



## ENRICHING EXPERIENCE

Actor Vidya Balan says she has learnt something from each character she has portrayed so far in her career

LEISURE

P2



## BILLS SANS DEBATE

BJD denounces passage of Bills without debate in Parliament as both the Houses were adjourned till Monday

DOWNTOWN

P3



## AFGHANS AIRLIFTED

The first flight evacuating Afghans who worked alongside Americans rescued more than 200 people

INTERNATIONAL

P10

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 121 | www.orissapost.com

BHUBANESWAR | SATURDAY, JULY 31 | 2021

12 PAGES | ₹5.00

# LOVLINA SECURES MEDAL FOR INDIA

AGENCIES

**Tokyo, July 30:** Debutant Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) assured India of its first boxing medal at the ongoing Olympic Games when she upstaged former world champion Nien-Chin Chen of Chinese Taipei to enter the semifinals here Friday.

The 23-year-old Assam boxer prevailed 4-1 to make the last-four where she will square off against reigning world champion Busenaz Surmeneli of Turkey, who hammered Ukraine's Anna Lysenko in her quarterfinal bout.

Borgohain, a two-time world championship bronze-medallist and the first female boxer from Assam to qualify for the Games,

displayed tremendous calm in the face of a plucky opponent, who had beaten her in the past.

She was aggressive to start with, followed it up with a tremendous counter-attacking game and kept her defence tight in the final three minutes to emerge triumphant.

"She stuck to the plan of counter-attacking and taking advantage of her height. She had tried being aggressive with this girl in the previous bout and lost. So this time, we told her 'aap khade raho, usko aane do,'" national coach Mohammed Ali Qamar told PTI.

"And what a cool mind she displayed, never got excited. Never tried to barge in. She executed the plan to perfection. Had she tried

to go on the offensive, she would have ended up getting hit," he said.

The youngster, who was laid low by COVID-19 last year and missed a training trip to Europe because of it, let out a huge scream after the referee raised her hand, pent up emotions finally getting the better of her.

She had caught the infection while visiting her ailing mother Mamoni Borgohain, who underwent a kidney transplant last year. Her father Tiken is a small-time businessman and her elder sisters are also kick boxers.



## SINDHU SEALS SEMIFINAL BERTH

**TOKYO:** PV Sindhu, the 2016 Olympics silver medallist and reigning World Champion, quelled a superb fightback by Japan's Akane Yamaguchi to win in straight games and reach the semifinals in women's singles badminton competition at the Olympic Games Friday. Sindhu, seeded sixth here, beat the fourth seed Yamaguchi 21-13, 22-20 in 56 minutes. Sindhu,

looking to add a gold medal to the silver she won in Rio, dominated her Japanese rival at the net, created points with her disguised shots, and completed straight games win. Sindhu was really happy with her performance but she was focused on the next match. "I'm happy but it's not over yet. For me, it's time to go back, relax and get ready for the next match. I'm happy but I need to prepare for the next match." Yamaguchi said the mood in the Japan camp was sombre as compatriot Nozomi Okuhara had lost to China's He Bing Jiao in the first quarterfinal.

MORE P12

## IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Not the toppers' list...let's discuss the list of students who failed in a cancelled exam!

## Top court to hear plea on Pegasus next week

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court will next week hear a plea by senior journalists N Ram and Sashi Kumar seeking an independent probe by a sitting or a retired judge into the Pegasus snooping matter. A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana Friday took note of senior advocate Kapil Sibal's submissions that the petition, which has been numbered after filing with the apex court registry, needed an urgent hearing in view of its wide ramifications. The issue affects the freedom of citizens, the lawyer said.

## SC seeks report on J'khand judge's death

**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court Friday took suo motu cognizance of the "sad demise" of a judge in a "gruesome incident" of being allegedly mowed down by a vehicle while on morning jog July 28 at Dhanbad and sought a status report within a week from Jharkhand's Chief Secretary and the DGP on the probe into the incident. While making it clear that the proceedings before Jharkhand High Court to monitor the probe into the death of the judicial officer would continue, a bench headed by CJI NV Ramana said it was taking suo motu cognizance of the matter.

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX	VARIATION		
SENSEX	52586.84	↓	66.23
NIFTY	15763.00	↓	15.50
DOLLAR	74.59	↑	₹0.10
EURO	88.20	↓	₹0.12
GOLD	₹48,134	↓	₹147
SILVER	₹68,073	↓	₹127

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
TEMP MAX	29.2°C	29.2°C	
TEMP MIN	24.5°C	23.0°C	
Humidity	92%	87%	
Rainfall	02mm	Nil	
			Forecast Light rain very likely

# 99.37% pass CBSE Class XII

## GIRLS OUTSHINE BOYS

- Girls outshine boys by a slender margin of 0.54%
- Number of candidates scoring above 95% increases from 38,686 last year to 70,004 this year
- Number of candidates scoring between 90-95% goes down from 1,57,934 to 1,50,152
- Pass percentage of private schools increases by over 11% since last year

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 30:** The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) recorded the highest ever pass percentage of 99.37 in this year's Class XII results, declared Friday, with girls outshining boys by a

slender margin of 0.54 per cent. The pass percentage increased by over 10 percentage points against last year's 88.78 per cent. The difference between the pass percentage of girls and boys was nearly 6 per cent last year.

The board has announced the results on the basis of an alternate assessment policy after the exams were cancelled in view of the aggressive second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to the policy decided by a 13-member panel of the board, the theory paper evaluation formula is 30 per cent weightage to Class X marks, another 30 per cent to Class XI marks and 40 per cent weightage to marks obtained in Class XII unit test, mid-term, pre-board exams.

"For the implementation of tabulation policy successfully and in the given time frame, it was considered

important to facilitate the work to be done by teachers. So, in order to facilitate schools and help them in compilation and moderation of results and reduce any inadvertent errors on their part, a comprehensive and feature-rich system was developed by IT team of the CBSE," said CBSE Examinations Controller Sanjay Bhardwaj.

The number of candidates scoring above 95 per cent has increased from 38,686 last year to 70,004 this year. However, the number of candidates scoring between 90-95 per cent has gone down from 1,57,934 to 1,50,152.

The number of Children with Special Needs scoring above 95 per cent is 129 while 400 students in the category have scored above 90 per cent. In CBSE-affiliated schools abroad, 99.92 per cent students have passed Class XII.

## 6 Odia migrants charred to death in AP prawn farm

PNN/ AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar/Amaravti, July 30:** Six migrant workers from Odisha were killed in what was suspected to be an electric short-circuit at a prawn hatchery in Repalle of Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh in the wee hours of Friday.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has announced an ex-gratia of ₹2 lakh each for the next of the kin of the deceased migrant workers.

Expressing grief over the loss of lives, the Chief Minister said ₹2 lakh each for the family members of the six migrant workers will be provided from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF).

Guntur Superintendent of Police (SP) Vishal Gunni told news agency PTI over phone that it looked like an accidental fire caused by an electric short-circuit.

"Our clues team is on the spot, collecting forensic evidence. Some bleaching powder and other residues were also found there. We are investigating the case from various angles," Gunni said.

He said that there was prima facie 'nothing suspicious' regarding the tragic incident.

"We are talking to the staff of the electricity and other departments to ascertain the cause of the incident," he added.

The owner and the manager of the hatchery have been detained for questioning, the SP said.

As per preliminary reports, the deceased migrants hailed from Gunupur area in Rayagada district. Around 25 labourers from Odisha were reportedly engaged at the prawn hatchery located at Lankavani Dibba village in Guntur district of the neighbouring state. Three to four other labourers are said to be hurt in the mishap.

## State to promote over 63K primary teachers

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday announced the promotion of 63,303 primary teachers across Odisha by reducing the residency period.

With the implementation of this decision, 29,759 assistant teachers at Level-V (A) will be promoted to Level-V (B) and 29,759 senior teachers at Level-V (B) will be promoted to Level-IV immediately. In addition, 3,785 headmasters/headmistresses at Level-IV will be promoted to Level-III by September 2021, the CM informed.

The residency period for assistant teachers has been reduced to six months from existing one year, whereas the period for promotion to

Level-III from Level-IV has been reduced to one year from the existing two years.

The Chief Minister also congratulated all the teachers who are going to be promoted and sought their contribution in the efforts of the state government toward providing quality education. Patnaik also hoped that the promotion of the teachers will improve the education system in primary schools across the state.

The Chief Minister also sought the cooperation from all concerned in the state government's efforts to ensure quality education.

In 2019, the cadre of primary teachers was restructured to create 51,164 posts in place of 21,463 posts at Level-IV and 18,769 posts in place of 9,305 posts at Level-III.

## WAIT NOT OVER FOR 65,000 STUDENTS

**NEW DELHI:** The wait is not over for nearly 65,000 Class XII students whose results are yet to be declared by the CBSE. "The result of about 1,060 new schools is still under process as there was no reference year. Hence, the board is looking into the interests of these candidates and their result will be declared latest by August 5," said Sanjay Bhardwaj, Controller of Examinations. These students have been placed under the 'results later' category in Friday's announcement of scores. No merit list has been announced this year. "CBSE will be issuing a combined marksheet-cum-certificate to students unlike separate documents issued in previous years," Bhardwaj said.



**TESTING TIMES:** Class X students entering an exam centre at Unit-IX Capital Boys' High School in Bhubaneswar for offline matriculation examinations, Friday. (Report on P4)

PHOTO: BIKASH NAYAK

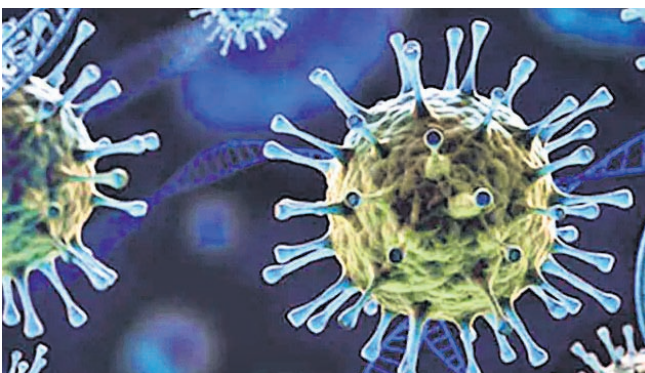
# Delta may spread as easily as chickenpox: Reports

AGENCIES

**New York, July 30:** The Delta variant of the coronavirus may cause more severe illness than all other known versions of the virus and spread as easily as chickenpox, US media reports quoting an internal document from the US health authority said.

The document from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) outlines unpublished data that shows fully vaccinated people might spread the Delta variant, first identified in India, at the same rate as unvaccinated people, reports said. The contents of the document - a slide presentation - were first reported by The Washington Post Thursday.

Dr Rochelle P Walensky, the di-



rector of the CDC, acknowledged Tuesday that vaccinated people with so-called breakthrough infections of the Delta variant carry just as much virus in the nose and throat as unvaccinated people and may spread it just as read-

ily, if less often. But the internal document lays out a broader and even grimmer view of the variant.

The Delta variant is more transmissible than the viruses that cause MERS, SARS, Ebola, the common cold, the seasonal flu

and smallpox, and it is as contagious as chickenpox, according to the document, a copy of which was also obtained by The New York Times.

The Delta variant - originally known as B.1.617.2 - might cause more severe disease, according to the document. The immediate next step for the agency is to "acknowledge the war has changed," the document said.

The document's tone reflects alarm among CDC scientists about Delta's spread across the country, the NYT quoted a federal official, who has seen the research described in the document, as saying. "The CDC is very concerned with the data coming in that Delta is a very serious threat that requires action now," the official said. There

are roughly 35,000 symptomatic infections per week among 162 million vaccinated Americans, according to data collected by the CDC as of July 24 that was cited in the internal presentation.

But the agency does not track all mild or asymptomatic infections, so the actual incidence may be higher. Infection with the Delta variant produces virus amounts in the airways that are ten-fold higher than what is seen in people infected with the Alpha variant, which is also highly contagious, the document noted.

The amount of virus in a person infected with Delta is a thousand-fold more than what is seen in people infected with the original version of the virus, according to one recent study.

### JSW Cement

The Leaders' Choice

1800 266 266 1 (toll free)

## 7 projects worth ₹2,083cr cleared

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** The state government Friday approved seven investment proposals worth ₹2083.88 crore, which will create employment opportunities for 2,144 people.

The State-Level Single Window Clearance Authority headed by Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra has accorded in principle approval to these projects. The projects will create many more indirect employment opportunities and enhance economic activities in different parts of the state.

Presenting details of the investment proposals, Industries Secretary Hemant Kumar Sharma said, "The proposals are mainly from the sectors like power and renewable energy, tourism, and food processing. Three grain-based ethanol projects will add to the state's capacity for reduction of carbon footprint in power generation."

A 500 KLPD grain-based ethanol plant and an 8 MW co-gen power plant by IOCL envisaging investment of ₹870 crore is proposed to be set up at Balgopalpur, Balasore. The government has approved a 500 KLPD

grain-based ethanol plant (in two phases) by HPCL with an investment of ₹500 crore proposed to be set up in Umerkote, Nabarangpur.

Similarly, another 100 KLPD grain-based ethanol plant along with a compressed biogas plant of 12 TPD capacity and 2.20 MW co-gen power plant by Newalt Energy Pvt Ltd envisaging an investment of ₹125 crore was approved by the government panel. The unit is proposed to be set up in Bantala, Angul.

A multi-modal logistics park by International Cargo Terminals and Infrastructure Pvt Ltd with an investment of ₹150 crore is proposed to be set up at Kujang, Jagatsinghpur. An 18.75 MW solar power plant by Aditya Birla Renewables Limited with an investment of ₹89.44 crore is proposed to be set up at Saintala, Bolangir.

Besides, a five-star deluxe hotel by Atmosphere Core India Pvt Ltd visualising investment of ₹184.64 crore is proposed to be established in Khurda district. Another five-star hotel by DB Homes Pvt Ltd with an investment of ₹164.80 crore is proposed to be set up near Chandaka in Khurda district.



**FORTUNE FORECAST**

**GaneshaSpeaks.com™**  
accuracy • reliability • trust  
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181\*

**ARIES**

Today nostalgia tinges your mood, and this reflects in your dealings at work, where others see your softer side. You even spend carefully, seeming to be wiser regarding your savings. Ganesha sees profits for cashiers and money lenders.

**TAURUS**

The time you previously spent on certain activities may not yield results as expected, predicts Ganesha. You will be reluctant to travel today. Your may find yourself wanting more space and freedom of expression. A stroll with your sweetheart, hand in hand, may be the highlight of your day, says Ganesha.

**GEMINI**

Today, it's time to meet those who are close to you, and maybe even those who were close to you at some point of time. Also, it's time to revive old friendships, old memories and sink into nostalgia. You may want to buy a valuable historic artefact, says Ganesha.

**CANCER**

Today, you are likely to achieve something that you have badly wanted for a long time. It is very likely that you will get very emotional in the moment of victory today, predicts Ganesha. Your arrogance and overconfidence can throw you off track. You had better keep your emotional balance once you are through the victory lap.

**LEO**

Unlike Dennis or Calvin, expect your sometimes haughty and mostly naughty kids to behave 'just right' at the right time. It's not that children like to break rules, they just want to have some fun, reminds Ganesha.

**VIRGO**

Ganesha foretells that you will start off on a long, arduous path to success. Some tough work will play a vital role in your progress. Don't cut corners, and your labours will pay rich dividends and you will reap due rewards. Some opportunities are best left alone as they involve too much risk.

**LIBRA**

Nothing overshadows your love for your children today. And love is precisely what drives you incessantly to give them the best possible of everything. Be it special classes for that extra edge in education, or a visit to a holy place to seek divine blessing, you will do it all today.

**SCORPIO**

It's the same old rut today, says Ganesha. Nothing new, nothing exciting. People from the opposite sex, however, may bring you out of the routine and try to enliven your spirits, predicts Ganesha.

**SAGITTARIUS**

Those around you will be impressed by the leader in you. You are the general and others will rally at your call to arms. And all the while, you swing your sword and make your way to the top, defying all odds. Do not forget to let people have their own time and space.

**CAPRICORN**

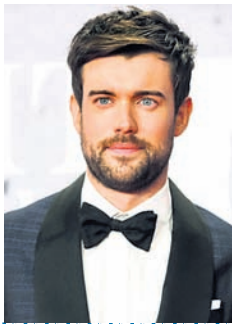
Despite repeated failures, very few realise that the key to success is in having the patience of a saint. Vexation invariably leads to an outburst which, in turn, can ruin your reputation and future prospects in innumerable ways.

**AQUARIUS**

You will tackle complicated issues with infinite ease! But you will also find people passing the buck onto you. It irks you no end, having to take the blame for others' mistakes. But here's a chance, says Ganesha, to turn a weakness into a strength.

