sub-Collector and the Harbhanga tehsildar over the issue, but the talks remained inconclusive.

Villagers have been opposing

Agitating villagers said that dust emanating from stone crushers settles on farmlands and affects soil fertility. Dust also continues to pollute water bodies, causing diseases among people

the operation of the stone crushing units in the area for the last one month. The villagers lamented that these crusher units have been causing pollution in the area and also affecting farming activities.

"Dust emanating from stone crushers falls on farmland and affects its fertility. Dust also polluted water bodies, causing diseases among people," they added.

They demanded that all these crusher units should be closed down. The agitating people warned of intensifying their protest in coming days if no action is taken by the administration to close down these units.

The villagers led by Kharbhuin Village Committee president Akshay Nayak observed that operation of stone crushing units have spurred quarrying in the region. The agitators submitted a memorandum to the Sub-Collector for the district administration, seeking transfer of the Harbhanga tehsildar.

Woman, two kids killed in road mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, July 27: A woman and her two minor children were killed in a road accident on National Highway 26 near Chanher Tuesday afternoon. The incident took place after the driver of the car in which they were travelling lost control on the wheels and rammed it into a tree.

The woman and her two children died on the spot, while the driver has been admitted to a local hospital. His condition is stated to be critical. According to reports, the woman was traveling to her hometown Titlagarh from Bhawanipatna when the mishap took place.

Robbers loot bank in Sundargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, July 27: A gang of armed robbers looted a bank at gunpoint Tuesday afternoon in Sundargarh district. The robbers decamped with ₹2.87 lakh in cash.

According to reports, the robbery was committed at the Kirei branch of the Utkal Gramya Bank under Sundargarh Sadar police limits.

The robbers, apart from looting ₹2.87 lakh in cash from the bank's cash counter at gunpoint, decamped with a gold necklace of a woman customer, mobile phones and ATM cards of the bank staff and customers.

At around 2.30 PM the four men with guns who came on two motorcycles and entered the bank before herding all staff and customers into a room. The robbers took away their mobile phones and ATM cards. Then they looted the cash from the cash counter and departed.

The gang's entry and exit on two motorcycles have been captured in the CCTV of a shop in front of the bank.

COVID PRECAUTIONS



Student of MV-79 College under Kalimela block in Malkangiri district being checked with a thermal scanner as part of Covid-19 protocols
OP PHOTO

Vacant teachers' posts in schools affect students' education

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boinda, July 27: Resumption of offline classes for Class X has brought back the long lost smiles on the faces of students. Students in Kishorenagar block of Angul district are no different. But their parents are a worried lot.

They are worried about the quality of education as teachers' posts are lying vacant in most of the schools in the block.

"If immediate steps are not taken to fill up the vacant posts, teaching can never be complete," some parents observed.

There are 14 government high schools in Kishorenagar block. Out of them, 13 schools are struggling due to shortage of teachers and peons. Posts of a Sanskrit and PET teachers and two peons are lying vacant at Radhakrushna High School at Urukula. Similarly, in Ramdeo High School in Boinda

one post of science teacher, one post of PET teacher, two posts of art teacher and two posts of peon are yet to be filled up.

Maa Maheswari High School at Nakichi has no Hindi and Sanskrit teachers. One art and PET teacher's post is vacant at Pulamba Government High School. At Bileinali High School, posts of two art teachers and one peon are vacant.

Angapada High School is running without a head master, Hindi and art teachers. A peon's post is also lying vacant. Hindi, Sanskrit and art teachers' posts are lying vacant at Raniakata High School. Bamur High School is managing without science, Hindi and Sanskrit teachers. Similarly, posts of two art teachers, one Sanskrit and one PET teacher are vacant at Kishorenagar High School.

While one art and one PET teacher's posts are vacant at Oscapali High School, Sanskrit,



art and PET teachers' posts are falling vacant at Ambapal High School. Two post of peons are also lying vacant at Ambapal High School. While Ichhapur Hrushikesh Uchha Vidyapeeth has two art teachers and one peon posts vacant, no appointment has been made to fill up vacant PET teacher and peon posts at Kadalimunda

High School.

It is pertinent to mention that, Boinda villagers took up the matter with the district education officer and Secretary of School and Mass Education department but to no avail.

When asked for her comment on the issue, head mistress, Oscapali High School, Kabita Dandapat said,

MATTER OF CONCERN

There are 14 government high schools in Kishorenagar block. Out of them, 13 schools are struggling due to shortage of teachers and peons

Athamallik MLA Ramesh Chandra Sai said, he had already discussed the matter with the officials of Education department and will take it up with the Education Minister for early filling up the vacant teachers' posts

"We have been requesting for appointments of more teachers every year, but nothing has been done in this regard so far. Due to shortage of teaching staff, we are facing many problems," said Dandapat. Expressing concern,

Satchidananda Sahu, an educationist in Boinda area, said the staff shortage will definitely harm the students. The government is not appointing new teachers. Instead of appointing retired teachers, young teachers should be appointed, he opined.

Echoing the same, Lakishwar Panda, a resident of Urukula village said the students will be deprived of sports related activities as PET teacher posts are lying vacant at most schools.

When asked, Lambodar Sahu, a resident of Nakichi village, said because of such problems, parents prefer to send their children to private schools.

Athamallik MLA Ramesh Chandra Sai said he had already discussed the matter with the officials of Education department. "I will take it up with the Education Minister for early appointment to vacant teachers' posts."



ASSAM-MIZORAM BORDER TENSION

Assam declares 3-day state mourning

At least six persons were killed and 60 others, including an SP, injured in a bloody clash between the police forces of the two states along the Assam-Mizoram border Monday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, July 27: The situation on the Assam-Mizoram border remained tense as Assam declared a three-day mourning from Tuesday to condole the death of five policemen and one civilian in a border clash last night.

During the three-day mourning period, the national flag will fly at half-mast and there will be no public entertainment, a notification issued by the Assam government said.

At least six persons were killed and 60 others, including an SP, injured in a bloody clash between the police forces of the two states along the Assam-Mizoram border Monday.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who had last week held a conference with chief ministers of north-eastern states in a bid to resolve prickly border disputes be-



tween the, last night spoke to chief ministers of Assam and Mizoram, Himanta Biswa Sarma and Zoramthanga respectively, and urged them to ensure peace along the disputed border and find an amicable settlement.

Earlier in May this year, firing on Nagaland-Assam border had

similarly raised tensions. However, no deaths or injuries had occurred then. Sarma paid floral tributes to the five slain policemen at Silchar Tuesday.

We are deeply anguished by the loss of lives of our brave @assam police personnel. I visited Silchar SP office and paid floral tributes to

Locals threaten economic blockade

Locals in the state's Cachar district threatened an economic blockade of the neighbouring state of Mizoram.

People of Kabuganj and Dholai area have "launched an indefinite blockade of roads" leading to Mizoram from 9 am Tuesday to prevent any vehicle from moving to the neighbouring state.

Social activist Jabir Hussain Laskar told reporters that the people of border towns and vil-

lage will also launch an indefinite 'economic blockade' from Wednesday and urged the Assam government to take steps to resolve the boundary dispute.

The Barak Democratic Front (BDF) too has called a 12-hour Barak Valley bandh Wednesday in protest against the killing of six Assam police jawans and one civilian in Lailapur, BDF Chief Convenor Pradip Dutta Roy said.

the five martyrs and salute their sacrifice, he tweeted.

Earlier in the day, the chief minister visited the Silchar Medical College and Hospital and met the police personnel injured in the attack.

Cachar Superintendent of Police Vaibhab Chandrakant Nimbalkar, has been airlifted to a hospital in Mumbai by an air force air ambulance.

The chief minister is also likely to visit the inter-state border where the situation was stated to

be tense but under control, officials said.

We would do all possible to help the families of our martyred colleagues. The injured would be looked after fully, the Special DGP GP Singh tweeted.

All lawful and operational measures would be taken to bring culprits to book and protect the integrity of the constitutional boundary of Assam, Singh added, in an indication that Mizo policemen who fired at their Assam counterparts would be prosecuted.

Delhi brings black fungus under its health scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 27: Mucormycosis patients at Delhi government-run hospitals can be referred for surgeries at private hospitals under a cashless health scheme if the allotted date for operation is beyond seven days, according to the latest order issued by the Delhi government.

Mucormycosis (black fungus) is a life-threatening disease which requires urgent and timely surgical intervention. There is "limited capacity for performing surgeries pertaining to Mucormycosis in Delhi government hospitals", the order said.

In view of it, Health Minister-cum-Chairman, Delhi Arogya Kosh, has approved that eligible patients undergoing treatment for Mucormycosis in Delhi government hospitals "may be referred to empanelled private hospitals under the cashless surgery scheme if the allotted date of surgery in the Delhi government hospital concerned is beyond seven days".

Only residents of Delhi can avail benefit under the scheme.

Mucormycosis is more common among people whose immunity has lowered due to Covid, diabetes,



kidney disease, liver or cardiac disorders, age-related issues, or those on medication for autoimmune diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. If such patients are administered steroids, their immunity reduces further, allowing the fungus to thrive.

Under Delhi Arogya Kosh, the city government provides financial assistance to the extent of Rs 5 lakh to the needy eligible patients for treatment of any illness in government hospitals.

