



GREAT RESPONSIBILITY

Actor Lara Dutta Bhupathi says playing former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi is an opportunity of a lifetime

LEISURE P2



NEW MORATORIUM

Under pressure from Democrats, US health authorities declare new moratorium on tenant evictions until October

INTERNATIONAL P10



NEERAJ IN FINALS

Neeraj Chopra becomes first Indian javelin thrower to enter the finals at Olympic Games with a throw of 86.65m

SPORTS P12

RAVI SEALS SILVER

Dahiya assured of medal after becoming 2nd Indian wrestler to qualify for Olympic finals



RAVI DAHIYA

- ▶ Dahiya 4th Indian wrestler to get a medal at the Olympics
- ▶ India's 1st wrestling medal came in 1952 when KD Jadhav won bronze at Helsinki (1952)
- ▶ Sushil Kumar (bronze in 2008 and silver in 2012) and Yogeshwar Dutt (2012) are the other Indian wrestlers to win Olympic medals

INDIAN WOMEN TO PLAY FOR BRONZE

TOKYO: A brave Indian women's hockey team put up a gritty performance but it was not enough to secure a maiden Olympic final berth as they lost 1-2 to World No.2 Argentina in a hard-fought semifinal of the ongoing Tokyo Games here Wednesday. They will now fight for the bronze medal against Great Britain in the third-fourth place play-off match Friday. Gurjit Kaur gave India the lead in the second minute, but Argentina hit back through goals in the 18th and 36th minute to emerge winners. **MORE P12**

AGENCIES

Chiba (Japan), August 4: Wrestler Ravi Dahiya was in sensational form as he stormed into the final of the 57kg category here Wednesday. In the process Dahiya ensured at least a second silver medal for India at the Tokyo Games and also became the second Indian wrestler after Sushil Kumar to qualify for the finals of an Olympic event. Compatriot Deepak Punia (86kg)

however, was left to fight for the bronze medal after he lost his semifinal bout to American David Morris Taylor. Dahiya looked down and out in the semifinals against Kazakhstan's Nurislam Sanayev, but turned the bout around in a sensational manner with only a minute remaining. The fourth-seeded Dahiya trailed 2-9 after Sanayev applied a few 'fity' (leg lace). However, as the clock ticked away, Dahiya regrouped and got hold of his rival with a double leg attack that resulted in a 'victory by fall'.

"I had no business conceding that much lead against Sanayev. I am not happy with it. I have beaten Sanayev twice before, so I knew I could pull it off. I was assured inside, but I made it a close fight. That was pretty bad of me," informed Dahiya. "I still have some unfinished business to do. I came with a target here and that is not complete yet (winning gold)," he added.

It was revealed after the fight that Sanayev had bit Dahiya on his right bicep during the fight. "He is okay, even though it is painful. However, he will be ready for the final tomorrow (Thursday), the official added.

Dahiya however, has a daunting task in hand. In the final, the Indian will face reigning World Champion Russian Zaur Uguev. He had lost to Uguev in the finals of the 2019 World Championships.

Dahiya won both his previous contests on technical superiority en route to the final. He defeated Colombia's Tigreros Urbano (13-2) and beat Bulgaria's Georgi Valentinov (14-4). While Dahiya was a live-wire on the mat, Punia (86kg) made good use of a favourable draw to reach the semifinals but lost to the formidable Taylor. He will now fight for bronze Thursday against the winner of the repechage round between Myles Amine and Ali Shabanau.

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Rules relaxed for outsiders

Negative reports, vax certificates not required

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: People coming to Odisha from other states will no longer be required to produce Covid-19 negative reports or final vaccination certificates as the state government has removed the restrictions that had been imposed to check the 2nd wave of Covid-19. An order to this effect was announced Wednesday by Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Pradeep Kumar Jena.

Orders regarding restrictions on entry of people into Odisha from other states by producing Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) or RT-

PCR negative report or final vaccination certificate etc are hereby withdrawn, the SRC order said.

Following the outbreak of the second Covid-19 wave, the Odisha government had made it mandatory for people entering the state to show their Covid-19 negative report or a complete vaccination certificate from April 12.

The restriction was imposed for all modes of travel including trains, roads surface, air and waterways. As per earlier guidelines, a person entering the state without any one of the two would have to undergo a seven-day mandatory institutional or home quarantine.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Yes, we don't provide our sportspersons basic facilities but we can always motivate them with my speeches!

Technical colleges to restart August 9

BHUBANESWAR: All technical educational institutions including engineering colleges in Odisha will reopen from August 9, the Skill Development and Technical Education department said Wednesday. These institutions had been closed due to the outbreak of the second wave of Covid-19. The educational institutions - technical universities, diploma, ITI, degree and polytechnic colleges - will resume for physical classroom teaching for final year students in the first phase with adherence to Covid-19 protocols. All the hostels of the educational institutions will also reopen for benefit of students, it added. **P4**

14 more RT-PCR test labs in Odisha soon

PREPARATIONS IN PLACE TO TACKLE 3RD COVID-19 WAVE, SAYS GOVT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: The Odisha government has decided to set up 14 new RT-PCR laboratories across the state. This information was given by the director of Health Services, Dr Bijay Mohapatra here Wednesday. He said that with the possibility of a third Covid-19 wave still looming large the government has planned for new labs to speed up testing process across the state.

Speaking to reporters, the Director, Health Services, Dr Bijay Mohapatra said that people having covid symptoms won't have to visit far off places to get themselves tested for the infection.

"The government has decided to set up 14 more RT-PCR laboratories in the state. Almost all the districts in Odisha will have dedicated and sophisticated testing centres. This will speed up the testing process. Also people with Covid-19 symptoms will not have to travel far if the new laboratories come up," Dr Mohapatra told reporters. The top health official also stated



Almost all districts in Odisha will have dedicated and sophisticated testing centres. This will speed up identifying positive patients

DR BIJAY MOHAPATRA

that the government is trying its best to tackle a possible third wave. Tracing, testing and surveillance are the key tools to prevent any wave of a pandemic, he added.

"Proper treatment of critical Covid-19 patients is another method to check the pandemic. The government has made elaborate arrangements for handling

of such patients, before the arrival of the next wave of Covid-19," informed the health official.

"The Odisha government is giving priority to vaccination. The pace of inoculation however is dependent on the availability of vaccines," Dr Mohapatra added.

The health official also clarified regarding the large number of fatalities that are being reported daily. He said that the figures being given by the Health department is based on old audited reports. The number of exact deaths can be arrived at only after the pandemic subsides, Dr Mohapatra pointed out. Odisha reported 66 new fatalities Wednesday.

Srimandir reopens Aug 16

TEMPLE TO REMAIN CLOSED DURING WEEKEND SHUTDOWN IN PURI DISTRICT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: After remaining closed for more than three months due to Covid-19, the Srimandir in Puri will reopen for devotees from August 16 with strict adherence to Covid-19 protocols. The decision to reopen the shrine was taken at a meeting attended by officials of the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), Chhatisa Nijog and district administration Wednesday evening. The darshan of the sibling deities - Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath will begin 7.00am and continue till 8.00pm amid. Only residents of Puri town

- ▶ Devotees must carry RT-PCR negative reports or vaccine certificates
- ▶ First 5 days only Puri devotees will be allowed to visit Srimandir

will be allowed to visit the temple August 16 to 20. The temple will remain closed due to the weekend shutdown in Puri district. From August 23, devotees from all parts of India will be allowed to enter the temple, SJTA chief administrator Krishan Kumar told reporters.

All visitors must carry RT-PCR negative reports obtained 96 hours before entry or the final vaccina-

tion certificate, Kumar said. Devotees should also have identity proof and wear masks while entering the temple. They will also have to sanitise their hands.

Kumar also informed devotees will not be allowed to have 'Mahaprasad' on the temple premises. Offerings of flowers, tulsi (basil leaves) and similar items will not be allowed inside the temple as per the government's guidelines.

Kumar told reporters that all servitors, officials of the SJTA and district administration who took part in the Rath Yatra festival will have to undergo mandatory Covid-19 testing once more which will begin August 8.

Lockdown if rules broken: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik warned people that they should continue to remain on guard to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and also to avoid a third wave of the pandemic. The Odisha CM stated that lockdown restrictions were being eased as the number of cases has remained stable for a period now.

Patnaik categorically said that if the number of cases starts shooting up, the administration will not hes-

itate to implement rigorous lockdown again. "Yes we know it will affect the livelihood of many, but if people don't follow rules we will be forced to impose lockdown again," Patnaik said in a televised speech. Patnaik cautioned that the threat of the Covid-19 virus is still looming large and some countries have already been hit by the third wave. Even though the number of Covid-19 cases in the state Capital has remained stable for the past few days, people should not let their guard down, asserted Patnaik.

Indigenous Vikrant ventures into sea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 4: The much-awaited sea trials of India's first indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) 'Vikrant', the largest and most complex warship built in the country, began Wednesday. It is a development which was termed 'historic' by the Indian Navy.

With the launch of the sea trials of the aircraft carrier, India has joined a select group of countries having the capability to indigenously design, build and integrate a state-of-the-art aircraft carrier, the Navy said.

The 40,000 tonne aircraft carrier set off on its maiden sea trials, 50 years after its namesake played a major role in the 1971 war.

The aircraft carrier has been built at a cost of around ₹23,000 crore. It is expected to be commissioned into the Indian Navy in the second half of next year after it completes the aviation and other trials.

"It is a proud and historic day for India as the reincarnated Vikrant (IAC) sails for her maiden sea trials today (Wednesday) in the 50th year of her illustrious predecessor's key role in the victory during the 1971 war," Indian Navy spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal told reporters.

The aircraft carrier is around 262 metres long and 62 metres wide, and has been built by the Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)

India keen to end Chinese supremacy

NAVY TO PARTICIPATE IN WAR DRILLS IN SOUTH CHINA SEA WITH QUAD NATIONS

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 4: India is increasing its presence in the South China Sea. The Indian government will be sending a naval task force to the South China Sea sometime this month to build on security and military ties with friendly countries, officials in the know of things said Wednesday. This move signals India's intention to play a more significant regional role to counter China.

Initially, the Armed Forces were always wary of antagonising China. However, the mood has changed since the Galwan Valley clash in Ladakh last year. The government has since become closer to the United States to nullify the Chinese threat in the South China Sea region.

Four ships including a guided missile destroyer and a missile frigate will be deployed for a two-month period to South East Asia, the South China Sea and the western Pacific, the Indian Navy said in a statement Wednesday.

"The deployment of the Indian Navy ships seeks to underscore the operational reach, peaceful presence and solidarity with



friendly countries towards ensuring good order in the maritime domain..." The Navy said in the statement.

The South China Sea has be-

come one of the many flashpoints in the testy relationship between China and the United States. Washington has time and again rejected what it calls unlawful ter-

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	54369.77 ↑ 546.41
NIFTY	16258.80 ↑ 128.00
DOLLAR	74.34 ↓ ₹0.10
EURO	88.19 ↓ ₹0.33
GOLD	₹48,150 ↑ ₹333
SILVER	₹67,772 ↓ ₹142

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	35.8°C	35.5°C
TEMP. MIN	26.5°C	26.0°C
Humidity	72%	71%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light rain very likely	



CAMILA CABELLO'S 'CINDERELLA' IS A FEMINIST RE-TELLING OF A CLASSIC

The trailer of actress Camila Cabello's upcoming film *Cinderella* was released Tuesday. As opposed to the story in the fairytale told about a damsel in distress, this version has a contemporary twist with the protagonist aiming to be independent and ambitious.

ROBBIE NOT TAKING A BREAK FROM PLAYING HARLEY QUINN

Actress Margot Robbie has dismissed the prospect of taking a break from playing Harley Quinn. The 31-year-old actress recently suggested that she wanted to step away from playing the DC Extended Universe (DCEU) villain in three movies but has now said that she is ready to play Harley on the big screen.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today will be as agreeable as any day can be. You are satisfied with what you have, says Ganesha. Besides, you have already planned on what you desire and are moving towards it. A date of romantic nature may turn out to be interesting or it may lead to a controversy; you have to decide on it.

TAURUS
You can expect a pleasant, comfortable day at the office, today, so says Ganesha. You will be carrying out your work cheerfully and effortlessly. You could, later in the evening, have a strong urge to go out for dinner with your family and friends.

GEMINI
You know where you are headed, and will redouble your efforts to reach your goals today. You are full of energy and enthusiasm, which helps you to achieve all your targets. You will receive unexpected gains owing to your hard work.

CANCER
You will focus on financial matters and plan accordingly. Compared to expenses, you will save more. A beneficial day for cashiers, money lenders and petty traders. Ganesha counsels hard work to achieve success.

LEO
You will be able to influence people with your co-operative and accommodating attitude today. You will have discussions on various topics with people who come into contact with you. You will also come into contact with people who share the same mental wavelength as you do, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Motivation will remain high today, says Ganesha. Your talents and skills make you stand out as a superb artist. Words will glow if you let your creativity flow, and should you decide to dance or sing, you'll set the stage on fire today. Cultivate hobbies in performing arts and literature, advises Ganesha.

LIBRA
Ganesha says today you will try to be adept in your favorite subject. Today you will be buying antique artistic things too. If there are any legal proceeding going on then the results will be in your favor. You shall be a success in everything that you touch today.

SCORPIO
Thank Ganesha that you have the grace to handle pressure at work, because today, you are going to be bogged down with a lot of work pressure. By the end of the day, try some stress bursting activities like yoga, meditation or listening to soft music.

SAGITTARIUS
You are caught in a whirlpool of emotions, predicts Ganesha. You may come across many ups and downs today. However, nothing seems to deter you from your determination and dedication towards work.

CAPRICORN
By and large, your life today will be dull. But, there isn't something unfavourable or negative about it, assures Ganesha, as the planetary movements signal a change, probably a positive one, happening in the near future. So, keep your chin up and get ready for a better tomorrow.

AQUARIUS
You are armed with good communication skills, and like always, it will come to your aide today, too. There is one problem though. You are not clear about your emotions and it may make your arms blunt, foresees Ganesha. Make sure that you are able to identify your feelings and don't make any disastrous decisions based on that confusion.

PISCES
Your energy and enthusiasm will know no bounds today, as everything seems to fall into place, seemingly on its own. You will blaze a new trail at the workplace. Certain tough calls may leave you off-balance momentarily, but you will come out of it with flying colours.

'Playing Indira Gandhi an opportunity of a lifetime'



New Delhi: Actress Lara Dutta Bhupathi is all set to take the audience by surprise as she plays Indira Gandhi in the espionage drama *Bell Bottom*, which is slated for an August 19 theatrical release.

Calling it an opportunity of a lifetime, she said it was a great responsibility when you portray someone who's an iconic figure like Mrs Gandhi. It was very important to get her body language right," the 46-year-old actress said at the *Bell Bottom* trailer launch.

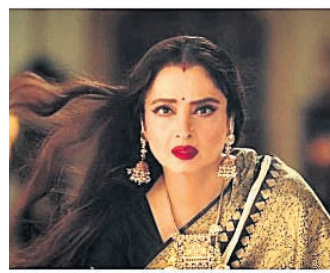
The film, incidentally, is set in 1984, the year that saw Operation Bluestar as well as Mrs Gandhi's assassination. "The film is about a hijack that took place during Mrs Gandhi's tenure," the actress said, describing the outline of the plot. "Given the dramatic events that were unfolding, she was extremely centred. It was important therefore to portray her in that way. As a result, a lot of homework and research went into the role. It was an opportunity I am very thankful for," added Lara. IANS

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Rekha's ageless look in TV promo

Mumbai: Iconic actress Rekha can be seen with her poise and perfect portrayal of emotions in the newly-launched promo of the show *Ghum Hai Kisikey Pyaar Mein*.

In her intense voice, she tells the upcoming twist in the story of Sai (Ayesha Singh) and Virat (Neil Bhatt) in the promo.

This serial brings out a love triangle between Patralekha (Aishwarya Sharma), Sai (Ayesha Singh) and Virat (Neil Bhatt) and as a new turn is about to come in their relationship, the show has launched this promo.

Producer Rajesh Ram Singh shares about the same and says: "With this upcoming twist on the show, we will be offering our audience another perspective and a peek into the emotional turmoil of our central characters. The promo has also been conceptualised after a lot of thought and Rekha ji has simply made it magical with her presence and top-notch performance."

Ghum Hai Kisikey Pyaar Mein airs on Star Plus. IANS

TANNISHTHA JOINS CARTEL CAST

Mumbai: Actress Tannishtha Chatterjee who is known for her films like *Angry Indian Goddesses*, *Parched*, and *UnIndian* opposite Brett Lee, has joined the cast of upcoming action-drama *Cartel*.

She plays a pivotal role of Romila who is an author; opposite Madhu Bhau (played by Jitendra Joshi) in the series *Cartel*. The actress will be performing a pole dance in one of the sequences.

While speaking about her character, Tannishtha quips: "Romila is a very fiery character. She owns her body, her mind, and her sexuality. But behind all her outward strength, there is a hidden pain of non-acceptance. This complex mixture was what intrigued me to play

Romila. I was really interested in playing someone that most people would not see me as. Romila is a very different character than my real personality and yes, the pole dancing was one of the highlights for me as well."

Cartel is streaming from August 20 on ALTBalaji. IANS



Film fest to showcase scientists' role in India's freedom struggle



THE BRITISH BROUGHT SCIENCE TO STRENGTHEN THEIR RULE IN INDIA. HOWEVER, THIS HELPED IN FORTIFYING THE SWADESHI SENTIMENT, SAYS FORMER BARC SCIENTIST JAYANT SAHASRABUDHE

Swatantrata Ka Amrit Mahotsav Ka Vigyan Filmstov, a science film festival to highlight the role of Indian scientists, science communicators and teachers in the Indian Independence movement will be held between August 13 and 15 to mark India's 75th year of Independence.

This film festival will be organised by Vigyan Prasar, an autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Science and Technology (S&T) that is dedi-

cated to science communication popularisation for over three decades. Vigyan Prasar is jointly organising this film festival with Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA), an NGO, CSIR-NIS-CPR and Films Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, government of India.

Documentaries, docu-drama, animation, short videos (up to 60 minutes) made in the last five years will be showcased in the Swatantrata Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Ka Vigyan Filmstov. The themes chosen are - role of scientists in India's freedom movement, and Science and Technology in India during 1947 or pre-independence.

The film festival is part of the year-long festivities that would be dedicated to those scientists, science communicators and teachers who struggled and sacrificed their personal gains and careers against the tyranny of the British during the Indian Independence movement.

"The film festival is a part of the year-long celebration, where Vigyan Prasar will showcase the involvement of Indian scientists in the country's freedom movement. From the digital standpoint this festival will bring to the Indian populace a web portal - www.swavigyan75.in - which has been designed to act as a single access point to all the information on the Mahotsav," said Nimish Kapoor, senior scientist with Vigyan Prasar and coordinator for the

film festival. Keeping in mind the pandemic situation, the film festival would be held virtually and would be available for viewers on Vigyan Prasar's social media platforms.