**PISCES**

You could swing both ways today! Fortunately, this alludes to nothing more sinister than the mix of the introvert and the extrovert that you are. So, between a quiet evening out by yourself at a classical music concert, or performing on the dance floor at the local disc – take your pick, says Ganesha.



**WHITEHALL HURTS HIS RIB WHILE EXERCISING WITH JOHNSON**

Actor Jack Whitehall dislocated a rib working out with his *Jungle Cruise* co-star, Dwayne Johnson. Whitehall and Johnson exercised together while working on the film, which is based on the Disney ride *Jungle Cruise* and he suffered a nasty injury, reports aceshowbiz.com.



**Singaporean rapper's ode to Rajinikanth**

**Singapore:** Singaporean rapper Yung Raja revealed his brand-new single *Spice Boy*, paying an ode to superstar Rajinikanth.

The 26-year-old bilingual rapper said: "Rajinikanth has been my idol all through my growing-up years. He's such a legend world over.

"I wanted to give an ode of sorts to him and celebrate his supremacy in my music video and for as long as I'm creating, I'll look back to the moments he has given me as inspiration - his style mainly, and as inimitable as it is, I belong to the generation of fans that have his swagger permanently etched in our minds."

The three-minute cinematic video is fused together by madcap action, curly wigs, inflated sumo costumes, and disorienting close-ups.

All of this is captured by Vadhbibes director Jas Tan with a carefree sense of the surreal and produced by Flightsch and RIIDEM.

*Spice Boy* was released Thursday night on all audio streaming platforms and the official music video will premiere on Yung Raja's Vevo channel.

**JAMIE LEE CURTIS SAYS HER YOUNGEST CHILD IS TRANSGENDER**

Actress Jamie Lee Curtis, 62, has talked about her transgender daughter and said that she 'watched in wonder and pride' as her son became her daughter Ruby. In an interview to *AARP The Magazine*, Curtis opened up about Ruby, reports people.com.



**Vidya: I always learn from my onscreen characters**

**Mumbai:** Actress Vidya Balan, who has always wowed the audience with her power-packed performances and strong roles, has opened up about how each character she has portrayed till now has educated and changed something for her.

Ever since she made her debut with *Parineeta* in 2005, Vidya has treated fans with her dynamic portrayals in films such as *No One Killed Jessica*, *The Dirty Picture*, *Paa*, *Kahaani*, *Shakuntala Devi* and several others.

Asked if she takes back anything from her character or if they educate her in any way, Vidya said: "Yeah absolutely. It's like you always take back something after you have an interaction with another indi-

vidual. It's the same. You live this person's life for one and a half months or two or maybe more because you start prep before that."

The 42-year-old actress says it is difficult not getting impacted by a character. "So, I almost stay with one character for at least four months. So, it's difficult not to let that character impact you," she concluded.

IANS



**Pranati gushes about her Cartel role**

**Mumbai:** Actress Pranati Rai Prakash has talked about her role in the upcoming web series *Cartel*. She describes her character as 'motivated' and 'emotionally volatile'.

"My character's name in the *Cartel* is Sumi. She is an aspiring actress who is very motivated, loves her family but is sensitive and emotionally volatile. In the series, you'll watch her evolution. She is the youngest member of the Angre family and the most loved one," Pranati said.

The web series also stars Tanuj Virwani, Rithvik Dhanjani and Sanaya Pithawala. Pranati could not stop gushing about her role.

The 23-year-old ac-

tress added: "She is the youngest member of the Angre family, full of life and the most loved one. It was a great experience working with such great actors like Supriya Pathak ma'am, Jitendra Joshi sir, Rithvik Dhanjani, Tanuj Virwani who is also my co-actor for the second time! Everyone was lovely to work with, all of my co-actors."

*Cartel* is an action-drama on MX Player and ALTBalaji. It is based in Mumbai and has a story with action, drama and power play.

IANS

**FIVE MOST SCENIC RAIL JOURNEYS IN INDIA**

**STARTED IN 1903, THE HIMALAYAN QUEEN TRANSPORTS PASSENGERS THROUGH 102 TUNNELS AND 82 BRIDGES**

**T**rains in India are special and are one of the most reliable and affordable modes of long-distance transportation. Despite all the great things that they offer, one factor stands paramount: the unparalleled scenic beauty that we experience during the journey.

Here goes a list of five Indian journeys by rail that one should never miss out on:

**Kalka to Shimla on The Himalayan Queen**

Started in 1903, this train transports you through 102 tunnels and 82 bridges. You also get to experience the steepest rise in altitude. For five hours, you are immersed in scenic beauties that are primarily showcased in Indian cinema. You will be travelling upwards till you reach Shimla, and there you get to gape at the stunning beauty that Pine and Oak trees, valleys, and an

abundance of rhododendrons provide. This journey has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2008, and the picturesque treat it provides justifies the honour:

**Vasco Da Gama to Londa**

Much like the explorer, its derived name, this journey is explorative. From Goa to Karnataka, you get to witness the unique environment that Goan villages showcase. As the journey proceeds and you glide across the Western Ghats, you bear witness to the most breathtaking views of the Western Ghats and its picturesque waterfalls. You get to treat yourself to nature's best sights for almost 145 kms.

**Kanyakumari to Thiruvananthapuram**

This route is a testament to the fact that great things come in small packages. This



is probably the shortest train route on the list, yet it holds no comparison to the sensory experience it can provide. It takes

you through lush coconut groves and the best view of the bewildering Tamilian and Kerala architecture.

**Matheran Hill Railway**

This train is truly special when it comes to its historical relevance. The train tracks were laid down by Akbar Peerbhoy somewhere between 1901 to 1907. It is also the only remaining heritage railway in Maharashtra. While on the train, you get to explore the tranquillity of nature for about 20 kms on the narrow gauge rail lines.

**New Jalpaiguri to Darjeeling on The Toy Train**

This tiny steam-operated train moving at a speed of 12 km/hr takes you through an immersive journey. In 7 hrs 15 mins, you get a chance to view dense forests, beautiful tea plantations and experience travelling the spiral at Agony point. This journey is best taken during a clear day, as you get to see the snow-capped tip of Kanchenjunga.

**FUN post**

**PEANUTS**



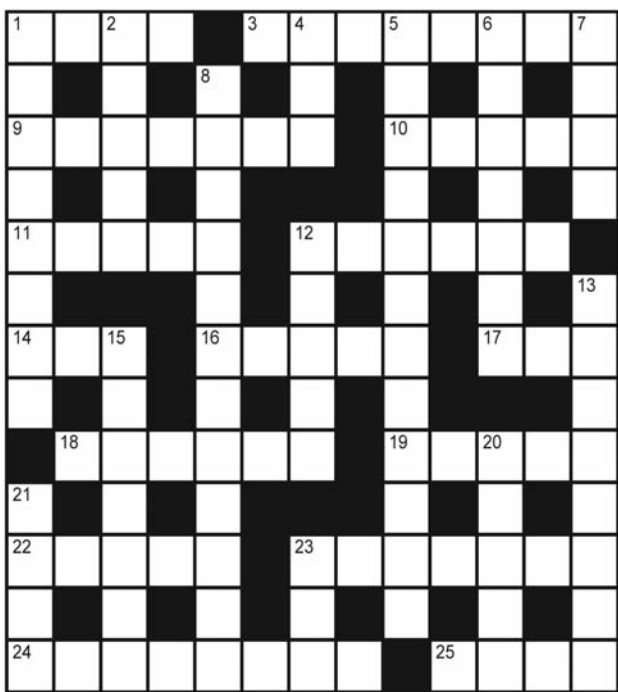
**CALVIN AND HOBBS**



**BREVITY**



**CROSSWORD**



**Across**

- 1 Small salmon
- 3 Chum
- 9 Cut short
- 10 Wedding member
- 11 Indian grackle
- 12 Gaudy
- 14 Bird-to-be
- 16 Sponge
- 17 Stately tree
- 18 Hummocks
- 19 Prods

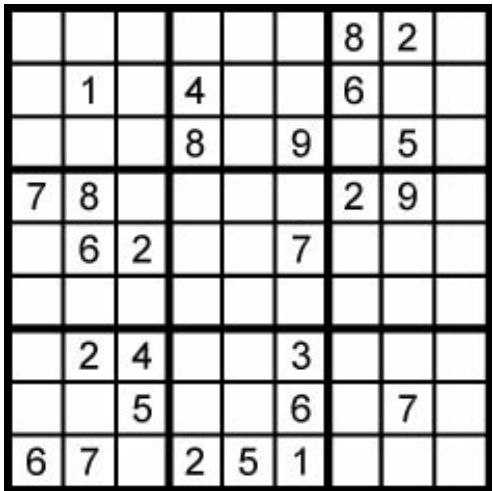
- 22 Scouting group
- 23 Sophocles
- 24 Scholarly one
- 25 Catch sight of

**Down**

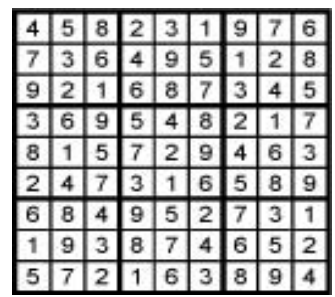
- 1 Type of salad
- 2 Graceful bird
- 4 Mouse catcher
- 5 Beer gardens (6,6)
- 6 A little rain
- 7 Utopia
- 8 Have crow for dinner? (3,6,3)
- 12 Blunders
- 13 Go-between
- 15 Venice
- 20 Airport features
- 21 Greek portico
- 23 Biblical high priest

**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**



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



# downtown

## EXPEDITE RAILWAY PROJECTS, BJP MP URGES VAISHNAW

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, July 30:** Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Basanta Panda Friday met Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and requested him to expedite work for various pending railway projects for welfare of the people of Kalahandi and Nuapada districts.

The BJP MP from Kalahandi submitted a memorandum to Vaishnaw and urged him to take steps for initiating work for the proposed railway lines between Bargarh to Nuapada via Padampur, Junagarh to Nabarangpur via Dharamgarh and Kantabanji to Nabarangpur.

Panda also sought the intervention of the Railway Minister for ensuring stoppage of all express trains for at least two minutes at Nuapada district headquarters railway station. He urged Vaishnaw to consider the case for improvement of infrastructure and facilities at Nuapada railway station.

He urged the minister to run a new train from Junagarh to Visakhapatnam on the plea that lakhs of people from Kalahandi usually depend upon the coastal city in Andhra Pradesh for healthcare and business purposes. He also sought extension of Ispat Express up to Junagarh station.

## Vig glare on pvt secy to OSSC member

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Vigilance officials Friday raided the houses of Biranchi Narayan Sahoo, private secretary to a member of Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC). The anti-corruption sleuths raided six places related to Sahoo and his relatives in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar.

Sahoo's houses were raided on the allegations of possessing disproportionate assets. The sleuths have till now found two double-storied buildings at Niladri Vihar, one single storied building at Bhakti Vihar here and another at Godibandha in Cuttack.

## Alliance Air flight to Kolkata from Aug 11

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Air India's regional subsidiary, the Alliance Air, Friday, stated that it would begin flight services from Kolkata to Bhubaneswar via Ranchi for four days in a week from August 11.

As per sources, the airline, which will deploy its 70-seater luxurious aircraft in service, will operate the flight on the route Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. While the flight will take off from Kolkata at 8am, it will land at Ranchi at 9:40am. Similarly, it will take off from Ranchi at 10:10am and land at Bhubaneswar at 11:15am.

Similarly, the flight will depart from Bhubaneswar at 11:45am and reach Ranchi at 12:50pm. Further, it would leave Ranchi at 1:15pm and arrive in Kolkata at 2:50pm.

This is the sixth operator that will provide services between two capital cities after Air India, IndiGo, Air Asia, Go Air and Vistara.

## GOVT SHELVES BEACH SHACK PLAN FOR PURI

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Puri, July 30:** After facing flak from several quarters including Puri Shankaracharya, the state government Friday shelved a plan to open beach shacks in Puri.

"The state government has cancelled a proposal to open beach shacks in the Holy City Puri is a heritage city. Devotees and tourists from across the globe visit the coastal city. The state government is committed to maintain the sanctity of Puri," said Puri Collector Samarth Verma.

The Odisha Tourism Development Corporation (OTDC) had planned to open beach shacks in Puri and some other places in state to increase the tourist footfall. Serving liquor in beach shacks is



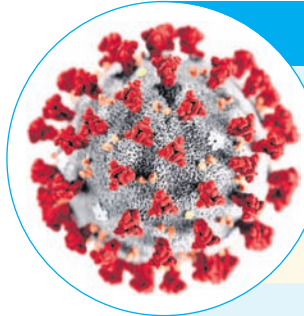
permitted under the Odisha Excise Policy-2021 as part of the plan to promote tourism.

Several social outfits as well as a few political parties had taken exception to the plan for opening beach shacks in Puri. Opposing



### UNVEILING STATUE

Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani unveils a statue of Swami Vivekananda at Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya at Mundali in Cuttack, Friday



### COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	19,75,81,270	17,86,82,892	42,18,774
India	3,15,72,344	3,07,43,972	4,23,217
Odisha	9,75,690	9,53,088	5,834

## HALF OF MONSOON SESSION OVER AMID RUCKUS

# BJD decries passage of Bills sans debate

Congress MP Saptagiri Ulaka terms snooping as murder of democracy

POST NEWS NETWORK

**New Delhi, July 30:** Amid continuous ruckus by the Opposition parties demanding discussion on Pegasus project reports and other issues, both Houses of the Parliament were Friday adjourned till Monday. While the Congress termed snooping as 'murder of democracy', the BJD denounced the passage of Bills without debate in Parliament.

With this, half of the Monsoon session of the parliament was over. The Monsoon session started July 19 and is scheduled to end August 13.

While Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha saw multiple adjournments since the beginning of the session, the Union government has passed several Bills without debate.

The Lok Sabha has passed the Inland Vessels Bill, 2021, the Airports Economic Regulatory Authority of India (Amendment) Bill 2021, the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill 2021, Supplementary Demands for Grants for 2021-22 and Demands



for Excess Grants 2017-18 among others amid pandemonium.

Similarly, Rajya Sabha passed Factoring Regulation (Amendment) Bill 2021, Coconut Development Board (Amendment) Bill, 2021 and several other bills amid the din.

Criticising the Modi government, Congress MP from Koraput Saptagiri Ulaka said that the government must allow discussion on Pegasus project reports. He said that the House belongs to MPs and not to the government.

"It is murder of democracy. This government has been snooping on its own people. Judges, journalists, politicians, ministers and civil

rights activists have been allegedly spied upon by this government. Now, they are not ready to hold discussion on the issue. Many countries have initiated investigations into the Pegasus project but our government is not ready to discuss it," Ulaka said.

Expressing dissatisfaction over continuous uproarious situation in both Houses, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Friday said it is the responsibility of both the government and Opposition to run the Parliament smoothly. BJD Parliamentary Party leader in Rajya Sabha Prasanna Acharya said the government should hold a meet-

## Odisha MPs pose 302 questions

MPs from Odisha posed 302 questions on various issues in both Houses of the Parliament in the first two weeks of the Monsoon session. Lok Sabha MPs from the state asked 174 questions while Rajya Sabha MPs made 128 queries on various state and national issues.

ing with the Opposition parties and take steps to end the deadlock.

"In the all-party meeting, the government had given assurance to hold discussion on any issue as per rules. The government should sit with the Opposition parties and try to find ways for smooth functioning of the Houses. We all are accountable to the people," Acharya said.

The BJD MP also decried the passage of Bills without any discussion in Parliament. "Every Bill must be scrutinised and debated properly before its passage in any of the Houses. The laws made in the Parliament have nationwide impact. The government should not pass Bills without discussion," Acharya added.

## Bhub region shines with 99.55% success rate

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** The Bhubaneswar region recorded a pass percentage of 99.55 in the CBSE Class XII examination the results of which were published Friday.

### CBSE CLASS XII RESULTS

According to sources, students of many schools in the Capital city did well in the exams. As many as 20 students of ODM School scored above 95 per cent while 134 others scored above 90 per cent.

"Now, I will focus on medical entrance exam. I was waiting for the Class XII exam results anxiously," said Haimavatnandan Pati, a science student of ODM School, who has scored 99 per cent in the exam.

## Guv inaugurates e-SAIMUN

SAI International School Friday hosted a two-day annual SAI Model United Nations e-Conference. The inaugural ceremony was attended by 1,000 global delegates from 20 countries including Australia, Japan, USA, UK, Uganda, South Africa, UAE, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Ukraine, Poland, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Egypt, Morocco, Nepal and India. Addressing the session, Governor Ganeshi Lal said, "Children exist to be the super souls, that the divinity has brought you into existence to spread that light in our Basudheiva Kutumbakam, one world one family." SAIMUN is an attempt to create awareness among the young minds on various issues.