Flooded roads affect traffic as heavy rains hammer Delhi

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 27: Heavy rains Tuesday morning led to extensive waterlogging at several road stretches across Delhi, including near Pragati Maidan in the central part of the city and Dhaura Kuan in the southern part, affecting traffic movement.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said 100 mm of rainfall was recorded at the Safdarjung observatory, which provides representative data for the city in the last 24 hours.

Waterlogging was also seen at Mathura Road, Moti Bagh, Vikas Marg, Ring Road, Rohtak Road, Sangam Vihar and Kirari, among other places.

Due to the waterlogging, traffic crawled at ITO, underneath Moti Bagh metro station, Dhaura Kuan underpass, near Pragati Maidan, Mathura Road, Vikas Marg, Ring Road near IP Flyover, Rohtak Road. Public Works Department (PWD) officials said waterlogging complaints were being dealt with on priority.

Morning rain was of high intensity so a few areas of the city witnessed waterlogging. Our field staff is on the ground and we are closely observing the situation, a PWD official said.

The Delhi Traffic Police took to Twitter to inform commuters about waterlogging and the areas where traffic movement had been affected.

Traffic is affected near Qutab Minar Metro Station towards 100 Foota carriageway due to waterlogging.

Traffic coming from Badarpur towards Mehrauli has been diverted towards Mathura Road due to waterlogging near Pul Prahladpur, the traffic police said.



Highest rainfall for July in 18 years: IMD

Monsoon may have arrived late in Delhi, but it is inundating the capital now. The city has recorded 381 mm rainfall so far this month, the highest for July since 2003 and the second-highest ever. The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative data for the city, recorded 100 mm rainfall in just three hours Tuesday morning, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). It is also the maximum rainfall in 24 hours in the month of July in eight years. In 2013, Delhi had received 123.4mm rainfall July 21. The capital has recorded 14 rainy days this month so far, despite the delayed arrival of the monsoon on July 13, 16 days behind schedule. The monsoon, the most-delayed in 19 years, is now drenching Delhi, flooding low-lying areas and causing long traffic snarls. According to IMD data, the Safdarjung Observatory has gauged 108 per cent excess rainfall so far - 380.9 mm rainfall till July 27 against the normal of 183.5mm. Normally, Delhi records 210.6 mm precipitation in July.

In further tweets, they said traffic is affected near Okhla Mandi, from Tamil Sangam Marg towards RK Puram and from Hyatt Regency to RK Puram Sector-12 near CNG pump. A senior police officer said traffic has also been affected in Dhaura Kuan.

After the rains, the weather turned pleasant in Delhi.

The weatherman has predicted generally cloudy skies with moderate rain and the possibility of thundershowers accompanied by gusty winds with a speed of 30-40

kmph later in the day. The IMD said the maximum temperature in the national capital is likely to hover around 30 degrees Celsius.

According to the IMD, the southwest monsoon had reached Delhi July 13 - 16 days behind the usual date of onset.

Normally, the monsoon reaches the city by June 27 and covers the entire country by July 8. Last year, the wind system had reached Delhi on June 25 and covered the entire country by June 29.

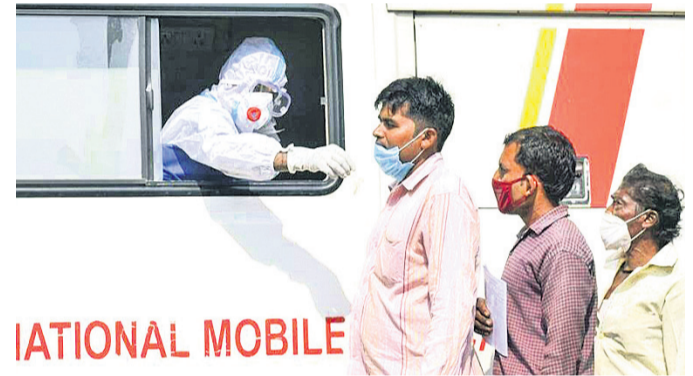
Assam govt issues revised Covid SOP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, July 27: Two districts of Assam will continue to remain under total containment zone due to high Covid-19 positivity rate, while the ban on inter-district movement of people will be in force in the state till further orders, according to the revised Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) issued by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) Tuesday.

Golaghat and Lakhimpur districts will remain under round-the-clock curfew, the order signed by Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua, in his capacity as chairperson, state executive committee of the ASDMA, said.

In the five districts of Goalpara, Morigaon, Jorhat, Sonitpur and Biswanath, where the Covid-19 positivity rate is moderate, curfew will remain in force from 2 pm to 5 am.



NATIONAL MOBILE

In the remaining districts, curfew timing will be from 5 pm to 5 am, as per the new directive.

All workplaces, business, commercial establishments, dine-in restaurants, hotels, resorts, dhabas, eateries, takeaway of food items from restaurants and eateries, the opening of counters, showrooms of cold storages and warehouses will be closed in the two districts with high positivity rate.

The establishments will be open till 1 pm in districts with moderate positivity rate, and up to 4 pm in districts showing improvement in the positivity rate, the order said.

Shops dealing with groceries, fruits, and vegetables, dairy and milk booths, animal fodder will be open up to 5 pm in districts showing high and moderate positivity rate, and up to 4 pm in the districts showing improvement.

There will be a total ban on the movement of all public and private transport in the total containment districts, though the movement of goods will continue, the ASDMA directive said.

In other districts, public transport will be allowed to operate by following Covid-19 protocol.

All inter-district passenger transport services and movement of people to and from other districts will remain suspended, the directive added.

Public gathering remained banned in the total containment districts, and up to 10 people will be allowed to attend marriage or funeral programmes in the other areas.

Previous orders, like compulsory wearing of face masks in public places, imposition of odd-even formula for plying of vehicles, and declaration of containment zones, will remain in force as per the new directive.

Assam to move SC for protection of forests



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Silchar, July 27: The Assam government will move the Supreme Court seeking protection of Innerline Forest Reserve from destruction and encroachment, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said Tuesday, a day after border clashes with Mizoram left five state policemen and a civilian dead and 60 others injured.

He told a press conference in Silchar that satellite images have

shown that roads are being constructed and forests cleared for jhum cultivation which cannot be allowed.

We will move the Supreme Court to ensure that the forests are protected, he said.

Jhum cultivation is a farming activity where farmland is cleared of trees and other vegetation and then set on fire. The practice is followed in most states of the northeast.

The dispute is not regarding

land but encroachment of reserved forests is the issue. We have no settlements in the forest areas and, if Mizoram can give evidence, we will immediately carry out eviction, he said.

The chief minister asserted that not an inch of Assam's land could be encroached by the neighbouring state.

People have sacrificed their lives but boundary has been protected which we will continue to do at any cost, he asserted.

After the vexed border dispute erupted into bloody clashes with security personnel and civilians from the two states going after each other on Monday, the Centre had directed them to move away their forces from the border post.

We have done so but Mizoram is yet to do so. Our police forces are, however, deployed 100 metres from the post, Sarma said.

The Assam government, he said, will deploy three commando battalions in Cachar, Karimganj and Haialakandi districts bordering Mizoram to strengthen security.



Children play on a waterlogged street after heavy rains near ITO in New Delhi, Tuesday

PTI PHOTO

PADMA AWARDS

Delhi to recommend docs, healthcare workers

Kejriwal said for the last one and half years doctors and healthcare workers have been putting their lives at risk and many have even lost their lives while serving in Covid care centres

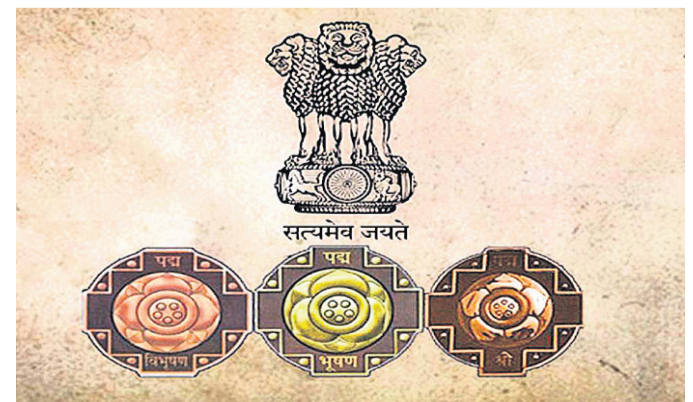
INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, July 27: The Delhi government has decided to recommend the names of doctors and healthcare workers for this year's Padma Award, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said Tuesday.

Every year, the Centre asks the states union territories to recommend the names of persons for the Padma Awards - Padma Vibhushan (second highest civilian award), Padma Bhushan (third highest civilian award) and Padma Shri (fourth highest civilian award) to honour them for their extraordinary services to the people.

Kejriwal said for the last one and half years doctors and healthcare workers have been putting their lives at risk and many have even lost their lives while serving in Covid care centres.

During a press conference here,



Kejriwal said that it was an opportunity to honour the doctors and healthcare staff who have saved the lives of several people amid this Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the Delhi government has decided to send only the names of doctors and healthcare workers for the Padma Awards to the

Centre for this year, he added. The Chief Minister has appealed to the people of Delhi to recommend the names of doctors and healthcare workers who have done extraordinary work during the pandemic.