The films will also receive awards. The first prize will fetch the winner ₹1,50,000 with a trophy and certificate; the second prize winner will get ₹1,00,000 with trophy and certificate while the third prize winner will get ₹75,000 with trophy and certificate. AGENCIES

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

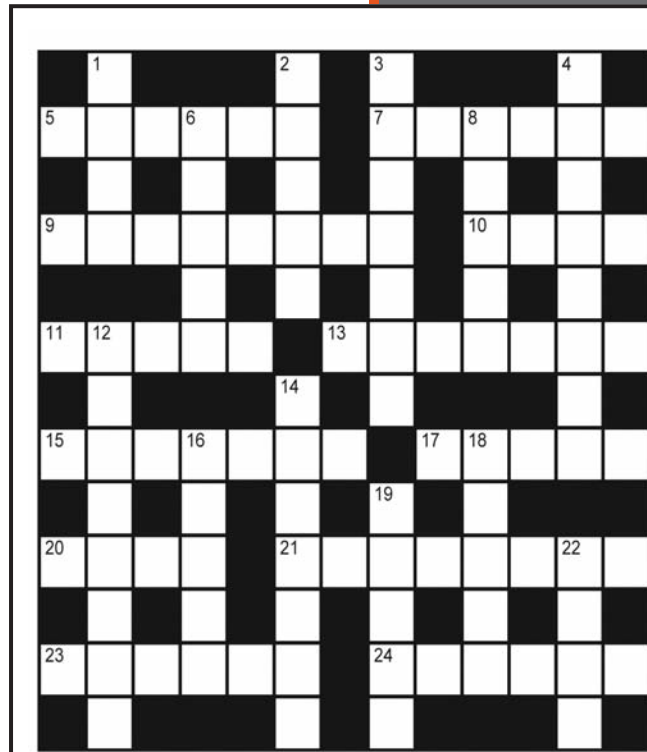


BREVITY



FUN post

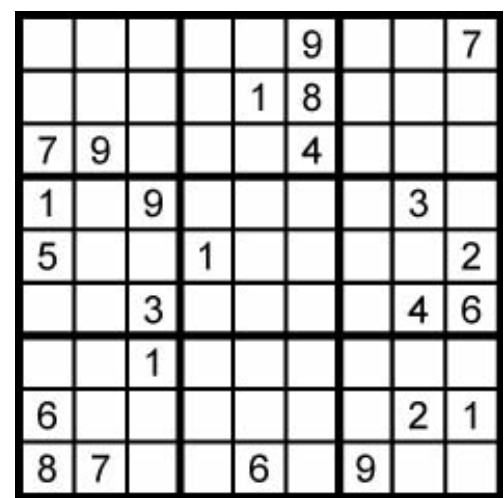
CROSSWORD



- Copyright ©2021 PuzzleJunction.com
- Across**
- 5 Wine starters
 - 7 Gad about
 - 9 Omit (5,3)
 - 10 Sharp metal spike
 - 11 Small biting flies
 - 13 Llama relatives
 - 15 Acquires
 - 17 Cheapskate
 - 20 Greek salad cheese
 - 21 Stop signal (3,5)
 - 23 Praying insect
 - 24 News report
- Down**
- 1 Scottish hillside
 - 2 Fancy tie
 - 3 Yakety-yak
 - 4 Former squeeze (3,5)
 - 6 Come about
 - 8 Molten rock
 - 12 Duke, for one
 - 14 Entrance
 - 16 Separately
 - 18 Trojan War epic
 - 19 Fragrance
 - 22 Shacks

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



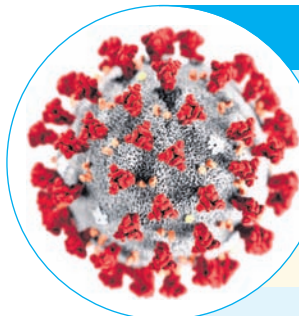
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



PLEA FOR JOBS

Law students of Utkal University hold a demonstration at the varsity gate in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday, seeking annual recruitment of assistant public prosecutors in state



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	20,06,11,394	18,07,89,118	42,65,093
India	3,17,69,132	3,09,33,022	4,25,757
Odisha	9,82,181	9,63,718	6,168

Kendrapara Road rly stn not in Kendrapara, Anubhav tells Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 4: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Anubhav Mohanty Wednesday urged the Centre to launch passenger train services in Kendrapara, his constituency.

While speaking during the Question Hour in the Lok Sabha, the BJD MP said he had urged the Centre to launch passenger train services in Kendrapara while participating in the Budget Session of the Parliament.

BJD MP Anubhav Mohanty urged the Centre to run passenger trains in Kendrapara as that will boost the economic development of the region

The people of Kendrapara have been demanding passenger trains for the last many years. "The Centre told me that the Kendrapara Road railway station is just 5 km away from Cuttack. So, passenger train services to Kendrapara Road are not operationally feasible now," Mohanty said.

However, Mohanty told the House that Kendrapara Road railway station doesn't fall under Kendrapara district. He urged the Centre to run passenger trains for the people of the district. "Kendrapara is a district and passenger train services are still a distant dream for its people. I urge the Centre to start passenger train services in Kendrapara as that will boost economic development in the district," Mohanty said.

51,968 forest infernos in state from Nov to June



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 4: The Union government has informed the Rajya Sabha that Odisha has reported maximum number of forest fire incidents during non-monsoon months - November 2020 to June 2021.

The Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Ashwini Kumar Choubey informed the Rajya Sabha that the Forest Survey of India (FSI) had sent 3,45,989 forest fire alerts during November 2020 to June 2021 across the country. As many as 51,968 forest fire alerts were sent to Odisha during the non-monsoon months.

The ministry further said that the state had received 10,602 forest fire alerts from November 2019 to June 2020 and 19,159 alerts from November 2018 to June 2019. The Union government had released Rs 4.55 crore to Odisha under the

Forest Fire Prevention & Management Scheme, the data revealed.

Choubey also said that the responsibility of forest fire prevention and management lies primarily with the states. The minister, however, said the Union government supports the efforts of the states in prevention and control of forest fire by providing financial assistance.

"The Union government supports the efforts of the states by providing financial assistance for various forest fire prevention and management measures such as modern tools for fire extinguishing, use of communication and information technology, creation and maintenance of fire lines in forest areas, engagement of fire watchers, creation of water storage structures in forest areas, strengthening of forest infrastructure, procurement of firefighting equipment, soil and moisture conservation

- Forest Survey of India had sent 3,45,989 forest fire alerts during November 2020 to June 2021 across the country

- The state had received 10,602 forest fire alerts from November 2019 to June 2020 and 19,159 alerts from November 2018 to June 2019

- The Centre has constituted a national level committee under the chairmanship of Secretary of the Ministry that oversees the issues arising out of forest fire

works in high-risk areas, awareness creation, incentivizing villages/communities for protection against forest fire among others under the Centrally Sponsored Forest Fire Prevention and Management Scheme," Choubey said.

The Union government has constituted a national level committee under the chairmanship of Secretary of the Ministry that oversees the issues arising out of forest fire, Choubey said.

"The committee has advised all the states to take several measures including constituting State-level Monitoring Committee on Forest Fire, preparing State Action Plan on Forest Fire, and Fire Risk Zone mapping," he said.

NANDINI REMEMBERED



People from various walks of life including MLA Ananta Narayan Jena and activists of Utkal Sammilani and Puja Puja Sanskruti Surakhya Abhiyan pay homage to former Chief Minister Nandini Satpathy on her 15th death anniversary at LIC Square near Raj Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTOS

OSSC MEMBER'S EX-PRIVATE SECRETARY IN SOUP

ED to investigate money laundering by Biranchi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhubaneswar, August 4: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) will probe the involvement of Biranchi Narayan Sahoo, a former private secretary to a member of the Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC) member, in a money laundering case, said an official.

"We have registered a case and will investigate money laundering involved in the case," said ED joint director Madhab Chandra Mishra here Wednesday. The ED will investigate all aspects of the case, he added.

The Central agency is likely to investigate the source and the mode of monetary transaction, who have received the money, and who are the beneficiaries, sources said.



The Enforcement Directorate will investigate the source and mode of monetary transaction, who have received the money and who are the beneficiaries

At present, state Vigilance has taken Sahoo on four-day remand to interrogate him for amassing disproportionate assets worth Rs 3.51 crore, which is 268 per cent of his known sources of income, the source said.

On July 31, the anti-corruption wing of Odisha had arrested Sahoo, following which the state government sent him on compulsory retirement.

The Vigilance sleuths have traced

Rs 25 lakh cash, two double-storied buildings at Niladri Vihar, two single-storied buildings at Bhakti Vihar, 14 plots in Bhubaneswar, Puri, & Khurda, one four-wheeler, two two-wheelers, insurance deposits worth over Rs 56 lakh, and gold ornaments worth Rs 60 lakh during a raid last week.

Recruitment related applicants' admit cards and other incriminating documents have also been recovered during the raids.

Upcoming BDA park to be named after ex-Prez Kalam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: In a fitting tribute to former President of India APJ Abdul Kalam, the Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) has decided to dedicate one of its upcoming parks to the scientist-cum-statesman at Kalinga Nagar here.

Taking it to Twitter, the BDA stated that it is developing a new park in the name of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, popularly known as Missile Man of India, in K8 area of Kalinga Nagar. The park which is having an area of around 12 acres is under construction and is expected to be completed within a month.

"We have decided to dedicate a park in Kalam's name ahead of his birth anniversary. This will not only improve the recreational facility in our city, it will also rouse



The park at Kalinga Nagar having an area of around 12 acres is expected to be completed within a month

curiosity about the revered personality among the younger generation. This would be the first park that would come up in the city after former President's name," said a BDA official.

As per sources, the project is

one of the three parks that the BDA had announced in June.

As per the plan the three new parks would come up at Kalinga Nagar, Dumduma Housing Board Colony and Laxmisagar. While construction of the park at Kalinga Nagar is estimated to be Rs 15.42 lakh, the Dumduma and Laxmisagar projects are set to cost the development authority Rs 29.27 lakh and Rs 42.71 lakh respectively.

Significantly, there are more than 120 parks in the Capital city. While BDA has about 57 parks under its management, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) takes care of 63 parks. About 10 bigger parks such as Biju Patnaik, Indra Gandhi and Madusudhan Das parks are directly managed by the BDA while BMC takes care of smaller parks.

Probe ordered into question paper gaffe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: The School and Mass Education (S&ME) department Wednesday ordered a probe into the question paper goof-up that was reported during the offline annual High School Certificate (HSC) examination at a centre in Cuttack.

S&ME Minister Samir Ranjan Dash directed the department secretary to inquire into the circumstances leading to the incident and submit a report.

The minister said stringent action will be initiated against the officials concerned if any lapse is found during the inquiry.

Around 20 regular students Tuesday were reportedly given the ex-regular question papers of 2014 during the offline examination at Board High School in Cuttack. After the faux pass was brought to notice, the examination authorities took back the papers and gave the regular question papers to the students.

DELTA RANKING

Koraput asp dist tops in edu development

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 4: Koraput aspirational district in the state topped while Bolangir was placed at third position in the category of education development in the NITI Aayog's delta ranking for the month of June. Assam's Barpeta ranked second in the category among the aspirational districts.

Significantly, Chandel district in Manipur has topped the list of aspirational districts for the month of June in all development areas. Sahibganj (Jharkhand) and Firozpur (Punjab) have been ranked second and third, respectively.

The delta rankings took into account incremental progress made by over 112 aspirational districts across six developmental areas in June 2021. Health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion, skill development and basic infrastructure were the development areas that were taken into consideration for the ranking. Aspirational districts programme, launched in January 2018, aims to transform districts that have shown relatively lesser progress in key social areas.

The ranking of aspirational districts is done every month.

'Goalie' Naveen keeps guarding India's hockey post

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 4: When the Naveen Patnaik government in Odisha signed an agreement with Hockey India in 2018 to sponsor both men's and women's national teams for five years, critics wondered whether a poor state frequently ravaged by natural calamities could afford to contribute Rs 100 crore from the public exchequer to the game.

Exactly three years later, the Odisha government came out with a full-page advertisement in all national and local dailies Tuesday, announcing: "Odisha is proud to have partnered with Hockey India in this remarkable journey."

The occasion was the national men's and women's hockey teams entering the semi-finals of the Tokyo Olympics. The men's team made it to the semi-finals after 41 years, while the women's team reached the level for the very first time.

The man behind the state's sponsorship of the hockey teams, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, gave a befitting reply to critics saying, "Investment in sports is an investment in youth. Investment in youth is an investment in the future."

Noting that this mantra made Odisha focus on hockey, which is almost a way of life for the tribal population, Patnaik asserted, "The children in Sundargarh district



File photo of CM Naveen Patnaik celebrating the victory of Indian men's hockey team in the Olympics quarterfinals

learn walking by holding a hockey stick."

He said that the five-year sponsorship deal was Odisha's gift to the nation, silencing critics including opposition parties, while also raising the sponsorship amount to Rs 150 crore in five years.

"Thirty-eight champions script history in hockey, 1.3 billion Indians walk an inch taller," the Odisha government announced.

As the nation's stake in hockey escalated, Patnaik turned ecstatic and paid a standing ovation to

Team India while watching the quarterfinals of the Olympics on television. The next day, sporting a black tee-shirt and a trouser, an otherwise shy and introvert Naveen showed a 'thumbs up' gesture while celebrating the victories.

However, despite India's men's team losing to Belgium by 2-5 in the semi-finals Tuesday, 74-year-old Patnaik was not disheartened.

"Well played. Congratulate Indian Men's Hockey Team for putting up a brave fight in the #HockeySemi Finals of #Tokyo2020 against World

Champion Belgium. What they have achieved so far will inspire a generation of sportspersons. Wish them all the best for the future," Patnaik tweeted to encourage the men in blue to bag at least a bronze medal, for which India will play Germany.

Patnaik's love for hockey dates back to his childhood days in Doon School where he was the team's goalkeeper or 'goalie'.

Now, after being the Chief Minister for five consecutive terms, Patnaik has finally got the oppor-

- Naveen said that the five-year sponsorship deal was Odisha's gift to the nation, silencing critics including opposition parties, while also raising the sponsorship amount to ₹150 crore in five years.

- The state will host the men's World Cup in 2023, for which India's largest hockey stadium with 20,000 capacity is being built in Rourkela at a cost of over ₹120 crore

- The state govt is building 20 hockey training centres at a cost of ₹200 crore to enable young players to start practice on Astro-turf

tunity to fulfill his long-cherished dream to contribute to the national game, which suffered a setback after the rise of cricket in the late 1970s.

"More than at an individual level, the Chief Minister was moved by the love people of Odisha have for hockey as a game and this inspired him to promote the sport," a senior bureaucrat implementing the hockey programmes in the state said.

"Patnaik was astonished to see that irrespective of rain or sun, a hockey game always attracted a packed stadium in Odisha," he added. Incidentally, Odisha was the only state to have its own professional hockey club — Kalinga Lancers — which emerged as the champion in the last edition of Hockey India League in 2017.

The state also has a system of sports hostels where thousands of players are coached. Some of them even participated in international events.

Besides supporting the national teams since 2018 after Sahara pulled out, Odisha also hosted all major international hockey championships in the last few years, including the men's World Cup in 2018, World League in 2017, FIH Pro-league, Olympic Qualifiers and others.

The state will host the men's World Cup in 2023, for which India's largest hockey stadium with 20,000 capacity is being built in Rourkela at a cost of over Rs 120 crore.

"This will be one of the most modern hockey stadiums in the world," Patnaik said.

The state government is building 20 hockey training centres at a cost of Rs 200 crore to enable young players to start practice on Astro-turf. A high-performance centre (HPC) in partnership with the Tata Group has been operational in Kalinga Stadium for the last two years. The HPC is expected to produce a large number of national players in the coming years.

Odisha has produced India's finest hockey players. Patnaik's BJD is perhaps the only political party in the country that has made a former Indian men's hockey team captain, Dilip Tirkey, as a Rajya Sabha MP.

Physical classes at tech institutions from Aug 9

1,315 fresh cases push nCoV tally to 9,82,181

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 4: Odisha's Covid-19 tally rose to 9,82,181 Wednesday as 1,315 more people tested positive for the infection, while 66 fresh fatalities pushed the coastal state's coronavirus death toll to 6,168, a Health official said.

As many as 762 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 553 infections were detected during contact tracing, said the official, adding that the single-day positivity rate was at 2.01 per cent.

Khurda district registered the



The state has thus far tested over 1.62 crore samples for Covid-19, including 65,209 in the last 24 hours

highest number of new cases at 413, followed by Cuttack (198). Khurda also reported the highest number of fresh fatalities at 18 (including 11 in Bhubaneswar), fol-

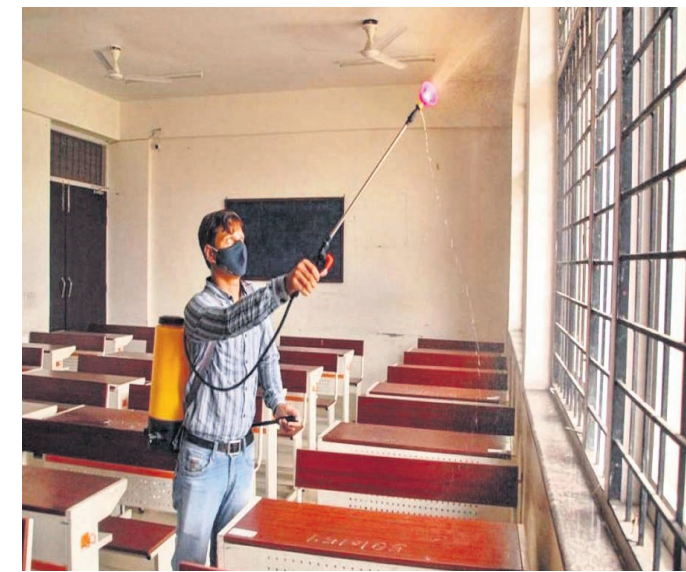
lowed by Cuttack (10) and Puri (nine). The state now has 13,872 active cases, while 9,62,088 people have recovered from the disease so far,

including 1,702 Tuesday. Fifty-three other coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities.

The state has thus far tested over 1.62 crore samples for Covid-19, including 65,209 in the last 24 hours.

The cumulative positivity rate stood at 6.02 per cent.

Meanwhile, with significant subsidence in the intensity of the second wave across Odisha, the state government issued a notification withdrawing a previous order which had made it mandatory for travellers to produce Covid negative certificates to enter the state.