Similarly, 63 students of BJEM School got above 90 per cent while 113 students scored above 80 per cent. Swetalina Mohanty of BJEM School, who scored 97 per cent, said, "We have lost precious time due to the pandemic. Now, our focus is to go forward from this situation. It is very difficult to wait for the reexamination." All 303 students of Unit-VIII DAV School have

got first class in the exam.

"Keeping the pandemic situation in mind and giving priority to the safety of students, the Board has managed to bring out the best possible solution. It took into consideration the overall performance of the students during the vital years of their schooling, said Mona Lisa Bal, Chairperson, KIIT International School.

## ALL ARE WINNERS



Students of DAV Public School at CDA in Cuttack celebrate after the publication of CBSE Class XII results, Friday

OP PHOTO

## BROWN SUGAR WORTH ₹1 CRORE SEIZED; 1 HELD

AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** A team of Special Task Force (STF) of Odisha Police Friday seized brown sugar worth over ₹1 crore in Puri district and arrested one person in this connection, officials said.

The arrested has been identified as Imataj Khan of Pipli area.

On the basis of an intelligence input, the STF raided near Pipli-Nimapara over-bridge and recovered 1.48 kg of brown sugar worth over ₹1 crore from his possession, the police said.

Khan could not produce any

valid authorisation paper in support of possession of such contraband, for which he was arrested and will be presented before the court of District & Sessions Judge, Puri, they said.

The STF has registered a case under Section 21(c) 29 of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985 and further investigation is on.

Since 2020, the STF has seized more than 35 kg of brown sugar/heroin and more than 67 quintals 52 kg (6,752 kg) of ganja /marijuana and arrested more than 100 drug dealers/peddlers, sources said.



TEST POSITIVITY RATE DIPS TO 2.05%

# Odisha logs 1,558 fresh cases, 66 fatalities

PNN & AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Odisha's Covid-19 tally surged to 9,75,690 Friday as 1,558 more people tested positive for the infection, while 66 fresh fatalities pushed the coastal state's coronavirus death toll to 5,834, a Health official said.

The state's daily test positivity rate (TPR) also registered a marginal dip to 2.05 per cent from 2.09 per cent Thursday.

As many as 904 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 654 infections were detected during contact tracing, said the official. Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, recorded the highest number of new cases at 479, followed by Cuttack (241) and Balasore (97). Koraput registered the lowest fresh infection of just one case.

Sundargarh district reported the highest number of fresh fatalities at 11, followed by Cuttack (10) and Khurda (eight).

The state now has 16,715 active cases, while 9,53,088 people have recovered from the infection thus



The state has so far tested over 1.59 crore samples for Covid-19, including 75,868 Thursday. The cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.11 per cent

far, including 2,039 in the last 24 hours. Fifty-three coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities to date. Odisha has so far tested over 1.59 crore samples for Covid-19, including 75,868 Thursday. The cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.11 per cent. A total of 1.61 crore people have been inoculated to date, of whom over 38.26 lakh have received both doses, the official said.

Meanwhile, anticipating the third wave of the pandemic, the Health department has issued a detailed guideline for strengthening manpower in various health-care facilities across the state.

Though the government had earlier decided to reduce manpower in healthcare facilities after a dip in Covid cases, it has now decided to continue with the enough staff strength for at least three

months from August.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, PK Mohapatra issued fresh instructions to collectors, chief medical officers and authorities of various hospitals to remain prepared for the third wave.

He said that hospitals with more than 50 per cent bed occupancy of Covid patients will retain the manpower already engaged till July-end.

Similarly, hospitals with less than 50 per cent bed occupancy of Covid patients can retain half of their manpower engaged till July 31.

"The extension of the engagement of the manpower is allowed for a period of three months from August or until further orders, while manpower engaged in the testing laboratories will continue for a period of three months from August," a notification issued by Mohapatra read.

The Health department has earmarked 3,000 beds, including 610 critical care beds, for the possible third wave. Similarly, a 32-bed paediatric unit has also been planned.

# Offline HSC exams begin after much uproar in state



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** More than 15,000 students appeared physically for the offline Matriculation (Class-X) examinations Friday. The Board of Secondary Education (BSE) has setup 505 centres across the state including three centres in Bhubaneswar. The exams will conclude August 5.

The exams are being conducted after a large number of students and parents expressed displeasure over the grades given on the alternative method of assessment by taking into consideration the students' past performances in their schools.

The students are checked through thermal screening and their hands are sanitized before entering the examination centres. Also, all the teachers and examiners at the centres have undergone antigen tests and have been fully vaccinated.

School and Mass Education Minister, Samir Ranjan Dash visited the centres and reviewed the arrangements there. He said that all safety measures have been taken to ensure safety of children.

Examination centres have been asked to follow the standard operating procedures strictly. "We are hopeful that the results of students appearing in offline mode will be

declared on time so that students can take admission in Class XI without delay," said the Minister.

The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Thursday directed the Board of Secondary Education (BSE) and the Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (SSEPD) department to make proper arrangements for 139 differently-abled students who would sit for offline HSC examination. The examinees attended the exams Friday. The OHRC directed SSEPD to look into the transportation facility of all 139 students to the nine examination centres at Balasore, Keonjhar, Sundargarh, Cuttack, Bhubaneswar and Nimapara in adherence to the Covid-19 guidelines. It further directed BSE to arrange scribes for 55 blind students and give 40 minutes of extra time to such students in the tests.

The last time students had appeared physically for the 10th board examinations was March 2, 2020. Since then all physical examinations have remained suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

# Complete unlock unlikely as threat persists: DMET

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Even though the test positivity rate (TPR) in all the districts has dipped below 5 per cent as aimed earlier, the state Health department, however, Friday said that major relaxations in next phase of unlocking are unlikely.

Chief of Directorate of Medical Education and Training (DMET) CBK Mohanty said that the situation in the state has indeed improved but full unlocking could pose health risks.

This comes when major high-burden districts like Cuttack and Khurda have now TPR below 5 per cent while the state's TPR has dropped to 2 per cent.

"The situation of Covid-19 in the state has definitely improved in the state. But as long as the threat of further infection exists, we need to be careful about that. Cases may rise if we go lax.

MAJOR HIGH-BURDEN DISTRICTS	
DISTRICTS	TEST POSITIVITY RATE
Deogarh	4.48%
Khurda	4.23%
Balasore	3.77%
Kendrapara	3.38%
Cuttack	3.25%
Puri	3.22%

Becoming more lax and complacent could be an invitation to the third wave or next waves to the state," Mohanty said. He also said that complete unlocking meant giving full liberty to all without any restrictions. "Such a situation is yet to come," he said.

Mohanty said that the case burden in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar has also shown improvement. "It was earlier going above 500 in Bhubaneswar but the cases are now coming down. If we consider the cases of the last five days, the

data suggest the twin cities are also showing improvement," he said.

When asked about the new unlock norms slated to be announced Saturday, the DMET chief said, "A special team is looking into all the parameters and would decide on the new rules. A decision on the new rules will be out soon. The areas which are reporting higher case burden need more controlled measures."

Public health expert Niroj Mishra said that malls could be opened but dine-ins should be kept in abeyance.

## STUDENTS' PLEA FOR EARLY EXAM



Students of Diploma in Elementary Education stage a sit-in at the office of Board of Secondary Education, Odisha, in Cuttack, Friday, seeking completion of their examinations and publication of results by the end of August

## ECoR cancels trains for rain, poor footfall

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** The East Coast Railway (ECOR) has decided to cancel some special trains in view of waterlogging due to heavy rain and poor passenger occupancy during Covid-19 pandemic.

As per ECOR sources, seven pairs of trains would be cancelled from August 2 to 8. They are: Puri-Cuttack-Puri Special, Bhubaneswar-Bolangir-Bhubaneswar Special, Bhubaneswar-Kendujhargarh-Bhubaneswar Special, Bhubaneswar-Bhadrak-Bhubaneswar Special, Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack Special, Cuttack-Paradip-Cuttack Special and Cuttack-Bhadrak-Cuttack Special.

This apart, three other pairs of trains will remain cancelled August 7 and 8. They are: Puri-Angul-Puri Special, Bhubaneswar-Palasa-Bhubaneswar Special and Bhubaneswar-Bangiriposi-Bhubaneswar Special.

Likewise, Puri-Angul-Puri Special will be cancelled partially.

## 60-yr-old gets 10-yr RI for raping minor

**Cuttack:** The special POCSCO court here Friday sentenced a 60-year-old man to 10 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) for raping a minor girl in Barang area here in 2016. Justice Subas Kumar Behari convicted Gopal Das, a resident of Fakirpada under Barang police limits here, and slapped a penalty of Rs 10,000 on the convict after finding him guilty under Sections 376(2)(a) and 506 of the IPC apart from Section 6 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

While pronouncing the order, the court said that the victim is entitled to get Rs 2 lakh by way of compensation through the District Legal Services Authority.

# Lady moves OHRC for probe into mom's death

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Unhappy with police investigation, a woman Friday moved the Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) seeking speedy and proper investigation into the alleged brutal murder of her mother 10 years ago.

The petitioner, Vijayani Mishra, accused the cops of delaying the investigating into the alleged murder of her mother after the submission of preliminary charge-sheet in November 2019.

"My suspicion is that the circumstantial evidence is gradually being eroded and there are no sign of investigation being actively pursued since mid-November (soon after the submission of the preliminary charge-sheet)," she alleged in her petition.

Vijayani received many accolades for her fight to bring out the truth related to the sudden disappearance of her mother that forced an apathetic and insensitive police to reopen the case.

Notably it was June 9, 2011 when her mother, Jayashree Mishra, left their home at Nandapara in Sambalpur to distribute the wedding invitation cards of Vijayani's elder sister Purnima Mishra whose marriage was scheduled to be held June 23, 2011. However, she did not return home despite the lapse of several hours.

Subsequently, they approached the IIC of Sambalpur Town Police station who instead asked them to wait for a few more days. The po-

## Vijayani accused the cops of delaying the investigation into the alleged murder of her mother after submission of a charge-sheet in November 2019

lice officials at Sambalpur Sadar PS registered a missing case October 14, 2011 after three months of Jayashree's disappearance.

However, the insensitive police officials concluded that the victim had been eloped with the prime accused, Basant Panda.

In 2018, Vijayani came to know from a source at Bada Singhari village of Burla area in Samalpur district that Panda had brutally murdered her mother when she allegedly asked for repayment of a loan of around 1.5 lakh and some gold ornaments taken by the accused from Jayashree.

Later, she started running from pillar to post, from the IIC to the DGP, to reopen the case between 2018 and 2019.

"Finally, IIC Sambalpur Sadar PS, after eight years of my mother went missing, registered an FIR (0289 dated 21.07.2019) against the accused Basant Panda and forwarded him to the court on 22 July 2019," Vijayani said.

The scientific team exhumed body parts of Jayashree and sent them to SFSL, Bhubaneswar and CFSL, Hyderabad for examination.

## Colleges, varsities to open zero balance a/c for RUSA funds

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Higher Education (HE) department has informed all the universities and colleges of the state to open zero balance accounts for release and monitoring of funds under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

From now onwards, the funds released under RUSA by MHRD will be kept in a single nodal account (SNA) at headquarter level in State Bank of India, Secretariat Branch in Bhubaneswar. Accordingly, an account has been opened in the name of "SNA RUSA Odisha".

The beneficiary universities/colleges have been asked to open zero balance subsidiary accounts with their local branches of SBI in their names. To facilitate opening of such zero balance subsidiary accounts, the HE department will share Google form link with beneficiary universities/colleges for collecting KYC details of the co-signatories of RUSA accounts of the beneficiary institutions. This account will exclusively deal with all transactions relating to RUSA.

All zero balance subsidiary accounts will be allocated drawing limit decided by the HE department from time to time. In time of payment, the institutions will generate a Print Payment Advice (PPA) in Public Financial Management System (PFMS) and present the same in the SBI branch having its zero balance account. The amount, then, will be transferred to the beneficiary account via the zero balance account of the university/colleges.

# S&ME min launches e-attendance app

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash Friday launched the e-attendance application in which the students' and teachers' attendance can be recorded. While inaugurating the app, the Minister said that it will bring reforms in the school education structure.

Principal Secretary of School and Mass Education department, Satyabrata Sahu said that this app will help keep track on the teachers' attendance and the kind of device they are using such as smart phones and computers. Sahu said that teachers in all districts will be trained for this app.

Anupam Saha, State Project Director of Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA), said that the app will help in proper data collection and will be helpful in bringing transparency in school management.



Earlier, the Odisha Higher Secondary Education department had decided to implement a new attendance module to collect the daily attendance of Class 11 and 12 students after the re-opening of schools.

Bhagirathi Kandi, officer in charge of the Program Management Unit (PMU), Student Academic Management System (SAMS) has directed the principals of all higher secondary schools in state to upload stream-wise students' attendance on a daily basis by 4 pm.

## CM interacts with new data entry operators

**Bhubaneswar:** Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Friday interacted with the newly-appointed data entry operators who joined the state Home department. The data entry operators were chosen through Odisha Staff Selection Commission. The Chief Minister's Office (CMO) said that Patnaik addressed the new recruits and encouraged them to work for augmenting the effectiveness of governance. The Chief Minister said that data creation, storage, protection and transfer play a crucial role in implementation and delivery of important government services. He urged the new recruits to put in their best efforts. He pinned hopes on their expertise and knowledge that would bolster the efficacy of the state administration.

## 6 students receive BIPF scholarship

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Bansidhar & Ila Panda Foundation (BIPF), the CSR wing of Indian Metals & Ferro Alloys (Imfa) Limited, Friday conducted a virtual ceremony to handover the 16th 'Professor Ghanashyam Dash Scholarship for Higher Education' to six meritorious students.

Students pursuing professional degree courses in different disciplines received the prestigious scholarship for the year 2020-21. The scholarship amount will cover 90 per cent of the academic fee and related expenses for the entire duration of the course covering a maximum of Rs 4,00,000 for each student.

Anita Kujur from Bankadarha in Debagarh district, Ashutosh Sahoo from Uttara in Bhubaneswar, Deepak Kumar Mohanty from Telengapentha in Cuttack, Himanshu Ranjan Prusty from Nuapatha in Jagatsinghpur, Roshan Paik from Jamutpali in Bargarh and Sambit Kumar Ayach from Balibarei in Keonjhar were selected to receive the scholarship.

Anita and Himanshu are pursuing MBBS at MKCG Medical College, Berhampur while Roshan is pursuing MBBS at VSS Institute of Medical Sciences & Research, Burla. Similarly, Ashutosh is pursuing MBBS at SCB Medical College in Cuttack while Deepak is pursuing B Tech at National Institute of Technology (NIT), Rourkela and Sambit is pursuing B Tech at Government College of Engineering in Keonjhar.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-DayalAgency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupadik Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookiemana-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.



# Bolangir farmers buy fake fert from Chhattisgarh at high price

JAGDALPUR POLICE BUST A RACKET, SEIZE 180 PACKETS OF UREA; FARMERS FACE ACUTE SHORTAGE AND BLACK MARKETING OF UREA



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Deogan, July 30:** At a time when Covid-induced restrictions have grounded income generation activities, black-marketing of fertilisers and their short supply have taken a toll on farming activities in Bolangir with farmers left at the receiving end.

A racket, active in Deogaon area, has been smuggling subsidised fertilisers from Chhattisgarh. This fact came to the fore after 180 packets of DAP urea from Jagdalpur to Deogaon July 28. Acting on a tip-off, police seized the truck in the area. The urea is suspected to be adulterated and fake. The police have sent samples of the seized fertilisers to a labora-

tory in Sambalpur. Farmers had earlier alleged that Krushnachandra Rana, a resident of Deogaon block, had been supplying fertilisers from Chhattisgarh and selling it at high prices to farmers at Gudkhapla, Badabahal, Arjanpur, Kulutapada, Mukundpur, Uparjhara and Mahali panchayats. The seized truck has been handed over to assistant agriculture officer of Jharbandh Pranay Mantri and Dunguripalli assistant agriculture officer Manoj Rout. During the investigation, the two officials confirmed that the fertilisers were being smuggled from Jagdalpur. Smuggled fertilisers are allegedly sold at high prices to farmers who are facing shortage of fertilizers. This problem comes up every farming season in district. Besides, unscrupulous dealers push supply of fake fertilisers with tacit support from agriculture officers. The administration should conduct investigations into alleged short supply and black

A mini truck was carrying 180 packets of DAP urea from Jagdalpur to Deogaon July 28. Acting on a tip-off, police seized the truck in the area. The urea is said to be adulterated and fake. The police have sent samples of the seized fertilisers to a laboratory in Sambalpur. Farmers had earlier alleged that Krushnachandra Rana, a resident of Deogaon block, had been supplying fertilisers from Chhattisgarh and selling it at high prices to farmers at Gudkhapla, Badabahal, Arjanpur, Kulutapada, Mukundpur, Uparjhara and Mahali panchayats

marketing of urea at this time, farmers said. They pointed out that at the peak of farming, farmers require urea and other fertilisers to nurture paddy plants. "Urea is not available sufficiently with dealers and the primary agricultural co-operative societies in the district. Wholesalers and dealers are deliberately creating artificial shortage of fertilisers," farmers lamented. Fertiliser dealers, retailers and agriculture officials have allegedly formed a racket to divert subsidised fertilisers into open market. All this happens in Tusura, Deogaon and Badangomunda areas. Farmers said that this problem stands in sharp contrast to the state and the central governments' priority on smooth fertilizer supply and focus on farming to tide over the aftereffects of the pandemic. They have demanded action against illegal hoarders and smugglers.