People of Delhi can send their recommendations on -- pad-

maawards.delhi@gmail.com by August 15 August.

One has to recommend the name of a doctor or healthcare worker with address details and detailed description regarding the extraordinary work of the suggested name for the Padma awards, Kejriwal said.

For this purpose, the Delhi government has also set up a screening committee under the supervision of Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia. After receiving names from the people, the screening committee will verify the facts given about the particular doctor or healthcare worker and then the list will be sent to the Centre by September 15.

Earlier, Kejriwal had written a letter to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging to give 'Bharat Ratna', the highest civilian award in the country this year, to a doctor.

national

of the day quote

Almost all religions that came to Kashmir embraced the unique feature of 'Kashmiriyat' that shunned orthodox and encouraged tolerance and mutual acceptance among communities

RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

Over the last two days, there have been natural calamities occurring in Himachal Pradesh for which I have expressed my pain. But there has been a red alert issued again today. The government there is focussed in its attention and prepared

RAJENDRA ARLEKAR | HIMACHAL PRADESH GOVERNOR

The enthusiastic participation in the prabudh varg meetings, which has come into discussion as Brahmin Sammelans, being taken out by the party's general secretary S C Misra under my direction, is proof that people have conscious faith in the BSP. Heartfelt thanks to all

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Rakesh Asthana new Delhi Police chief

New Delhi: Rakesh Asthana, a senior IPS officer of Gujarat cadre, was appointed as the Commissioner of Delhi Police Tuesday. According to a Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) order, Asthana, currently serving as Director General of the Border Security Force (BSF), will join as the Delhi Police Commissioner with immediate effect. The appointment of Asthana, a 1984-batch IPS officer, to the post of Commissioner of Police (CP), Delhi came just days before his superannuation July 31.

24x7 helpline number for women

New Delhi: The government Tuesday launched a round-the-clock helpline for women affected by violence. The National Commission for Women's helpline number -- 7827170170 -- aims to provide online support to women affected by violence by linking them with appropriate authorities such as police, hospitals, district legal service authorities and psychological services.

MP: Govt sets up SIT

Bhopal/Mandsaur (MP): The Madhya Pradesh government Tuesday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the spurious liquor incident in which six persons have died so far in Mandsaur district. The committee, headed by Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Rajesh Rajora, includes Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) GP Singh and Inspector General (IG), Railways, MS Sikarwar, as members, as per the order issued by Home Department Secretary D Sreenivasa Verma.

Pb: BSP protests against farm laws

Nawanshahr: The BSP here Tuesday protested the Centre's farm laws, demanding their rollback while describing the Union government as "anti-farmer" and "anti-minority". Protesters led by Bahujan Samaj Party's (BSP) Punjab unit chief Jasvir Singh Garhi took out a march from Ambedkar Chowk to the deputy commissioner's office here. Addressing the gathering, Garhi accused the BJP-led government at the Centre of being "anti-farmer" and "anti-minority".



What we need is to take public awareness to such a level that social sanctions are built against dowry. The fear of such a social stigma should deter people from demanding or giving dowry

ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN | KERALA GOVERNOR

TRAGIC INCIDENT

Ten policemen in Uttar Pradesh's Bagpat have been relieved of their duties after a 22-year-old man - the son of a local RSS leader -- allegedly ended his life by hanging when his mother was roughed up and their house ransacked by police, following a brawl at a Covid vaccination camp in the district, officials said



PORNOGRAPHY CASE

Kundra earned ₹ 1.17 cr in 5 months: Police

AGENCIES

Mumbai, July 27: Raj Kundra earned at least Rs 1.17 crore between August and December last year from his business of production and online distribution of porn films, Mumbai Police told a court Tuesday, seeking another extension of his custody.

The magistrate's court, however, remanded Kundra (45), who is married to Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty, in judicial custody for 14 days.

The Bombay High Court, meanwhile, refused to give him any urgent temporary relief.

"Interrogation of Ryan Thorpe, another accused in the case, revealed that revenue from Hotshots (an online app or platform through which alleged porn content was made available) was Rs 1, 17, 64,886 (USD 1,58,057) between August and December 2020," the remand plea of the police said.

This revenue was earned from the app on Apple store and the police have sought information from Google too, it said. The app had more users on Google Play than the Apple store before it was removed, so he must have earned much more revenue, the police claimed.

7 OPPN PARTIES SEEK PREZ'S INTERVENTION

'Ask govt to discuss farm stir, Pegasus' Mamata meets PM

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 27: Seven opposition parties have written to President Ram Nath Kovind seeking his intervention to direct the government to discuss farmers' issues and Pegasus spyware report in the ongoing Monsoon session of Parliament as they apprised him of these "two disturbing developments".

The BSP, RLP, SAD, National Conference, CPI and the CPI(M), besides the NCP, are the signatories to the letter. The main opposition party Congress is not among the signatories.

"We members of parliament (MPs) of various political parties are writing to you to seek an appointment to apprise you of two disturbing developments including the complete stonewalling of demands of the peasantry to repeal the three agricultural laws as well as use of Israeli spyware Pegasus to tape telephones of politicians, journalists and activists," the letter read.

SAD leader Harsimrat Badal said it is "very unfortunate" that farmers have died while protesting against the three farm laws but

the Centre is not even ready to discuss their issues. "You would appreciate that a human tragedy is unfolding on the borders of Delhi with more than 550 farmers already having lost their lives during the course of the ongoing 'Kisan Andolan' (farmers' agitation). The livelihoods of millions more are at stake due to the three agricultural laws which have been made with the express purpose of handing over the agriculture sector to corporations," the letter to President Kovind said.

Similarly, the use of Pegasus software "to tape telephone numbers of politicians as well as journalists and activists besides known detractors of the NDA government has sent shockwaves amongst civil society," it said.

It is a known fact that the Israeli company NSO sells the software only to vetted governments and the company has admitted as such, the letter claimed. "Despite these revelations the union government is refusing to disclose why it had used this software against its own citizens besides disclosing details of the payments made to access the same. The NDA government has also refused to hold a probe into

the entire issue," it said.

"We MPs urge you to intervene personally and direct the government to discuss both issues during the ongoing parliament session in the spirit of a healthy

democracy," the parties said.

Since the beginning of the Monsoon session, the opposition has been disrupting proceedings of both the Houses over these issues.



Trinamool Congress leader and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday said the unity of opposition parties will take shape on its own. Banerjee, who is in the national capital, met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and requested him to give her state more coronavirus vaccines based on its population. Responding to a question on opposition unity against the ruling NDA, she said it will

take shape on its own. Asked whether she will lead the opposition parties, Banerjee said the country will lead the opposition unity. She said the Prime Minister should convene an all-party meet on the Pegasus snooping row and decide on a Supreme Court-led probe. Banerjee would meet Congress president Sonia Gandhi Thursday which she described as "chai pe charcha".

LS, RS witness adjournments

AGENCIES

New Delhi, July 27: Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha Tuesday witnessed a series of brief adjournments amid uproar created by opposition members over various issues, including the Pegasus spying controversy and the three contentious agri laws.

Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said that the Opposition's protest destroyed the dignity of the House. The protests forced Lok Sabha speaker to adjourn the House till 11: 45 am. As the House reconvened, the protests returned too and the House was adjourned till 12 noon.

The house was again adjourned till 12: 30 pm as protests continued and then till 2: 30 pm. The House was again adjourned till 3 pm and then till 3:30 pm and 4 pm. Similar scenes were witnessed in Rajya Sabha where the proceedings were adjourned till 12 noon and then till 2 pm, then till 3 pm and later till 4 pm. Earlier in the day, both the Houses reconvened today after the session witnessed stormy scenes yesterday as Opposition members protested over the alleged Pegasus snooping row and farm reform laws. The proceedings were repeatedly adjourned yesterday, as well. Amid the din, however, the

Lok Sabha managed to pass two Bills- The Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2020 and the Institute of Food Technology Entrepreneurship and Management Bill, 2021 after which the House was adjourned as protesting MPs demanded a probe into the phone hacking allegations despite repeated requests from the presiding officers.

The Rajya Sabha has so far failed to transact any substantial business in the Monsoon Session that started July 19. There has only been a discussion on Covid-19 management in the Upper House.

An exasperated Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu said that the agitating members were harming the interest of the country, the MPs and also Parliament with their conduct, as his repeated appeals to them to maintain order went unheeded. "I am concerned over media reports that some sections of the House have decided not to allow the functioning of the House for the remainder of the session," he said in a statement. No sooner had the House condoned the death of former member Wasim Ahmad, former prime minister of Mauritius Anerood Jugnauth and Zambia's first president Kenneth David Buchizhya Kaunda, the opposition MPs rushed into the Well shouting slogans.



FUN TIME



Children play in the water during a hot summer day in Kolkata

US Secretary of State Blinken arrives in India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 27: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived here Tuesday on a two-day maiden visit to expand the strong and growing bilateral partnership with the Biden administration describing India as a "leading global power and a key US partner" in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

In a clear reflection of Washington's position towards certain Chinese actions, US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin talked about China's "unwillingness" to resolve disputes peacefully as well as "aggression against India", in an apparent reference to the eastern Ladakh standoff.

Separately, in a fact sheet, the US State Department said the US supports India's emergence as a leading global power and vital partner in efforts to ensure that the Indo-Pacific is a region of peace, stability, and growing prosperity and economic inclusion.