PLANETARIUMS TO REOPEN AUGUST 10

BHUBANESWAR: After remaining out of bounds for visitors for around three months in the wake of the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, Pathani Samanta Planetarium here, Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Planetarium in Sambalpur's Burla and Pathani Samanta Museum in Nayagarh's Khandapara will reopen August 10, an official said Wednesday.

Pathani Samanta Planetarium director Laxmidhar Das said that the three institutions under the Science and Technology department will entertain visitors with strict adherence to Covid protocols. Visitors are required to produce final vaccination certificate to enter the premises, Das added.

This apart, screening of visitors at the entrance and proper sanitation on the premises will be ensured to keep the virus at bay. "Visitors will be asked to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour on the premises," said an official familiar with the development.

Pathani Samanta Planetarium will remain open on weekdays, while Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Planetarium and Pathani Samanta Museum will entertain visitors on all days except for Mondays.

Sources said that like cinema halls, planetariums have also been allowed to operate with 50 per cent capacity in strict adherence to Covid norms.

Notably, the City planetarium had been reopened for visitors February 2 this year after remaining shut for around a year owing to the first wave of the pandemic.

Visitors to Pathani Samanta Planetarium are required to produce final vaccination certificate to enter the premises



Regional Museum of Natural History at Acharya Vihar in Bhubaneswar welcomes visitors as it reopens after around three months, Wednesday

Heavy rain warning

Bhubaneswar: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Wednesday issued heavy rain warning for the next two days. The department has also issued warning of lightning and thunderstorm at a few places. Four districts are likely to see heavy downpour Thursday. The department, while issuing weather warning for Wednesday, said, "Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places in Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sambalpur districts."

Activists decry FL shops near Puri Swargadwar

Puri: Social activists had staged a satyagrah at Gandhi ghat demanding cancellation of the opening of Foreign Liquor (FL) shops near Swargadwar here honouring the religious faith of crores of Odias. State convener of Pujya Pooja Sansad Krushna Chandra Jagde along with a number of activists staged a Satyagrah at Gandhi ghat. The residents and devotees of this pilgrim town have also opposed the opening of five FL shops close to Swargadwar located along the beach. The state excise department through lottery selected applicants against 36 FL shops and 18 country liquor shops for the district including five FL shops very close to Swargadwar last week.

11 snatchers nabbed in 2 separate cases

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 4: The Commissionerate Police Wednesday claimed to have arrested 11 snatchers from Choudwar and Chauliganj areas under its jurisdiction.

The arrested persons have been produced in a local court, said Cuttack Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Prateek Singh.

According to the DCP, two miscreants had snatched away a gold chain from the wife of Gajendra Biswal at Gatirautapatna July 19 this year. Chauliganj police had registered a case in this regard and launched a probe.

During investigation, police came to know about the involvement of a four-member snatchers' gang in the incident. All members of the gang—Gopal Rout and Sambit Behera of Kandarpur and Sanjib Kumar Sahu & Rajib Kumar Sahu of Mangalabag in Cuttack—were arrested by Chauliganj police.

Gold ornaments weighing around 100 gram, a bike and two cell phones have been seized from the arrested snatchers. They had been booked in 33 cases at several police stations, said the DCP.

We will seek the permission of the court to take all the accused on remand for further investigation
PRATEEK SINGH | CUTTACK DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

The DCP further revealed that a miscreant had snatched away a cellphone from Kanhuacharan Rout of Tangi area December 21, last year. Choudwar police had registered a case in this regard.

The investigation had confirmed the involvement of a seven-member snatchers' gang in the incident. Choudwar police arrested Bijay Samantaray, Babuli Samantaray, Ranjan Samantaray, Sanjay Samantaray, Sanjay Pradhan and Bishnu Samantaray of Chhatia in Jajpur district and Bishwajit Sahu of Mahanga area in connection with the case.

Police have seized 20 cellphones, gold ornaments and two bikes from the gang. "We will seek the permission of the court to take all the accused on remand for further investigation," the DCP said.

BJD flays Centre's reply on PMAY-G

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Sasmit Patra Wednesday took exception to the official statement of the Ministry of Rural Development presented before the Lok Sabha recently on the issue of alleged irregularities in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Grameen) in Odisha.

The MP raised objection to the memorandum of BJD which was submitted to the ministry. Patra said that the Union Minister of State for Rural Development Sadvi Niranjan Jyoti presented her reply in the House in a partisan manner.

"She has reproduced the contents of a memorandum of BJD MPs' delegation in a partisan and biased manner which is highly deplorable. No political memorandum is ever reproduced in ministerial reply. This reply is politically motivated with the intent to willfully show the Government of Odisha in poor light," he said.

KiiT Int'l School shines in CBSE Class X exams

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: The students of KiiT International School stood out and apart, with all its students passing in First Division in the CBSE Class X exams the results of which were declared Tuesday, said the institution sources.

Forty students of the school scored of above 90 per cent (A1) while Vaibhav Kumar topped the institution with 99.4 per cent, followed by Yash Khandelwal with 99 per cent.



Congratulating the successful students, founder of KiiT & KISS Achyuta Samanta said, "The school has been posting excellent results consistently only due to proper care of students and modern teaching methodology."

He thanked Chairperson Mona Lisa Bal, Principal Sanjay Suar, teachers and staffers for their efforts that translated into success.

Bhubaneswar, August 4: The Skill Development and Technical Education department Wednesday directed for reopening of all the technical universities, engineering and professional colleges, polytechnics, diploma institutions and ITIs of the state from August 9.

In a letter to all the technical institutions of the state, the department joint secretary, Ajay Kumar Nayak, said that physical classroom teaching for final year students will commence August 9 after all precautionary measures such as complete sanitisation and disinfection of classrooms, laboratories and hostels are taken as per Covid guidelines.

As per standard operating procedure (SOP), physical classes will be held in regular manner to cover all chapters of the syllabus irrespective of coverage of some chapters through online teaching.

Physical classroom teaching will be recorded and shared with absentee students.

Teachers and students residing in containment zones are not allowed to visit universities and colleges.

Hostels will open adhering strictly to Covid-19 safety protocols and thereby ensuring safety

AS PER SOP, PHYSICAL CLASSES WILL BE HELD REGULARLY TO COVER ALL CHAPTERS OF THE SYLLABUS IRRESPECTIVE OF COVERAGE OF SOME CHAPTERS THROUGH ONLINE TEACHING

PHYSICAL CLASSROOM TEACHING WILL BE RECORDED AND SHARED WITH ABSENTEE STUDENTS

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS RESIDING IN CONTAINMENT ZONES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO VISIT UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

of students, the department said. Isolation rooms in all hostels should be kept ready for immediate shifting of any inmate reporting illness.

Earlier, several students of Biju Patnaik University of Technology (BPUT) met Skill Development and Technical Education minister Premananda Nayak and demanded reopening of technical institutions.

Notably, as part of recently announced unlock guidelines, the state government had also allowed reopening of schools for Class X and Class XII students, which opened from July 26 this year.

Six arrested for murder in Begunia

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, August 4: Police Wednesday claimed to have cracked the sensational murder case of a youth at Karadagadia here August 2 with the arrest of six persons, including the prime accused.

The accused were identified as Swapneswar Nayak, Tulu Behera and Bijay Nayak of Khurda, Shyamaghana Nayak and Baikuntha Nayak of Puri, and Yagneswar Nayak of Talcher.

According to Khurda superintendent of police (SP) Rajkishore Dora, prime accused Swapneswar along with others had eliminated Satyabrata Nayak of Manapur under Begunia police limits here in the wee hours of August 2 fearing that the victim could be a threat to him.

Swapneswar was heading an outfit that has been demanding scheduled caste status for its members.

"Swapneswar had approached the victim on multiple occasions to join the outfit. The victim, however, continued to decline. Fearing that the victim could create any issue for the outfit, Swapneswar along with other accused abducted Satyabrata, bludgeoned him to death and set his body afire in a nearby jungle August 2," the SP said.

A case was registered with the police (149/21) under Sections 363, 364, 302, 201, 506 and 34 of the IPC on the basis of a complaint filed by the victim's relative.

Teams of Sadar and Begunia police, led by Sadar sub-divisional police officer, arrested the accused.

Bar Assn to boycott CJ's court till Aug 9

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 4: The Orissa High Court Bar Association has decided to boycott the court of the HC Chief Justice till August 9 as part of its protest against the livestreaming of the proceedings.

A decision to this effect was taken at the general body meeting of the Bar Association Wednesday. "We have also served a show-cause notice on the lawyers who were present in the court of the Chief Justice," said HC Bar Association secretary JK Lenka.

Notably, a notice was issued for

livestreaming of the HC proceedings July 28. However, the HC Bar Association opposed the move and submitted a memorandum to the Chief Justice.

The lawyers' body had claimed that the decision to go for the livestreaming of HC proceedings was taken in haste. The HC should have consulted the Bar Association before taking a decision in this regard, said the lawyers' body.

The Bar Association argued that proper infrastructure, arrangement for data security and high-speed internet service are required for livestreaming of court proceedings.

Mo School head reviews Smart Classrooms in Capital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: Mo School Abhiyan chairperson Susmita Bagchi Wednesday visited the Unit IX Girls High School here to take stock of implementation of Smart Classrooms project under Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL).

Bagchi visited the e-classroom and video conferencing system at Unit IX Girls' High School and reviewed the facility such as biometric attendance system, CCTVs and electronic interactive board. The e-classroom also has an in-built online syllabus of BSE approved for students.

She directed for expansion of the system to more classrooms of the school and more schools in the state.

The Smart Classrooms project is being implemented in 14 schools across the city and each school will be connected to the system through their 'Smart Classes' as there would be one 'Smart Classroom' each in the selected schools under the initiative.

The objective behind the Smart Classrooms project is to facilitate virtual learning by bringing technology to the doorsteps of the teachers and children, and to improve in student engagement activities—read, write and making visualisation possible and child-friendly.

The Smart Classrooms project is an e-learning application for classroom in selected schools and the learning infra is eco-friendly ensuring low carbon footprints.



The project is unique as it can track the child and its activities or lifestyle and the software in the learning process can disseminate the information in three Indian languages—English, Hindi and Odia.

Smart Classrooms project will also help in conducting online examinations as the software is accessible over internet so that administrative activities, exam management, reporting and other

e-LEARNING INITIATIVE

The 'Smart Classrooms' project is an e-learning application for classroom in selected schools and the learning infra is eco-friendly ensuring low carbon footprints

The system under Smart Classrooms can help the schools manage things right from student registration till generating transfer certificate

activities can be managed over internet.

The system under Smart Classrooms can help the schools manage things right from student registration till generating transfer certificate (TC).

It can also help in rapid atten-

dance register, fees and finance management, teaching and non-teaching staff coordination and also discipline management in schools. It can also help in provision for online payment gateway integration.

The BSCL has installed desktop computers, 24 port switch for networking, metallic cabinet, interactive white board (IWB), green board, ultra-short through projector, speakers for better audio system, surveillance camera, close circuit televisions (CCTVs), network video recorder (NVR), UPS, video conferencing system, document visualizer, smoke detector, 65" LED display unit and biometric fingerprint reader in each school through the project under Smart City Proposal.

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Modern infra in 24 Bolangir schools



The team reviewed progress of a science park, a planetarium, a new bus terminal, sub-divisional hospitals at Patnagarh and Titilagarh, Bolangir by-pass road project, Maharani Sagar (pond) restoration and beautification works. The team directed officials to speed up land acquisition process for the ambitious Bolangir by-pass road

The officials also reviewed ongoing works at Santha Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital, under-construction ESS building, service block, medical gas pipeline system and nurse hostel. The team instructed officials concerned to ensure quality work of these projects

Suktel irrigation project site and reviewed the progress of its dam and spillway construction. The bureaucrats directed concerned officials to complete the work by June 2022.

In addition, the team also reviewed progress of a science park, a planetarium, a new bus terminal, sub-divisional hospitals at Patnagarh and Titilagarh, Bolangir by-pass road project, Maharani Sagar (pond) restoration and beautification works. The team directed officials to speed up land acquisition process for the ambitious Bolangir by-pass road.

Bolangir Collector Chanchal Rana, Superintendent of Police Nitin Kushalkar and several other senior officials of the district administration accompanied the high-level team during the tour.

and other upgraded facilities soon. These schools have been short-listed for development under School Transformation Programme of the 5T initiative.

Later, the high-level team reviewed ongoing works at Santha Bhima Bhoi Medical College and Hospital (SBBMCH). The team instructed officials concerned to ensure good-quality work in the project. The team also reviewed progresses of under-construction ESS building, service block, medical gas pipeline system and nurse hostel.

Besides, the senior bureaucrats reviewed the progress of an under-construction liquid medical oxygen plant and PSA plant, including a resting lobby for attendants of patients, an Ahaar centre, Covid ward, ENT and orthopedic wards under WODC, pediatric ICU facilities and an oxygen supply manifold system (OSMS), the official stated.

Later, the team visited Lower

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bolangir, August 4: Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mohapatra and 5T Secretary VK Pandian Wednesday reviewed various ongoing projects in Bolangir.

Accompanied by Principal Secretary of the water resources department Anu Garg and National Health Mission-Odisha Director Shalini Pandit, Mohapatra and Pandian directed officials in Bolangir district to expedite ongoing works for on-time completion of the projects.

According to an official, the senior bureaucrats reviewed projects at Panchayat Samiti High School in Deogaon and PP Academy in Bolangir town. The team also interacted with students, teachers and alumni of the respective schools during the visit in the morning.

Twenty-four high schools in the district will have modern infrastructure such as smart classrooms, science laboratories, e-libraries



Government offices being demolished as part of an eviction drive for Samaleswari temple expansion project at Kamlī Bazaar in Sambalpur, Wednesday

IRREGULARITIES IN HOUSING SCHEME

Babus scot-free despite Lokayukta order

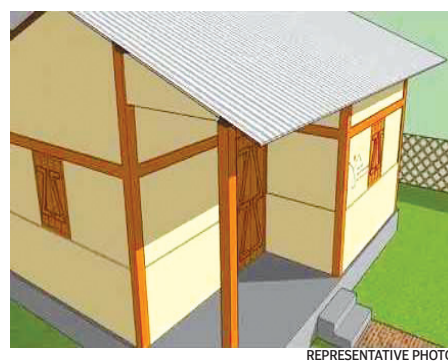
POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, August 4: Rural housing schemes were allegedly marred by irregularities in Jajpur. As a result, the schemes are far from achieving their objectives.

Even there are families who have been allotted more than one housing unit in the district. However, no action has been taken against the officials responsible for promoting such illegalities despite a Lokayukta directive, a report said.

Here is a case in point in Taranja panchayat under Dharmashala block. A family has been allotted four housing units. This was revealed through an RTI query. Sabeswar Behura in 2019 had drawn the attention of the Lokayukta towards this irregularity.

Taking a serious note of the



Locals alleged due to corruption, housing schemes like PMAY, MKY and BPGY have failed to achieve their objectives in Jajpur

signed charge of other panchayats, it was alleged. Locals alleged that due to corruption, housing schemes like Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Mo Kudia Yojana and Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana have failed to achieve their objectives with no action against corrupt officials. The RTI activist had sought information

from the administration about action taken against the officials and the beneficiary. It was revealed that ₹1 lakh has been recovered from the beneficiary in two installments while a draft charge case has been filed against then PEO Anam Charan Rout. Deputy Collector Pragyan Hota had first held a hearing of the draft charge case June 30, 2021. A 'draft charge' case was also initiated against GPTA Ratnakar Sahu one year after the directive of the Lokayukta. However, it was learnt that no stern action was taken against the two officials, except framing draft charges. Surprisingly, GPTA Sahu has been assigned additional charge of Kantigadia and Haridaspur panchayats, the RTI activist alleged. Similarly, the PEO has been assigned additional charge of Mahisara and Mirjapur panchayats.

Jajpur drainage divn supdt engineer held for taking bribe

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, August 4: A team of Vigilance sleuths Wednesday arrested Chandri Prasad Mohapatra, superintending engineer of Jajpur drainage division, while he was accepting ₹10,000 to clear pending bills pertaining to vehicles hired by his department.

According to official sources, the anti-corruption wing also initiated simultaneous raids on houses of the engineer located in Bhubaneswar and Tirtol following his arrest in the morning.

Mohapatra was caught red-handed while accepting the bribe money from the owner of a vehicle. The latter had rented out his vehicle to Jajpur drainage division. After being informed by the vehicle owner that Mohapatra was demanding bribe, the Vigilance officials laid a trap leading to his arrest. Cuttack Vigilance DSP Surendra Rayguru said.

DA case: Vig raids ophthalmic aide

BARGARH: Vigilance sleuths raided the office and residences of Kishore Chandra Pradhan, an ophthalmic assistant at the Sub-Divisional Hospital in Padampur on charge of amassing assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. A team of sleuths led by DSP Dasarathi Sethi conducted raids at his official chamber in Padampur sub-divisional hospital, his residence at College Road in Padampur and his ancestral house at Tal village under Melchhamunda police limits.

It is pertinent to mention, the arrest of Mohapatra comes close on the heels of arrest of Biranchi Narayan Sahoo, private secretary to Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC) member, a few days ago.

WIFE SET ABLAZE ON VILLAGE ROAD



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, August 4: A man allegedly set his wife on fire by pouring petrol on her at Gandhi Chhak in Sana Aryapali village under Aryapali marine police limits in Ganjam district, Wednesday.

B Eramma, wife of B Mukodu, was first rushed to Chhatrapur hospital and later shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur.

Police recorded her statement in the presence of a magistrate. Eramma alleged that her husband poured petrol on her and set her on fire. Police detained Mukodu and started an investigation.

According to reports, Eramma of Sana Aryapali village was residing at her father's place with her three minor children following regular fights with her husband. The couple was not on good terms and often fought with each other. The incident occurred when she

was on her way to her workplace Wednesday morning. Mukodu waylaid her at Gandhi Chhak and again picked up a fight with her before carrying out a pre-planned attack on the woman. He poured petrol on her from a container and set her ablaze. She sustained critical burn injuries. Locals rescued and rushed her to Chhatrapur hospital. She was later shifted to MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur as her condition deteriorated.

Chhatrapur IIC and Aryapali marine police rushed to the spot and nabbed Mukodu while he was trying to flee. Several incriminating materials were seized from the spot. Directed by the Ganjam SP, a scientific team was also pressed into service. Police registered a case over a complaint lodged by the victim's father and intensified the investigation. Police suspect the incident to be the fallout of a marital dispute.

Water recedes in Subarnarekha

Bhograi: Even as the water level in Subarnarekha river continues to subside, most parts of Bhograi, Jaleswar and Baliapal blocks are still marooned. Over 1200 people of Rasulpur village under Baliapal block have been reeling from floodwater over last four days. It may be noted here that following heavy rain in upper catchment area of the river in Jharkhand, low-lying areas of Balasore witnessed flood. Meanwhile, with fall in rain, 12 gates of Galudih barrage have been closed by the irrigation department. Water level in Subarnarekha is receding. Tuesday, it flowed near the danger mark. Floodwater has damaged crops in hundreds of hectares.