In view of a possible third wave of Covid-19, an awareness campaign with the help of UNICEF is underway at Bondaghati in Malkangiri, Friday

## Admin removes prawn gherries in Chilika

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Krushnaprasad, July 30:** Even as the tussle between fishermen and the administration over removal of prawn gherries in Chilika lake in Krushnaprasad area of Puri district is yet to end, the administration has started removing enclosures in the water lake with the help of the Chilika Development Authority. In the first phase, the administration has removed gherries and earthen enclosures in 430 acres in Solakida and Banamala areas. Two excavators and 100 labourers have been engaged in the exercise amid police security. However, locals who used to earn their living from prawn farming, have denounced the act of the administration. "At this time when people have



been sitting idle for want of work, the administration has dealt a blow on our sources of livelihood. Many people were doing prawn farming in brackish water and eking out their living," locals lamented. Locals had earlier urged the government to halt the removal of gherries during the pan-

demie times. The administration will continue to pull down the gherries in the coming days. Chilika, Asia's largest brackish water lagoon, is allegedly being choked with hundreds of prawn gherries. Prawn farming has led to clashes among fishermen, claiming lives in some cases. Environmentalists have been clamouring for freeing the lake from illegal gherries, which have been adversely affecting its biodiversity. Over the decades, some traders have been exploiting Chilika's marine resources with illegal prawn farming, that is killing the sensitive eco-system. Lakhs of traditional fishermen along the Chilika lake eke out their living from fishing and prawn farming.

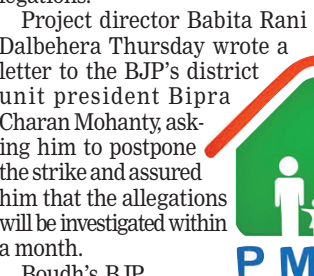
## PMAY GRAFT IN BOUDH

### BJP threatens stir; PD, DRDA seeks a month for probe

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Boudh, July 30:** In response to the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) warning to resort to strike citing massive irregularities in the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in Boudh district, project director, DRDA, has sought a month's time to investigate the allegations. Project director Babita Rani Dalbehera Thursday wrote a letter to the BJP's district unit president Bipra Charan Mohanty, asking him to postpone the strike and assured him that the allegations will be investigated within a month. Boudh's BJP district unit has been staging protests over alleged irregularities in the PMAY. Demanding investigation into allegations, it had staged demonstrations in front of three block headquarters July 8, 9 and 10. The BJP's district unit president had also written a letter to PD, DRDA July 22. Mohanty said the BJP will stage a demonstration and sit-in at the DRDA office for an indefinite period if no action is taken against those involved in the corruption. In reply to the letter, the PD,

DRDA wrote a letter (No-1700/29/07/2021) to Mohanty, clarifying about actions taken so far. After media reports on irregularities in the PMAY in Harbhanga and Boudh blocks, action has been taken against those involved in the scam. Then Harbhanga BDO Rabindranath Satpathy has been suspended and the government has been suggested to take disciplinary action against him. Similarly, disciplinary actions have been taken against the panchayat executive officers of Chhatrang, Lunibahal, Talagaon and Radhanagar panchayats, sarpanch of Chhatrang panchayat and some Gram Rojgar Sevaks. Some GRSs and PEOs have been transferred, the PD said. A block project executive and a call centre executive have been put under suspension. A police complaint has been lodged against a middleman. The allegations of corruption in Talagaon panchayat will be probed and disciplinary action taken against those found guilty; the official added. The BJP district unit president said the proposed demonstration has been deferred for a month.



## BUDHABALANG CHANGES COURSE

THE RIVER THREATENS EXISTENCE OF VILLAGES IN MAYURBHANJ DISTRICT

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, July 30:** River Budhabalang which originates from Simlipal and passes through Mayurbhanj district headquarters has been a bane of riparian villagers. The river has been changing its course and gobbling up villages over years. As of now, some villages 10 kilometres from the district headquarters are said to be on the verge of extinction. For this, the villagers have held the district administration responsible, alleging the latter is not serious about the problem. Had the administration been serious, it would have already taken permanent measures to save their villages from being submerged in the river, they argued. At the advent of rainy season, the fear of being eaten up by the river grips the riparian villagers. This season, the residents of Jamadapal, Kanchanpal, Balipal, Kundasahi and Mugarasahi of Hatikote panchayat under Baripada Sadar block are spending sleepless nights. "It's just a matter of time before the river devours our villages," the villagers feared. They fear so because the river embankment is too weak to withstand the force of floodwater. "Every year, due to the floodwater, the river changes its course and causes massive erosion. With no river-



wall or stone packing in place, more than 50 feet of land has already vanished over past few years," informed worried villagers including Hrusikesh Senapati, Santosh Bhuyan and Deben Ghosh of Jamadapal village. Echoing the same concern, Ashok Ghosh, Santosh Naik, Basant Naik, Mohan Singh and Prafulla Barik of Balipal village alleged the river is gradually inching closer to their village. If they are presently living in fear, it is only because of the officers

## LIFE ON THE EDGE

As of now, some villages 10 kilometres from the district headquarters are said to be on the verge of extinction. For this, the villagers have held the district administration responsible, alleging the latter is not serious about the problem. At the advent of rainy season, the fear of being eaten up by the river grips the riparian villagers. This season, the residents of Jamadapal, Kanchanpal, Balipal, Kundasahi and Mugarasahi of Hatikote panchayat under Baripada Sadar block are spending sleepless nights. "Every year, due to the floodwater, the river changes its course and causes massive erosion. With no river-wall or stone packing in place, more than 50 feet of land has already vanished over past few years," informed worried villagers including Hrusikesh Senapati, Santosh Bhuyan and Deben Ghosh of Jamadapal village

partment, Lokanath Mohanty said, "A proposal for stone packing of the river embankment at Balipal village at a cost of ₹17 crore has been sent for approval. Once approved, the work will be started," he added.

## 3-time BJD MLA appears for Class X exam



AGENCIES

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Purna Chandra Swain, a three-time MLA of the ruling BJD Friday appeared for the offline Class X examination at Sorada Girls' High School centre in Ganjam District. Swain represents the Sorada Assembly constituency in Ganjam district. The offline examination was started Friday in 504 examination centres across the state with all Covid protocols for students who were not satisfied with the marks awarded to them under the alternative assessment method. The alternative assessment method was developed after the annual High School Certificate examination conducted by the Board of Secondary Education cancelled by the authorities due to Covid pandemic. Official sources said 15,155 students are appearing for the offline examination which will continue till August 5 next. The school authorities conducted thermal screening of students and teachers.

## COMMUNICATION DISRUPTED



A biker negotiating with a flooded bridge on Malpada-Kharselguda road under Junagardh block of Kalahandi district. Heavy rain lashed the area Friday

## 2 killed in Mayurbhanj road mishap

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Baripada, July 30:** In a tragic mishap, two bikers were killed after their bikes collided head-on at Sana Manada under Bisoi police limits in Mayurbhanj district Thursday. The deceased were identified as Sauna Murmu (29) of Jodapokhari and Gulam Mustafa (35), a resident of Bankura area in West Bengal. According to sources, Murmu and Mustafa riding on two bikes were going somewhere. They were travelling in opposite directions. As they were nearing Sana Manada, their bikes collided, throwing them off the bikes. Local people came to their rescue and rushed them to Rairangpur government hospital. The doctors there declared Murmu as received dead. Mustafa was shifted to PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada. IIC of Bisoi police station Phanindra Bhushan Naik said Mustafa succumbed to injuries.

## UGC recognition to Rajendra University

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Rajendra University in Balangir district Friday got the much awaited recognition from the University Grants Commission. In a letter to the registrar of the university, UGC joint secretary Surender Singh said the name of the university has been included in the list of universities established as per section 2(F) of the UGC Act 1956. The university shall operate only within the territorial jurisdiction allotted to it under its Act and in no cases beyond the territory of the state. The university must note and adhere to ensure that no off campus centre(s)/ study centre(s) is opened beyond the territorial jurisdiction of the university as stipulated in the Act and in no case beyond the territory of the state. It should also ensure that no



programmes should be offered through franchise arrangements with private institutions. It must also ensure that no study centre(s) are opened through franchises by the University. In case the university is already started any off-campus/ study centre and the centre operating through franchises outside the state, it must be closed immediately. No open and distance learning programmes and online programmes shall be started without the prior recognition of the UGC. MPhil/PhD programmes can be conducted as per the provisions of the UGC.


## Veteran athlete Debanand Patra dies

AGENCIES

**Phulbani, July 30:** Veteran athlete Debanand Patra passed away at his home in Phulbani town in Kandhamal district following a brief illness. He was 90 and is survived by three daughters and two sons. Patra, who was also a retired police officer, died Wednesday night. He had tested positive for Covid-19 a few days earlier and was undergoing treatment at his home, executive officer of Phulbani Municipality Baladev Behera said. Patra had participated in national events in various categories of athletics, and was felicitated by the state government and Kandhamal district administration. His admirers thronged his house to pay their last respects. The last rites were conducted at a Christian burial ground in Phulbani with strict adherence to Covid norms, Oriya Baptist Church, Phulbani, general secretary Gideon Nayak said.



“What the soul sees and has experienced, that it knows; the rest is appearance, prejudice and opinion.”



SRI AUROBINDO

# Air India sale back in focus

The privatisation of the national carrier Air India is being watched keenly both within the government and outside. The well regarded and efficient Civil Aviation Secretary Pradeep Singh Kharola is now busy speeding things up on the divestment process. It had, insiders concur, got delayed by the government’s own red tape and then the Covid pandemic. And with newly inducted minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on board, who is a former investment banker, with a firm grip on things, there is reason for some to start believing that the sale of Air India is finally on course for take-off.

It is been made clear to the babus in the Civil Aviation Ministry that the divestment of Air India is the top priority of the government this year. And Kharola has the full attention of his *mantri* now. When there’s total focus on one ministry, babus also feel more empowered, we’ve seen.

Apparently, Kharola and his cohorts at Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan are seeking to step up the pace of privatisation by exploring the added option of limiting the benefits of Air India employees till such time as the government is the owner of the carrier. This is to make the airline more attractive to private bidders who then can have new terms for employees and tweak compensation packages.

All eyes are on the move since it is widely believed that it may well become the template for the privatisation of other public sector companies that the government is also planning to put on the block.

## Haryana govt keen on shining bright

The Manohar Lal Khattar sarkar in Haryana has tightened the screws on government officers to improve its public image. IAS, IPS officers and others who are facing CBI probes will not be given field assignments or posts where they deal with the public. Public awareness of this is expected to be politically advantageous.

State Chief Secretary Vijai Vardhan has issued an order directing that “officers for whom sanction to prosecute has been granted by the competent authority or court has framed charges in a criminal case stand debarred for field postings or positions involving public dealing.”

To give further evidence of its intent, the state government has recently sacked a 1991-batch IAS officer, Sandeep Garg, for corruption. Garg was under suspension since 2016 after his conviction by a CBI court for amassing assets disproportionate to his known income. The termination from service follows the approval from the Department of Personnel and Training at the Centre. Garg, reportedly, is only the second IAS officer from the state to be dismissed for corruption.

Undoubtedly, the Garg case is just a warning to corrupt babus that the government is serious about ‘cleaning the Augean stables’. Hopefully, this current enthusiasm of the state government will last long enough to leave an abiding impact on the administration.

## Pegasus prelude or ED under scanner?

The recent repatriation of Enforcement Directorate (ED) Special Director Sushil Kumar to his parent cadre the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has set tongues wagging. The order came from the Department of Revenue.

The move surprised many since it is widely believed that Sushil Kumar is a trusted officer of the ED chief. Apparently, the repatriation order was directed by the Finance Ministry, which acted on intelligence reports, overruling the ED top brass. In this time of Pegasus revelations, those in law enforcement, including the ED are no longer sure, who’s been snooping who.

Clearly, all is not well in the ED, the premier agency that investigates economic offences in India. Its officers may groan that their workload has risen, but so have allegations of faulty policing. Just a few days before this, two senior ED officials were arrested by the CBI for allegedly demanding a bribe from the owner of a Gujarat-based firm that is being probed for bank fraud. The arrest of Deputy Director PK Singh and Assistant Director Bhuvnesh Kumar has caused serious embarrassment to the agency. Sources say that in recent years ED has been dominated by officers from the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), which may not have gone down well with the police officers. These moves seem to be the government’s attempts to fix the agency’s reputation quickly before serious damage is done. No one is saying it yet, but these moves do not auger well for the top brass in national agencies beyond just this one.

*Share a babu experience! Follow dilipthecherian@twitter.com. Let’s multiply the effect.*

WISDOM CORNER

“Look up at the stars and not down at your feet. Try to make sense of what you see, and wonder about what makes the universe exist. Be curious.”

STEPHEN HAWKING

“Motivation is the art of getting people to do what you want them to do because they want to do it.”

WIGHT D. EISENHOWER

“When something is important enough, you do it even if the odds are not in your favor.”

ELON MUSK

## WORDSWORTH

### ■ Cantankerous

Cantankerous isn’t especially old by historical timescales. A curiosity of this passage is that it appears in numerous places as “bitter cantankerous road”, an unfortunate error that led the late Ivor Brown to base a molehill of discursiveness on this pimple of misinformation by reasoning falsely that it could apply to things as well as people. The fault is traceable to a misprint in volume two of Farmer and Henley’s Slang and its Analogues of 1891, which quotes only the last part of the excerpt, so denuding it of the context that would expose the error. The error has been perpetuated by writers who borrow the quote without troubling themselves to check the original. It must indeed have been new in Goldsmith’s day, for the good Doctor Johnson didn’t give it house room in his Dictionary of 1755. It may be that he felt it was too slangy for him — Farmer and Henley called it “colloquial” more than two centuries later. But for Goldsmith it already had the sense we know today, of a person with a quarrelsome, cross-grained, ill-natured personality. One proposal is that it was a blend of two words, each of which by itself suggested its sense: contentious and rancorous. But it’s also argued that it can be traced to the Middle English conteke, contention or quarrelling, via its compound contecouk, a person who causes strife. The latter word may have later changed spelling under the influence of these other words.

LOL




Reaching one’s country

A Brazilian, a Frenchman, and a Nigerian were in a plane. The pilot told them that they have to jump out of the plane when they find their country. The Brazilian jumped out when he saw the Christ the Redeemer statue. The Frenchman jumped out when he saw the Eiffel Tower. When it was the Nigerian’s turn the pilot asked, “When will you jump?” The Nigerian put his hand outside the plane window. When he brought it back in, his watch was gone. He said, “Ah, we’ve reached my country.”

FOCUS

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

# INDIA’S INTERNET HYPOCRISY



The internet’s potential as a force for good is well known, not least to India’s citizens. During the devastating second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, when public services failed, Indians used social-media platforms like Twitter and WhatsApp to crowdsource resources

Neeti Biyani

SINCE THE BJP CAME TO POWER IN 2014, IT HAS SHUT DOWN THE INTERNET 521 TIMES. BUT, BECAUSE SHUTDOWNS ARE A BLUNT INSTRUMENT, THE GOVERNMENT IS ATTEMPTING TO ESTABLISH MORE CONSISTENT CONTROL OVER HOW THE INTERNET OPERATES IN THE COUNTRY

At last month’s G7 summit, India joined 11 other signatories, from Canada to South Korea to the European Union, in issuing a joint statement affirming their “shared belief in open societies, democratic values, and multi-lateralism.” The statement touted signatories’ commitment to international rules and norms relating to, among other things, “freedom of expression, both online and offline,” and identified “politically motivated internet shutdowns” as a threat to freedom and democracy. By this definition, India can no longer be considered a model of democratic values.

The internet’s potential as a force for good is well known, not least to India’s citizens. During the devastating second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, when public services failed, Indians used social-media platforms like Twitter and WhatsApp to crowdsource resources.

Indians also used such platforms to organise and mobilise support for protests against controversial agricultural reforms and the discriminatory Citizenship Amendment Act. But the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party deemed this unacceptable, and Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s government repeatedly suspended online access under the guise of “maintaining public safety.”

In fact, since the BJP came to power in 2014, it has shut down the internet 521 times. But, because shutdowns are a blunt instrument, the government is attempting to establish more consistent control over how the internet operates in the country, through the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules, 2021.