"Unfortunately, Beijing's unwillingness to resolve disputes peacefully and respect the rule of law isn't just occurring on the



water," Austin said at the International Institute for Strategic Studies in Singapore. "We have also seen aggression against India destabilising military activity and other forms of coercion against the people of Taiwan and genocide and crimes against humanity against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang," he said.

On Wednesday, Blinken and Indian leaders will discuss a plethora of pressing issues such as the fluid situation in Afghanistan,

regional security concerns, COVID-19 response and ways to boost Indo-Pacific engagement, people familiar with the agenda of talks said.

"India is a leading global power and a key U.S. Partner in the Indo-Pacific and beyond," the US State Department said in the fact sheet which was shared with reporters by the US embassy here.

"A partnership anchored in shared values, mutual interests and goodwill. Welcome to US Secretary of State @SecBlinken

on his arrival in Delhi," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi tweeted.

On Wednesday, Blinken will hold extensive talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and meet National Security Advisor Ajit Doval. He will also call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi before leaving for Kuwait as part of his two-nation tour.

"@SecBlinken is wheels down in New Delhi for meetings with our Indian partners. We're excited to expand the strong and growing #USIndia partnership," US State Department spokesperson Ned Price said on Twitter.

The US State Department said Blinken is visiting India to reaffirm the United States' commitment to strengthening the partnership and underscore cooperation on shared priorities. This is Blinken's first visit to India after assuming charge as the US Secretary of State and the third by a high-ranking Biden administration official after visits to New Delhi by Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin in March and Special Envoy on Climate Change John Kerry in April.

Bomma: Lingayat leader with origins in Janata Parivar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, July 27: Basavaraj Somappa Bommai, a Yediyurappa loyalist, who has his origins in the Janata Parivar, Tuesday won the race for Chief Minister's post as the BJP leadership decided to replace B S Yediyurappa with another Lingayat leader.

The 61-year-old leader was the Minister for Home Affairs, Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Legislature in Yediyurappa's council of ministers that was dissolved Monday and was also the Minister in-charge of Haveri and Udupi Districts.

Bomma's father S R Bommai was a Janata Parivar stalwart and had served as the 11th Chief

Minister of Karnataka. Born January 28, 1960 in Hubballi, Basavaraj Bommai is a graduate in Mechanical Engineering. He worked in Tata Motors, Pune for three years and then became an industrial entrepreneur.

His caste, educational qualification, administrative capacities and proximity to Yediyurappa and central leaders of the BJP is said to be the reasons for his choice for the post. Bommai is from the dominant Veerashaiva-Lingayat community to which Yediyurappa also belongs. The community accounts for 16-17 per cent of the state's population and is counted as a key vote-base of BJP. He started his political career with the Janata Dal, and was a member of the



Outgoing Karnataka CM BS Yediyurappa congratulates newly elected State CM Basavaraj Bommai, during BJP Legislature Party meeting in Bangalore

Karnataka Legislative Council, twice (in 1997 and 2003) from Dharwad local authorities con-

stituency. He had also served as Political Secretary to Chief Minister JH Patel and as Deputy Leader of

the Opposition in the council.

Bomma quit the Janata Dal (United) and joined the BJP in February 2008 and in the assembly elections held later that year, was elected as MLA from Shiggaon constituency in Haveri district. He then went on to retain the seat in the 2013 and 2018 assembly polls. Married to Chennamma, he has a son and a daughter.

Bomma had served as Minister for Water resources and Cooperation in the previous BJP government. Widely appreciated for his knowledge regarding irrigation projects in the state, Bommai was like Yediyurappa's shadow in the just-dissolved BJP government, as he used to follow the 78-year-old Chief Minister at meetings,

events and press briefings and assist him. Bommai, who was in-charge of Home Affairs at the beginning of the term, was subsequently given Law, Parliamentary Affairs and Legislature as additional portfolios during the cabinet reshuffle a few months ago.

The new leader of the BJP legislature party enjoys reading, writing, golf and cricket and has served as Chairman of the Karnataka State Cricket Association, Dharwad, and Karnataka Volleyball Association, Dharwad District.

He is also the founder of Arunodaya Co-operative Society, a member of Jayanagar Housing Society and German Chamber of Commerce.

international



Overall, 57 percent of over-18's are now fully vaccinated across the 27 nations. These figures put Europe among the world leaders. I therefore call on everyone to be vaccinated. For their own health and to protect others

URSULA VON DER LEYEN | CHIEF, EU

WATER VAPOUR ON JUPITER'S MOON

Astronomers have uncovered the first evidence of water vapour in the atmosphere of Jupiter's moon Ganymede by using new and archival datasets from NASA's Hubble Space Telescope



of the day quote

The designated media representatives would be given the chance to ask direct questions from the president. In the recent past, we have seen that presidential statements had been misrepresented or quoted out of context by the media

GOTABAYA RAJAPAKSA | PRESIDENT, SL

I hold the US government responsible for its continuous campaigns against our country that encourage these behaviors and for calls for violence, with impunity, from its territory

BRUNO RODRIGUEZ | FOREIGN MINISTER, CUBA

Driven by the Delta variant, cases are rising here at home, particularly among those who are unvaccinated, and appears likely to continue in the weeks ahead

JEN PSAKI | WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY, US

US combat mission in Iraq ends

There are currently 2,500 US troops in Iraq focusing on countering the remnants of Islamic State. The US role in Iraq will shift entirely to training and advising the Iraqi military to defend itself

AGENCIES

Washington, July 27: US President Joe Biden and Iraqi Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi sealed an agreement Monday formally ending the US combat mission in Iraq by the end of 2021, but US forces will still operate there in an advisory role.

The agreement comes at a politically delicate time for the Iraqi government and could be a boost for Baghdad. Kadhimi has faced increasing pressure from Iran-aligned parties and paramilitary groups who oppose the US military role in the country.

Biden and Kadhimi met in the Oval Office for their first face-to-face talks as part of a strategic dialogue between the United States and Iraq.

"Our role in Iraq will be ... to be available, to continue to train, to assist, to help and to deal with ISIS as it arises, but we're not going to be, by the end of the year, in a combat mission," Biden told reporters as he and Kadhimi met.

The shift is not expected to have



a major operational impact since the United States has already moved toward focusing on training Iraqi forces. In recent years, the US mission was focused on helping defeat Islamic State militants in Iraq and Syria.

US diplomats and troops in Iraq and Syria were targeted in three rocket and drone attacks earlier this month. Analysts believed the attacks were part of a campaign by

Iranian-backed militias.

The senior administration official would not say how many US troops would remain on the ground in Iraq for advising and training. Kadhimi also declined to speculate about a future US drawdown, saying troop levels would be determined by technical reviews.

Kadhimi, who is seen as friendly to the United States, has tried to check the power of Iran-aligned

Our shared fight against ISIS is critical for the stability of the region and our counterterrorism operation will continue, even as we shift to this new phase we're going to be talking about. We're not going to be, by the end of the year, in a combat mission

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

militias. But his government condemned US air strikes against Iran-aligned fighters along its border with Syria in late June, calling it a violation of Iraqi sovereignty.

The United States plans to provide Iraq with 500,000 doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech, Covid-19 vaccine under the global COVAX vaccine-sharing program. Biden said the doses should arrive in a couple of weeks.

The United States will also provide \$5.2 million to help fund a UN mission to monitor October elections in Iraq.

SECESSION CHARGES

Guilty verdict in first HK trial under security law

AGENCIES

Hong Kong, July 27: The first person charged under Hong Kong's national security law was found guilty Tuesday of terrorism and inciting secession in a landmark case that carries long-term implications for how the legislation will reshape the city's common law traditions.

Former waiter Tong Ying-kit, 24, was accused of driving his motorcycle into three riot policemen while carrying a flag with the protest slogan "Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times," which prosecutors said was secessionist.

The widely anticipated ruling, much of which has hinged on the interpretation of the slogan, imposes new limits on free speech in the former British colony, activists say. Human rights groups have also criticised the decision to deny Tong bail and a jury trial, which have been key features of Hong Kong's rule of law.

The government did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the accusations.



Tong's trial was presided over by judges Esther Toh, Anthea Pang and Wilson Chan, picked by city leader Carrie Lam to hear national security cases.

Toh read out a summary of the ruling in court, saying "such display of the words was capable of inciting others to commit secession."

She added that Tong was aware of the slogan's secessionist meaning, and that he intended to communicate this meaning to others. His actions caused "grave harm to society".

In a detailed judgment published on the judiciary's website, the judges also said Tong's motorcycle was potentially a lethal weapon.

SHORT TAKES

Najib Mikati named Lebanon's new PM

Beirut: Najib Mikati was named as Lebanon's new Prime Minister with 72 votes in parliament following months of political turmoil in the crises-hit country. Mikati gave a speech following his appointment Monday, calling upon all political parties to cooperate with him on finding the right solutions to the country's crises. "The vote of confidence by MPs is necessary for my appointment but I am keen to gain the confidence of the Lebanese population, every man and woman, and the youths," Mikati said at Baabda Palace after his meeting with President Michel Aoun.