Woman, daughter drown

Keonjhar: A woman and her minor daughter drowned while taking bath in a pond at Jamupasi Sahi of Jamujodi panchayat under Harichandampur block of Keonjhar district Tuesday. The deceased have been identified as Draupadi Nayak (40), the wife of Basudeb Nayak, and their daughter Rinki Nayak (6). The duo had gone to take bath in a pond near their house. As they did not return home, Draupadi's elder daughter searched for them and found her mother's body floating in the water. She immediately retrieved the body with help of villagers. Later, fire brigade retrieved the body of the minor girl at around 6pm. The bodies were sent for post-mortem.

Infra crunch choking fishermen's survival

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, August 4: Lack of safety gears, fishing equipment and marketing facilities for their produce have posed serious threat to the survival of fishermen in Swabhiman area in this district, a report said.

The report said the Balimela reservoir was constructed on the Sileru river; a tributary of Godavari in Chittrakonda to provide irrigation facilities to farmlands and power supply to households in the district.

Thousands of people were displaced to make space for the reservoir and 151 villages in Kudumulugumma block were cut off from the mainland following the construction of the reservoir. These villages were named as the cut-off region and later, renamed as Swabhiman Anchal in the district.

The state government released varieties of fish seeds into the reservoir so that people in the area could catch fish from the reservoir and eke out their living. The state government's initiative paid

SWABHIMAN ANCHAL



off as people got a scope of earning from fishing in the reservoir.

However, due to lack of safety gears like life jackets and quality fishing boats, many fishermen of Panaspadar and Orapadar villages under Swabhiman Anchal endangered their lives by fishing in small dingy boats. Over the years, several fishermen were drowned while catching fish in the reservoir in

small fishing boats. Earlier, some fishermen were provided with life jackets which is just like a drop in the ocean as compared to scores of fishermen living in the area.

Fishermen like Madhu Sisa, Raghu Golari and Hari Sisa said there are hundreds of fishermen in the area who risk their lives to catch fish from the reservoir in

the absence of life jackets and quality boats.

Moreover, they are catching fish in traditional nets and do not have improvised nets. As a result, they do not get enough fish to manage their livelihood, they observed.

This apart, absence of marketing facilities to sell fish has hit them hard. They don't get the right price for their fish catch and often

resort to distress sale. When contacted, Rajendra Patra, district fisheries officer, said that this year the fishermen will be provided with some good quality boats and life jackets as well as other facilities. Moreover, fish seeds will also be released into the reservoir to increase the fish population, he added.

EAST COAST RAILWAY
Tender Notice No. ST-OT-TMS-WORKS-KUR-229, Dt: 30.07.2021

Name of the work: SYSTEM DESIGN, SUPPLY, INSTALLATION, TESTING, INTEGRATION & COMMISSIONING OF TRAIN MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COVERING 104 STATIONS AND 864 ROUTE KILOMETERS OF KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY.

Tender Value: ₹2,50,67,235.54

Bidding start date: 09.08.2021, **Tender closing date & time:** at 1100 hrs. of 23.08.2021.

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

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

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

Divisional Railway Manager (S&T) Khurda Road
PR-260/M/21-22

TUMBA DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, TUMBA, GANJAM
E-mail: tdatumba@gmail.com / Ph. No. 0680-2648875 Dt. 04.08.2021

TENDER CALL NOTICE : 01/2021-22, DATED: 04.08.2021
No. CAD-792. The Special Officer, TDA, Tumba, Ganjam, Odisha invites sealed percentage rate bid tender on behalf of Governor of Odisha from registered and eligible Civil Contractors 'C' & 'B' of the State PWD (R&B)/Water Resources/Rural Works/M.I.C.P.W.D. for the following works for tender value as mentioned against each work in column No. 3 eventually to be drawn up in the PWD-P1 form in conformity with the Detailed Tender Call Notice.

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	Approx. Cost of Project in Rs.	Cost of Tender in Rs.	EMD @ 1% in Rs.	Stipulated Period of Completion
1	Construction of Checkdam at Dimbaisa of Kanhsimaisa, G.P. Tumba under TDA, Tumba for the FY 2021-22	15,73,407.00	6,000.00	NIL	6 (Six) Calendar Months

The approved tender schedule along with DTCN will be available in the official website <http://www.ganjam.nic.in> from Dt. 04.08.2021 to 17.08.2021 upto 5.30 P.M. and can be downloaded from the above website. The last date of receipt of tender paper is upto 5.30 P.M. of dated 17.08.2021 through Registered Post/Speed Post only. The sealed tenders received through Registered/Speed Post will be opened on dated 18.08.2021 at 11.30 A.M. in presence of the contractors or their authorized representatives at TDA, Tumba Office.

The authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason therefor.
Sd./- Special Officer, TDA, Tumba
OIPR-26032/11/0001/12/22

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DISTRICT MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER, SUBARNAPUR
Bid Ref. No.-C.D.M. & P.H.O. (Sonepur) Date:

TENDER CALL NOTICE
No.E-301/- Sealed tenders are invited from authorized Manufacturers/ Suppliers / Distributors for supply of chemicals, consumable, equipment & reagents for RTPCR lab to Subarnapur district. The details are available in the district website: www.subarnapur.nic.in. The tender paper cost of Rs.1000/- + GST 18% (Non-refundable) in shape of Demand Draft from any Nationalized Bank in favour of ZSS NON NRHM, Sonepur payable at SBI Sonepur (1085), Odisha. The eligible bidders may submit their tender papers on or before 11.08.2021 by 01.30 P.M. through Registered Post/ Speed Post only to the undersigned. The tender documents will be opened on the same day i.e. 11.08.2021 at 03.00 P.M. in the office chamber of the undersigned. The bidders or their representatives may present at the time of opening. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd./- (Dr. P.K. Guru)
Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Subarnapur
OIPR-10118/11/0004/2/122

FOCUS PANDEMIC RESPONSE

MANDATING VACCINATION



Although the first compulsory seat-belt laws met with strong objections when they were introduced 50 years ago, nobody bothers to complain about such a commonsense rule anymore. In mandating vaccination against COVID-19, governments today can offer the same basic justification for protecting both individuals and society

same. They cry. And they tell me they didn't know. They thought it was a hoax. They thought it was political. They thought because they had a certain blood type or a certain skin colour they wouldn't get as sick. They thought it was 'just the flu.' But they were wrong. And they wish they could go back. But they can't."

The same reason justifies making vaccination against COVID-19 compulsory: otherwise, too many people make decisions that they later regret. One would have to be monstrously callous to say: "It's their own fault, let them die."

In any case, in the COVID era, making vaccination compulsory doesn't violate Mill's "harm to others" principle. Unvaccinated Olympic athletes impose risks on others, just as speeding down a busy street does. The only "personal choice" Ellison should have had was to get vaccinated or stay at home. If the International Olympic Committee had said that only vaccinated athletes can compete, that would have freed thousands of athletes from a heightened risk of infection, and would have justified overriding Ellison's desire to compete without being vaccinated.

For the same reason, rules announced last month in France and Greece requiring that people going to cinemas, bars, or travelling on a train show proof of vaccination are not a violation of anyone's freedom. This past February, when the Indonesian government became the first to make vaccination mandatory for all adults, the real tragedy was not that it was violating the freedom of its citizens, but that richer countries did not donate the vaccines it needed to implement the law. As a result, Indonesia is now the epicenter of the virus and tens of thousands of unvaccinated Indonesians have died.

The writer is Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University and Founder of the non-profit organisation The Life You Can Save.
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I'm writing from Victoria, the Australian state that became, in 1970, the first jurisdiction in the world to make it compulsory to wear a seat belt in a car. The legislation was attacked as a violation of individual freedom, but Victorians accepted it because it saved lives. Now most of the world has similar legislation. I can't recall when I last heard someone demanding the freedom to drive without wearing a seat belt.

Instead, we are now hearing demands for the freedom to be unvaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19. Brady Ellison, a member of the United States Olympic archery team, says his decision not to get vaccinated was "one hundred percent a personal choice," insisting that "anyone that says otherwise is taking away people's freedoms."

The oddity, here, is that laws requiring us to wear seat belts really are quite straightforwardly infringing on freedom, whereas laws requiring people to be vaccinated if they are going to be in places where they could infect other people are restricting one kind of freedom in order to protect the freedom of others to go about their business safely.

Don't misunderstand me. I strongly support laws requiring drivers and passengers in cars to wear seat belts. In the US, such laws are estimated to have saved approximately 370,000 lives, and to have prevented many more serious injuries. Nevertheless, these laws are paternalistic. They coerce us to do something for our own good. They violate John Stuart Mill's famous principle: "the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others." The fact that the coercion is for the individual's own good is "not a sufficient warrant."

There is a lot to be said for this principle, especially when it is used to oppose laws against victimless acts like homosexual relations between consenting adults or voluntary euthanasia. But Mill had more confidence in the ability of members of "civilized" communities to make rational choices about their own interest than we can justifiably have today.

Before seat belts were made compulsory, governments ran campaigns to educate people about the risks of not wearing them. These campaigns had some effect, but the number of people who wore seat belts came nowhere near the 90 per cent or more who wear them in the US today (with similar or higher figures in many other countries where not wearing them is an offense).

The reason is that we are not good at protecting ourselves against very small risks of disaster. Each time we get into a car, the chance that we will be involved in an accident serious enough to cause injury, if we are not wearing a seat belt, is very small. Nevertheless, given the negligible cost of wearing a belt, a reasonable calculation of one's own interests shows

that it is irrational not to wear one. Car crash survivors who were injured because they were not wearing seat belts recognise and regret their irrationality – but only when it is too late, as it always is for those who were killed while sitting on their belts.

We are now seeing a very similar situation with vaccination. Brytney Cobia recently posted on Facebook the following account of her experiences working as a doctor in Birmingham, Alabama:

"I'm admitting young healthy people to the hospital with very serious COVID infections. One of the last things they do before they're intubated is beg me for the vaccine. I hold their hand and tell them that I'm sorry, but it's too late. A few days later when I call time of death, I hug their family members and I tell them the best way to honour their loved one is to get vaccinated and encourage everyone they know to do the



Peter Singer

WE ARE NOW HEARING DEMANDS FOR THE FREEDOM TO BE UNVACCINATED AGAINST THE VIRUS THAT CAUSES COVID-19

There is no greater courage than that of recognizing one's own mistakes.

THE MOTHER



China's Coal Relapse

China is stuck between a fossil fuel-dependent past and a future powered by renewable energy. The country today generates 53 per cent of the world's coal-fired power. At the same time, it is the world's leading manufacturer of, and market for, solar panels, wind turbines, and electric vehicles. Whether China can free itself from its decades-old addiction to coal will determine not just its own environmental future, but also – and more crucially – Earth's prospects in the face of the gathering climate crisis.

China's leaders began to recognise the need for change in the early 2000s. The largely coal-fueled "economic growth at all costs" policy had brought great prosperity, but the collateral damage to the country's air and water had grown unacceptably high. Environmental advocates called for "building an ecological civilization," in which nature and humankind would find a harmonious balance. And when President Xi Jinping assumed power in 2012, he immediately took up the cause.

In quick succession, the Chinese government declared a "war on pollution," drew up separate air, water, and soil action plans committing \$1 trillion to environmental cleanup, closed inefficient coal plants, and invested hundreds of billions of dollars in renewable-energy development. It also made domestic manufacture and sales of electric vehicles a high priority, and devised a nationwide carbon-trading system.

Worryingly for China and the planet, that forward momentum now appears to have shifted into reverse. Coal consumption, which had decreased each year between 2014 and 2016, has since risen steadily. The same is true of carbon-dioxide emissions, which increased by 1.5-1.7 per cent even during the pandemic-induced slowdown in 2020.

China must do better: The 2019 United Nations Emissions Gap Report concluded that limiting global warming to 1.5° Celsius relative to pre-industrial levels requires reducing global emissions by 55 per cent from 2018 levels by 2030. But China added 38.4 gigawatts of new coal-fired power capacity in 2020, even as the rest of the world reduced its net capacity by 17.2 GW.

Worse, this increase is only the beginning. The Chinese government has approved construction of an additional 36.9 GW of coal-fired power capacity, bringing the total under construction today to 88 GW. And proposals to build another 158.7 GW are in the pipeline, putting the total new capacity now under consideration at 247 GW – more than the United States' total installed amount of 233.6 GW. There are probably more plants to come. Powerful coal and energy industry groups are pushing the government to increase China's current total coal-power capacity of 1,080 GW to 1,200-1,300 GW over the next five years, and to as much as 1,400 GW by 2035. A Global Energy Monitor (GEM) report concludes that if China continues to expand capacity through 2035 as proposed, "its coal-power generation alone will be more than three times as large as the global limit on coal power use determined by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to keep global warming well below 2°C."

What explains China's apparent return to its coal-addicted ways? For starters, the protests in Hong Kong, the trade war with the US, and the coronavirus pandemic have shifted policymakers' focus away from environmental reform. So, too, has the slowdown in China's GDP growth and the rise in unemployment. The government has been more interested in stimulating traditional, energy-intensive industries like steel, iron, and cement, while provincial leaders have embarked on a spree of construction of coal-fired power plants.

Furthermore, the recent US-China trade war has heightened Chinese concerns about energy security, given that the country imports 70 per cent of its oil needs and 40 per cent of its gas requirements. And while China has gone all in on renewable energy, especially solar and wind, it cannot scale up these sources quickly enough to meet anticipated demand. Nor is the current electricity grid capable of transmitting this energy efficiently from China's distant west, where most of it is produced, to high-demand areas. Coal – abundant and relatively inexpensive – seems to many a reliable, tried-and-true energy source.

Finally, it is probably not a coincidence that China's 'coal relapse' came at a time when the US was absent from the international climate scene. Whereas former US President Barack Obama and Xi found common ground in the battle against global warming, setting the stage for the 2015 Paris climate agreement, US disengagement from the issue under President Donald Trump probably weakened China's commitment, too.

Which China will the world see in the next several years? That question is more urgent than ever in light of a recent International Energy Agency report warning that all new fossil-fuel development should be halted this year if the world is to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and have any hope of limiting the global temperature increase to 1.5°C.

Xi's announcement in September 2020 that China aims to become carbon neutral by 2060 revived optimism. But hopes that the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-25), released this March, would outline the government's strategy for starting the decarbonisation process were disappointed. And at US President Joe Biden's climate summit in April, Xi announced that during the new Five-Year Plan, China would "strictly control" coal-fired power consumption but allow it to increase, and "phase it down" only from 2026. This is a recklessly unambitious timetable. Climate experts at GEM, TransitionZero, and elsewhere calculate that limiting global warming to well below a "catastrophic" 2°C will require China to close 600 of its 1,082 coal plants by 2030. If they are right, China had better start turning its massive carbon ship around now.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Chinese History and Environment at Smith College.
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WISDOM CORNER

- “A somebody was once a nobody who wanted to and did.”
JOHN BURROUGHS
- “It is better to have loved and lost than never to have lost at all.”
SAMUEL BUTLER
- “I have no methods; all I do is accept people as they are.”
JOAN RIVERS

WORDSWORTH

Optogenetics

News of this field, as yet in its early stages of development – the term optogenetics is first recorded in an article in Nature in April 2008 – has begun to emerge from research laboratories because of its astonishing results. Neuroscientists have inserted genes that code for light-sensitive brain proteins into animal subjects. By firing laser light deep into the animals' brains via fibre-optic cables, they have been able to turn brain cells on and off at will, like clicking a light switch. It has proved possible to stop the electrical activity of various kinds of neurons, such as those that control movement or the establishment of memories. The technique can also be used as a research tool to monitor when neurons fire. There is some hope that one day a method like this might be used, for example, to control epilepsy and other neurological conditions in humans.

SPECTRUM FINANCE

Digital financial inclusion in Covid times



Dasarathi Mishra

THERE HAS BEEN AN APPRECIABLE GROWTH OF THE DIGITAL PAYMENTS INDEX IN INDIA DURING THE PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic could be a game-changer for digital financial services. Low-income households and small firms can benefit greatly from advances in mobile money, fintech services, and online banking. Financial inclusion as a result of digital financial services can also boost economic growth. While the pandemic is set to increase the use of these services, it has also posed challenges for the growth of the industry's smaller players and high-lighted unequal access to digital infrastructure. Several actions will need to be taken to ensure maximum inclusion going forward.

The shift towards digital financial services was already helping societies advance financial inclusion before the pandemic started, benefiting many low-income households and small firms with typically little access to traditional financial institutions. Lockdowns and social distancing norms are accelerating the use of digital financial services, just as the SARS epidemic in 2003 hastened China's launching of digital payments and e-commerce.

Many countries (for example, Liberia, Ghana, Kenya, Kuwait, Myanmar, Paraguay and Portugal) are supporting this shift with meas-

ures such as lowering fees and increasing limits on mobile money transactions.

In a new study at the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the authors introduced an index of digital financial inclusion that measures the progress in 52 emerging markets and developing economies. The authors found that digitisation increased financial inclusion between 2014 and 2017, even where financial inclusion through traditional banking services was declining. This is likely to have progressed more since then.

Africa and Asia lead in digital financial inclusion, but with significant variations across countries. In Africa, Ghana, Kenya, and Uganda are frontrunners. In comparison, the Middle East and Latin America tend to use digital financial services more moderately. In some countries, such as Chile and Panama, this reflects a relatively higher level of bank penetration.

In most countries digital payments services are evolving into digital lending, as companies accumulate users' data and develop new ways to use the data for credit worthiness analysis. Marketplace lending, which uses digital plat-

forms to directly connect lenders to borrowers doubled in value from 2015 to 2017. While so far concentrated in China, the United Kingdom, and the United States, it appears to be growing in other parts of the world, such as in Kenya and India. With guidelines issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), peer-to-peer (P2P) lending has become a popular vehicle of lending in India.

The RBI has constructed a composite Digital Payments Index (DPI) to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country. The RBI-DPI has been constructed with March 2018 as the base period – DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100.

The RBI-DPI consists of five broad parameters that enable measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods. These parameters are – (i) Payment Enablers (weight 25 per cent), (ii) Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors (10 per cent), (iii) Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors (15 per cent), (iv) Payment Performance (45 per cent) and (v) Consumer Centricity (5 per cent). Each of these parameters has sub-parameters which, in turn, consist of various measurable in-

dicators.

There has been an appreciable growth of the DPI in India during the pandemic. DPI for March 2019 and March 2020 work out to 153.47 and 207.84 respectively, indicating appreciable growth. The DPI went up to 217.74 in September 2020 and further to 270.59 in March 2021. This indicates deepening of digital payments in the country during the recent months.