Enacted in February without adequate public consultation or parliamentary debate, the Rules grant the Indian government vast powers to suppress content on-

line. This includes forcing tech platforms to remove posts or videos deemed libelous, hateful, deceptive, or in violation of the country’s sovereignty and integrity.

The rules also instruct social-media companies to appoint India-based executives, who could be held criminally liable for any violations. And perhaps most contentiously, messaging services are required to implement “traceability” for all messages sent via their services, thereby effectively breaking the end-to-end encryption that platforms like WhatsApp and Signal provide for their users.

Of course, India’s government insists that it is acting with the best of intentions: to curb crime and keep women and children safe online. In fact, it is doing just the opposite. With its assault on end-to-end encryption, it is threatening the safety of India’s people, including the most vulnerable.

Encryption is the strongest and most widely available mechanism for ensuring privacy and security for internet users. End-to-

originator of every message on its platform forever.

Ultimately, the rules are unconstitutional, the lawsuit asserts, because they infringe on privacy without passing the three-part test, established in a 2017 Supreme Court ruling, of legality, necessity, and proportionality. Other lawsuits challenging the traceability clause echo these arguments.

Tech companies are hardly alone in opposing the IT rules. Three United Nations special rapporteurs — on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and on the right to privacy — have urged India’s government to withdraw, review, or reconsider aspects of the rules. As written, the special rapporteurs argue, the rules are inconsistent with international human-rights norms enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, a treaty India ratified in 1979.

The rapporteurs’ letter also points out that the rules’ ambiguous language leaves room for abuse. And experts have noted that, for all the risks the traceability requirement poses to security and privacy, it is not even likely to be effective.

As the world’s largest democracy, India is widely considered one of the world’s “digital deciders” in debates about cyber norms. But the Modi government’s decisions regarding the internet run directly counter to the statement it signed last month. India cannot have it both ways.

*The writer is Policy and Advocacy Manager at the Internet Society, a global nonprofit organisation working towards an open, globally-connected, secure, and trustworthy Internet. The views expressed here are personal.*

©PROJECT SYNDICATE

## SPECTRUM PANDEMIC PROBLEMS

# Addressing mental health of adolescents



Dr Bhaskar Nath Biswal

ACCORDING TO A WHO SURVEY, COVID-19 HAS INTERRUPTED OR HALTED ESSENTIAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN 93% OF COUNTRIES WORLDWIDE. EVERYONE IN THE SOCIETY FACED THE BRUNT OF THE PANDEMIC

Covid-19 changed the life styles of people across the world. Apart from having a big impact on the physical health, it heightened sensitivity about psychological concerns. The fear of contamination of the disease by self or family member, restriction on movement, changed way of work, setback of financial planning are some of the problems faced by people during the pandemic.

The psychological status of those who suffered the disease or lost their near and dear is unimaginable. Even the frontline workers like doctors too suffered from stress and anxiety because of the long hours of working with PPPE kits, helplessness when the cases swell or separation from family, etc. Volunteers who came forward to extend their helping hand to the victims and their families are facing the brunt of stress as they came across haunting stories or feeling of dejection when unable to help the needy. A research report of a Pune-based Nursing Institution revealed that 50 per cent of the nurses in the study felt powerless and experienced anxiety and depression due to changes in the patients’ condition.

The WHO defined mental health “as a state of wellbeing in which individuals realise their own potential, can cope with the normal

stresses of life, can work productively and are able to contribute to their community”. An individual can lead a normal life when both his physical and mental health is sound, and can contribute for the society and becoming a good human resource. Stress and anxiety are normal human feelings but uneven levels of these things will lead to mental illness.

According to a WHO survey, Covid-19 has interrupted or halted essential mental health services in 93% of countries worldwide. Everyone in the society — from children to senior citizens and from businessmen to bureaucrats, faced the brunt of the pandemic. The miseries of the mental health patients worsened, whereas normal ones were also badly affected.

The grown-up are able to understand the situation and adapt themselves slowly, but it is difficult for the children and adolescents. The biggest problem for them is pursuing online education and to cope up with the pressure of academics. Unable to meet and consult their peers and friends, they remain confused about their examinations, careers and future. Continuous gluing to the mobile or laptop screens without physical activities also triggers mental health problems.

The World Health Organisation’s “I support My Friends” campaign

is a timely and much needed training that facilitates the children and adolescents how to support a friend in distress applying the principles of psychological first aid (PFA). After the success of its pilot project in Japan, Jordan, Mongolia and Turkey, WHO has made the availability of training materials across the world. It is opined that children and adolescents should have access to reliable support systems that helps them to develop coping skills and adaptability.

Through “I Support My Friends” children and adolescents can better understand their friend’s needs and concerns, their reactions to difficult situations, can offer them comfort and solace, helping them in accessing basic supporting services and protect them from further harm. The training can be integrated with education of the children and adolescents which helps in capacity building to overcome disasters.

During the pandemic and post-pandemic, many of the adolescents and children faced the wrath of the disaster in many ways like separation from family, losing parents and relatives, irregular and uncertain studies, lack of facilities to access online education, shattered career plans and social insecurity. These will have a great impact on their tender minds. They are to be provided right help and timely

counseling which helps them to overcome the grief and shock. It is the responsibility of every one to identify the children and adolescents who are behaving differently and provide them timely help. Interacting regularly with them in a friendly manner, spending some time with them, listening to their views and thoughts with emotion and empathy can make them normal once again. It will prevent suicidal thoughts; reduce stigma and discrimination among them. They feel safe, comfortable and hopeful with social and emotional support.

But it is to be remembered that everyone in distress may not be willing to receive help from their friends, as they are stubborn and strong enough to face disasters. In such cases it is better to take the help of trained professional to tackle such situations.

All these will help the children and adolescents to get accustomed to the changed post-pandemic life. This will teach us how to balance between physical, emotional and social aspects of life. As this is the new normal, we too can learn new things to lead normal life.

*The writer is Head, Department of Commerce, Nowrangpur College, Nabarangpur, Odisha. Views expressed are personal.*

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](mailto:edit@orissapost.com)



**OrissaPOST**  
B-15, Roshanagar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

## Arrest trafficking

Sir, Human trafficking refuses to peter down. Exploration and smuggling of gullible women and children across districts and state borders continue to take place with the offenders pouncing on every loophole in the law to their advantage. Inadequate supervision, and ineffective implementation, of laws aid them. Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill 2021 aims to plug the loopholes in the existing laws. The earlier Bill, that was never tabled, was neither punitive nor exhaustive when seen against the backdrop of the gravity of the offence. The latest Bill is multipronged that desired to include more and more Indians, residing here or elsewhere including the transgender community. That said, what is needed is a broad-based approach that effectively addresses the socio-economic dimension of human trafficking. Poverty and illiteracy are driving forces behind human exploitation. Therefore, sensitising law enforcers to act tough is imperative. At the state-level, more needs to be done. ‘Sensitisation’ of the police force can act as tools to suppress the illegal nexus carrying out human trafficking. It is necessary for the government to take care that the new law and the existing ones do not overlap. Officers of the National Investigation Agency (NIA), entrusted with handling the cases, are known as tough taskmasters; but they should not be vengeful.

**Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA**

## Reservation for women

Sir, It refers to twin reports on reservation firstly Prime Minister announcing 27% reservation to OBC categories and 10% EWS categories in medical and dental colleges, and secondly a joint delegation of women belonging to different religious groups meeting Lt Governor of Ladakh demanding 33% reservation for women in Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Councils of Leh and Kargil. Only recently Bihar Chief Minister desired 33% reservation for women in engineering and medical colleges. It is most advisable that there must be a basic 33% reservation for women everywhere. Women though being 50% of population, get only a minute representation in law-making system. Many political parties cry for reservation on man-made aspects like religion and caste evidently for vote bank politics, but oppose reservation for women. Even Islamic world, including Pakistan, have adopted reservation for women in legislature. When women quota in panchayats and local bodies is being increased to 50% from 33%, it is meaningless to resist 33% reservation to women in legislature.

**Madhu Agarwal, NEW DELHI**



SAFE DRINKING WATER IN GANJAM

₹1,407cr earmarked for mega projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhanjanagar, July 30:** Even as the state government has set a target to ensure safe and adequate drinking water to all rural households in the state by 2024, a whopping ₹1407 crore has been earmarked for mega drinking water projects under two schemes to be executed in 11 blocks of Ganjam district, a report said.

A host of measures have been taken for these projects. However, the ground work of the projects has been delayed due to pandemic.

Chief engineer of the panchayati raj and rural drinking water supply department, Sarbeswar Barik visited Bhanjanagar Friday and took stock of the infrastructure of the drinking water projects in 11 blocks.

Later, he held a review meeting at the office of the superintending engineer here. He also took stock of the projects in Purusottampur and Kabisuryanagar.

“After detailed project reports of these projects are available, funds will be sanctioned and tenders floated,” he added.

It was learnt that ₹1407 crore will be spent on drinking water projects under the Bhanjanagar superintending engineer.

Chief engineer Barik also said that as ground water level is plummeting, the state government is planning to exploit the water of rivers and reservoirs for drinking purpose. A mega drinking water project entails supply of water through pipes from the



Chief engineer of the panchayati raj and rural drinking water supply department visiting Bhanjanagar, Friday

**A** mega drinking water project is planned to supply water through pipes from the Mahanadi in Gania block to Bhanjanagar, Belaguntha, Jagannathprasad, Aska, Dharakote and Polsara

**A** nother project is executed for Buguda and Polsara blocks, for which ₹244 cr will be spent. ₹381 cr is allocated two other projects

Mahanadi river in Gania block. The water will be supplied to Bhanjanagar, Belaguntha, Jagannathprasad, Aska, Dharakote and Polsara areas. This project will cost ₹530.16 crore.

Another project is being executed for Buguda and Polsara blocks, for which ₹244 crore will be spent while ₹381 crore will be allocated for drinking water projects in Kabisuryanagar and

Purusottampur.

Under the projects, water will be drawn up through pipes from Rusikulya river and Salia reservoir and will be supplied to Kabisuryanagar and Purusottampur. ₹252.38 crore will be allocated for Dharakote and Sorada blocks.

After DPRs are completed, the final shape of these projects will be clear, he added.

Notably, the government aspires to cover all rural households under piped drinking water system by 2024 as per the target set under the Jal Jeevan Mission. Providing safe and adequate drinking water to all rural household is one of the top priorities of the state government.

Around ₹8,000 crore has been earmarked in the annual state budget for 2020-21 fiscal to strengthen the drinking water supply system.

The state government also executes its own scheme Buxi Jagabandhu Assured Water Supply to Habitations (BASUDHA) since 2017-18.

Mall staffer looted workplace for brother’s marriage

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jharsuguda, July 30:** Five days after a shopping mall in Jharsuguda town was looted, police cracked the case and arrested an employee of the shopping mall Friday.

The police identified the accused as Deba Nayak (24), a resident of Udaypur village under Delang police limits in Puri district. Jharsuguda SP Bikash Chandra Das said the accused worked as a salesman at the shopping mall. The accused admitted that with monthly salary ₹15,000, he had difficulties in running his family.

Meanwhile, his brother's marriage was also fixed. He looted the mall July 25 night. He gained entry into the mall from a back door and decamped with ₹2,60,000, four Samsung tablets, a CCTV DVR and a JIO Internet machine.

Destitute man killed in Koraput

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Jeypore, July 30:** A destitute man was allegedly bludgeoned to death with a stone at a tea stall in Laxmi Panda Chowk in Jeypore town of Koraput district Thursday night.

The owner of a tea stall said that the homeless man used to sleep at the tea stall every night for the last one month.

He was last seen at around 8 pm Thursday when she closed her stall and went home. Friday she found him dead and reported the matter to Jeypore police. Police started a probe.

Locals oppose bid to close old station



POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, July 30:** Alleging that the railway authorities have decided to close down the Sambalpur Road Railway Station, hundreds of people braving rains and under the Sachetan Nagarika Committee staged protests Friday by forming a long human chain.

Locals had staged agitations over the alleged bid by the railways to shut the station several times in the past.

Hundreds of agitators including women and children of nearby areas gathered at the station and held hands to form a human chain.

“The railway department has decided to close this station. After repeated agitations, the railways had assured us to reverse its decision. But the assurance was not executed. Now, there is a plan to pull down the infrastructure,” agitators said. They also pointed out that DRM Pradip Kumar has recently told media persons about the decision to close down the station. Kumar said the station was built in 1890 and the railway department has decided

to close its down.

It may be noted here that March 23, the East Coast Railway (ECOR) had notified the permanent closure of Sambalpur Road Railway Station for passenger traffic with effect from April 1. The decision was taken to pave way for track doubling work between Sambalpur station and Sambalpur city railway station. Since then, a large section of people have been opposing the move to shut the oldest railway station in the district.

The agitators said closure of this station will affect livelihood of many rickshaw pullers, auto rickshaw drivers besides eateries and many other businesses in the area.

Locals said they are unhappy because the station, established in 1890, holds great significance in the history of Sambalpur. They are suggesting to preserve the station structure as a memorial.

It is said that the Sambalpur-Talcher doubling line work falls on platform number 1 at Sambalpur Road Station.

The agitators waned of intensifying their agitation if the decision is not reversed.

Stray dog menace bites Bhuban residents, administration alike

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhuban, July 30:** Stray dog menace has been worrying the residents of Bhuban area in Dhenkanal district. They have attributed it to ‘dog sterilisation’ drive not being started in Bhuban area as yet.

It has been 49 years since the Bhuban NAC was formed. It will celebrate its golden jubilee in 2022. But the NAC in long five decades has not taken any steps to control the population of stray dogs.

The population of the town is increasing, so is its area. And so are the population of stray dogs and the menace. Cases of commuters and bike riders being chased away by stray dogs are happening every day. At night, they not only chase but also attack passersby.

As per the information available from the Bhuban community health centre (CHC), as many as 107 persons fell victim to dog bites in the town between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021. But, from April 1, 2021 to July 28 alone, stray dogs mauled 257 people.



The menace of rabid dog is no less serious in the town. There are instances of domestic animals like cattle, goats and people breathing their last after being bitten by mad dogs. Such cases are more in summer.

It has not only been a concern for the NAC administration alone. It has been the cause of headache for the health department as well. To ensure treatment at right time, there is always a stock of anti-rabies vaccine at the CHC. At the same time, people who have high risk of being bitten by stray dogs are taking vaccines in advance as a precautionary measure. CHC sources said preventive vaccine is

being administered two days in a week – Tuesdays and Fridays.

Meanwhile, local intelligentsia observed sterilization is the only way to control the population of stray dogs and thereby reduce dog bite cases.

Biswanath Nayak, a victim, said he was bitten by a stray dog three days back. “I am under treatment. The NAC authorities are not taking any steps to control the population of stray dogs,” he alleged.

Expressing concern, Rath Sethi, a senior citizen, said the town dwellers suffer a lot due to ever increasing population of stray dogs and cattle. The administration is not taking any discernible steps to control the menace. A permanent solution to this problem is required.

In this regard, Duryodhan Sahu, executive officer, Bhuban NAC, said he has recently joined and is analyzing various works undertaken by the NAC. “I know the sterilisation of stray dogs has not been done in the town for a long period. Steps will be taken in this regard,” he assured.



Following a landslide due to heavy rains, a huge boulder lay blocking a road at Judia Ghati in Keonjhar Friday

OP PHOTO

DESPITE FUNDS, SONEPUR KV PROJECT GROUNDED

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sonepur, July 30:** The much awaited Sonepur Kendriya Vidyalay’s own campus to be built at a cost of ₹15.81 crore is hanging fire. Despite having funds, the school’s campus is lying half-constructed, causing dissatisfaction among residents.

The HRD ministry sanctioned a KV in Subarnapur district in 2010. Five years later, the district administration transferred 10 acres near Pinisiali area under Sonepur block to the institution in 2015. Then another problem cropped up. The Kendriya Vidyalay Sangathan termed the land as unfit from students’ safety point of view as a

high-tension wire was passing over the land. It took some time to shift the electric poles and lay a road to the land. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the school’s new campus from Bolangir through remote control October 15, 2018.

The cost of the project was estimated at ₹15.81 crore. At that time, the HRD ministry had announced that the school’s building, boundary wall, playground and eight quarters for teachers and staff would be ready by December 2019.

The Central Public Works Department (CPWD) floated a tender and VJ Engineers was awarded the tender with signining of an agreement.



However, the contractor stopped the construction work September 2019 as the Kendriya Vidyalay Sangathan stopped providing the grant. This irked the people. Resentment started brewing among them. Hence, Bolangir MP Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo raised the issue in Lok Sabha. She requested the

HRD Minister to release funds for the completion of the campus. Following this, the Kendriya Vidyalay Sangathan gave ₹1 crore and ₹5 crore to CPWD Match 3 and 22 respectively.