Israel Defence Min to visit France

Jerusalem: Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz will travel to France this week to discuss spyware sold by Israeli cyber firm NSO that was allegedly used to target French President Emmanuel Macron. Macron's phone was on a list of targets that were possibly under surveillance by Morocco, which used NSO Group's Pegasus software, according to France's Le Monde newspaper. The French leader has called for an investigation. Gantz will meet French Defence Minister Florence Parly Wednesday, an official Israeli statement said.

China's Nanjing tightens curbs

Beijing: Authorities in Nanjing, capital of China's Jiangsu province, Tuesday ordered the tightening of restrictive measures in the wake of the recent spike in Covid-19 infections. Among the measures, all retail pharmacies in the city suspended selling antipyretic, cough, antiviral and antibiotic medicine to citizens, according to the municipal epidemic prevention and control headquarters. The city's major hospitals, were urged to implement appointment registration.

6 killed in landslide, flooding in B'desh

Dhaka: At least six Rohingya Muslims, including children, were killed and several injured Tuesday after heavy monsoon rains triggered a landslide in refugee camps in southern Bangladesh, officials said. "So far we have information of five people who died in the landslides in camps and one child swept away by flooding," Mohammad Shamsud Douza, a senior Bangladesh government official in charge of the refugees, said.

Blast in German chemical plant kills 2, several missing

POLICE TOLD RESIDENTS LIVING NEARBY TO STAY INDOORS AND SHUT DOORS AND WINDOWS IN CASE THERE WERE TOXIC FUMES

AGENCIES

Berlin, July 27: An explosion in a German industrial park Tuesday killed at least two people and injured 31, setting off a fierce blaze that sent a pall of smoke over the western city of Leverkusen. Several people were still missing.

Emergency services took three hours to extinguish the fire at the Chempark site, home to chemicals companies Bayer and Lanxess, that flared up after the blast at 9:40 am (0740 GMT), park operator Currenta said.

"We are deeply shaken by the tragic death of one colleague," said Chempark chief Lars Friedrich, adding that the search was going on for four others who were still missing.

Police said five of the 31 injured people were affected seriously enough to need intensive care. "This is a tragic moment for the

city of Leverkusen," said Uwe Richrath, mayor of the city, which lies north of Cologne.

The area was sealed off and surrounded by emergency vehicles. Nearby roads, including motorways, were closed.

Chempark's Friedrich said it was not clear what had caused the explosion but he said it was not available so he had not withdrawn the warning. "A precise analysis is not yet available so we have not withdrawn the warning," said Friedrich.

Sirens and emergency alerts on the German civil protection agency's mobile phone app warned citizens of "extreme danger".

Leverkusen is less than 50 km (30 miles) from a region hit last week by catastrophic floods that killed at least 180 people. More than 30 companies operate at the Chempark site in Leverkusen, including Covestro, Bayer, Lanxess and Arlanxco, according to its website.



IN MEMORIAM



Residents laid flowers Tuesday at the entrance of the subway station where more than a dozen people died after a record-breaking downpour flooded large swaths of Henan province in central China

North, South Korea restore hotlines

THE TWO LEADERS ALSO AGREED TO RESTORE MUTUAL TRUST AND ENHANCE TIES AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Seoul, July 27: South Korea and North Korea have restored their cross-border communication lines that had been severed for over a year, the presidential Blue House in Seoul announced Tuesday.

In a statement, the Blue House said that the two Koreas decided to resume their direct communication hotlines from 10 am Tuesday, reports Xinhua news agency.

All of the communication lines had been severed since June last year after North Korea protested against Seoul's failure to stop civic activists from sending anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets.

According to the statement, South Korean President Moon Jae-in and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un have exchanged personal letters several times since April



to communicate about issues on restoring inter-Korean relations.

Moon and Kim agreed first to restore the severed inter-Korean communication lines, the statement noted.

Also reporting the news Tuesday, Pyongyang's official Korean Central

News Agency (KCNA) said the restoration of the communication liaison lines "will have positive effects on the improvement and development of the north-south relations".

Meanwhile, South and North Korean military authorities re-

opened their military communication lines and put them back to normal operations from 10 am, the South Korean Defence Ministry said in a separate statement.

Fixed-line phone calls through the fibre-optic cable and faxing to exchange documents are currently under a normal operation, the ministry noted.

From Tuesday afternoon, the military authorities of the two Koreas planned to restart their regular phone calls twice a day at 9 am and 4 pm.

The western military hotline across the inter-Korean border worked normally, but some technical problem was found in the eastern hotline, the Ministry said.

It added that the restored hotline would substantially contribute to the defused military tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Israeli war crimes apparent in Gaza war: Human Rights Watch

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Some 254 people were killed in Gaza, including at least 67 children and 39 women, according to the Gaza Health Ministry. Hamas has acknowledged the deaths of 80 militants

Jerusalem, July 27: Human Rights Watch Tuesday accused the Israeli military of carrying out attacks that "apparently amount to war crimes" during an 11-day war in May against the Hamas militant group.

The international human rights organization issued its conclusions after investigating three Israeli airstrikes that it said killed 62 Palestinian civilians. It said "there were no evident military targets in the vicinity" of the attacks.

The report also accused Palestinian militants of apparent war crimes by launching over 4,000 unguided rockets and mortars at Israeli population centers. Such attacks, it said, violate "the prohibition against deliberate or indiscriminate attacks against civilians."



The report, however, focused on Israeli actions during the fighting, and the group said it would issue a separate report on the actions of Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups in August.

"Israeli forces carried out attacks in Gaza in May that devastated entire families without any apparent military target nearby," said Gerry Simpson, associate crisis and conflict director at HRW.

BASELESS ATTACKS

MAY 16: Airstrikes destroyed three apartment buildings and killed a total of 44 civilians, HRW said, including 18 children and 14 women. Twenty-two of the dead were members of a single family

MAY 15: An Israeli airstrike destroyed a three-story building in Gaza's Shati refugee camp. The strike killed 10 people, including two women and eight children

MAY 10: An explosion killed eight people, including six children, near the northern Gaza town of Beit Hanoun

In its investigation, HRW concluded that Israel had used US-

made GBU-31 precision-guided bombs, and that Israel had not warned any of the residents to evacuate the area ahead of time. It also found no evidence of military targets in the area.

"An attack that is not directed at a specific military objective is unlawful," it wrote.

"Human Rights Watch found no evidence of a military target at or near the site of the strike," it said.

The New York-based group said that Israel refused to allow its investigators to enter Gaza. Instead, it said it relied on a field researcher based in Gaza, along with satellite images, expert reviews of photos of munitions fragments and interviews conducted by video and telephone.

The May conflict was the fourth war between Israel and Hamas since the Islamic militant group, which opposes Israel's existence, seized control of Gaza in 2007.

of the day quote

Let's have confidence in our ability to build indigenously and also attract global OEMs to build in India, not just import. We won't be the first country to do so!

BHAVISH AGGARWAL | OLA CO-FOUNDER

Balco's expansion is an important project for us. We hope to ramp up the smelter capacity over the next 18-24 months. After this expansion, Vedanta's aluminium capacity will increase to 2.8 million tonnes

SUNIL DUGGAL | VEDANTA GROUP CEO

The launch of Kushaq stands testament to a new era for the company in India... I am delighted to share that we will be present in more than 100 cities from the coming month

ZAC HOLLIS | SKODA AUTO INDIA BRAND DIRECTOR

SHORT TAKES

HP's new gaming notebooks out

Bhubaneswar: HP announced the introduction of its next-generation mainstream gaming PC portfolio Victus. The new gaming notebook range comprises a 16-inch unique laptop design in two attractive colours, Mica Silver and Performance Blue. Victus is built with the DNA of HP's powerful OMEN gaming lineup. It will be available in India in two processor's options - AMD Ryzen 6 and Intel Core 5 processors. Both models provide accessible, affordable, and an elevated gaming experience with FHD IPS 144Hz Display3, audio from Bang & Olufsen, an all-purpose backlit gaming keyboard, powerful NVIDIA GeForce RTX graphics, and an upgraded cooling system. Victus by HP E series laptops powered by AMD Ryzen Processor will start at ₹64,999. The laptops will be available on Amazon India. Victus by HP D series laptops powered by Intel 11th Processor will start at a price ₹74,999. This version will be sold on Reliance digital stores in coming weeks.

Realme expands its AIoT offerings

Bhubaneswar: Realme expanded its AIoT offerings with the launch of Realme watch 2, watch 2 Pro, buds wireless 2, buds wireless 2 Neo and buds Q2 Neo. Realme Watch 2 Pro is priced at ₹4,999 and Watch 2 is priced at ₹3,499. Realme Buds Wireless 2 is priced at ₹2,299 and Realme Buds Wireless 2 Neo is priced at ₹1,499. Realme Buds Q2 Neo is priced at ₹1,599 and will be up for sale July 29, 12:00 noon onwards on realme.com and Flipkart, soon to be available at mainline channels. Buyers can avail additional ₹300 off during the introductory offer first sale on Flipkart, bringing the price down of realme Buds Q2 Neo to ₹1,299.

Flipkart Pay Later targets 2X growth

Bangalore: Homegrown e-commerce marketplace Flipkart India plans major expansion of its Flipkart Pay Later credit offering, riding on the phenomenal growth of micro credit services in the country brought about by a fintech revolution. The e-commerce marketplace is targeting a 2X growth over the next six months on its credit service offering under the Pay Later scheme. Currently, there are over 2.8 million customers who have adopted Flipkart Pay Later and have made more than 42 million transactions on the platform to date.