The RBI-DPI shall be published on RBI's website on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of four months.

In a significant development on digital financial inclusion front, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched e-RUPI, a digital direct benefit transfer (DBT) platform August 2, 2021. e-RUPI is a digital voucher which can be transferred directly to mobile phone as an SMS or by QR code to the beneficiary. e-RUPI users can redeem the vouchers at the merchant outlets. These vouchers are like e-gift cards, which are prepaid in nature. These e-vouchers will be person and purpose-specific. Even if one does not have a bank account or a digital payments app or a smartphone can benefit from these vouchers.

The writer is a former central banker.

Worrying R-factor

Sir, The worst of the second wave of the COVID-19 is not behind us yet. The Union Health Ministry has cautioned that the pandemic is still raging, and eight states, including Karnataka, are showing high reproductive numbers (R) of infections. The R-factor has increased from 0.88 to 1.2, bringing India on par with the US, Australia, and Canada, which means one person was spreading the infection to more than one contact. Moreover, 49.85 per cent of the new cases reported in the past week were from Kerala, which has a poor record of contact tracing. Citizens would do well to adhere to COVID appropriate behaviour and not throw caution to the winds.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

Punching glory

Sir, Lovlina Borgohain fought valiantly but lost to the much experienced Busenaz Surmeneli. Winning a bronze in your first Olympic encounter is no small feat. India expects more by investing nothing. According to a recent report, India spends only 3 paise per person per day on sports. A country which spends close to ₹5 lakh crore on bullets and tanks expects medals in sports where it spends a meagre ₹2,800 crore. I want to congratulate Lovlina on her stunning performance. She should savour this moment. She is young and will have many opportunities to brighten the colour of her medal. More power to her punches. India is proud of her.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR

Ghastly act

Sir, The inhuman and gruesome incident of rape, murder and hurried cremation of a nine-year-old Dalit girl in Delhi Cantonment is shocking beyond words. The incident once again demonstrates the moral abyss to which we have descended. While condemnation has poured in from all quarters, we are yet to see the reactions from the Prime Minister and the Union Home Minister on this ghastly crime committed in the nation's capital. Maybe a nine-year-old Dalit girl from a poor family meeting such a sordid end does not deserve the sympathy of our top leadership.

Bhaskar Roy, NEW DELHI

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

MINING, INDUSTRIES BANE OF BAITARANI

22 hurt as truck rams vehicles in serial mishaps

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, August 4: The Baitarani river flowing through Keonjhar is considered a holy one in the district, but over the years its water is getting contaminated due to release of effluents from mines and industrial units along its coast.

Deforestation and soil erosion are other two factors responsible for the spurt in pollution of the river. The river course is said to be reducing its depth.

Baitarani nurtures flora and fauna in Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Bhadrak and Kendrapara districts, apart from being a lifeline for agriculture in all these districts. Its health has a lot to do with the ecology of riparian pockets, some environmentalists observed.

A number of mines and industrial units are operating in the river basin area of Baitarani over years. Social activists and environmentalists said the mines and industrial units endanger the river. They should be closed, they pointed out. They have demanded massive plantation along the river basin to save ecology and the river.

It may be recalled that the MB



Shah Commission which was probing the multi-crore mining scam in the state had expressed concern over mining on both sides of the river. In his report, Shah had opposed mineral extraction on both sides of the river.

On the basis of this report, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change had directed the state government to take ac-

tion against 55 mines of 50 companies along the banks of Baitarani. The MoEF ministry has also recommended lease cancellation of these mining firms.

But no one has any idea about what action was taken against these mining firms. Various outfits and environmentalists have demanded a review of the action as recommended against the mines.

On the other hand, big industrial units have been exploiting the river water for their own use. Lakhs of litres of water is drawn up from the river through pipes on a daily basis, it is said.

Baitarani river originates in Gonasika hill under Bansapal block and flows through Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and parts of

KILLER POLLUTION

Baitarani nurtures flora and fauna in Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, Bhadrak and Kendrapara districts, apart from being a lifeline for agriculture in all these districts. Its health has a lot to do with the ecology of riparian pockets, opined environmentalists

MB Shah Commission which was probing the multi-crore mining scam in the state had expressed concern over mining on both sides of the river. In his report, Shah had opposed mineral extraction on both sides of the river

Big industrial units have allegedly been exploiting the river water for their own use. Lakhs of litres of water is drawn up from the river through pipes on a daily basis

in Bhadrak.

Its catchment area in Odisha is 13,482 square/km. However, over last 30 years, the river is getting polluted due to rampant mining activities, industrial effluents along its banks.

In the past, various outfits have staged agitations for its protection. But no step is being taken for its protection, it was alleged.

Expressing concern over the issue, lawyer Ashok Das said if mining activities are allowed along its banks, the river is sure to see its death some day.

"There is a need for protective and preventive measures against mining and industrial activities in its peripheral areas," he noted.

Maheswar Sahu, president of the Odisha Nadi Suraksha Samiti said due to mining, Baitarani river is being polluted while the state government has a responsibility to protect it anyway.

"In coming days, our outfit will stage agitations for its protection," Sahu warned.

ADM Santosh Nayak said necessary steps will be taken for protection of the Baitarani river while at different times, its water is being tested.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bangiriposhi, August 4: As many as 22 persons were injured including 12 of them critically after an iron ore laden truck lost balance and hit seven vehicles in its front on Dwarsuni ghat road of National Highway-49 here in Mayurbhanj district, Wednesday.

The critically injured persons were Jagdish Mohanta, 35, Arun Naresh Mohanta, 45, Bhupati Das, 36, Sourav Das, 8, Bhabesh Das, 5, Kajal Das, 28, Kumudini Senapati, 36, Subhendu Sekhar Mohanta, 36, Sumitra Majhi, 25, Kaushal Yadav, 22, Mahendra Singh, 60, Joba Tudu, 45. They were rushed to PRM Medical College and Hospital in Baripada after administering their primary treatment at Bangiriposhi community health centre.

Over 10 persons sustaining minor injuries were discharged after primary treatment. Bangiriposhi police registered a case and launched a manhunt to nab the absconding driver.

The mishap occurred when the iron ore laden truck on its way to Haladia lost balance and hit a car on its front. Later, it hit another vehicle and pushed it to roadside. The driver was trying to escape the truck when it hit an auto-rickshaw and a jeep of Bijatala health centre. Later, it rammed two buses and a biker on the route before the vehicle overturned.

Scam in dam work alleged; villagers seek investigation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Khaprakhol, August 4: Alleging large-scale irregularities in renovation work of a dam, people of Odiapalli under Khaprakhol block of Bolangir district demanded an investigation into the scam Wednesday.

Villagers met BDO Rashmiranjan Rout stating that a contractor and a junior engineer have botched up the work of Guharakhaita dam and misappropriated the funds.

In a plaque, it was stated that the work was done at a cost of ₹15 lakh while ₹3.93 lakh was spent for a guard wall.

They urged the BDO to look into the irregularities in the dam upgradation work. The BDO has assured that the allegation will be looked into by officials with spot inquiry.

Ganjam: Land sharks rule the roost

POST NEWS NETWORK

Gopalpur, August 4: Land sharks have encroached upon thousands of acres of farmlands in Tatadapali mouza under Kanishi tehsil in Ganjam district by luring the poor and the gullible in exchange of pitance, a report said.

As a result, farmlands are shrinking while illegal housing plots are increasing in the area.

The land mafia are dividing illegally acquired land to make them into housing plots and sell them to interested buyers as home-stead lands.

The illegal acquisition of farmlands will obstruct the flow of water from upstream to the farmlands along the downstream and will result in loss of crop and livelihood for farmers.

Things have come to such a pass that over 70 per cent of farmlands are now in the possession of land

The land mafia have allegedly acquired farmlands of local farmers in Kothasingh, Manikpur, and Tatadapali in the district

mafia. The seriousness of the matter can be gauged from the fact that house construction work is going on in full swing in over 50 acres of farmlands acquired in the area.

It is alleged that the mafia acquire thousands of acres of farmlands and turn them into housing plots without converting their status. The mafias influence the officials in Kanishi tehsil and the Kanishi sub-registrar's office to register the lands in their name and, later, in the name of the buyers without converting the status of the

land. Local public representatives have written to the Chief Secretary of the State and the District Collector to intervene into the matter, but their pleas are yet to be addressed.

The land sharks allegedly use force to acquire farmlands in Kothasingh, Manikpur, and Tatadapali areas. The lands were earlier used by the local farmers for paddy cultivation.

The land mafia have also not spared the land adjoining the Rushikulya extension canal-10 and converted them into housing plots.

These illegal activities are only increasing day by day but no action has been taken yet to check the illegal acquisition of farmlands.

Locals have demanded the intervention of the district administration and revenue authorities and initiate action against the land mafia.

ECO-CONSCIOUS



Forest officials along with local people carrying out a plantation drive at a village in Sundargarh

OP PHOTO

O2 plant at Sambalpur DHH to be up in a week



POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, August 4: The state government had planned to set up a pressure swing absorption oxygen plant on the premises of the district headquarters hospital in Sambalpur district. Machines and other tools for the plant arrived here in a container Wednesday.

The works department has already put in place the infrastructure for the plant. Installation of machines will be started from Thursday. The administration is trying to make it operational within a week. It was learnt that the plant was built with the help of IOCL.

The 200-bed DHH doubles up as

a Covid hospital. The plant is capable of providing oxygen to patients. As the third wave of the pandemic is predicted in September, the plant is expected to meet the oxygen shortage.

When Covid hospital was in operation, 300 to 400 cylinders of oxygen were required for the patients.

This plant will produce 960 litres of oxygen per minute and can provide 15 litres of oxygen each to 65 ventilators. It has facility to provide 5 litres of oxygen per minute to 192 oxygen points directly through pipes.

After this plant is made operational, the DHH will not have to depend on oxygen provided by Jharsuguda plants.

Gurudwar where Brahmin priests officiate

IN THE 200-YEAR OLD SHRINE, BHAGABAT IS RECITED EVERYDAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Simulia, August 4: There is a 200 year-old Gurudwar at Pahitorana village under Simulia block of Balasore. Its uniqueness lies in its tradition of communal harmony - Brahmin priests perform puja here while Srimad Bhagabat is recited here every day.

However, its origin has been shrouded in mystery. Locals say, there is no clear cut idea about when the Gurudwar was set up and why it was set up.

According to legends, Dinabandhu Sahu, a landlord of the area, had set up this Gurudwar. Earlier, a photo of Guru Nanak was being worshipped in a thatched house. In 1919, a Gurudwar was built.

85-year old Bhaskar Chandra Sahu, one of the grandsons of the landlord claimed that his great grandfather used to look after the Gurudwar.

"After my great grandfather died, my father used to look after the Gurudwar. Now, my family members have the responsibilities to run it," he added.



The land which has been registered in the name of the Gurudwar has been allotted to some Brahmin priests.

Some people of Punjab came to know about the Gurudwar and built its main gate last year. They also put up a flag of their religion at the place.

Bhaskar Sahu claimed that Kashmir King Hari Singh and Deepak Singh from America had visited the Gurudwar.

But he could not explain why

this Gurudwar was set up in such a rural set-up.

78-year old Surendra Panigrahi, one of the priests, said as per tradition, upachar puja is performed in the mornings and evenings.

"Every day, three handful of khai, molasses, ghee and tulsi leaves are offered as bhog. Alati is offered. In view of such rituals, this religious place has its own significance," Panigrahi said.

A large number devotees throng the Gurudwar for fulfillment of

IN HARMONY

Legend has it that Dinabandhu Sahu, a landlord of the area, had set up this Gurudwar. Earlier, a photo of Guru Nanak was being worshipped in a thatched house. In 1919, a Gurudwar was built

The land which has been registered in the name of the Gurudwar has been allotted to some Brahmin priests

Some people of Punjab came to know about the Gurudwar and built its main gate last year. They also put up a flag of their religion at the place

their wishes. Many patients have cured leprosy after worshipping here, the priest said.

Three Brahmin priests worship the Gurudwar in turns.

A month-long Bhagabat recital programme is organised here from Abhisek purnima to Aghira purnima with religious fervor. During this celebration, bhog is prepared from *suji*, ghee and sugar, he added.

AGAINST POOR WORK



Servitors staging a sit-in protest, alleging sub-standard renovation work of Sri Sri Baldevjew temple in Baripada

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rasulpur, August 4: The state government has taken up a host of measures to augment income generation of farmers in the state. In a related development, the horticulture department has encouraged farmers to take up fruit farming in Rasulpur block of Jajpur.

In 2021-22 fiscal, the department has set a target to promote fruit farming in 10 acres of land in the area. The department said, though fruit farming takes a long time for growth, it is lucrative for farmers.

"Guava has a good demand in the market. I have taken up guava farming on two acres," said Rabintra Das, a farmer of Karanjaiari of Odisho panchayat. The horticulture department



has provided assistance to Rabintra Das for fruit farming under MGN-REGS. This was stated by agriculture extension officer Prabhas Ranjan Mallick.

As per a plan, coconut saplings will be planted along the borders of farmland while guava saplings were

planted inside with equal distance. In the initial stage, Das has planted 220 guava saplings, 50 coconut saplings and 20 hybrid berry saplings on his farmland. It is said that guava will be harvested in three years.

Rs 1.80 lakh will be provided to farmers for maintenance, fertilizers, medicines and other expenses. Such assistance will be provided to the farmers for two years.

The farmers can grow vegetables as inter-crops for at least two years. Sarpanch Nilam Mallick, Udayan Sathis Surendra Sahu and Sanjay Parida observed farmers can augment their income through fruit farming with the help of government assistance. More farmers in the area are expected to take up fruit farming in coming days, they said.

NIA searches 5 locations in ISIS Kerala module case

Group led by Mohammed Ameen of Kerala has been running various ISIS propaganda channels on different social media platforms such as Telegram, Hoop and Instagram



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 4: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Wednesday said that it is carrying out searches at five locations in Jammu and Kashmir and Karnataka in Kerala ISIS module case, officials said.

An NIA official related to probe told IANS, "Multiple NIA teams are carrying out searches since morning at three locations in Jammu and Kashmir and one location in Bangalore and Mangalore."

The case pertains to the terrorist activities of a group led by one Mohammed Ameen of Kerala.

The anti-terror probe agency had earlier arrested three people namely Ameen and his associates Mushab Anuvar and Rahees Rashid

after preliminary examination. The group has been running various ISIS propaganda channels on different social media platforms such as Telegram, Hoop and Instagram for propagating the violent Jihadi ideology of ISIS, and radicalising and recruiting new members to the module.

The NIA had registered a case against seven known and other unnamed persons under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act March 5, 2021.

The NIA official said the group of radicalised individuals, under the leadership of Ameen and having pledged allegiance to the proscribed terrorist organisation ISIS, had identified certain people in Kerala and Karnataka for targeted killing.

Why mountains in Himachal are rolling down

Environmental activists claim the state's policy of promoting mega hydropower projects is being implemented in a fragile and eco-sensitive zone

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, August 4: While cloudbursts and flash floods in recent years have become a regular feature in the hill state of Himachal Pradesh, the loss of life caused by natural calamities can be mainly attributed to increasing human interference, particularly in eco-sensitive Himalayan zones.

Experts told IANS Wednesday that since mountains in Himachal Pradesh are part of Himalayan range that are young and fragile in nature, creating cracks and fractures in the rock could widen in future and create a rockfall or slope failure zone -- a phenomenon in which a slope collapses abruptly under the influence of rainfall or an earthquake.

They say anthropological intervention along with climate change have worsened it further. Be it development of hydropower projects or tunnels or roads.

Seven people died in the exceptionally high rainfall across the cold desert of Lahaul-Spiti district July 27-28. Keylong and Udaipur subdivision of the district faced 12 incidents of flash flood after a cloudburst in which the Tozing Nallah impact was devastating, says a government report.

Two days before this disaster,

nine people were killed by a landslide in Kinnaur district as boulders fell and hit the vehicle they were travelling in. Both Lahaul-Spiti and Kinnaur fall in the Himalayan ranges, known for geological and ecological vulnerability.

This monsoon the heavy rains also caused major landslides in the state's Kangra district, claiming 10 lives. Terrifying videos capturing massive landslides in Sirmour district are common these days.

Explaining why flooding and landslides are common in the hill states, YP Sundriyal of the Department of Geology with Hemwati Nandan Bahuguna Garhwal University in Uttarakhand said, "Higher Himalayas, both climatically and tectonically, are highly sensitive, so much so, that at first stance the construction of mega hydro-projects should be avoided. Or else they should be of small capacity. Secondly, the construction of roads should be done with all scientific techniques. At present, we just see roads are being made or widened without taking proper measures such as no slope stability, lack of good quality retaining wall and rock bolting. All these measures can restrict the damage done by landslides up to some extent."



Citing a huge gap between planning and implementation, Sundriyal said for instance rainfall patterns are changing, temperatures have been increasing along with extreme weather events. "There is no denying the fact of development but hydropower plants, especially in higher Himalayas, should be of less capacity," he added. Environmental activists say more than 140 hydropower projects have been allocated in the Sutlej basin and disasters like the ones in Chamoli and Kedarnath are in the making.

They demand a moratorium on the construction of all new hydropower projects located in the Sutlej and Chenab river basins until a study on the cumulative

impact of the projects on the fragile ecology and livelihoods is done. Saying urbanisation has led to decrease in soil infiltration capacity, resulting in floods, Central Water Commission Director (Flood Forecasting and Monitoring) Sharath Chandra said, "Himalayan systems are very young and fragile, making them unstable. The rain which was earlier recorded during the span of days now pours within a handful of days only. This has led to an increase in incidence of flash flooding and landslides, making the region very vulnerable to natural disasters. If the landslide comes down to the river stream, it increases the chances of floods."

Experts say the higher

Himalayas were once home to a lot of glaciers, which have now retreated owing to global warming and climate change.

According to geologists, the retreating glaciers have left behind unlimited sediments that consist of an unstable mix of earth and rocks in the higher reaches of Himalayas. In such cases, even less rainfall is good enough to move the boulders and debris downstream. Hence, the higher Himalayan region is very unsuitable for dams and tunnels due to higher concentration of sediments.

Centre for Policy Research Senior Fellow Manju Menon said the social and environmental risks of large dams are well-documented.

Reporting 50% of daily nationwide Covid cases, Kerala eases curbs

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, August 4: Even as almost 50 per cent of the country's total daily new Covid cases is registered in Kerala, the Pinarayi Vijayan government Wednesday decided to ease the Covid norms.

The easing of the norms was on the cards as the traders' body was up in arms, and with the Onam season round the corner, it was the only way these traders could get the business started again.

Announcing the revised lockdown norms, journalist turned State Minister of Health Veena George said the method of locking down was based on the test positivity rate depending on the percentage of Covid patients per 100 population. This however will now be based on cases per 1,000 population.