Despite having the required money, the construction work has been delayed citing Covid-19 as the reason. Till now only 30 per cent of the school’s building has been completed. Similarly, the construction of the boundary wall has also not been completed.

The school has been running temporarily from the district resource centre. Class XI and XII students have been added since 2019. But, lack of classrooms has been affecting the learning process.

2 Hirakud sluice gates closed

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Sambalpur, July 30:** The Hirakud dam authorities have closed two sluice gates out of 14 through which excess floodwater from the reservoir was being released.

With the reservoir getting less flow of water due to scanty rainfall in the upper catchment areas of the Mahanadi river, the dam authorities decided to close two gates.

As of now, excess water is being released through 12 sluice gates with inflow at 1,00,799 cusec now, according to a dam official.

Deaf and mute bridge gap with sign language

AGENCIES

**Berhampur, July 30:** She is deaf and mute. Her students are also in the same boat. But that did not stop their classes as they used sign language to cross the barrier of communication.

The 20-year old woman in Ganjam district has been imparting teaching to some of the differently-abled students through sign language after their special schools got shut due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Rinki Gouda, a deaf-and-mute third-year student of a college in Bhubaneswar, is staying at her home at Lanjia village as her college was shut due to the Covid-19 situation.

In Lanjia, about 173 km south of Bhubaneswar in Kukudakhandi block, there are at least another four deaf-and-mute students who are in classes 7-9 and at their homes as their schools were shut since the first wave of the pandemic last year.

At this juncture, Gouda, who had known sign language during her school studies, came forward to teach them through the method at her home. Every day, the woman took two-hour classes for the four students of Class 6-9, apart from taking her own online classes for the past one year. “We’re very happy as my daughter teaches other stu-



REPRESENTATIVE PHOTO

dents who are deaf and mute,” said her father Niranjan Gouda, who is a labourer.

Besides providing other facilities, the parents of Rinki Gouda also offered lunch for all the students at their home frequently. Citizens Association for Rural Development, a Berhampur-based NGO, provided the teaching-learning materials (TLMs) to these students to continue their studies.

“Our community-based workers visit the village every week to inspect their studies and to support other TLMs,” said Suresh Sahu, president of the organisation. Earlier, the organisation had also supported her for pursuing her studies in school and college level, he added.

“We thanked Rinki and her parents for coming forward to support the persons-with-disability students of their village, whose studies suffered greatly due to the pandemic,” Sahu said.

Parents of these students, mostly labourers and farmers, were very much worried about their children as they did not have access to the deaf-friendly education and became stressed.

One of the students, Juli, was studying at Class 6 last year when she was feeling very mild and inactive due to the stress, according to her father. “We were not financially sound enough to support her to have a smartphone to take online classes,” he said.



Women netting fish at the breach of a fishing pond in Mahakalpara area of Kendrapara

OP PHOTO







of the day quote

Not only monsoon, even after light rain in any season, people's life becomes difficult. The government should make proper arrangements for drainage so that people do not face problems in future

**BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA** | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

Amit Shah asked me to give good governance in the state. I assured him that whatever faith you have reposed in me, I will do

**BASAVARAJ BOMMAI** | KARNATAKA CM

Rising cases of Coronavirus infections in Kerala are worrying

**RAHUL GANDHI** | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

ED summons Deshmukh again

**Mumbai:** The Enforcement Directorate Friday issued fresh summons to former Maharashtra home minister Anil Deshmukh and his son to appear before it next week in connection with a money laundering case probe, official sources said. The development comes on a day the Supreme Court adjourned Anil Deshmukh's plea, which sought protection from any coercive action by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the criminal case registered under various sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), and said it would hear his petition August 3. This is the fourth summons to Anil Deshmukh.

'Some Mins may step down in Raj'

**Jaipur:** In a clear indication that some members of the Rajasthan Cabinet may be dropped, Congress general secretary Ajay Maken Friday said a few ministers have expressed willingness to quit the government to work for the organisation. The remark by Maken, who is the Rajasthan in-charge at the All India Congress Committee (AICC), follows his one-on-one meetings here with party MLAs and other leaders in the Congress-ruled state ahead of a likely Cabinet reshuffle. Maken said everyone told him that they will accept whatever the party high command decides for them.

J'khand village on high alert

**Ranchi:** A Jharkhand village - Haradag Khurd in Garhwa district - has been put on high alert post detection of as many as 21 Covid-19 positive villagers in a short span of two days after return of migrant workers from Madhya Pradesh, officials said Friday. All 21 including eight children in the age group of 2 and 12 years have been admitted to Sadar Hospital, Garhwa and their all contacts have been isolated.

Bommai meets PM

**New Delhi:** New Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday and held talks for nearly an hour. Bommai, who is on his first visit to Delhi after becoming the Chief minister, met Modi at his residence here. Tweeting about the meeting, Modi said, "Met CM of Karnataka Shri @BSBommai ji today. Conveyed best wishes as he begins a new journey for Karnataka's progress. Assured full support for the development of Karnataka."



The Delhi government has decided we will recommend names of only doctors and paramedic staff for Padma Awards

**ARVIND KEJRIWAL** | CHIEF MINISTER OF DELHI

HIGH ALERT

The Delhi government Friday warned that the water level of the Yamuna river has reached closer to the 'danger mark'



Fresh round of Sino-India talks today



LAC ROW

THE LATEST ROUND OF TALKS WILL TAKE PLACE AFTER A GAP OF THREE MONTHS

INDIA HAS REORIENTED AROUND 50,000 TROOPS WHOSE MAIN FOCUS IS ON THE DISPUTED BORDERS WITH CHINA

THE CHINESE SIDE IS ALSO RAPIDLY BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE TIBETAN PLATEAU

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 30:** India and China will hold the 12th round of Corps Commander-level talks at Moldo on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) Saturday to iron out an agreement for the next phase of disengagement in Eastern Ladakh.

"The talks will begin at 10.30 am," said a military source.

The latest round of talks will take place after a gap of three months. Indian military delegates will meet their counterparts to discuss disengagement of troops at the friction areas such as the Hot Springs, Gogra and the Depsang plains spread over 900 sq km land.

While the build-up in Depsang was not considered as part of the current standoff that started in May last year since the escalations here took place in 2013, India has insisted during the recent military commander-level meetings to resolve all the issues along the LAC. "The initial attempt will be to resolve the issues in Gogra and Hot Springs. Finding a solution to Depsang might be tricky and take longer time," said an officer.

In April, during the 11th round

of Corps Commander-level talks, the focus was on disengagement at the friction points of Gogra, Hot Springs and Depsang.

On February 20, the two sides had held the 10th round of military dialogue to de-escalate tension along Line of Actual Control.

China has been enhancing military infrastructure across the LAC for some time now. Looking at it, India has changed its posture towards China, and unlike its previous defensive approach that placed a premium on fending on Chinese aggression, India is now catering military options to strike back and has reoriented its forces accordingly.

India has reoriented around 50,000 troops whose main focus is on the disputed borders with China.

The reorientation comes at a time when China is refurbishing its existing air-fields in the Tibetan Plateau that will allow twin-engine fighter aircraft to be stationed, sources said.

In addition, China has also brought troops from the Tibet military region to the Xinjiang region. The Chinese side is also rapidly building infrastructure in the Tibetan Plateau.

ASSAM POLICE SUMMONS MIZORAM MP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 30:** The Assam Police has summoned Mizoram's lone Rajya Sabha MP K Vanlalvena August 1 for questioning over his alleged "threatening statement" in connection with the Monday violence along the interstate border, and pasted a notice at his Delhi residence.

The Assam Police also said it will take "lawful action" against Vanlalvena who had allegedly made a "threatening" statement over the border clash in which five policemen and a civilian were killed.

Official sources said a team of Assam Police CID, which has arrived in Delhi, visited Vanlalvena's residence and the Mizoram House looking for him without any success.

Sources said Vanlalvena is believed to be avoiding the team. The MP was not available for comments.

Since the Resident Commissioner of Mizoram reportedly refused to receive any notice served on Vanlalvena to join the Assam Police investigation, the CID team pasted the notice on his residence.

Covid cases rising again

THE NATIONWIDE TALLY OF INFECTIONS HAS REACHED 31.57 MILLION, ACCORDING TO HEALTH MINISTRY DATA

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 30:** India has reported 44,230 new Covid-19 cases in the last 24 hours, the highest in three weeks, the latest evidence of a worrying trend of rising cases that has forced Kerala to lock down amid fears of another wave of infections.

India was battered by the Delta variant of the virus in April and May but the rate of spread of infections later eased off. It has again been rising, with higher numbers in seven of the past eight days.

The nationwide tally of infections has reached 31.57 million, according to health ministry data Friday. The number of deaths rose by 555 overnight, taking the overall toll to 423,217.

Health experts have called for faster vaccinations to stave off another big surge.

The government estimates that 67.6 percent of the 1.35 billion population already have antibodies against the coronavirus, with nearly 38 percent of the adult population of about 944 million having received at least one vac-



India confirms 70 cases of Delta + variant

Seventy cases of coronavirus Delta Plus variant were found in genome sequencing by INSACOG, a grouping of 28 laboratories involved in the task, Union Science and Technology Minister Jitendra Singh said Friday. In a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha, he said so far, 58,240 samples of SARS-CoV2 have been sequenced in the country and of these, 46,124 were analysed. A majority of these samples -- 17,169 -- were of Delta variant, Singh said. The Delta variant of SARS-CoV2 was behind the deadly second wave in the country that killed thousands and infected lakhs from March to May.

cine dose. The disease's estimated reproduction rate, or R-value, has also inched up in the past week,

The R-value hit 1 on July 24 -- meaning on average, every 10 people infected will infect 10 others -- for the first time since May when daily infections were near a peak of 4,00,000.

The southern state of Kerala announced a new lockdown Thursday, while movement restrictions are in place in some northeastern states reporting a rise in infection rates. Other places, including the capital New Delhi, have recently reopened most economic activities.

No blood bank in 63 districts

A TOTAL OF 3,500 LICENSED BLOOD BANKS ARE FUNCTIONAL IN THE COUNTRY, UNION HEALTH MINISTER MANSUKH MANDAVIYA TOLD LOK SABHA

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 30:** There are 3,500 licensed blood banks in the country and 63 districts are without the facility, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya told Lok Sabha Friday.

Elaborating on the steps taken or proposed by the government to set up blood banks in each district of the country, Mandaviya said the extant policy norm for setting up blood banks as per National Blood Policy is to have at least one licensed blood bank in every district while avoiding clustering of the blood banks in urban and semi urban areas.

The policy also advocates for a hub and spoke approach towards



transfusion services, wherein blood is collected and processed in hubs, which are high volume blood banks and distributed through spokes, which are smaller blood banks and blood storage centres. "There are 63 districts in the country without blood banks," he said in a written reply in the House.

"Due to various administrative reasons, state governments carve out new districts periodically. However, blood needs of such districts continue to be catered through blood banks in nearby districts and through blood storage centres set up in First Referral Units at Community Health Centres and select Primary Health Centres," Mandaviya said.

HIP HIP HOORAY



Students celebrate after CBSE declared class 12th results in Amritsar

PTI PHOTO

NATURE'S FURY HITS HIMACHAL

Entire mountain rolls down, scary video goes viral

THE HIGHWAY WAS CLOSED FOR TRAFFIC AFTER A 100 METRE ROAD STRETCH CAVED IN. LOCALS SAVED THEIR LIVES BY RUNNING AWAY

AGENCIES

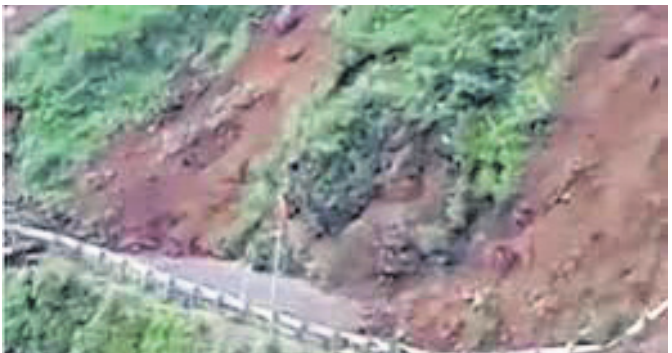
**Shimla, July 30:** A massive landslide occurred at Kamrau in Himachal Pradesh's Sirmaur district, blocking National Highway 707 near Barwas, Friday owing to heavy rainfall in the region. However, no loss of life was reported.

The video of virtually the entire mountain going downhill was shared by the State Disaster Management Authority. The Paonta Sahib-Shillai highway was closed for the traffic after a 100 metre road stretch caved in. Locals saved

their lives by running away.

Director General of Police Sanjay Kundu advised the motorists to travel with caution. "Though the rains have slowed, it is advisable to travel with caution. Stay alert, stay safe," he said in a tweet.

Over 200 people are still stranded in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul-Spiti following a cloudburst and landslides earlier this week even as three trekkers were reported missing Friday. Rescuers constructed a temporary footbridge over a rivulet for their evacuation, Deputy Commissioner Neeraj Kumar told the media. Later, they were trans-



ported in public transport vehicles. Kumar said traffic on

the Manali-Leh highway and the Manali-Udaipur highway have

The government has issued an advisory for tourists and locals to refrain the high mountains

been restored. Seven were washed away in the flash flood in the Tozing rivulet in Udaipur subdivision, some 15 km from district headquarters Keylong, after a cloudburst July 28.

Three people are still missing, and feared to have been killed. The government has issued an advisory

sory for tourists and locals to refrain the high mountains and wandering near rivers and other places vulnerable to landslides.

Earlier, at least nine people were killed and seven reported missing in flash floods triggered by heavy rainfall in the state Tuesday. The Shimla MeT Centre issued a yellow warning of heavy rains till August 3 as it advised people to not go near rivers and water bodies as the level may increase to heavy rains in the coming days. It also warned of landslides and predicted heavy rains in the plains and low and mid hills of the state till August 5.



India extends ban on int'l flights till Aug 31

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 30:** The coronavirus-induced suspension of scheduled international passenger flights has been extended till August 31, aviation regulator DGCA said Friday.

"However, international scheduled flights may be allowed on selected routes by the competent authority on a case-to-case basis," the Directorate General of Civil Aviation added. Scheduled international passenger services have been suspended in India since March 23, 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic. But special international flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat Mission since May 2020 and under bilateral "air bubble"

arrangements with selected countries since July 2020. India has formed air bubble pacts with around 24 countries including the US, the UK, the UAE, Kenya, Bhutan and France. Under an air bubble pact between two countries, special international flights can be operated by their airlines between their territories.



# international

## of the day quote

I met with Pakistan's NSA today to consult on regional connectivity and security, and other areas of mutual cooperation. We discussed the urgent need for a reduction in violence in Afghanistan and a negotiated political settlement to the conflict

**JAKE SULLIVAN** | NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, US

Commanders and political officers should focus all efforts on completing preparations for actively and offensively coping with any military provocation of enemies

**KIM JONG-UN** | LEADER, NORTH KOREA

UNICEF estimates that over 100,000 children in Tigray could suffer from life-threatening severe acute malnutrition in the next 12 months – a tenfold increase compared to the average annual caseload

**MARIXE MERCADO** | SPOKESWOMAN, UNICEF

## SHORT TAKES

### HK protester gets nine-year jail term

**Hong Kong:** A pro-democracy protester was sentenced Friday to nine years in prison in the closely watched first case under Hong Kong's national security law as the ruling Communist Party tightens control over the territory. Tong Ying-kit, 24, was convicted of inciting secession and terrorism for driving his motorcycle into a group of police officers at a July 1, 2020, rally. He carried a flag bearing the banned slogan, "Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our times." Tong's sentence is a "hammer blow to free speech" and shows the law is "a tool to instill terror" in government critics, Amnesty International's Asia-Pacific regional director, Yamini Mishra, said in a statement.

### UN office in Af comes under fire

**Kabul:** A UN office in western Afghanistan came under fire Friday and one of its guards was killed as the Taliban and Afghan forces waged fierce battles in the area, the United Nations said. The clashes were taking place in the district of Guzara in Herat province, about 10 kilometers, from the Herat provincial capital. It wasn't immediately clear which side was responsible for the fire that hit the UN office. The Taliban have overrun dozens of districts and seized several strategic border crossings.

## Airlift begins for Afghans who worked for US

The Afghans are being granted Special Immigrant Visas (SIV) entitling them to bring their families

AGENCIES

**Washington, July 30:** Some 200 Afghans were set to begin new lives in the United States Friday as an airlift got under way for translators and others who risk Taliban retaliation because they worked for the United States during its 20-year war in Afghanistan, US officials said.

The operation to evacuate US-affiliated Afghans and family members comes as the US troop pullout nears completion and government forces struggle to repulse Taliban advances.