We want to maintain our prosperity, but no longer to the detriment of our planet and future generations
URSULA VON DER LEYEN | EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT

TESLA ACHIEVES FINANCIAL MILESTONE

Tesla's quarterly profit has surpassed USD1 billion for the first time thanks to the electric car pioneer's ability to navigate through a pandemic-driven computer chip shortage that has caused major headaches for other automakers. The financial milestone extended a two-year run of prosperity that has erased questions about Tesla's long-term viability raised during its early years of losses.



CAIRN ARBITRATION

Govt confirms French court order against Indian assets

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 27: The government Tuesday confirmed that a French court has ordered the freezing of certain Indian assets in Paris on a petition by Britain's Cairn Energy, which is seeking to recover USD 1.72 billion from New Delhi after winning an arbitration against retro tax.

Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha said the government has filed an appeal against an international arbitration tribunal overturning levy of ₹10,247 crore in back taxes on Cairn Energy.

"Yes sir, an order has been passed by a French Court freezing certain Indian government properties in the case pertaining to Cairn Energy," he said.

While the minister did not identify the properties, PTI had earlier this month reported that the 20-odd centrally located properties mostly comprise flats, valued at more than EUR 20 million.

The French court, Tribunal Judiciaire de Paris, June 11 agreed to Cairn's application to freeze (through judicial mortgages) residential real estate owned by the Government of India in central Paris. The legal formalities for the same were completed earlier this month. A three-member international arbitration tribunal that consisted of one judge appointed by India, had in December last year unanimously overturned the levy of taxes on Cairn retroactively and ordered refund of



shares sold, dividend confiscated and tax refunds withheld to recover such demand.

"Arbitral tribunal (which had its seat in The Hague) pronounced its award on 21st December 2020 in favour of Cairn Energy Plc and Cairn UK Holdings Ltd (CUHL)," Chaudhary said.

The government has not accepted the award and has filed a 'setting aside' petition in a court in the Netherlands - the seat of the arbitration.

"Appeal against the said award has been filed in the Hague Court of Appeal March 22, 2021," he said.

On action initiated to protect the interest of the country, he said an international law firm, with relevant experience, has been engaged for handling enforcement proceedings. "In consultation with its counsel team, the government is taking all appropriate legal steps to protect its interest," he said without giving details.

With its shareholders - who include the biggies of the global financial world - egging it to get the money back, Cairn has got the arbitration award registered in countries such as the US, the UK, Canada, Singapore, Mauritius, France and the Netherlands. It has since started seeking enforcement action.

It has identified USD 70 billion of Indian assets overseas for the potential seizure to collect the award, which now totals to USD 1.72 billion after including interest and penalty.

Last month, Cairn brought a lawsuit in the US District Court for the Southern District of New York pleading that Air India is controlled by the Indian government so much that they are 'alter egos' and the airline should be held liable for the arbitration award.

Similar lawsuits are likely to be brought in other countries, primarily with high-value assets.

₹49,000cr lying unclaimed with banks, insurers

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, July 27: An estimated ₹49,000 crore is lying unclaimed with banks and insurance companies, the Minister of State for Finance Bhagwat Karad informed the Rajya Sabha Tuesday.

The data on the unclaimed amount is till December 31, 2020.

Giving the details in a written reply, the minister said as per information received from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), the total amount of unclaimed deposits of banks stood at ₹24,356 crore, as on December 31, 2020. He further said that as per the Insurance Regulator Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the total amount of unclaimed amounts of policy holders in public and private sector insurance companies was at ₹24,586 crore (end-December, 2020).



The RBI framed the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme, 2014. As per the Scheme, unclaimed amounts lying with banks are credited to the DEAF by banks and DEAF is subsequently utilised for promotion of depositors' interest. All insurers having unclaimed amounts of policyholders for a period of more than 10 years transfer such funds to the Senior Citizens' Welfare Fund every year. The SCWF is utilised for schemes for promoting the welfare of senior citizens. The minister also said the RBI has advised banks to play a more proactive role in finding the whereabouts of the account holders of unclaimed deposits/inoperative accounts.

IMF cuts India growth from 12.5 pc to 9.5 pc



AGENCIES

United Nations, July 27: The Delta variant-spurred Covid-19 second wave has shaved off 3 per cent from the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) previous projection for India's economic growth for fiscal year 2021-22, pegging it now at 9.5 per cent, but the country still remains the world's fastest-growing large economy.

The IMF's World Economic Outlook Update (WEOU) Tuesday made the cuts to the projection of 12.5 per cent made in April, and the January projection of 11 per cent.

"Growth prospects in India have been downgraded following the severe second Covid wave during March-May and expected slow recovery in confidence from that setback," said the update released in Washington. The IMF stressed the importance of vaccinations in the economic recovery from the pandemic and noted that countries like India that lagged in the rate of vaccinations would suffer if more infectious variants developed.

Despite the cut, India is projected to remain the fastest-growing large economy, followed by China with a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 8.1 per cent - 0.3 per cent less than the projection

made in April. The US and the UK come next with growth projections of 7 per cent each - an increase of 0.6 per cent since April for the US and 1.7 per cent for the UK.

India's growth rate is expected by the IMF to moderate next year to 8.5 per cent, an increase of 1.6 per cent from the April projection, and continue to be the fastest growing economy. The 9.5 per cent growth rate for India would be one of the highest recorded by the country, behind the 10.3 per cent in 2010, 9.8 per cent in 2007 and 9.6 per cent in 1988, according to IMF data.

But this fiscal year's high growth rate reflects a bounce back from the economy shrinking by 7.3 per cent during the last fiscal year, which in that context would seem less impressive. The IMF kept the growth forecasts for the global economy at 6 per cent this year and 4.9 per cent next year that were made in April.

Access to Covid-19 vaccines around the world and overcoming vaccine hesitancy where they are available could determine the trajectory for growth, according to the IMF. The WEOU said that amid the pandemic, there was a high degree of uncertainty for the global economy, "primarily related to the prospects of emerging market and developing economies".

ShareChat raises \$145m in funding

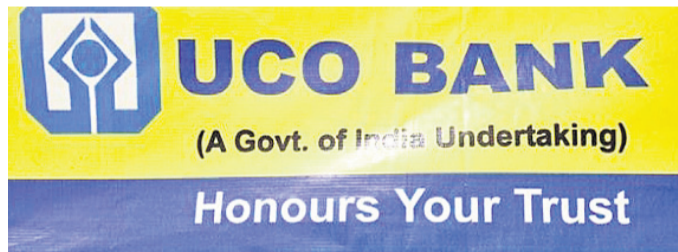
REUTERS

New Delhi, July 27: Content-sharing platform ShareChat has raised \$145 million in fresh funding from Singapore's Temasek Holdings and two other investors, giving it a valuation of \$2.88 billion, the company told Reuters Tuesday.

The funding signals growing fascination for content-sharing and short-video apps that have become popular ever since New Delhi last year banned ByteDance's TikTok and some other Chinese apps following an India-China border clash. ShareChat allows users to post content in 15 Indian languages. After TikTok was banned, the Indian firm also launched a similar short-video sharing app named Moj which has since become popular and clocked millions of downloads. The latest funding round was led by Temasek and Moore Strategic Ventures, with participation from a fund jointly set up by Mirae Asset and South Korean web portal Naver Corp, ShareChat said in its statement. Reuters is first to report the fund raise.

The latest investments come around four months after ShareChat raised \$502 million from Tiger Global, Snap Inc, Twitter and some others, which at the time valued it at just over \$2.1 billion.

UCO Bank net profit jumps to ₹101.81 crore in Q1, FY'22



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, July 27: State-owned UCO Bank Tuesday registered over four-fold jump in its net profit to ₹101.81 crore for the first quarter ended June 30. The bank's net profit was ₹21.46 crore in the quarter ended June 2020.

During a virtual meet, the bank's authorities stated about their achievements in the first quarter of FY'22.

The bank's officials said that operating profit of the bank for the quarter ended June 2021 stood at ₹1286.28 crore as against ₹977.08 crore for the quarter ended June 2020 registering a

growth of 31.65%. Moreover, net interest income of the bank for the quarter ended June 2021 has increased to ₹1460.24 crore from ₹1266.78 crore for the quarter ended June 2020 registering a growth of 15.27%. This is highest net interest income in the last 23 quarters.

Total business of the bank has increased to ₹32946.17 crore as on June 30, 2021 from ₹310355.63 crore as on June 30, 2020 registering a growth of 7.28%. Bank's total deposits have increased to ₹212096.82 crore in the same period of time registering a growth of 8.70% over the same period of previous fiscal. The CASA of the bank (Domestic) stood at 38.55%.

The gross NPA of the bank has reduced to ₹11321.76 crore (9.37%) as on June 30, 2021 from ₹16576.43 crore (14.38%) as on June 30, 2020.

Net NPA of the bank has reduced to ₹4387.25 crore (3.85%) as on June 30, 2021 from ₹5138.18 crore (4.95%) as on June 30, 2020.

