



PAN-INDIA APPROACH

Actor Pooja Hegde is never choosy over different film industries and feels comfortable in all of them

LEISURE P2



HIROSHIMA DAY

August 6 is observed as Hiroshima Day to highlight the devastation caused by the nuclear bomb

INTERNATIONAL P10



SILVER FOR DAHIYA

Wrestler Ravi Dahiya loses in the 57kg final at Tokyo Olympics and settles for silver

SPORTS P11

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



There is a three-generation gap between us, dad. You were there when Indian hockey team won an Olympic medal last time!

BRONZE-LETTER DAY

India end medal-less run in Olympic hockey with 5-4 win over Germany

AGENCIES

Tokyo, August 5: It was the moment the entire country was waiting for. At one point of time it seemed that it would be another heart-break. However, the Indian men's hockey team scripted an amazing turnaround to win the Olympics bronze medal by defeating Germany 5-4 in the third-fourth place play-off match here Thursday. And with it, ended India's 41 years of medal-less run in the Olympics.

There will be many more glorious chapters in the annals of Indian hockey in future. However, this bronze will always occupy a very special place. It is this medal which once more put Indian hockey on world map... for long it has been playing second fiddle to other Indian sports. The Manpreet Singh-led side have done what many other legendary teams before them failed to achieve. They regained lost glory, they saw to it that hockey once more united the nation, they made themselves household names.

It seemed at one point of time that the prayers were going to waste when Germany led 3-1. Once again it appeared a case of so near yet so far for the Men in Blue. But then it all changed as Simranjeet Singh (17th, 34th minutes) scored a brace, while Hardik Singh (27th), Harmanpreet Singh (29th) and Rupinder Pal Singh (31st) also got their names on the scorer's tally as



World No.3 India finished on top. Germany's goals were scored by Timur Oruz (second), Niklas Wellen (24th), Benedikt Furk (25th) and Lukas Windfeder (48th).

It is India's third hockey bronze medal in the Olympics. In all, India now have 12 Olympic medals, eight of

them gold, making them the most successful at the showpiece.

But then this game just shouldn't be judged by the nine-goal thriller that it was. It was a game which will be considered as the turning point of Indian hockey should the team maintain the momentum in the years to come. And

for that the two persons who should be credited are coach Graham Reid and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik. It was Reid who imbued in the team the never-say-die attitude and it was evident when India refused to give up even when 1-3 down or for that matter when they were hammered 1-7 by Australia in the Pool A encounter.

Patnaik and the Odisha government came forward to help Indian hockey when it was cash-strapped. Every player likes to have financial stability and the Patnaik-led government gave them that.

The rest as they say is now 'HISTORY'. Salute.



Congratulations to Indian men's hockey team on the spectacular victory to give us an Olympic medal after 41 long years. This historic win at Tokyo will inspire generation of sportspersons. All the very best for future

NAVEEN PATNAIK

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	CHANGE	PERCENTAGE
SENSEX	54492.84	↑	123.07
NIFTY	16294.60	↑	35.80
DOLLAR	74.28	↓	₹0.06
EURO	87.72	↓	₹0.02
GOLD	₹47,579	↓	₹313
SILVER	₹67,114	↓	₹487

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	33.0°C	33.2°C
MIN	27.1°C	26.4°C
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Rainfall	1.1mm	Nil

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Dev asks depts for supl budgets

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The Odisha government has initiated process for the supplementary Budget 2021-22, which will be presented before the Assembly either in October or November. Finance Secretary Vishal Dev has asked all departments to prepare the proposals in accordance with the guidelines issued and submit those by August 25.

Though there are options to borrow during FY 2021-22, the slow recovery of GSDP along with the anticipated third Covid-19 wave may destabilise the debt sustainability achieved by the state due to prudent financial management practices, informed Dev.

However, expenditures related to Covid-19 man-

agement, livelihood and completion of the ongoing Capex projects are to be assessed by the departments in a holistic manner, Dev informed.

In view of the lockdown and shutdown to control Covid-19, Odisha may have to downgrade growth expectation to nine per cent in 2021-22 in comparison to the original estimate of 11.5 per cent projected at the time of formulation of annual Budget, 2021-22.

"The supplementary statement of expenditure, 2021-22 will be an exercise for re-prioritisation of the Budget in which the administrative departments would be allowed to augment the provision in one unit only by locating equivalent savings in some other unit of expenditure," Dev stated.