"Henceforth all shops in areas, where triple lockdown norms are not there, can open from 7 in the morning till 9 pm. From now on only Sunday will be locked down, while Saturday will function as a normal day," said George.

For the past nearly three months Kerala was under lockdown based on the test positivity rate and all local bodies with a TPR above 15 per cent were closed down.

Incidentally, these new guidelines have come at a time when



Tuesday there were 42,625 new Covid cases in the country of which Kerala reported 23,676 cases. Of 4,10,353 active cases, Kerala had 1,73,221 active cases.

George said that the reason for opening up was the economic situation in the state. "Kerala started facing the second wave of Covid and with 56 per cent of the state's population still free from Covid, it's natural we will be reporting more number of daily cases. But when it comes to the death rate Kerala has done well with the

death rate standing at 0.5 per cent while the national average is 1.34," said George.

She added that one way to tackle Covid is through vaccinating all and Kerala has done well in that aspect also and is waiting for more vaccine supplies.

"So far 1.48 crore people have got their first dose, while 62 lakh have received both the doses. And if one looks into the rate of vaccination Kerala has a higher figure than the national average," added George.

218 dead this monsoon season in Himachal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shimla, August 4: A total of 218 people have died and 12 are missing in Himachal Pradesh in the last three weeks this monsoon season, Jal Shakti Minister Mahender Singh Thakur informed the state Assembly Wednesday.

Replying to a discussion on climate change on the third day of the ongoing monsoon session, Thakur said the state suffered a total loss of Rs 451.56 crore due to damaged roads, water lines and power transmission since June 13.

A maximum of 34 people died in Shimla, followed by 25 in Kangra, 23 in Sirmour, 21 in Chamba, 19 in Mandi, 18 in Lahaul-Spiti, 17 in Kullu, 16 in Solan, 14 each in Una and Kinnaur, 12 in Bilaspur and five in Hamirpur from June 13 to July 3, he added.

Several roads, bridges, PWD property, water lines had been fully or partially damaged due to heavy rains, he said.

The state government has so far suffered a loss of Rs 451.56 crore, the minister said.

Global warming is resulting in climate change which sometimes causes drought-like situations and sometimes heavy rains, he added.

Earlier participating in the discussion, Congress's Kinnaur MLA Jagat Singh Negi stated that 70 per cent of the crops of farmers in Lahaul were damaged as they



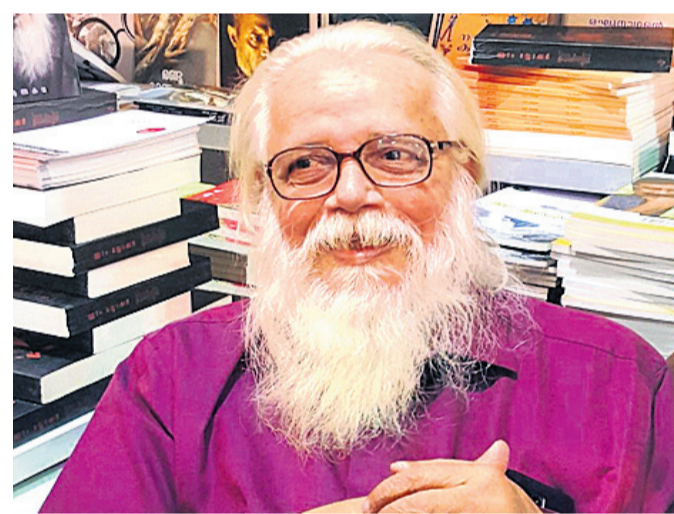
were unable to take their ripe crops to the mandis due to damaged bridges and roads.

The situation could not be properly managed by the government and the administration after the cloudburst in Udaipur subdivision of Lahaul-Spiti district, he alleged.

Several people had to spend some days in a cave as the administration could not rescue them, he claimed.

Earlier, Inder Dutt Lakhanpal (Congress), Vishal Nehriya (BJP), Balbir Singh Verma (BJP) and Jiya Lal (BJP) also spoke on the impact of climate change on the people, especially on the agriculturists and horticulturists.

HC extends interim protection from arrest to four in ISRO case



FACT FILE

The espionage case pertains to allegations of transfer of certain confidential documents on India's space programme to foreign countries by two scientists and four others, including two Maldivian women

The CBI, in its probe at that time, had held that top police officials in Kerala were responsible for ISRO scientist Nambi Narayanan's illegal arrest

The case also had a political fallout, with a section in Congress targeting the then Chief Minister late K Karunakaran over the issue, that eventually led to his resignation

not be granted any relief as the Maldivian nationals were harassed, unfairly arrested, and detained for over three years by the officers who investigated the spy case.

The counsel for the accused said the alleged conspiracy happened over 25 years ago and therefore, there was no need for the CBI to drag on the anticipatory bail pleas.

The court said that the accused were sufficiently protected from arrest by an interim order and therefore, they should not be concerned if the matter takes time as it has huge ramifications.

All three have moved applications in the high court opposing the anticipatory bail pleas of the accused.

The CBI has opposed all the anticipatory bail pleas and has claimed that the false implication of Narayanan in a 'concocted case' led to a delay in development of India's cryogenic technology.

The Supreme Court had April 15 ordered that the report of a high-level committee on the role of erring police officials in the espionage case relating to Narayanan be given to the CBI and directed the agency to conduct further investigation on the issue.

The three-member committee, headed by former apex court judge Justice (ret'd) DK Jain, was appointed by the top court in 2018 after acquitting Narayanan in the case. The top court had also directed the Kerala government to pay Rs 50 lakh as compensation for compelling Narayanan to undergo 'immense humiliation'.

RT-PCR negative report must for tourists entering HP



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Shimla, August 4: With the spike in Covid-19 cases again, Himachal Pradesh Wednesday made it mandatory for tourists coming to the state to produce a RT-PCR negative report obtained within 72 hours of entry.

However, those carrying vaccine certificates, one or both jabs, will be allowed to enter the state without the RT-PCR report.

Justifying the decision, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said in view of the spike in Covid-19 cases some restrictions are likely to be put in place. He said the pandemic situation was discussed by the Cabinet at its meeting on Tuesday and it was felt that some restrictions would have to be put in place.

The Chief Minister also said no overcrowding would be allowed in public transport vehicles.

ON WARPATH



Police use water cannon to disperse Kerala Students' Union (KSU) activists during their protest demanding the resignation of Kerala Education Minister K Sivankutty in Kochi, Wednesday.



Fishermen issue has created a big outrage in Tamil Nadu, especially in coastal areas

'NOT COST EFFECTIVE'

The railways has 'dropped' a project to provide internet connection in trains because it was not cost effective, the government informed Parliament Wednesday



of the day quote

The emerging threats in the cyber world and space require state-of-the-art technological responses

RAM NATH KOVIND | PRESIDENT

What had been done August 5 had come as a shock to most people who were affected by the sudden, unexpected and unconstitutional blow (Art 370 abrogation)

OMAR ABDULLAH | NC LEADER

The brutal murder of a nine-year-old Dalit girl after rape and then burning her body in Nagal village of Delhi Cantt is very sad and shameful. BSP demands strict action against the culprits and necessary steps to prevent recurrence of such incidents

MAYAWATI | BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY SUPREMO

SHORT TAKES

Mumbai gets its first GS lab

Mumbai: Mumbai's first genome sequencing (GS) laboratory at civic-run Nair Hospital will offer the city an added advantage in the battle against coronavirus as the new facility can analyse a large number of samples in a short period and also identify mutants, something that will be especially useful in hotspot areas, the hospital said Wednesday.

Raj rains: 7 of family killed

Kota: Seven members of a family, including four minors, were killed after a wall collapsed on their house due to incessant heavy rain in Rajasthan's Bundi district, police said Wednesday. The incident occurred on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday in Navghat area of the district, they said. According to the weather department, several areas in Rajasthan's Bundi, Baran, Sawai Madhopur and Kota districts received extremely heavy rains while many other areas received heavy to very heavy rains till Wednesday morning.

Jail inmate found dead

New Delhi: A 29-year-old Tihar Jail inmate was found dead inside his cell while two of his former cellmates, who were lodged in an adjacent lockup, were found injured Wednesday morning, officials said. The deceased inmate, gangster Ankit Gujjar, was involved in several criminal cases including killing of a BJP leader. The injured inmates, Gurjeet Singh (22) and his brother Gurpreet Singh (22), were taken to the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital here, they said. Police said statements of the two injured inmates are yet to be recorded and an investigation is underway to ascertain the exact sequence of events.

Police encounters continue in Assam

Rangia: A dreaded dacoit was injured in an encounter in Kamrup district of Assam Wednesday when he allegedly tried to escape from police custody, officials said. According to senior officials, the dacoit and his accomplice, who were allegedly involved in a number of cases including murder, were arrested Monday along with arms and ammunition. "On Wednesday, we took the main culprit to Barihat Bhalla to recover more arms. At that time, he tried to escape and we had to fire to stop him," a senior police officer said.

'Too early to declare 3rd wave'



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 4: The rise in fresh Covid cases and the effective reproduction number - indication of how fast an infection spreads - in many states is worrying but don't panic. Instead, mask up and get vaccinated, say experts, stressing that it is too early to declare the beginning of a new wave.

In fact, it could be that the second wave is not over, said several scientists who have been closely monitoring India's Covid graph and have noted the surge in a few pockets. In the northeast, for instance, cases have certainly not gone down to the low levels that are being seen in Delhi and other northern states, observed Gautam Menon, professor, Departments of Physics and Biology at Ashoka University in Haryana. "In that sense, we are likely seeing a continuation of the second wave rather than the initiation of a new Covid wave distinct from the previous one," he explained.

On Wednesday, India recorded 42,625 fresh Covid cases with a daily positivity rate of 2.31 per cent and a weekly one of

2.36 per cent. India's Covid situation is seemingly under control. However, 13 states/union territories recorded a surge in coronavirus infections last week with Kerala reporting half of India's daily new cases. With the government warning that the pandemic is "still raging", there is also an increase in India's effective reproduction number (R) which represents the number of susceptible people one Covid positive person may infect.

A recent analysis by researchers at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Chennai, found that the effective R number in India has crossed 1 for the first time since May 7. The government Tuesday also said the R-value is more than one in eight states and UTs, which is a cause of concern. Meanwhile, the Delhi government Wednesday put a cap on the rate of conventional RT-PCR tests for Covid-19 detection in private hospitals and laboratories at Rs 500, according to an order. Rapid antigen tests at private facilities will cost Rs 300. In a tweet, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "Delhi government drastically re-

Consider local curbs during festivals: Govt

States should consider restrictions in view of the coming festive season, the Centre said today pointing to the upsurge in cases in parts of the country. Pointing to the festivities starting with Muharram on August 19 to Durga Puja on October 15, the Union health ministry said the states should "actively consider local restrictions" and "curb mass gatherings". "Indian Council of Medical Research and National Centre for Disease control have expressed concern regarding the mass gathering events during festivals turning into super spreader events," added the letter from the health ministry to Chief Ministers and administrators of all states. "I would like to reiterate that any laxity in ensuring strict adherence to the five-fold strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccinate and Ensuring Covid-Appropriate Behaviour", may result in losing the impetus that our country has gained so far in managing the pandemic," read the letter signed by Rajesh Bhushan.

duces corona test rates. This will help the common man." According to the order, home collection of samples and testing would cost Rs 700. Earlier, it was Rs 1,200. At government centres and hospitals, RT-PCR and rapid antigen tests are conducted for free.

In November last year, the government had capped the rate of RT-PCR tests in private hospitals and labs at Rs 800.

DHANBAD JUDGE'S DEATH CASE

CBI takes over probe

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 4: The CBI Wednesday took over the investigation into the death of Dhanbad judge Uttam Anand who was mowed down by a vehicle while on a morning jog July 28, officials said.

A 20-member team has been set by the CBI to probe the matter. It has left for Dhanbad, they said, adding that it will be followed by a Central Forensic Science Laboratory team.

Officials said the agency has received the Jharkhand government's request, routed through the Centre, to investigate the matter.

Sources said according to the laid down procedure, the agency has taken over Dhanbad police FIR in the matter.

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren on last Saturday had decided to hand over the probe into the hit-and-run case of the 49-year-old Dhanbad judge to the Central Bureau of Investigation.

CCTV footage showed that the judge was jogging on one side of a fairly wide road at Randhir Verma Chowk when a heavy auto-rickshaw veered towards him, hit him from behind and fled. Doctors at hospital declared him brought dead.

The central probe agency had informed the Jharkhand High Court on Tuesday that it has received the state government's letter to take over the probe a day earlier.



The bench of Chief Justice Dr Ravi Ranjan and Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad had directed the CBI to initiate a probe at the earliest. It had also directed the government to hand over all the documents of the case to the CBI.

Taking cognizance of a letter filed before the court by the Dhanbad principal district judge in the case, Justice Ranjan had converted it into a writ petition and ordered the formation of an SIT headed by Additional Director General of Police Sanjay Latkar to look into the matter.

The bench, dissatisfied with the progress report, had questioned why there was a delay in registering an FIR into the case.

The incident occurred at 5.08 am, and the FIR was registered at 12.45 pm when it was clear from CCTV footage that the judge was picked up from the spot and taken

to a hospital, the court had said. "Do the police register an FIR only on the basis of a statement? Do the police not register an FIR on their own? Why did the police take six hours to register the FIR?" it had asked.

The court said that there is fear among judicial officers following the incident and directed that the security of courts, including the high court, and judicial officers be strengthened.

The Supreme Court July 30 had also taken suo motu cognizance of the "sad demise" of the Dhanbad judge. "We direct the Chief Secretary and Director General of Police (DGP) of Jharkhand to submit a report in a week's time on the status of the investigation on the sad demise of additional district and sessions Judge Uttam Anand, a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana had said.

BRAVING THE ODDS



Residents move from a flooded area to a safe place after rise in the water level of the Ganga river in Patna

Delhi govt to order magisterial probe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 4: The Delhi government Wednesday said it will order a magisterial inquiry into the death of a nine-year-old Dalit girl following an alleged sexual assault, even as a controversy erupted after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi tweeted a picture of him meeting her parents.

While the BJP accused Rahul Gandhi of "furthering" his political agenda, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights asked Twitter to take action against the Congress leader's handle for sharing the photo on the platform, saying it violates the Juvenile Justice and POCSO acts.

The Delhi Police Wednesday transferred the case to Crime Branch. Delhi Police PRO Chinmoy Biswal said it was done for further expeditious and scientific investigation in order for speedy trial in the interest of justice.

CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat wrote to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and demanded urgent action against the guilty.

During the day, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Gandhi and Karat met the parents of the girl and assured them of all possible help. The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) also demanded a speedy investigation into the case.

Kejriwal said his government will order a magisterial inquiry

into the case and announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for the family of the girl. The girl died under mysterious circumstances when she went to get water from a cooler at a crematorium in the Old Nangal area of southwest Delhi last Sunday. Her parents alleged that she was raped and her body was forcibly cremated by a crematorium priest who had falsely claimed that she was electrocuted.

Hundreds of locals, including the girl's parents, have been staging a protest near the site of the incident, demanding capital punishment for the guilty. Meanwhile, the NCPDR sent a letter to the resident grievance officer of Twitter, saying it received a complaint that a photo of the girl's family was posted on Rahul Gandhi's Twitter handle with the caption stating that they are the father and the mother of the child.

"In the said photo, the faces of the victim's father and mother can be seen which thereby reveals the identity of the girl," the apex child rights body said.

"Therefore, posting of the photo of the minor victim's family on the said Twitter handle has been observed by the commission to be a violation of Section 74 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015, Section 23 of the POCSO Act, 2012, Section 228A of the IPC and the guidelines of the Hon'ble court as well," it said.

Bengal flood: 23 dead, PM dials Mamata

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, August 4: The flood situation in West Bengal worsened Wednesday claiming 8 more lives taking the death toll to 23 as fresh areas went under water, with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee complaining to Prime Minister Narendra Modi that the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) caused the "man-made" deluge by releasing water from its dams in an unprecedented manner.

The DVC, however, said that it discharges water after taking consent of the state government and blaming it for the flood is not justified. The Prime Minister tele-

phoned Banerjee in the afternoon to take stock of the flood situation which affected seven districts of the state. During the talks, the CM blamed the DVC for the flood in the state and raised the issue in a letter she wrote to Modi in the evening.

Heavy rain and subsequent discharge of water in the last few days have inundated large parts of Purba and Paschim Bardhaman, Paschim Medinipur, Hooghly, Howrah, South 24 Parganas and Birbhum districts.

The death toll was 15 till Tuesday evening and the number of affected districts was six. A tweet issued by the Prime Minister's Office

29 ministers inducted into Bommai Cabinet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bangalore, August 4: Karnataka's new government headed by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai took shape Wednesday, when 29 ministers were sworn into the state Cabinet by Governor Thaaawarchand Gehlot at Raj Bhavan in Bengaluru.

The team is a mixture of senior and fresh faces. It includes Govind Karajol, KS Eshwarappa, R Ashok, V Somanna, V Umesh Katti and new faces V Sunil Kumar Araga Jnanendra, Halappa Achar and BC Nagesh and others.

There is a lone woman representative former minister Shashikala Jolle. The prominent omissions include former deputy chief minister Lakshman Savadi, and former ministers S Sureshkumar, Sreemanth Patil, CP Yogeshwar and Aravind Limbavali.

The ministers in the new cabinet include Govind Karajol, KS Eshwarappa, R Ashok, BSriramulu, V Somanna, V Umesh Katti, S Angara, JC Madhuswamy, Araga Jnanendra, Dr Ashwathnarayan CN, CCPatil, Anand Singh, Kota Srinivas Poojari, Prabhu Chouhan, Murgesh Nirani, Shivaram Hebbar, S.T. Somashekar, B.C. Patil, Bhyrathi Basavaraju, Dr K. Sudhakar, K. Gopalaih, Shashikala Jolle, MTB Naagaraju, K.C. Narayana Gowda, B.C. Nagesh, V. Sunilkumar, Halappa Basappa Achar, Shankar Patil Munenakoppa and Muniratna.

2 YRS AFTER ARTICLE 370 ABROGATION

People hope for a prosperous 'Naya Kashmir'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, August 4: Two years after abrogation of Article 370, hope for a prosperous "Naya Kashmir" is alive despite doomsday proponents calling it a "pipe dream".

Rome was not built in a day, argue the supporters of "Naya Kashmir". The Lt Governor Manoj Sinha-led administration is confident that the developmental push and its anti-corruption effort are visible on the ground. "Envisaging projects is a matter of paper work and implementing these on the

ground with the huge funding needed to do so, is a different ball game."

"Huge funds are being spent on every developmental project in J&K. Despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic, the administration has not allowed a single developmental project to be put on hold," said a senior government official. It is reasonable to expect that two years are not enough for the results of development to become palpable on the ground, argue the supporters of J&K's total integration with the rest of the country. Ironically, the disempower-



ment of traditional politicians was seen in J&K as the empowerment of the common man.