The first planeload of 200 evacuees arrived at Fort Lee, a military base in Virginia, for final paperwork processing and medical examinations.

As many as 50,000 or more people ultimately could be evacuated in "Operation Allies Refuge".



"These arrivals are just the first of many as we work quickly to relocate SIV-eligible Afghans out of harm's way — to the United States, to US facilities abroad, or to third countries — so that they can wait in safety while they finish their visa applications," President Joe Biden said in a statement.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a separate statement that the US would

continue to use "the full force of our diplomatic, economic, and development toolkit" to support the Afghan people after the United States' longest war. The first group of arrivals is among some 2,500 SIV applicants and family members who have almost completed the process, clearing them for evacuation, said Russ Travers, Biden's deputy homeland security adviser. The evacuees underwent

"rigorous background checks" and Covid-19 tests, Travers added. Some were already vaccinated, and the rest will be offered shots at Fort Lee.

Around 75,000 other Afghans have been resettled in the United States in the last decade, he said in a statement, adding there is a "moral obligation" for the country "to help those who have helped us."

The majority of those would likely missed out on the airlift operation, including the roughly 50% who were in the early stages of the process as the clock counts down towards the US withdrawal by September.

Applicants in that group have held multiple protests in Kabul in recent months and they and advocates say they face the risk of violence while they wait that will be heightened once troops withdraw.

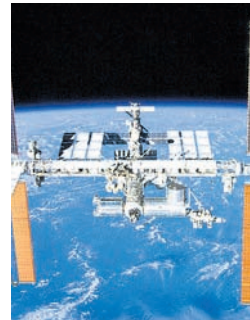


Israel is a pioneer in going ahead with the third dose for older people of the age of 60 and above. The fight against the Covid pandemic is a global fight. The only way we can defeat Covid is together

**NAFTALI BENNETT** | PM, ISRAEL

## ISS THROWN OUT OF CONTROL

The International Space Station (ISS) was thrown briefly out of control Thursday when jet thrusters of a newly arrived Russian research module inadvertently fired, a few hours after it was docked to the orbiting outpost, NASA officials said



## PEGASUS SNOOPING SCANDAL

## Israel launches probe against NSO group



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Jerusalem, July 30:** Israel has launched a probe into the allegations of wrongdoing against the NSO Group in the Pegasus snooping scandal, with authorities inspecting the cybersecurity company's offices over alleged abuses of its spyware by several government clients which have raised eyebrows the world over.

Representatives of several bodies visited the office of NSO to assess the allegations raised in regards to the company Wednesday, a spokesperson for Israel's Ministry of Defence said.

Mercury Public Affairs, which represents NSO Group, said in a statement: "We can confirm that representatives from the Israeli Ministry of Defense visited our offices. We welcome their inspection."

"The company is working in full transparency with the Israeli authorities. We are confident that this inspection will prove the facts are as declared repeatedly by the Company against the false allegations made against us in the recent media attacks," it said.

The alleged use of the Pegasus software to spy on journalists, human rights defenders, politi-

cians and others in a number of countries, including India, triggered concerns over issues relating to privacy.

Israel last week established a committee to review the allegations of misuse of the NSO group's surveillance software and hinted at a possible "review of the whole matter of giving licences".

NSO's chief executive, Shalev Hulio, had welcomed the move in an interview to Army Radio saying that he would "be very pleased if there were an investigation so that we'd be able to clear our name". Hulio claimed that there was an effort "to smear the whole Israeli cyber industry".

## DELTA DESTRUCTION LOOMS LARGE

## Fourth wave in Middle East: WHO

WHO said the highly transmissible strain has been recorded in 15 out of the 22 countries and territories of the region, stretching from Morocco to Pakistan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

**Washington, July 30:** The World Health Organization said Thursday the Delta variant has led to a "surge" in Coronavirus outbreaks triggering a "fourth wave" in the Middle East, where vaccination rates remain low.

"The circulation of the Delta variant is fuelling the surge in Covid-19 cases and deaths in an increasing number of countries in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region," it said in a statement.

"Most of the new cases and hospitalised patients are unvaccinated people. We are now in the fourth wave of Covid-19 across the region," said Ahmed al-Mandhari, director of WHO's Eastern Mediterranean region.

As of the last week of July, "only 41 million people, or 5.5 percent, of the region's population, had been fully vaccinated," the WHO said.

Infections have increased by 55 percent, and deaths by 15 percent,



in the last month compared to the month before. More than 310,000 case and 3,500 deaths have been recorded weekly.

Countries such as Tunisia, which has suffered the biggest number of Covid-19 deaths in North Africa, have been struggling to contain the outbreak.

Critical shortages of oxygen tanks and intensive care beds have stretched the capacities of health-

care systems regionally.

WHO noted the rapid spread of the Delta variant was quickly making it "the dominant strain" in the region. According to a recent paper in the journal Virological, the amount of virus found in the first tests of patients with the Delta variant was 1,000 times higher than patients in the first wave of the virus in 2020, greatly increasing its contagiousness.

## Myanmar leaders 'weaponising' pandemic

**BANGKOK:** With Coronavirus deaths rising in Myanmar, allegations are growing from residents and human rights activists that the military government, which seized control in February, is using the pandemic to consolidate power and crush opposition.

In the last week, the per capita death rate in Myanmar surpassed those of Indonesia and Malaysia to become the worst in Southeast

Supplies of medical oxygen are running low, and the government has restricted its private sale in many places, saying it is trying to prevent hoarding

Asia. The country's crippled health care system has rapidly become overwhelmed with new patients sick with Covid-19.

At the same time, medical workers have been targeted after spear-

heading a civil disobedience movement that urged professionals and civil servants not to cooperate with the government, known as the State Administrative Council.

"They have stopped distribut-

ing personal protection equipment and masks, and they will not let civilians who they suspect are supporting the democracy movement be treated in hospitals, and they're arresting doctors who support the civil disobedience movement," said Yanghee Lee, the UN's former Myanmar human rights expert and a founding member of the Special Advisory Council for Myanmar.

## Hungary election panel clears questions of LGBT referendum



Hungarians will be asked whether they support the holding of sexual orientation workshops in schools without parents' consent

The other question arises whether they believe gender reassignment procedures should be promoted among children

They will also be asked whether content that could affect sexual orientation should be shown to children without any restrictions

AGENCIES

**Budapest, July 30:** Hungary's National Election Committee (NEC) approved Friday the government's list of questions on LGBT issues it wants to put on a referendum as part of what Prime Minister Viktor Orban has called an "ideological war" with the European Union.

Orban, a nationalist who has been in power since 2010, proposed a referendum on ruling party legislation that

limits schools' teaching about homosexuality and transgender issues, stepping up a culture war with the EU.

An NEC spokesman confirmed that the panel had approved the government's questions.

Facing a tough election next year, Orban has increasingly sought to promote social policies that he says safeguard traditional Christian values against Western liberalism.

The European Commission has launched legal action against Orban's government over the new law, which came into force this month, saying it is discriminatory and contravenes European values of tolerance and individual freedom.

Orban aims to hold the referendum by early 2022 before a parliamentary election, where six opposition parties will unite against him for the first time.

# KALINGA KE LOHE SE, KONARK SA AJOOBA

## JINDAL PANTHER SARIYA AUR CEMENT

A PRODUCT OF JINDAL STEEL & POWER LIMITED  
www.jindalpanther.com | sales@jindalpanther.com

**Fe 550D**



## of the day quote

India can explore an FTA with the UK and it should try and leverage this agreement to grow and diversify its exports and attract investment

ISHTIYAQUE AHMED | ADVISER (INDUSTRY-I), NITI AAYOG

Organisations are planning with workforce requirements by keeping staffing as an integral part of the hiring strategy. In coming years, with enhanced formalisation, the staffing penetration is bound to grow leaps and bound, and recovery during the COVID pandemic year is a testament to that fact

LOHIT BHATIA | PRESIDENT, INDIAN STAFFING FEDERATION

We believe in building a scalable and highly qualitative platform that can enable practical learning of concepts in an amusing method. As a means to scale with quality, we developed SPARKY, which today teaches all our customers in a personalised manner

SNEHA PRYA | CO-FOUNDER AND CEO, SP ROBOTIC WORKS

## SHORT TAKES

### P&G: Jejurikar named global COO

**New Delhi:** Procter & Gamble (P&G) Friday announced the appointment of Shailesh Jejurikar as the global COO, making him the first Indian to do so. This is in line with the change at the CEO level with Jon Moeller taking over from David Taylor. "In October, Shailesh Jejurikar will become P&G's COO. As COO, Shailesh will have profit/loss responsibility for P&G's Enterprise Markets (Latin America, India, ME, Africa, SE Asia, and Eastern Europe)," P&G said.

### IOC to tie up with Petronas

**New Delhi:** Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), nation's biggest oil firm, Friday said it will partner with Malaysia's Petronas for natural gas and transportation fuel retailing business. IOC and Petronas have a 50:50 JV, IndianOil Petronas Pvt Ltd (IPPL) for import of LPG. It sells LPG to commercial customers who are not allowed to use subsidised cooking gas sold to households by state energy firms. This JV will "diversify into natural gas and transportation fuel retailing business," IOC Chairman Shrikant Madhav Vaidya said.

### Mastercard submits audit report to RBI

**New Delhi:** After being banned by the RBI from issuing new cards, US-based payments technology-major Mastercard Friday said it has submitted an audit report to the regulator showing compliance with the local data storage norms. The RBI had July 14 put an indefinite ban on Mastercard from issuing new credit, debit and prepaid cards. The ban came into effect from July 22. The restrictions were put in place because of the company's failure to comply with local data storage norms.

### 'Tata Motors to invest ₹28,900cr'

**New Delhi:** Tata Motors group will invest ₹28,900 crore across its domestic business and JLR in 2021-22 and is also investing on development of hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, company Chairman N Chandrasekaran said Friday. The company will also look to raise capital separately for its EV business. It is looking to have 25% of its sales coming from EVs in the medium to long term, up from 2% at present, he said.

## 'Received over 71K complaints, took down 1.54L content pieces'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 30:** Google received 71,148 complaints from individual users in India in May and June combined, which resulted in the removal of more than 1.54 lakh pieces of content, as per the company's latest monthly transparency reports. The number of complaints received in June from individual users in India was 36,265, leading to 83,613 removal actions - both the numbers were higher than the levels seen in May.

In addition to reports from users, Google also removed more than 11.6 lakh pieces of content in May and June as a result of automated detection, the reports released on Friday showed.

The US-based company has made



these disclosures as part of compliance with India's IT rules that came into force May 26.

In its maiden report, Google said it had received over 27,700 complaints in April this year from individual users in India over alleged violation of local laws or personal

If anyone, anywhere in the world is thinking of good investment in energy, India is a good place to begin

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | PETROLEUM MINISTER

rights, which resulted in the removal of 59,350 pieces of content.

Friday, Google said it had received 34,883 complaints in May from individual users located in India via designated mechanisms, and the number of removal actions as a result of user complaints was 71,132.

## Output of eight core sectors up 8.9% in June

AGENCIES

**New Delhi, July 30:** The output of eight core sectors grew 8.9% in June, mainly due to a low base effect and uptick in production of natural gas, steel, coal and electricity, official data showed Friday.

The eight infrastructure sectors of coal, crude oil, natural gas, refinery products, fertilisers, steel, cement and electricity had contracted by 12.4% in June 2020 due to the lockdown restrictions imposed to control the spread of coronavirus infections.

In May this year, these key sectors had recorded a growth of 16.3 per cent, while it was 60.9% in April.

According to the commerce and industry ministry data, production of coal, natural gas, refinery products, steel, cement and electricity jumped by 7.4 per cent, 20.6 per cent, 2.4%, 25%, 4.3% and 7.2%, respectively, in June 2021.

The same stood at (-) 15.5%, (-) 12%, (-) 8.9 per cent, (-) 23.2%, (-) 6.8% and (-) 10% in the corresponding month last year. Crude oil output contracted by 1.8 per cent during the month under review as against a negative growth of 6 per cent in June 2020. Fertiliser segment



### UPTICK IN PRODUCTION

The eight infrastructure sectors in May, had recorded a growth of 16.3%, while it was 60.9% in April

Despite the gradual unlocking, the sequential uptick in the overall core index in June 2021 was mild at just 1.1%

recorded a growth of 2% in June.

During April-June period this fiscal, the eight sectors grew by 25.3% against a contraction of 23.8% in the same period last year.

Commenting on the data, ratings agency ICRA's Chief Economist Aditi Nayar said continued unlocking by the states, improved mobility and higher electricity demand, pushed up in part by the lull in rainfall, are expected to

boost the core sector growth to 11-14% in July 2021.

Despite the gradual unlocking, the sequential uptick in the overall core index in June 2021 was mild at just 1.1%, with double-digit increases in cement and fertilisers, dampened by a month-on-month decline in petroleum refinery products and coal, with the latter reflecting the onset of the monsoon, she said.

### PSU Leadership Awards: MCL bags two awards

**Sambalpur:** Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) bagged the CMD leadership award and CSR Leader of the Year awards at the Governance Now: 8th PSU Awards Ceremony held July 29, 2021. Kiran Bedi, Former Governor, Pondicherry and Chief Guest of the virtually organised ceremony presented the CMD leadership award to PK Sinha, CMD MCL. OP Singh, Director (Technical/ Operations) MCL who received the award on behalf of Sinha thanked 'Governance Now' for recognising MCL's achievements. Meanwhile, Keshav Rao, Director (Personnel), MCL received the CSR Leader of the Year Award for outstanding contribution of MCL in the field of CSR.

## CII organises conference on 'Metal & Mining'

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** CII organised a virtual conference on Mineral & Metal Wagon of East: Sustainable Resurgence to revive economy with five major objectives (a) procedural reforms, (b) availability of raw materials, (c) fair pricing for higher metal production in mineral-rich states, (d) engaging local MSMEs as vendors and (e) creating global connect for sustainable mining.

Speaking on the occasion, Hon'ble Minister of State, Department of Steel, Government of India, Faggan Singh Kulaste said, "The Indian steel industry

is modern with state-of-the-art steel mills.

It has always strived for continuous modernisation of older plants and upgradation to higher energy efficiency levels.

The second half of the Covid-struck FY21 witnessed an unprecedented rally in domestic steel prices which seems unstoppable even in the current FY22". Kulaste emphasised that the Ministry is talking all necessary steps to help MSME units, downstream and ancillary units that are associated with the sector to revive the economy in distress.

Rashika Chaube, Addl Secy, Ministry of Steel, Government of

### ECONOMIC REVIVAL



India spoke about Vision of Steel: 2030, where she mentioned about the National Steel Policy 2017 which is aiming at technologically advanced and globally competitive steel industry in the country. She spoke about the focus of

### NO CHANGE IN FUEL PRICES

OMCs continued to pause fuel price revision for the 13th consecutive day Friday, the longest period in weeks, as wait and watch continued amid rising global crude prices. Accordingly, in New Delhi, petrol continued to be sold for ₹101.84 per litre, while diesel was being sold at the unchanged rate of ₹89.87 a litre Friday



### MICROSOFT IN TALKS TO INVEST IN OYO, REPORT FINDS



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

**New Delhi, July 30:** Satya Nadella-run Microsoft is in advanced talks to invest in Airbnb-backed Indian budget hotel chain OYO at a valuation of \$9 billion, the media reported Friday.

According to a TechCrunch report citing sources, a deal may close soon but the "proposed size of the investment is unclear". Both Microsoft and OYO declined to comment on the reports.

The Ritesh Agarwal-run hospitality chain has Airbnb, Chinese ride-hailing giant Didi Chuxing and ride-hailing firm Grab as strategic investors. The news comes after OYO announced earlier this month that it has raised \$660 million from global institutional investors as TLB (Term Loan B).

A company statement had said that the offer was oversubscribed by 1.7 times and the company received commitments of close to \$1 billion from leading institutional investors.

"We are delighted by the response to OYO's maiden TLB capital raise that was oversubscribed by leading global institutional investors. We are thankful for the trust that they have placed in OYO's mission of creating value for owners and operators of hotels and homes across the globe," said Abhishek Gupta, Group Chief Financial Officer, OYO.

The company said it will utilise these funds to retire its past debts, strengthen the balance sheet and other business purposes including investment in product technology, it said.

### MSMEs need most policy attention, says Niti Aayog VC



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**New Delhi, July 30:** The MSME sector needs most policy attention, and the government will continue to do whatever is required to promote the sector, Niti Aayog Vice-Chairman Rajiv Kumar said Friday.

Speaking at a virtual event organised by the Institute for Studies in Industrial Development (ISID), Kumar said the government and the RBI have announced several measures to help the micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) sector.

"The MSME sector needs most policy attention of all stakeholders. A lot has been written about it but some of the challenges of the sector has remained unmet till recently," he said.