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leisure



HAYEK DECODES HER ROLE IN HITMAN'S WIFE'S BODYGUARD

Actress Salma Hayek plays the role of international con artist Sonia Kincaid in *Hitman's Wife's Bodyguard* to be released in India August 6. Talking about her character in the film, Salma said: "She's full of contradictions, but I had my own bible of how she thinks and those contradictions make sense to me."

I WILL BE A SUPPORTIVE AND FUN MOTHER: PARIS HILTON

Socialite and entrepreneur Paris Hilton will be a 'supportive and fun' mother when she has children. She said: "I want to be like my mom - like their best friend, where they feel like they can come and talk to me about anything. Very supportive and fun and playful."



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today will be a difficult day full of action. You may not agree with your friends about trifling matters, but you will love it. You will complete all work that has been pending, which will give you relief. Ganesh says it is an optimistic day.

TAURUS
Money matters are likely to take up most of your time, this day. Ganesh sees that you will have quite a time handling the difficulties and complexities they pose. You may not find an easy way out of your financial problems and will find it hard to take firm decisions.

GEMINI
You will feel physical and mental excitement and emotions today. You may take part in some competition and will seek to improve your self-esteem by performing physically in it. Your intellectual capacity will be on display in the work that you do, says Ganesh.

CANCER
Sentimentalism will be hinder your path of success. So, says Ganesh, give up too much sentimentalism. It can be quite a hazard in the future. You will win over people with the force of speech and polite approach.

LEO
You want to make your personal relationships conflict free and hence will attempt to resolve the conflicts which are within you. You will need to adopt a compromising attitude in life. It is best to stay away from risky financial investments today. An event which will make you happy will occur at the end of the day, says Ganesh.

VIRGO
Take time off all by yourself and introspect today, says Ganesh. Office cubicle looks set to be a war front and pay due attention there, lest things turn to be more difficult, advises Ganesh. New love may just blossom today, and you may even enjoy a nice quiet evening with friends.

LIBRA
Ganesh says that today you will get worried over petty matters and be tense. To get mental peace keep yourself occupied with religious or spiritual activity. Along with that if you go to some religious place you will gain mental peace, which will stay with you for a long time.

SCORPIO
Your account balance may suffer suddenly as you decide to loosen your purse strings. You are all set to splurge on your loved ones today, according to Ganesh. However, it is important to remember that the value of money is precious, and once spent it never returns; spend wisely.

SAGITTARIUS
Get ready to rule hearts today. Your thoughtful insights into other people's psyche might just help you write a book on it! In the battleground of love, you will win over your sweetheart all over again, probably with a nice, slow dance coupled with a fantastic candlelit dinner.

CAPRICORN
Your lover is in for many pleasant surprises today. You'll be in a completely romantic mood, making every wish of your sweetheart your command. Both of you will go shopping, and have fun. Extravagant expenditures will keep you charged up for the day.

AQUARIUS
Travelling is on the cards for you today. Ganesh advises you to travel alone, because if you take people with different tastes along with you, their preferences may dampen your mood and spoil the trips. But, once put in such a situation, you will try to adjust yourself and find enjoyment in that, too. Your biggest plus point is the ability to convert your shortcoming into strength.

PISCES
For those looking for a promotion at the work-place, now is the time to ask for it. Freelancers could find interesting projects falling into their laps. Businesses are likely to see a surge in profits. No conflicts in personal life are indicated. Overall, a progressive and pleasant day awaits, says Ganesh.

Shalini opens up on her transformation

Mumbai: Shalini Pandey, who is all set to make her Hindi film debut in the Ranveer Singh starrer *Jayeshbhai Jordaar*, says she has always been confident of her physique and never paid attention to what people were saying about it.

Shalini, who shot to fame with her performance in Arjun Reddy, says that she has never felt the pressure to look a certain way for the industry. She said: "I have always been confident of my physique and I never really paid attention to what people were saying about it. I loved whichever phase I was in physically and never really put pressure on myself to be a certain body type."

She admits that women are unnecessarily scrutinised for how they look. "I feel women are subjected to a lot of pressure to be a certain way physically and that's not right. So, I don't really look at this as a transformation. I look at it as a phase that has been achieved for how I needed to be seen on screen for my role," added the actress.



Kapoor family's new kid set to debut in Faraaz

New Delhi: Zahan Kapoor, another entrant from illustrious Kapoor family is all set to make his debut in Hindi films. Late superstar Shashi Kapoor's grandson Zahan will be seen in Hansal Mehta's directorial *Faraaz*.

Zahan is the son of actor Kunal Kapoor and Sheena Sippy, daughter of filmmaker Ramesh Sippy.