Also, provision coverage ratio of the bank has increased to 88.53% and capital adequacy ratio of the bank stood at 14.24%.



| Category | Stock | Change |
|-------------|---------------|--------|
| TOP GAINERS | Tata Steel | 2.50 |
| | Bajaj Finserv | 2.15 |
| | Bajaj Fin | 1.12 |
| | Nestle | 0.89 |
| TOP LOSERS | Dr Reddys | -10.44 |
| | Axis Bank | -3.23 |
| | Kotak Mahi | -2.44 |
| | HDFC | -1.19 |

Bitcoin jumps on speculation about Amazon considering crypto

AMAZON CURRENTLY HAS 74 LISTINGS FOR JOBS WHOSE DESCRIPTIONS INCLUDE THE WORDS 'BLOCKCHAIN' THE BACKBONE OF CRYPTOCURRENCIES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, July 27: Bitcoin's price surged again Monday after speculation that Amazon may be entering the cryptocurrency sector after it posted a job seeking for a product leader to develop its digital currency.

Bitcoin jumped more than 14 per cent in the past 24 hours, nearly reaching \$40,000 per unit before settling closer to \$37,000. The five-week intra-day high reached Monday comes after a long slide where it dipped under \$30,000 from an April high of nearly \$65,000.

There is also speculation that the price surge may have also been a result of traders buying up bitcoin to fill positions they were short on, having bet its value would fall further. But it's difficult if not

impossible to track short positions on the cryptocurrency.

Amazon's job listing says the company is looking for "an experienced product leader to develop Amazon's Digital Currency and Blockchain strategy and product roadmap." The Seattle-based online retail giant currently has 74 listings for jobs whose descriptions include the words 'blockchain' the backbone of cryptocurrencies, many dating back to earlier this year.

However, the jobs are not necessarily related to blockchain development, but list blockchain background as relevant experience for those applying for the job.

In a statement, Amazon rejected as "fabricated" a report that said it would be accepting payments in cryptocurrency by the end of the year, and that it could launch its own



digital coin in 2022. But it did acknowledge that is exploring what the use of cryptocurrencies would look like on Amazon. "We believe the future

will be built on new technologies that enable modern, fast, and inexpensive payments, and hope to bring that future to Amazon customers as soon as possible," the

company said. Tom Forte, a senior research analyst who covers Amazon for the investment bank DA Davidson, said he doubts Amazon will accept bitcoin across

its platform any time soon. Forte noted bitcoin accounts for less than 1 per cent of transaction payments on Overstock.Com, one of the few online retailers to accept cryptocurrency. "It's been an effective mechanism for trading and speculation, but it hasn't shown to date to be a form of currency for payments," Forte said. Proponents of bitcoin seem to have shifted their pitch from its value as a digital currency, focusing more on applying it as "store of value" like gold or other commodities.

Bitcoin is not tied to a bank or government and allows users to spend money anonymously. The coins are created by users, who "mine" them by lending and computing power to verify other users' transactions. And they receive bitcoins in exchange.

India back to winning ways

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, July 27: Dragflicker Rupinder Pal Singh scored a brace as the Indian men's hockey overcame a demoralising defeat in the previous match to cruise past Spain 3-0 and inch closer to a quarterfinal berth at the Tokyo Olympics here Tuesday.

Drubbed 1-7 by Australia in their last match, India produced a spirited performance against world No.9 Spain and scored through Simranjeet Singh (14th minute) and Rupinder Pal Singh (15th and 51st) to record a comfortable win in their third Pool A match at the Oi Hockey Stadium.

India, ranked fourth in the world, had earlier defeated New Zealand 3-2 in their opening fixture. Spain, on the other hand, are yet to register a win in the competition. Spain drew 1-1 against Argentina before losing 3-4 to New Zealand. The Indians will next play reigning Olympic champions Argentina Thursday.

For any team it is always tough to recover from a morale-shattering loss within a day, but India looked more organised and sorted against Spain Tuesday. Despite the win, India's chief coach Graham Reid said the team needs to work upon a lot of grey areas, like conceding penalty corners, ahead of their remaining matches.

Manpreet Singh's men played high pressure hockey from the word go and dominated the possession in initial 10 minutes even



RIGHT ON THE MONEY: Rupinder Pal Singh (L) calmly reacts after scoring one of his goals against Spain, Tuesday

though they failed to create any real scoring opportunities.

Spain slowly and steadily got into the groove and secured their first penalty corner in the 12th minute but wasted the chance. The Indians mounted number of at-

tacks in the final few minutes of the game and the play bore fruits when Spain's defence was caught off guard by Amit Rohidas' pass and an unmarked Simranjeet just tapped the ball into the goal past Quico Cortes.

The goal rejuvenated India as they secured three back-to-back penalty corners in the final minute of the first quarter and from the third set piece Harmanpreet's flick found the body of a Spanish defender, which resulted in a penalty stroke. Rupinder Pal Singh stepped up and made no mistake in doubling India's lead.

Trailing by two goals, the Spaniards pressed the Indian defence hard in the second quarter and the play was mostly inside the Indian half.

Spain's pressure tactics earned them three penalty corners in the

third quarter - the last one coming just seconds from the end following a referral - but the Indian defence held firm to keep their lead intact.

With a two goal cushion, the Indians were quite content in just defending in the fourth and final quarter as Spain continued to apply relentless pressure.

But in the 51st minute India managed to find the net again when they earned a penalty corner; their fourth of the match, from a counter attack and this time Rupinder was bang on target with a powerful low flick to the right of Spanish goalkeeper Cortes.



MATCH TO REMEMBER: Odisha stars Amit Rohidas and Birendra Lakra pose, alongside PR Sreejesh, with Indian jerseys marking their 100th and 200th appearance for India



LOVLINA ENTERS QUARTERFINALS

TOKYO: Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) advanced to the quarterfinals in her debut Olympic appearance, defeating German veteran Nadine Apetz in a closely fought last-16 stage bout here Tuesday.

Borgohain, the lone Indian boxer in action on the day, prevailed 3-2 over her rival who is 12 years her senior. Both the boxers were making their Games debut and the Indian became the first from her nine-strong team to make the quarterfinal stage. The 23-year-old showed great poise in a tense contest to triumph by the thinnest of margins. She claimed all the three rounds on split points.

The 35-year-old Apetz was the first German woman to qualify for a boxing event at the Olympics and also a two-time world championship bronze-medallist and a former European champion.

Borgohain is a two-time World and Asian championships bronze-medallist. She will next face Chinese Taipei's Nien-Chin Chen, who is seeded fourth and a former World Champion, July 30. A win in that bout would assure Borgohain of at least a bronze medal at the mega-event.

Chen was also a silver-medallist at the 2019 Asian Championships and defeated Italy's Angela Carini 3-2 in her pre-quarterfinal bout.

Forgettable outing for Indian shooters

TOKYO: Indian shooters endured yet another forgettable outing at the Tokyo Olympics here Tuesday as they crashed out in the qualifying stages of the mixed team events in both pistol and rifle.

Considered the team's best bet for a podium finish, the duo of Saurabh Chaudhary and Manu Bhaker caved in under pressure and failed to qualify for the final of the 10m air pistol mixed team event.

They finished seventh in Qualification 2 after topping the first phase with 582 at the Asaka Range. Both the 19-year-old shooters lost the plot completely when the top eight teams battled it out in the second phase.

The other Indian team in the event, Abhishek Verma and Yashaswini Singh Deswal, failed to clear Qualification 1 and finished in 17th place, having totalled 564 across six series (three each for one member).

The team of Chaudhary and Bhaker totalled 380 across two series each in the second phase of the qualification. Chaudhary and Bhaker were languishing at the bottom of the table after the first series. While the top eight teams make the Qualification 2, the top



Manu Bhaker reacts after her and her partner Saurabh Chaudhary's elimination from their mixed doubles event, Tuesday

four pairs in the second phase qualify for the medal rounds.

The duo of Elavelini Valarivan and Divyansh Singh Panwar finished 12th with a total of 626.5 across three series each, while Anjum Moudgil and Deepak Kumar ended 18th out of 29 pairs with an aggregate score of 623.8 at the Asaka Range.

SHARATH GOES DOWN FIGHTING

TOKYO: Indian paddler Sharath Kamal took a game off the legendary Ma Long, the reigning Olympic and World Champion, before making a third round exit from the table tennis competition at the Tokyo Games here, Tuesday. Sharath fought tooth and nail to take the second game from Long but eventually lost the men's singles contest 7-11, 11-8, 11-13, 4-11, 4-11 in 46 minutes. The Chinese great acknowledged that Sharath made it tough for him. With Sharath's defeat, India's challenge has ended in table tennis at the Games. Manika Batra, Sutirtha Mukherjee and G Sathiyan have all exited the singles competition.

they ended at 22nd and 33rd spot in the respective events after six races in the Tokyo Olympics here Tuesday. Saravanan finished 23rd and 22nd in the fifth and sixth race in the men's laser event while Kumanan was 32nd and 38th in the two races of the women's laser radial event held at Enoshima Yacht Harbour Tuesday. Four more races and medal race remain in the competition and the India duo were far behind in the rankings.

TOKYO HITS RECORD VIRUS CASES

TOKYO: Tokyo reported its highest daily number of new coronavirus infections Tuesday, days after the Olympics began. The Japanese capital reported 2,848 new COVID-19 cases, exceeding the earlier record of 2,520 cases from January 7. It brings Tokyo's total to more than 200,000 since the pandemic began last year. Tokyo is under its fourth state of emergency that will last through the Olympics and into the Paralympics next month. Experts have warned the more contagious delta variant could cause a surge during the Olympics, which started Friday.