"Those who played the king are now worried about losing their personal assets. This is a positive sign, but people need ground level translation of the intention to empower us," said Sajad Ahmad, a shopkeeper in old city Srinagar. Detractors, however, say they don't see the brick and mortar needed to realise the promised dream of making J&K the jewel in the country's crown.

"Not a single developmental milestone has been laid during the last

two years. Be it the laying of the new roads, building of power projects or the construction of the rail link and tunnel making, all these were started during the tenure of Dr Manmohan Singh. "Just give me one example of any developmental achievement we have seen during the last two years," former Chief Minister Omar Abdullah noted.

While politicians on the either side of the divide cannot be expected to agree on post August 5, 2019 developments, the common man in J&K says the last two years have been very hard and trying for him.

international

of the day quote

Every Belarusian who can be a target for criminals in connection with his public political position must receive special and reliable protection



VOLODYMYR ZELENSKIY | PRESIDENT, UKRAINE

I am aware that my position as Prime Minister continues to be questioned. Hence, I have informed the King that I will determine my legitimacy as Prime Minister in parliament



MUHYIDDIN YASSIN | PM, MALAYSIA

It is a shame that Jews feel threatened in our country. Especially in view of our history, we have a special obligation to protect Jews and Jewish life in Germany



ANJA KARLICZEK | EDUCATION AND RESEARCH MINISTER, GERMANY

SHORT TAKES

Global Covid toll surpasses 200M

Washington: Coronavirus cases worldwide surpassed 200 million Wednesday, according to a Reuters tally, as the more-infectious Delta variant threatens areas with low vaccination rates and strains healthcare systems.

Indian students in UK's new plan

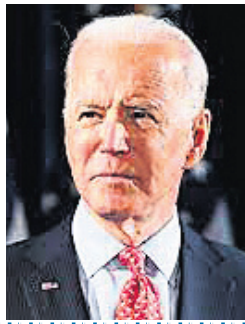
London: As many as 40,000 students from the UK will be able to study and work abroad under the British government's new Turing Scheme, with India among 150 international destinations for such placements.

Three killed in Czech train crash

Prague: Three people died and dozens more were injured Wednesday when two trains collided at a village in the west of the Czech Republic, according to railway officials.

Khan names next premier of PoK

Islamabad: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan Wednesday nominated his party's lawmaker Abdul Qayyum Niazi as the next premier of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir after extensive consultations.



We have committed to over a half a billion doses. And we're trying to provide for more and provide for the capacity of countries like India to be able to produce the vaccine themselves. We're helping them do that

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

INDONESIA CROSSES 1L COVID FATALITIES

Indonesia crossed 100,000 Covid-19 deaths Wednesday, a grim milestone in a country struggling with its worst pandemic wave fueled by the delta variant, amid concerns the actual figure could be much higher



Mediterranean a 'wildfire hotspot'

In Turkey, a key metric of fire intensity - the "fire radiative power", which measures energy produced from burning trees and other matter - reached the highest daily values since data records began in 2003



AGENCIES

Brussels, August 4: The Mediterranean has become a wildfire hotspot, with Turkey hit by its most intense blazes on record and a heat wave producing a high risk of further fires and smoke pollution around the region, a European Union atmosphere monitor said Wednesday.

Greece Tuesday recording temperatures of over 46 Celsius (115 Fahrenheit). Human-induced climate change is making heat waves more likely and more severe, scientists say.

said the emissions and intensity of wildfires are rapidly increasing in Turkey and Southern Italy. Plumes of smoke from fires in southern Turkey were clearly visible in satellite images of the region, and the severe scale of the fires had caused high levels of particulate matter pollution over the Eastern Mediterranean area, CAMS said.

EU sends help

Fire-fighting resources from EU nations are on their way to Greece, Italy, Albania and Northern Macedonia to help fight forest blazes, the EU crisis management commissioner said Wednesday.

fires as the smoke they emit can have impacts on air quality locally and downwind," said Copernicus senior scientist Mark Parrington. Italy, Albania, Morocco, Greece, North Macedonia and Lebanon have all faced wildfires since late July.

CITING DELTA THREAT

CDC announces new eviction moratorium

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Washington, August 4: Under pressure from progressive Democrats, US health authorities Tuesday declared a new moratorium on tenant evictions until October in much of the country, citing public health risks posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.



ants extra time to access funds previously issued by Congress to help people pay rent, President Joe Biden said from the White House. For bureaucratic reasons, these payments were incredibly slow in reaching the US population - only \$3 billion has thus far been distributed to households out of \$25 billion allotted to states and localities in early February.

HIJACKERS LEFT SHIP OFF UAE COAST: UK AGENCY



ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Tuesday, intruders boarded a Panama-flagged asphalt tanker called Asphalt Princess sailing off the coast of Fujairah
Oman military's official news agency said it received reports that the Asphalt Princess had been hijacked
The military dispatched Royal Air Force maritime patrol aircraft and naval vessels
The same evening six oil tankers announced around the same time that they were "not under command"

Satellite-tracking data for the Asphalt Princess had showed it gradually heading toward Iranian waters off the port of Jask early Wednesday
Hours later, it stopped and changed course toward Oman, just before the British navy group declared the hijackers had departed and the vessel was now "safe"

Fujairah, August 4: The hijackers who captured a vessel off the coast of the United Arab Emirates in the Gulf of Oman departed the targeted ship Wednesday, the British navy reported, as recorded radio traffic appeared to reveal a crew member onboard saying Iranian gunmen had stormed the asphalt tanker.

"Iranian people are onboard with ammunition," the crew member says. "We are ... now, drifting. We cannot tell you exact our ETA to (get to) Sohar," the port in Oman listed on the vessel's tracker as its destination. It was not clear whether the crew members, whom he identified as Indian and Indonesian, were in immediate danger.

spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh Tuesday denied that Iran played any role. He described the recent maritime attacks in the Persian Gulf as "completely suspicious." Over the past years, the rising tensions have played out in the waters of the Persian Gulf, where just last week a drone attack on an oil tanker linked to an Israeli billionaire off the coast of Oman killed two crew members.

China curbs overseas travel

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beijing, August 4: China Wednesday tightened overseas travel restrictions for its citizens as part of efforts to contain rising Coronavirus cases, after reporting its highest number of infections in months. The movement of people is coming under more restriction inside China - with localised transport closures and stay-at-home orders in places in some cities - and beyond China's borders.

Coronavirus Immigration authorities said they would temporarily not be issuing ordinary passports and other entry-exit documents for non-essential reasons

tire cities and locked down millions, with the official figures n Wednesday revealing 71 new infections - the most since January, but still a low caseload despite the outbreak spreading to dozens of cities. The outbreak, which began when an infection among passengers on a flight from Moscow spread to airport cleaners in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, has exposed weaknesses in the country's already strict border containment measures.

Indian held in US for \$2.3M fraud scheme

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, August 4: Law enforcement agencies have arrested an Indian national in New Jersey on charges of fraudulently obtaining at least USD2.3 million from elderly victims by impersonating fraud prevention representatives from the US. Charged with conspiracy to commit wire fraud, Ashish Bajaj, 28, appeared Tuesday afternoon in federal court in the Middle District of North Carolina. He faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a USD250,000 fine, or twice the gross gain or loss from the offense.

HORRENDOUS PAST



People fill the street at a march for children after the discovery of hundreds of graves of children at indigenous residential schools across Canada in Chemainus, British Columbia

Mired in crises, Lebanon marks year since horrific blast

THE EXPLOSION WENT DOWN AS ONE OF THE LARGEST NON-NUCLEAR BLASTS IN HISTORY THAT KILLED AT LEAST 214 PEOPLE

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beirut, August 4: Lebanon Wednesday marks a year since a cataclysmic explosion ravaged Beirut, with a mix of grief over lost lives and rage at the impunity for its worst peacetime disaster at a time when its economy was already in tatters.

whose shockwave was felt as far away as Cyprus. Port workers were buried under gutted grain silos, firefighters battling the fire that preceded the blast were pulverised, commuters crushed to death and residents lacerated by supersonic shards of glass bled out in their homes.



willing to "break bones" in upcoming protests. "We are done with routine and peaceful demonstrations... beware

Lebanon's political class has hidden behind its proclaimed immunity to avoid prosecution. Amnesty International accused the Lebanese authorities of "shamelessly obstructing" justice. Human Rights Watch published a long report accusing Lebanon ministers of "criminal negligence". The leaders are yet to agree on a government lineup despite being given a mid-September deadline last year by Paris

of our anger," said Ibrahim Hoteit, a spokesperson for the families. According to foreign and Lebanese intelligence reports seen by AFP, hundreds of tonnes of fertiliser were carelessly stored in the same warehouse as tonnes of fireworks and rolls of detonating cord, among other dangerous materials. The reports, all dating back to last year, suggest that welding work caused the original fire. However, more thorough investigations have yet to ascertain that fact and answer how the shipment got there in the first place, or why the deadly assortment of hazardous materials was left to fester in the same location for years.



AGEL's growth continues to accelerate. In just two years, it has marched to the very forefront of the world's renewable energy brigade, accelerating the transition to green energy faster than any other company in the world

GAUTAM ADANI | CHAIRMAN, ADANI GROUP

BIRLA QUILTS VODAFONE IDEA

Vodafone Idea Wednesday said its board accepted the request of Aditya Birla group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla to step down as non-executive director and non-executive chairman of the board. Himanshu Kapania, currently a non-executive director, has been appointed as non-executive chairman



of the day quote

India, today is a top market for inward remittance globally, receiving around \$83bn p.a. remitted by over 30 million expats and PIO overseas. We at NIPL are focussed on bringing about the superior cross-border experience through our cutting-edge real-time payment solution - UPI

RITESH SHUKLA | CEO, NIPL

The MPC has kept key policy rates unchanged since May 2020, after having brought them down to a record low of 4% from 5.15% through two rate cuts (75 bps in March 2020 and 40 bps in May 2020), to assuage the economic consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic

M GOVINDA RAO | CEA, BRICKWORK RATINGS

With our rapid client and revenue expansion in India and across the world, we're geared to becoming the global leader in the CX Automation space and are bullish on building our product, partnerships, teams, and community to truly democratize AI in the near future

RAGHU RAVINUTALA | CEO & CO-FOUNDER, YELLOW.AI

Service sector shrinks for third straight month

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 4: India's services sector remained in contraction territory for the third straight month in July, as business activity, new orders and employment declined further largely due to the Covid-19 pandemic and local restrictions, a monthly survey said Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted India Services Business Activity Index rose from 41.2 in June to 45.4 in July, but was stuck in the red due to subdued demand conditions amid the Covid-19 crisis. In Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"The current Covid-19 environment continued to weigh on the performance of the service sector that is so crucial to the Indian economy. July data was somewhat disappointing, with incoming new business and output falling solidly over the month, but there was at least a slowdown in rates of contraction," Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at IHS Markit, said.

Looking ahead, firms were pessimistic about the 12-month outlook for output for the first time in a year. "Uncertainty over when the pandemic will end, as well as concerns about inflationary pressures and financial troubles, dampened business confidence in July. Service providers were pessimistic towards the outlook for business activity for the first time in a year," Lima said.

In line with sustained falls in new work, there was a further reduction in service sector jobs during July.

Employment contracted for the eighth consecutive month, albeit at a moderate pace that was slower than that seen in June. Another



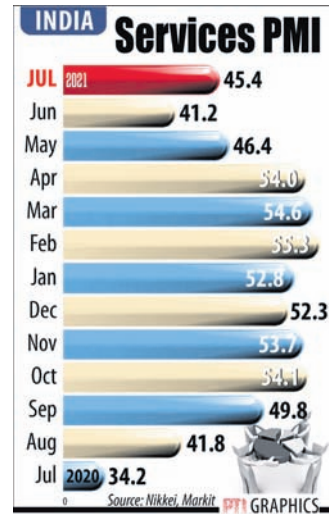
The current Covid-19 environment continued to weigh on the performance of the service sector that is so crucial to the Indian economy. July data was somewhat disappointing, with incoming new business and output falling solidly over the month

POLLYANNA DE LIMA, ECONOMICS ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR, IHS MARKIT

factor weighing on jobs was an overall view that business activity will decline over the course of the coming 12 months.

"Companies were pessimistic for the first time in a year. The downbeat assessment for output stemmed from concerns over the pandemic, margins and inflation," the survey noted.

Meanwhile, the July data pointed to a third consecutive monthly decline in Indian private sector activity. The Composite PMI Output Index, which measures combined services and manufacturing output, rose from 43.1 in June to 49.2 in July, but remained in the contraction territory.



On the inflation front, the latest data also pointed to an intensification of inflationary pressures across the sector.

Survey participants reported higher prices paid for a wide range of items such as fuel, medical equipment and raw materials. The overall rate of inflation quickened from June and outpaced its long-run average. Output charges also rose at a quicker pace in July.

SHORT TAKES

IBM to set up software lab

Kochi: IBM Wednesday announced that it is working to set up a software lab in Kochi, during a discussion between Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan, Sandip Patel, MD, IBM India, and Gaurav Sharma, Vice-President, IBM India Software Labs. The three discussed the role of technology in accelerating the digital mission in the state. During the virtual meeting, Vijayan shared his vision of making Kerala a digital knowledge economy.

Adi Godrej to step down

New Delhi: Veteran industrialist and Godrej Group Chairman Adi Godrej will step down from the board of Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) next month. After stepping down from the board with effect from September 30, he will remain as Chairman Emeritus of the FMCG firm, according to a statement issued Wednesday. The 79-year-old industrialist passed on the baton of GCPL to his younger daughter Nisaba Godrej in 2017 after leading the company for 17 years.

Rupee climbs to over 5-week high

Mumbai: The Indian rupee added another 9 paise to mark its highest level in over five weeks at 74.19 against the US dollar Wednesday, aided by bullish equities and subdued crude oil prices. Further, gains in Asian peers against the US dollar too bolstered rupee sentiment. At the interbank forex market, the rupee opened at 74.16 and hit an intra-day high of 74.08 and a low of 74.24. It finally closed at 74.19, higher by 9 paise over its last close.

'AI piles up losses of about ₹70,820cr'

New Delhi: Air India (AI) has been suffering heavy losses since its merger with Indian Airlines in 2007 and it has accumulated losses of about ₹70,820 crore till March 31, 2020, MoS for Civil Aviation VK Singh said Wednesday. Financial bids for AI are likely to be received from qualified interested bidders by September 15 this year. The Centre had invited EoIs for AI January 27, 2020. The last date of submission, after multiple extensions due to the pandemic, of EoIs was December 14, 2020.

SBI net profit in Q1 surges 55 pc to ₹6,504 crore

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 4: The country's biggest bank SBI Wednesday posted a 55 per cent rise in stand-alone net profit at ₹6,504 crore for the first quarter of the current financial year, helped by decline in bad loans. The lender had reported a net profit of ₹4,189.34 crore in the April-June quarter of 2020-21.

State Bank of India's (SBI) stand-alone total income increased to ₹77,347.17 crore in the first quarter of 2021-22 as against ₹74,457.86 crore in the same period a year ago, according to regulatory filing.

The operating profit of the bank increased 5 per cent to ₹18,975 crore from ₹18,061 crore in the April-June quarter of the previous fiscal. However, interest income of the bank declined marginally to ₹65,564 crore as against ₹66,500 crore at the end of June 2020.



Net interest margin too slipped to 3.15 per cent as against 3.24 per cent at the end of first quarter of last year. The bank's gross non-performing assets (NPA) of the total advances declined to 5.32 per cent at June-end from 5.44 per cent at June-end last year.

Similarly, net NPAs also declined to 1.7 per cent in June 2020 against 1.8 per cent a year ago. As a result, the provision for bad loans declined to ₹5,029.79 crore from ₹9,420.46 in the same period a year ago.

About Health Insurance Portability

Health insurance portability allows you to switch your policy from insurer A to insurer B along with the credits you have gained for time exclusions and pre-existing ailments. Portability ensures that insurers keep delivering excellent service to the customer if they want to retain them. It also gives customers the freedom to change the insurer without losing on cumulative bonus and time-bound benefits if they are not satisfied with their insurer.

The Procedure
You can port your policy close to the renewal which should be initiated 45 days in advance from the time of renewal. For porting your policy, you need to also submit a new

BIZ BUZZ

Essar expands UK aviation footprint

New Delhi: Essar Oil (UK) Limited, which owns and operates the Stanlow Manufacturing Complex at Ellesmere Port, the UK, announced on Wednesday that it has begun supplying jet fuel directly to airlines at the Cardiff Airport, with new deals having already been secured with various carriers that operate flights from the Wales facility. Essar's aviation fuel business has grown lately, with direct supply arrangements now in place with carriers at five major airports across the UK - Manchester, Birmingham, London Stansted, Leeds-Bradford and Cardiff.



India, WB sign \$250mn project

New Delhi: The Indian government, the Central Water Commission, representatives from 10 participating states, and the World Bank on Wednesday signed a \$250 million project for long-term dam safety programme and improving the safety and performance of existing dams across various states. The Second Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project (DRIP-2) will strengthen dam safety by building dam safety guidelines, bringing in global experience, and introducing innovative technologies. Another major innovation envisaged under the project, that is likely to transform dam asset management, is the introduction of a risk-based approach to dam asset management that will help to effectively allocate financial resources towards priority dam safety needs. The project will be implemented in approximately 120 dams across Odisha and nine other states, and at the national level through the CWC.

Large cos add net 56K jobs in FY21: Report

Mumbai: Large corporates, mostly private sector banks and three major software firms, have added net 56,000-odd jobs during the financial year 2020-21, which is a paltry 1.6 per cent growth over FY20, when the net employment generation in the organised sector grew 4.5 per cent, according to a report. CARE Ratings in the report said 423 companies added a modest 1.6 per cent to their payrolls in 2020-21 as against 4.5 per cent more additions in 2019-20. While they added a gross 1.08 lakh, of that three IT companies alone contributed around 70,000, it added. The report is based on the analysis of the annual reports of large 423 companies across 29 sectors.

Odisha proposes to set up 50 SFURTI clusters

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: The government of Odisha has proposed the Centre to set up 50 new Scheme of Fund for Regeneration of Traditional Industries (SFURTI) clusters in the state. Odisha MSME Principal Secretary Satyabrata Sahu submitted the Centre in a bid to promote traditional industries in the state.

Sahu submitted the proposal to Union MSME Secretary BB Swain, Food Processing Secretary Pushpa Subramaniam and Banking Secretary D Panda during his recent visit to Delhi. He said that

each cluster will be established with estimated investment of ₹2 crore to ₹5 crore. He also requested the Union Government to sanction ₹50 crore each for the development of 50 industrial projects in Odisha.