BOEING DOMINATES INDIA'S WIDE-BODY MARKET OF 51 PLANES BUT FARE WARS AND HIGH COSTS HAVE LED TO CASUALTIES AMONG FULL-SERVICE CARRIERS, INCLUDING KINGFISHER AIRLINES IN 2012 AND JET IN 2019

REUTERS

**New Delhi, July 30:** Indian billionaire Rakesh Jhunjhunwala's plan to launch an ultra low-cost airline could give planemaker Boeing a chance to regain lost



ground in India after the fall of one of its biggest customers, Jet Airways, two years ago, industry executives say.

Jhunjhunwala, known as India's Warren Buffett for his successful stock investments, plans to team up with former CEOs of IndiGo, the country's biggest carrier, and Jet Airways to tap into demand for domestic air travel.

While plans to launch Akasa Air come at a time when India's aviation industry is reeling from the impact of the pandemic, with airlines losing billions of dollars, the sector's long-term prospect makes it a hot market for planemakers Boeing and Airbus.

"There will be a big fight be-

tween Airbus and Boeing," said Nitin Sarin, managing partner at law firm Sarin & Co, which advises lessors and airlines.

"For Boeing this is a great opportunity to step in and up their game, considering they don't have any other major operator for their 737 aircraft in India apart from SpiceJet," Sarin said, referring to Boeing's narrowbody aircraft.

Boeing did not comment on Akasa's plans, but in a statement to Reuters said it always sought opportunities and talks with current and potential customers about how it can best support their fleet and operational needs.

Details of the venture, including any decision on plane orders, have not been formally disclosed, but Jhunjhunwala told Bloomberg he plans to have a 40% stake in Akasa, which will have 70 aircraft of up to 180 seats within four years.

Jhunjhunwala, valued at \$4.6 billion by Forbes, did not respond to an interview request.

Indian skies are dominated by low-cost carriers (LCCs) including IndiGo, SpiceJet, GoFirst and AirAsia India, with the majority of them operating a fleet of Airbus' narrowbody planes.

Boeing dominates India's wide-body market of 51 planes but fare wars and high costs have led to casualties among full-service carriers, including Kingfisher Airlines in 2012 and Jet in 2019, making LCCs and Airbus even more dominant.

Boeing's share of India's 570 narrow-body planes fell to 18% after Jet's demise from 35% in 2018, data from

consultancy CAPA India shows. Jet was recently rescued from bankruptcy and is expected to fly again. Indian carriers have over 900 planes on order of which 185 are Boeing 737 aircraft and 710 are Airbus, which counts IndiGo as one of its biggest customers globally.

"If you have to lease an aircraft there is an abundance and lessors would be happy to provide competitive rates, even better than pre-Covid times," Sarin said.

He, however, warned that India is still a difficult place to do business, with regulatory hurdles and expensive and under-developed airports making LCCs less efficient than in overseas markets.

Even as Akasa faces tough competition in a battered, post-Covid market which has pushed airlines to renegotiate terms with lessors and vendors, raise fresh funds and trim costs, starting with a clean slate and good capital will give it an advantage.



# SINDHU POWERS INTO SEMIS



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

**Tokyo, July 30:** Reigning World Champion PV Sindhu kept alive India's hopes of a first-ever Olympic gold in badminton by reaching the semifinals of the women's singles with a straight-game win over World No.5 Japanese Akane Yamaguchi here Friday.

The 26-year-old Indian, who won a silver in the 2016 Rio Olympics, defended brilliantly and rode on her attacking all-round game to out-class the fourth seeded Yamaguchi 21-13, 22-20 in a 56-minute quarterfinal clash at the Musashino Forest Plaza here.

Yamaguchi had scripted a late comeback in the second game, grabbing two game points but Sindhu ensured there were no hiccups, registering her 12th win over Yamaguchi in 19 meetings. She had last beaten the Japanese at the All England Championship in March this year.

Sindhu will next face second seed Chinese Taipei's Tai Tzu Ying, who edged out Thailand's

Ratchanok Intanon 14-21, 21-18, 21-18 in another quarterfinal match. China's Chen Yu Fei and He Bing Jiao are the other two semifinalists.

The World No.1 Tai Tzu, whom coach Park Tae-sang considers as Sindhu's biggest rival, has an overwhelming 13-7 advantage against the Indian.

Sindhu, who has lost to Tai Tzu in last three occasions, however, has managed to outwit the Taiwanese shuttler in important events such as the 2016 Rio Games, 2019 World Championships and 2018 World Tour Finals. In the match, Yamaguchi tried to play an aggressive game but Sindhu held her ground and used her good anticipation and reach to stay ahead. The Indian unleashed her attacking returns whenever there was a chance to put pressure on her rival.

The opening game saw Sindhu quickly erase a 2-4 deficit to level the scores at 6-6. Yamaguchi committed few unforced errors to allow the Indian to move ahead and enter the interval at 11-7 with a cross court smash.

Sindhu used her fore court well and took charge of the net. The duo played some good rallies at a good pace but Yamaguchi couldn't find an answer in the exchanges. The Japanese was also too erratic.

Sindhu eventually produced a winner near the net and grabbed the first game when Yamaguchi sent long a return-to-serve.

Sindhu dictated the pace and seemed in total control, starting the second game with two superb smashes for a 11-6 lead at the break. However, Yamaguchi managed to pocket eight of the next nine points from 8-13 to open up a slender one-point lead at 16-15 for the first time.

Yamaguchi grabbed two game points, fuelling hope of a turnaround but Sindhu responded with authority. She unleashed a straight-down-the-line smash and then set up another point with a smash and a great follow-up to make it 20-20.

Another precise half smash down the line gave her a match point and she screamed her heart out in joy after Yamaguchi found the net next.

**INDIA'S SCHEDULE**

**ARCHERY:** Atanu Das vs Takaharu Furukawa (Japan) in Men's Individual Pre-Quarterfinals Match: **7:18am IST**

**ATHLETICS:** Seem Punia in Women's Discus Throw Qualification – Group A: **6:00am IST**; Kamalpreet Kaur in Women's Discus Throw Qualification – Group B: **7:25am IST**; Sreeshankar in Men's Long Jump Qualification – Group B: **3:40pm IST**.

**BADMINTON:** PV Sindhu vs Tai Tzu-Ying (Chinese Taipei) in Women's Singles Semifinal Match: **3:20pm IST**.

**BOXING:** Amit Panghal vs Yurberjen Herney Martinez Rivas (Colombia) in Men's 52kg Round of 16 bout: **7:30am IST**; Pooja Rani vs Li Qian (China) in Women's 75kg quarterfinal bout: **3:36pm IST**.

**GOLF:** Anirban Lahiri & Udayan Mane in Men's Individual Stroke Play Round 2, which was suspended Friday: **04:15am IST**.

**HOCKEY:** India vs South Africa in Women's Pool A Match: **8:45am IST**.

Sailing: KC Ganapathy and Varun Thakkar in Men's Skiff 49er Race 10, 11 and 12: **8:35am IST**.

**SHOOTING:** Anjum Moudgil and Tejaswini Sawant in Women's 50m Rifle 3 Positions Qualification: **8:30am IST**.

## Dutee performs poorly; Sable breaks nat'l record

**TOKYO:** Avinash Sable shattered his own 3000m steeplechase national record but failed to qualify for the final while sprinter Dutee Chand produced a below-par performance to make an exit from the Tokyo Olympics here Friday.

MP Jabir also brought up the rear in men's 400m hurdles while the mixed 4x400m relay team finished eighth and last in the second heat race as the Indians made a disappointing start to their athletics campaign.

The 26-year-old Sable failed to qualify for the final despite clocking a better time than the top three in another heat race. He clocked 8

minutes 18.12 seconds in heat number 2 to finish seventh and better his earlier national record of 8:20.20 that he had set during the Federation Cup in March.

But he was unlucky to miss the finals cut as only the top-three finishers from each heat gain automatic entry. The top-three from heat number 3 ran in slower time than him.

Fifteen athletes – the best three in each of the three heats and the next six fastest athletes across all the qualifying heats – qualify for the final. Sable ended seventh next best across all the qualifying heats and 13th overall.

Dutee was nowhere near her best as she clocked 11.54 seconds in 100m, well outside her national record of 11.17 seconds – also her season's best – to finish seventh in heat 5 and 45th overall out of 54 competitors.

The first three in each of the seven heats and the next three fastest advance to the semifinals. The 25-year-old had qualified for the Olympics on the basis of world rankings, unable to breach the automatic qualification mark of 11.15 seconds.

She has also qualified for the Olympics in the 200m race on the basis of world rankings.

Jabir was disappointing as he ended seventh and last in heat number 5, clocking 50.77 seconds for an overall 33rd position out of 36 competitors. The 25-year-old Indian has a personal best of 49.13 seconds.

In the evening session, the Indian quartet of Muhammad Anas Yahiya, Ravathi Veeramani, Subha Venkatesan and Rajiv Arokia clocked season's best timing of 3:19.93 but it was good enough for a bottom-place finish in heat 2. The Indian team finished 13th and last overall while two teams – USA and Dominical Republic – were disqualified.

## Country in awe after Lovlina assures medal

*India rejoiced after Lovlina Borgohain Friday assured the country of its second medal at the Tokyo Olympics as the young pugilist (69kg) upstaged former World Champion Nien-Chin Chen of Chinese Taipei to enter the semifinals...*

**ANURAG THAKUR:** Lovlina has entered the Semi Finals ! Well done Lovlina Borgohain, what an amazing news for India to wake up to today! We've been glued to the tv screen watching you in action

**AVINABH BINDRA:** Super super show by Lovlina Borgohain! Two more to go! Go for gold.

**HIMANTA BISAW SARMA (ASSAM CM):** This is a BIG punch. You continue to make us proud Lovlina Borgohain and keep India's flag high & shining at Tokyo Olympics 2020. Well done.

**KIREN RIJUJ:** India is confirmed of 2nd Olympics medal. What a lovely Boxing from Lovlina. Lovlina Borgohain has reached semifinals and looking for Gold medal in Tokyo 2020 Olympics!

**YOGESHWAR DUTT:** What a day!! One more Medal confirmation win by Indian Women proud.

**HEENA SIDHU:** Medal confirmed for Lovlina!!!! Great show!!! Amazing amazing amazing.

**VIREN RASQUINHA:** This means everything!! Keep going. Don't be satisfied with this.

**JAY SHAH:** Congratulations Lovlina Borgohain on beating former World Champion Chen Nien-Chin and entering the semis of the women's welterweight category. First place medal Let's go for Gold, Lovlina!

**JOYDEEP KARMAKAR:** Still hold my congratulatory message! But what courage and deliberation Lovlina Borgohain.

### Zverev ends Djoko's Golden Slam dream

**TOKYO:** There will be no Golden Slam for Novak Djokovic. The top-ranked Serb lost to Alexander Zverev of Germany 6-1, 3-6, 1-6 Friday in the semifinals of the tennis tournament at the Tokyo Olympics. Djokovic was attempting to become the first man to win all four Grand Slam tournaments and Olympic gold in the same year. He won the Australian Open, the French Open and Wimbledon this year and needed the Olympic and US Open titles to complete the collection. Steffi Graf in 1988 remains the only tennis player to achieve the Golden Slam. Zverev's opponent in the gold-medal match will be Karen Khachanov.

### Manu, Rahi crash out

**TOKYO:** Indian shooters Manu Bhaker and Rahi Sarnobat crashed out of the 25m pistol qualifications (rapid fire stage) as both finished outside the top 8 at the Tokyo Olympics here Friday. It means the pistol shooters will return home empty-handed for the second straight time at the Olympics. Bhaker shot 290 in the rapid fire stage of the qualifications for a total of 582, a day after scoring 290 in precision at the Akasa Shooting Range, while the more experienced Sarnobat managed 573 (287+286).

**Deepika bows out**

**TOKYO:** World No.1 archer Deepika Kumari's quest for an Olympic

medal ended in heartbreak for the third time as she surrendered tamente to Korean top seed An San in straight sets in the quarterfinals here Friday. Deepika misfired four 7s as An, who had broken a 25-year-old Olympic record en route to topping the ranking round, wrapped up the women's individual match 6-0 in less than six minutes. For the three-time Olympian Deepika, this was yet another heartbreaking outing at the Games. In the 2016 Rio Olympics, she had lost in the pre-quarterfinals, while at her maiden Olympics in London, where she had gone as a number one ranked player, she had crashed out in the opening round.

### South African sets world swim record

**TOKYO:** South Africa's Tatjana Schoenmaker was the star of the day, setting the first individual swimming world record at the Tokyo Olympics. The mighty Americans? For the first time in the meet, they spent the entire session Friday watching others win gold. Schoenmaker, a 24-year-old South African, won the women's 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 2:19.11 set by Denmark's Rikke Moller Pedersen at the 2013 world championships in Barcelona. It was the third world record at the Tokyo Aquatics Centre, with the first two coming in women's relays.



Skipper Rani Rampal hugs scorer Navneet Kaur in delight after the latter struck the winner against Ireland, Friday

### MEN END POOL ROUND WITH WIN

**TOKYO:** The Indian men's hockey team registered a comprehensive 5-3 win over hosts Japan to cement its quarterfinal spot with a second-place finish in Pool A at the Olympics here Friday. Already assured of a quarterfinal berth going into the match, India scored through Gurjant Singh (17th and 56th minutes), Harmanpreet Singh (13th), Shamsheer Singh (34th) and Nilakanta Sharma (51st) to register their third consecutive win at the Oi Hockey Stadium. By virtue of this win, India finished second in Pool A behind Australia with four victories out of five Games.

## OFC rope in Javi Hernandez Deliberate ploy to disturb: Mary Kom

POST NEWS NETWORK

**Bhubaneswar, July 30:** Odisha FC Friday announced the signing of attacking midfielder Javi Hernandez ahead of the eighth edition of the Indian Super League (ISL). A source close to the club said that the Spaniard has signed a one-year deal and an extension would be on cards.

After his youth career at CDF Pizarrales, Salamanca and Real Madrid, the Spaniard made his senior debut for Real Madrid B. Before playing for various Spanish clubs, the 32-year-old footballer joined Romanian professional club ACS Poli Timisoara.

He also played professional football in Poland and Azerbaijan before signing for ATK in 2019. After winning the title with the Kolkata-based side, he was retained by the newly-



formed ATK Mohun Bagan in 2020. Javi has an experience of playing 37 matches in the ISL and even scored two goals in the final of the 2019-20 season against Chennaiyin FC. He has also represented the Spanish U-19 national team.

"Javi is a great addition to the squad, he is going to give us work

in the midfield, and balance to the team. The most important thing is that even playing in midfield, he is a player who can score goals due to his physical capabilities and his good technique," said head coach Kiko Ramirez.

"He is a good player to play different styles of football. From set-pieces, he is a great kicker, both for direct scoring and for strategy plays. He is loved in the teams where he has been for his work ethic, for his enthusiasm, and for his character."

Javi, on his part, said, "I am really excited to join Odisha FC and very happy to continue playing in India. I am looking forward to meeting my teammates and we will definitely work hard and play well to make sure that we have a wonderful season ahead. I want to make the fans proud."

**TOKYO:** The absence of their own and the country's name on some Indian boxers' vests in the Olympics has caused a small furore here after the legendary MC Mary Kom alleged that she was forced to change minutes before her last 16 bout without proper explanation from the organisers.

Mary Kom Thursday and Lovlina Borgohain Friday fought in uniforms which neither featured their names nor identified their countries at the back of their vests.

"It was a bit unsettling that they asked me to change my uniform just five minutes before the bout. In fact, at that time my name had been announced," Mary Kom told this agency, still agitated about the 2-3 pre-quarterfinal loss in which she won two of the three rounds but fell short by a point in the final



scoreline.

"I think it was deliberate action to disturb me because I had fought my first round with similar gear with Mary Kom and India written

on it," she said.

A conversation with Indian Boxing's High Performance Director Santiago Nieva and a look at the International Olympic Committee's rules threw some light at what exactly might have caused this little storm in a tea cup.

"The boxers are allowed to wear their last names or the given name on vest, so if it was just Kom at the back, there would not have been a problem or just Mangte would have been fine too. She was not allowed to wear Mary Kom. Same with Lovlina, she needed to have Borgohain on the back," Nieva explained.

"But it is no problem, we have got new vests for her and she will wear the new one in the semifinal," he said. "For those who don't use their full names, it is no problem like

Pooja (Rani) and Satish (Kumar)." Mary Kom's grievance was about being asked to change just minutes before the bout and not being told clearly about the rules, which seems to be quite apparent from the fact that she was not stopped from competing in the opening round despite her vest not adhering to laid-down specifications.

The IOC rules on uniforms state that "the athlete's name (Preferred Family Name) may be included on the back of the vest" and the national flag or the National Olympic Committee emblem is "permitted only in one area per vest, shorts and skirt."

During the Games, the Boxing Task Force has its Equipment's Check Table with an official Equipment Manager to ensure compliance with rules.