RUSSIAN MEDALLISTS MISS ANTHEM

TOKYO: Russia's men's 100-meter backstroke gold and silver medallists said they were disappointed but understood why they weren't able to hear their country's national anthem on the podium Tuesday. Instead of the Russian national anthem, Tchaikovsky was played at the medal ceremony for Evgeny Rylov and Kliment Kolesnikov, part of a compromise agreement with the IOC to allow their country to take part in the games. Russian athletes competing in Tokyo as the Russian Olympic Committee after having been barred from using their country's name, flag or anthem after being suspended for widespread doping across dozens of sports.

TENNIS CAMPAIGN ENDS FOR INDIA

TOKYO: The Indian tennis team's campaign at the Tokyo Olympics officially ended on Tuesday as Sania Mirza and Sumit Nagal could not make the cut for the mixed doubles event due to their low combined ranking of 153. The entries were to be finalised Tuesday morning and the cut was expected to be between 50 and 60. The Indians did not even have faint hopes of getting into the easiest of tennis events at the Games. Only 16 teams play the mixed doubles event and thus winning just two matches can get a team in the medal round.

SAILORS VISHNU, NETHRA FAIL TO IMPRESS

ENOSHIMA: Indian sailors Vishnu Saravanan and Nethra Kumanan finished way behind the leaders as

INDIA'S SCHEDULE

ARCHERY: Tarundeep Rai vs Oleksii Hurbini (Ukraine) in Men's Individual 1/32 Elimination Match; 7:30am IST; Pravin Jadhav vs Galsan Bazarzhapov (Russian Olympic Committee) in Men's Individual 1/32 Elimination Match; 12:30pm IST; Deepika Kumari vs Karma (Bhutan) in Women's Individual 1/32 Elimination Match; 2:15pm IST.

BADMINTON: PV Sindhu vs NY Cheung (Hong Kong) in Women's Singles Group J Match; 7:30am IST; Sai Praneth vs M Caljouw (Netherlands) in Men's Singles Group D Match; 2:30pm IST.

BOXING: Pooja Rani vs Ichrak Chaib (Algeria) in Women's 75kg Round of 16 Bout; 2:30pm IST.

HOCKEY: India vs Great Britain in Women's Pool A match; 6:30am IST. Rowing: Arjun Lal Jat and Arvind Singh in Men's Lightweight Double Sculls Semifinal 2; 8:00am IST.

SAILING: KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar in Men's Skiff 49er Race 1 to 4; 8:30am IST.

First pandemic, then heat, now typhoon for Olympics!

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, July 27: First, the sun. Now: the wind and the rain. The Tokyo Olympics, delayed by the pandemic and opened under oppressive heat, are due for another hit of nature's power: a typhoon arriving Tuesday morning that is forecast to disrupt at least some parts of the Games.

"Feels like we're trying to prepare for bloody everything," said New Zealand rugby sevens player Andrew Knewstubb. Don't worry, Japanese hosts say: In US terms, the incoming weather is just a mid-grade tropical storm. And the surfers at Tsuringasaki beach say Tropical Storm Nepartak could actually improve the competition so long as it doesn't hit the beach directly. But archery, rowing and sailing

have already adjusted their Tuesday schedules. Tokyo Games spokesman Masa Takaya said there were no other changes expected.

"It is a tropical storm of three grade out of five, so you shouldn't be too much worried about that, but it is a typhoon in Japan interpretation," Takaya said. "This is the weakest category, but this is still a typhoon so we should not be too optimistic about the impact of the course." On the beach about 60 miles east of Tokyo, the competitors want the change in weather so long as the rain and wind don't make total landfall. The surfing competition was delayed Monday because of low tide. But if the storm hits as expected, it could deliver waves twice as high as expected.

The Japan Meteorological Agency said Nepartak was headed northwest over the Pacific Ocean

east of Japan Monday with landfall expected Tuesday afternoon. The storm could bring strong winds, up to 5.9 inches (150 millimeters) of rainfall and high waves as it cuts across Japan's northeastern region.

In advance, organisers made the first major alterations to the Olympic archery schedule because of weather. There was an hour delay at the Beijing Games in 2008. Here, the Tuesday afternoon sessions have been postponed until Wednesday and Thursday.

At Ariake Tennis Park, center court has a retractable roof that can be closed for inclement weather, but play on outer courts would have to be suspended.

Any sort of rain - typhoon, tropical storm, or even light sprinkling - will be a wild swing from the first three days of the Games.

CHIRAG-SATWIK WINS, BUT OUT

TOKYO: Indian shuttlers Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy emerged victorious against the England pair of Ben Lane and Sean Vandy in their final Group A match but still missed out on qualifying for the quarterfinals at the Tokyo Olympics, here Tuesday.

Ranked 10th in the world, the Indians beat World No.18 team 21-17, 21-19 in a 44-minute Group A men's doubles match at the Musashino Forest Plaza. However, they couldn't make it to the knockout stage as they finished third in the Group A behind top-ranked Indonesian team of Marcus Gideon Fernaldi and Kevin Sanjaya Sukamuljo and World No.3 Yang Lee

and Chi-Lin Wang of Chinese Taipei.

All three teams finished on same points with two wins each and when the number of games won was considered to identify the qualifiers, the Indians lost. Chirag and Satwik's straight game loss to the Indonesians Monday cost them dear.

Moments before the Indian pair stepped on the court, Lee and Wang had completed a three-game win over Sukamuljo and Gideon in the preceding group match, rendering the result of India's contest against Britain inconsequential. Only the top two pairs of each group advance to the quarterfinals.



Osaka ousted post shock loss

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, July 27: The host country's superstar is out of the Tokyo Olympics. Naomi Osaka lost to former French Open finalist Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic 1-6, 4-6 in the third round of the Olympic tennis tournament Tuesday. The second-ranked Osaka, who was born in Japan and grew up in the United States, struggled with her usually reliable groundstrokes while the left-handed Vondrousova produced a series of drop-shot winners and other crafty shots that drew her opponent out of her comfort zone.

Osaka, who lit the Olympic cauldron in Friday's opening ceremony, won her opening two matches in

straight sets following a two-month mental-health break. But conditions were different Tuesday with the roof closed because it was raining outside.

Shortly after the match was over, organisers said that Osaka had left the venue and would not be talking to the media. Osaka spoke openly to reporters after her first two matches. That came after she announced in May going into the French Open that she wouldn't speak to reporters at that tournament, saying those interactions create doubts for her.

In men's action, third-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas of Greece beat Frances Tiafoe of the United States 6-3, 6-4 to reach the last 16.

Kalahandi tie with Kendrapara

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, July 27: Avijeet Mohanty's (45, 75b & 4/29) all-round show helped Kalahandi tie with Kendrapara in their Kalahandi Cup OCA Inter-District cricket tournament match at the Nimpur Ground in Jagatpur here, Tuesday. Kalahandi were bowled out for 135 in 31.3 overs after opting to bat first. Avijeet was the top scorer for Kalahandi. For Kendrapara, Vimal Kumar (4/28) and Biswabhusan Bihari (3/17) bowled brilliantly.

In response, Kendrapara were also dramatically bowled out for 135, in 26.4 overs. Satya R Soma (29) was the top scorer for Kendrapara.



AVIJEET MOHANTY (Kalahandi) Besides Avijeet, Govinda Naik (4/43) also bagged four wickets.

OTHER RESULTS

ECORSA beat Ganjam by 6 wickets via VID/other method; Best player: Sameer R Mohanty (32 & 1/12); Angul beat Boudh by 7 wickets; Best player: Rakesh Biswal (39 & 4/26); Cuttack B beat Bhadrak by 5 wickets; Best player: Dheeraj Kumar Singh (4/13); Sundargarh beat Nabarangpur by 9 wickets via DLS method; Best player: Ashish Tiwari (5/28); Dhenkanal beat Malkangiri by 181 runs via DLS method; Best player: Mustak Beg (64 & 2/16); Khurda beat BBSR A by 6 wickets via VID/other method; Best player: Aryashree D Bhatta (65 n o).

EMOTIONAL HOMECOMING FOR CHANU

IMPHAL: It was an emotional homecoming for newly-crowned Olympic silver-medallist Mirabai Chanu, who broke down on meeting her mother here Tuesday before being felicitated by Manipur chief minister N Biren Singh at the airport.

Much like the reception at the Indra Gandhi International Airport Monday, Chanu was met with media frenzy at the Bir Tikendrajit International Airport here.

A stringent training regimen after the 2016 Rio Games had limited Chanu's visits to home for the past five years. Chanu, who won the silver medal in the women's 49kg category Saturday, was seen hugging her mother Saikhom Ongbi Tombi Leima and her father Saikhom Kriti Meitei with tears rolling down her face as security guards formed a ring around her.

The now famous gold earrings, shaped like the Olympic rings, that Chanu sported at the Games were a gift from her mother who sold her own jewellery for them five years ago ahead of the Rio Games in the hope of bringing the weightlifter luck.



Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur felicitates Mirabai Chanu after her return to India, Monday