Sahu also requested the Central Government to establish five more centers like CTTC and a MSME University in Odisha to empower the state's youth. He also requested Banking Secretary to ask Odisha's banking leaders to disburse loans under Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME) scheme and Prime Minister's

Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) scheme.

Moreover, MSME Principal Secretary urged to commence steps for exporting paddy from Odisha, a surplus paddy producing state to Asian countries for the benefits of the farmers.

Sahu urged the central government to take steps for value addition of agri-products at the block level and develop container facilities in Paradip, Dharma and Gopalpur ports for the smooth transportation of goods. He also pleaded the Centre to appoint a foreign trade expert in Odisha in order to promote export.

'India needs 3 private players in telecom, hope govt offers support'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 4: Bharti Airtel CEO Gopal Vittal Wednesday asserted that a large nation like India needs three private players in the telecom sector, and hoped the government would take measures to offer relief to the industry that is facing "serious financial stress". The comments assume significance in the backdrop of Vodafone Idea's desperate struggle to stay afloat.

Aditya Birla Group Chairman Kumar Mangalam Birla had in June this year offered to hand over the group's stake in debt-laden Vodafone Idea Ltd (VIL) to the government or any other entity to ensure that the company remains a going concern.

Speaking at the Q1 earnings call, Airtel CEO Gopal Vittal said, "I think just from national perspective, it would be appropriate to see an industry structure where three players not just survive, but thrive and of course the government player is always there."

"I feel as a country we do need three players... It is a large enough country with 1.3 billion people, which can easily accommodate three (private) players in this market," Vittal said.

The top boss of Airtel was responding to an analyst query on how the company perceives industry structure to be in the next 1-2 years, and whether the Sunil Mittal-led telco is prepared for a two-player market, if the situation arose. "There is clearly a situation of serious financial stress in the industry and we have seen one of the players actually saying to the government that they may not be able to pay their dues coming up in March 2022. We hope that



From a national perspective, it would be appropriate to see an industry structure where three players not just survive, but thrive and of course the government player is always there, said Vittal

the government does something to provide some relief to the industry," Vittal said.

Flagging the "extremely low" ARPU (Average Revenue Per User) in the Indian telecom market, Vittal said that the level needs to rise to ₹200 and eventually ₹300.

"As we have always said, ARPU in India is extremely low and at this level, our return on capital is in the low single digit. ARPU must rise first to (Rs) 200 and eventually to (Rs) 300," Vittal said. If ARPU rises, then industry repair can "certainly happen", he noted.

Having three private players in the telecom market would be an "appropriate outcome" for a country as large as India, he said, adding that substantial investments have already been infused by the industry.

Modicare registers 52 pc growth in state

The company has clocked over ₹160 crore in revenue within a year in Odisha



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 4: Modicare Limited, one of India's leading direct selling companies, has witnessed a growth of 52% in sales in Odisha within a year. The company authorities announced about this feat during a virtual press conference, Wednesday. Modicare has clocked in revenue of over ₹160 crore in a year in the state. Now, the company is looking to reach ₹215 crore this fiscal.

Samir Modi, Founder and Managing Director, Modicare Limited said, "Odisha has consistently been amongst our top three markets since inception and continues to grow at a fast pace. In last one year, despite the pandemic, Odisha has registered a fantastic

growth of 52%. This is due to the unmatched dedication and diligence of our consultants across the state.

Our commitment to providing world-class products at value prices has been a big part of our success story. Odisha continues to be an integral part of our growth strategy and will continue to drive business momentum."

Committed to providing world-class products to its consultants, Modicare has launched over 100 new products in nutrition, health & wellness, personal care and food & beverages categories.

It has also been adding to its consultant-base in Odisha. Despite the disruptions caused by the pandemic, the brand's consultant base has grown by 66% in the state in a year.

A comprehensive guide to Health Insurance Portability

proposal form in addition to the portability form. Once the new insurer receives your portability request, they will approach the existing insurer to know your medical and claims history. The new insurer might accept, propose restricted covers or reject the request basis to their underwriting norms.

Documents required
Below is a list of essential documents required while porting your health policy:

- Proposal form
- Portability form
- Identity proof
- Address proof
- Claims history (if any)
- Medical history

There are few things you should

keep in mind while porting your health cover:

Sum insured
If you opt for an increase in sum insured, please note that the waiting period benefit will apply only to the amount of the older sum insured. Suppose your sum insured with insurer A was 5 lakh and while porting you wish to increase this to 7 lakh then the portable sum insured will be that of 5 lakh and for the remaining 2 lakh you will have to serve the waiting period with the new insurer.

Restrictions on the cover
Go through the terms and conditions of the policy and understand the restrictions in the cover, if any. Look for a policy that does not impose too many restrictions

on the coverage. Many people port insurers because the second insurer is offering a lower premium; this lower premium comes at the cost of restricted cover. It is imperative to understand the coverage extended by the new insurer. Clearly understand the limits and sub-limits capped by the

insurer. This will help avoid confusion during claims.

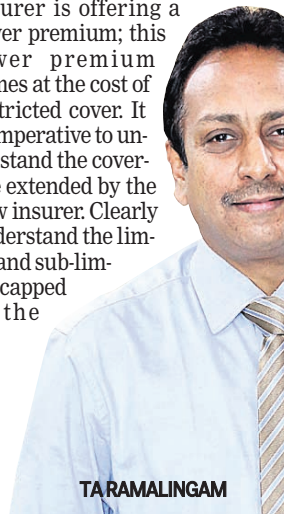
I want to highlight that when you move from insurer A to insurer B, you get to port time served for pre-existing ailments, waiting period, no claim bonus, if any, but not the features of the policy. Every policy has some unique features. Attain a clear understanding of the features of both the policies to know what you are leaving behind and what additional benefits you will be acquiring.

Another important point to

keep in mind is that you must correctly disclose all the details pertaining to your medical and claims history to avoid any hassles of non-disclosure. Transparency is a crucial element that ensures a smooth transition.

Health insurance portability gives you the freedom to move around and explore other offerings but you should evaluate your options thoroughly, understand the coverage and restrictions, along with doing a comparative study before opting for portability. Making an informed decision always helps in avoiding surprises later.

(TA Ramalingam is the Chief Technical Officer, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance)



TA RAMALINGAM

EVES GO DOWN FIGHTING

Heartbreak for Indian women's hockey team as they lose 1-2 against Argentina in the semifinals at Tokyo 2020; to play for bronze versus Great Britain

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, August 4: A brave Indian women's hockey team put up a gritty performance but it was not enough to secure a maiden Olympic final berth as it lost 1-2 to World No.2 Argentina in a hard-fought semifinal of the ongoing Games here Wednesday.

India still have a chance to win the bronze medal as they will take on Great Britain in the third-fourth place play-off match Friday. The Netherlands will play Argentina in the final the same day.

The Indians fought valiantly and gave Argentina a run for their money by taking the lead in the second minute through a penalty corner conversion by Gurjit Kaur. But the Las Leonas bounced back strongly with skipper Maria Barrionuevo's (18th, 36th minutes) twin strikes from penalty corners to secure the hard-fought win.

The bunch of 18 fearless and determined Indian women had already done the unthinkable when they stunned three-time champions Australia 1-0 Monday to enter the Olympic semifinals for the first time.

Coming into the match, the odds were totally against India but the side led by talismanic Rani Rampal and coached by master tactician Sjoerd Marijne exceeded expectations.

India's best performance in the Olympics came way back in the 1980 Moscow Games where they finished fourth out of six teams. In that edition of the Games, women's hockey made its debut in the Olympics and the sport was played in a round-robin format with top two teams qualifying for the final.

Even though Argentina dominated in terms of possession, it was India who got the all-important lead. Despite penetrating their opponent's circle on numerous occasions, Argentina failed to create a clear cut chance in the first quarter as the Indians defended stoutly.



Indian women's team players react after losing their match against Argentina, Wednesday. PTI PHOTO

It was India who grabbed both hands, the first opportunity that came their way. India secured a penalty corner with their first circle penetration and it was perfectly converted by Gurjit with a powerful drag-flick to hand her side an unexpected lead.

Thereafter it was all Argentina, which exerted tremendous pressure on the Indian defence with relentless attacks. Most of Argentina's attacks came from the left flank and they kept up the pressure on the Indian defence in the

second quarter.

Minutes into the second quarter, Argentina secured two penalty corners in quick time, the second of which was converted by skipper Barrionuevo to level the scores.

India got two more penalty corners in the second quarter but wasted both. Three minutes from half time, Argentina earned their fourth penalty corner of the match, again from an attack from the left flank, but this time the Indian defence was up to the task.

Argentina continued in the same vein after the change of ends and attacked the Indian goal, securing two more penalty corners soon and once again Barrionuevo was

bang on target.

Barrionuevo's flick crashed into the board after getting a deflection of Sushila Chanu's legs as Argentina took a 2-1 lead. The difference between the two sides was the battle in the mid-field which the Argentines won hands down.

The Indians were also guilty of sitting back and defending and not forcing the pace after taking the lead.

Trailing by a goal, the Indians showed intent in the fourth quarter and put the Argentine defence under pressure in search of the equaliser. This is something which they needed to do after taking the lead.

India put continuous pressure in the last 15 minutes and secured their fourth and final penalty corner in the 51st minute but experienced Argentina goalkeeper Maria Succi made a brilliant save to deny Gurjit.

Seventeen seconds from the final hooter, Succi came to her side's rescue again when she brilliantly kept out Navneet Kaur's deflection from Udit's hit from outside the circle.

The Indians immediately asked for a referral for dangerous ball but the TV umpire rejected it, breaking the hearts of the courageous lot, who can hold their heads high in pride.

A throw for Neeraj to make into finals

TOKYO: Medal contender Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian javelin thrower to enter the finals of the Olympic Games with a stunning throw of 86.65m in his opening attempt that put him on top of the qualification round here Wednesday.

The 23-year-old kept India's hopes of an elusive Olympic medal from athletics alive by earning a direct entry into the finals to be held on Saturday as he sent the spear well past the qualifying mark of 83.50m in his first attempt.

However, Shivpal Singh, failed to make the final cut with a below-par best throw of 76.40m, which he came up in his first attempt, to finish a lowly 12th in the Group B qualification which featured 16 athletes.

Competing in his first Olympics, Chopra took just a few seconds to make the final round. He topped the Group A contest as well as the two qualification rounds. Chopra is, however, under no illusion that the final will be a totally different contest where the world's best will go for podium finish. "It will be a different feeling

(in the finals), since it is my first time in the Olympics. Physically we (all) train hard, and are ready but I also need to focus on the throw, and try to repeat this (performance) with a higher score," said the youngster who came into the Olympics with the fourth best throw (88.07m) this year.

Chopra's performance Saturday will go down as one of the best performances by an Indian in the Olympics, as he finished ahead of gold medal favourite and 2017 world champion Johannes Vetter of Germany.

Vetter, who had earlier said that Chopra will find it tough to beat him in the Olympics, struggled in his first two throws before crossing the automatic qualification mark with a 85.64m final throw.

The 28-year-old towering German, who came into the Olympics after having seven monster throws of over 90m between April and June, was lying at a dangerous seventh position after his first two throws but eventually qualified for the final at second overall behind Chopra.

Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who had won a bronze medal when

Chopra clinched gold in the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia, topped Group B to earn an automatic qualification to the finals with a second round

throw of 85.16m. He qualified for the finals at overall third behind Chopra and Vetter.



Lovlina settles for bronze

TOKYO: Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) signed off with a bronze medal in her debut Olympic Games after a comprehensive 0-5 loss to reigning world champion Busenaz Surmeneli here Wednesday, bringing an end to the country's campaign in the sport here.

Up against quite literally a bully in the ring, Borgohain was completely out-punched by the gold medal favourite Turkish boxer, who produced a thoroughly dominating performance.

Borgohain, who hails from Assam, also coped a one point deduction in the second round for not paying attention to the referee's instructions despite a couple of cautions.

"I don't know what to say. I could not execute what I had planned. I could have done better," Borgohain told PTI after the loss.

The Indian's start was not all that bad as she stood up to the strong challenge but she came undone after Surmeneli got down to connecting her vicious

hooks and body shots.

The third round was especially punishing for Borgohain, who faced two standing eight counts during the bout.

Surmeneli was unrelenting in all

three rounds after being unsettled only slightly in the opening few seconds when Borgohain tried to keep her at long range and struck only counter-attacking straight hits.

The flamboyant Turkish boxer didn't just out-punch her rival after that but also taunted her with some showboating, including dropping her guard to dare the Indian.

Nonetheless, Borgohain goes home a history-maker as the 23-year-old, who started her career as a Muay Thai practitioner, has become only the third Indian boxer to ensure a podium finish at the showpiece after Vijender Singh (2008) and MC Mary Kom (2012). Hers is also the first Olympic medal in Indian boxing in nine years.



MEDAL TALLY

Rank	Country	G	S	B	Total
1	China	32	22	16	70
2	USA	25	31	23	79
3	Japan	21	7	12	40
4	Great Britain	15	18	15	48
5	Australia	15	4	17	36
6	ROC	14	21	18	53
7	Germany	8	8	16	32
8	France	6	10	9	25
9	Italy	6	9	15	30
10	Netherlands	6	8	9	23
65	India	0	1	2	3

INDIA'S SCHEDULE

ATHLETICS: KT Irfan, Rahul Rohilla and Sandeep Kumar in men's 20km race walk event: **1:00pm IST.**

GOLF: Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar in women's individual stroke play round 2: **4:00am IST.**

HOCKEY: India vs Germany in men's bronze medal match: **7:00am IST.**

WRESTLING: Vinesh Phogat vs Sofia Magdalena Mattsson (Sweden) in women's freestyle 53kg; **8:00am IST;** Anshu Malik vs Valeria Koblova (ROC) in repechage round of women's freestyle 57kg; second bout after **7:30am IST** start; Ravi Dahiya vs Zaur Uguev (Russian Olympic Committee) in men's freestyle 57kg final; ninth bout after **2:45pm IST** start; Deepak Punia in men's freestyle bronze medal match; 11th bout after **2:45pm IST** start.

Solid start by golfer Aditi

TOKYO: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok got off to a brilliant start at the Olympic Games, carding a four-under 67 in the opening round for a share of the second spot at the Kasumigaseki Country Club here Wednesday.

Aditi, who caught the golfing world's attention five years ago at the Rio Olympics, shared the position with World No.1 Nelly Korda. She was one shot behind the leader, Madalene Sagstrom of Sweden, who shot 66.

Aditi may well have had a share of the lead but for a bogey on the 18th hole. While Sagstrom shot a bogey free five-under 66, Aditi had five birdies against one bogey and that on the closing hole.

She was placed well ahead of some big names in women's golf, including the formidable defending champion, Inbee Park (69).

India's other entrant in the field, Diksha Dagar (76) had a rough start in her maiden Olympics as she had five bogeys and no birdies to lie at the tied 56th spot.

The 60-player field will play 18 holes each day and there will be no cut, so all players get to play 72 holes.

Aditi birdied fifth and ninth from 15 feet and seven feet respectively. On the back nine, she



added birdies on the 13th from 15 feet and another from almost 18 feet on 17th. In between, she had another birdie on 14th from under three feet after a superb approach. Placed at 5-under she bogeyed the last after missing a par from under seven feet.

Among others, South Korea's World No.2 Ko Jin-young, Finland's Matilda Castren and Spaniard

Carlota Ciganda were tied fourth after all three carded 3-under 68 each.

The South Korean team also boasts of the reigning Olympic champion Park Inbee (69) and World No.4 Kim Sei-young (69) who are Tied-7th and sixth-ranked Kim Hyo-joo (70) who is T-16th. New Zealand's former World No.1 Lydia Ko (70) was four behind the leader.

PACERS' SHOW HELP INDIA TAKE CONTROL OF FIRST TEST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nottingham, August 4: Indian pacers breathed fire in helpful conditions to dismiss a vulnerable England batting line-up for 183 and put their team in a strong position on day one of the first Test here Wednesday.

Jasprit Bumrah (4/46) was back in his element and ran through the opposition alongside his new ball partner Mohammad Shami (3/28). In fact, all the pacers including Mohammad Siraj (1/48) and Shardul Thakur (2/41) made the ball talk throughout the England innings lasting 65.4 overs, vindicating the team management's decision to go for a four-pronged pace

attack while leaving out premier spinner R Ashwin from the playing XI. Ravindra Jadeja was picked as the sole spinner.

In response, KL Rahul (9 batting) and Rohit Sharma (9 batting), took India to 21 for no loss at stumps, surviving 13 testing overs from England fast bowlers.

Skipper Joe Root (64, 108b, 11x4) was the only batsman who looked comfortable in the middle and Jonny Bairstow (29), to a certain extent, as the duo shared a 72-run stand.

England, who were 138/4 at tea, lost their last six wickets for 45 runs and if it was not for Sam Curran's unbeaten 27 towards the end, they would have struggled to cross 180.

In the afternoon session, Root and Bairstow frustrated the Indian bowlers with solid Test match batting in challenging conditions, before Shami broke their stand by dismissing the latter in the final ball before the tea. India had their tail up early on in the session when Shami had Dom Sibley (18) caught at short mid-wicket in the third over post lunch.

In the morning, the Indian fast bowlers were up to the task, reducing England to 61/2at lunch. Bumrah dismissed Rory Burns in the very first over before Siraj got rid of dangerous-looking Zak Crawley.

With the sun beating down on Trent Bridge, Root opted to bat on a dry pitch with a decent covering of grass on top.



Jasprit Bumrah celebrates with a teammate after dismissing an England batsman.

SCORECARD

England 1st innings

Rory Burns lbw b Bumrah 0, Dom Sibley c Rahul b Shami 18, Zak Crawley c Pant b Siraj 27, Joe Root lbw b Thakur 64, Jonny Bairstow lbw b Shami 29, Dan Lawrence c Pant b Shami 0, Jos Buttler c Pant b Bumrah 0, Sam Curran not out 27, Ollie Robinson c Shami b Thakur 0, Stuart Broad lbw b Bumrah 4, James Anderson b Bumrah 1; **Extras:** 13 (b-1, lb-8, nb-4); **Total: 183 all out.**

7/155 (Root), 8/155 (Robinson), 9/160 (Broad), 10/183 (Anderson). **Bowling:** Jasprit Bumrah 20.4-4-46-4, Mohammed Shami 17.2-28-3, Mohammed Siraj 12.2-48-1, Shardul Thakur 13.3-41-2, Ravindra Jadeja 3.0-11-0.

India 1st innings

Rohit Sharma batting 9, KL Rahul batting 9; **Extras:** 3 (b-1, lb-1, nb-1); **Total: 21 for no loss.** **Bowling:** James Anderson 3.1-9-0, Stuart Broad 5.1-9-0, Ollie Robinson 4.3-1-0, Sam Curran 1.1-0-0.