An Anubhav Sinha production, jointly produced by Bhushan Kumar, *Faraaz* is an action thriller depicting the Holey Artisan Cafe terrorist attack that shook Bangladesh in July 2016.

This film chronicles the events that took place on the night of July 1, 2016, in Dhaka where five young militants ravaged the upscale cafe and held over 50 people hostage for nearly 12 dreadful hours. Zahan has been an active theatre actor and photographer. He made his debut at Prithvi Theatre with *Pitaji Please* opposite Makarand Deshpande and Swanand Kirkire. He has staged several performances at Prithvi Theatre which was set up by his grandparents Shashi Kapoor and Jennifer Kapoor in memory of his great grandfather Prithviraj Kapoor.

'Always wanted to be an Indian actor'

Hyderabad: Actress Pooja Hegde might be working in three different film industries at the moment, but she never differentiated between them.

The actress will soon be seen in Hindi films *Kabhi Eid Kabhi Diwali* and *Cirkus*, in Tamil films with *Radhe Shyam* and in Kannada films with *Beast*.

In an interview, the actress, who has been working in various language industries for a while, says that a good mix of everything has worked for her.

"There are pan-India films and then there is another way to

do it where you become a pan-India artist and I think for me it's been a mix of both and that is what has helped me achieve that," says Pooja.

She adds: "I feel like Telugu takes me as their own and now I am doing Tamil and Hindi. I always wanted to be an Indian actor. I never wanted to differentiate between the industries and have treated them all of them like my own."

Pooja had made her Hindi film debut alongside Hrithik Roshan in *Moherjo Daro* back in 2016.

Ludo, Sherni, Sooraraipottru bag top nominations at IFFM

The Best Film winner at IFFM automatically gets a nomination nod under the Best Asian Film category at the annual prestigious Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Awards

Vidya Balan-starrer *Sherni*, anthology *Ludo*, *Sooraraipottru* featuring Suriya and Biswajeet Bora's directorial *God on the Balcony* have been nominated for top honours at the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM) 2021.

The award ceremony will take place virtually August 20. The festival is presented by the Victorian government in Australia. It is an annual festival that takes place in Melbourne, Australia now in its 12th edition; the IFFM 2021 has gone virtual as well as physical due to the global pandemic. This year the festival is launching three categories under the belt of web shows. The festival will recognise Best Series, Best Performance in a series each under the Actor and Actress category. This list of names includes extraordinary films of 2021 such as



Ludo directed by Anurag Basu, Vidya Balan-starrer *Sherni* directed by Amit Masukar, *Sooraraipottru* (Tamil) that stars and is produced by Suriya and directed by Sudha Kongara and *God on the Balcony*, an Assamese film starring Harish Khanna and directed by Biswajeet Bora.

This year's Best Documentary features some of the most compelling stories including *Shut Up*

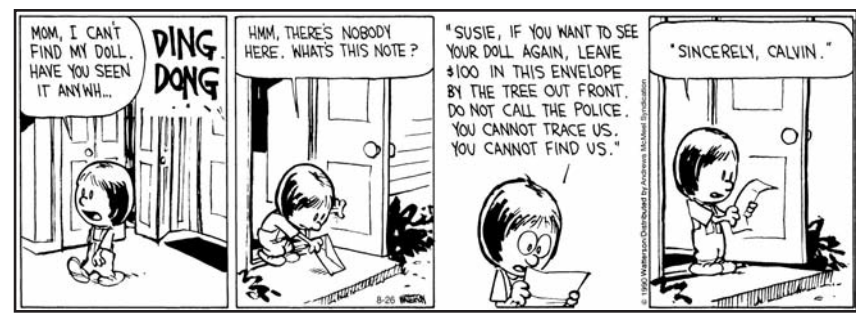
Sona, W.O.M.B, About Mumma, among others. Names such as Rajkumar Rao, Suriya, Pankaj Tripathi, Neel Deshmukh, Koumarane Valavane, Jitin Puthanchery, Harish Khanna and Benjamin Daimary are contending for the Best Actor category. For Best Actress, the nominees are Vidya Balan, Rasika Dugal, Swastika Mukherjee, Kani Kusruti, and Rima Kallingal. Ali Fazal,

Divyenndu, Manoj Bajpayee, Mohammed Zeeshan Ayyub, Pankaj Tripathi and Saif Ali Khan have been named for Best Performance (Male) - Series. For the Best Performance (Female) - Series, names such as Neena Gupta, Prajakta Koli, Rasika Dugal, Samantha Akkineni, Shahana Goswami and Shweta Tripathi Sharma have been nominated.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

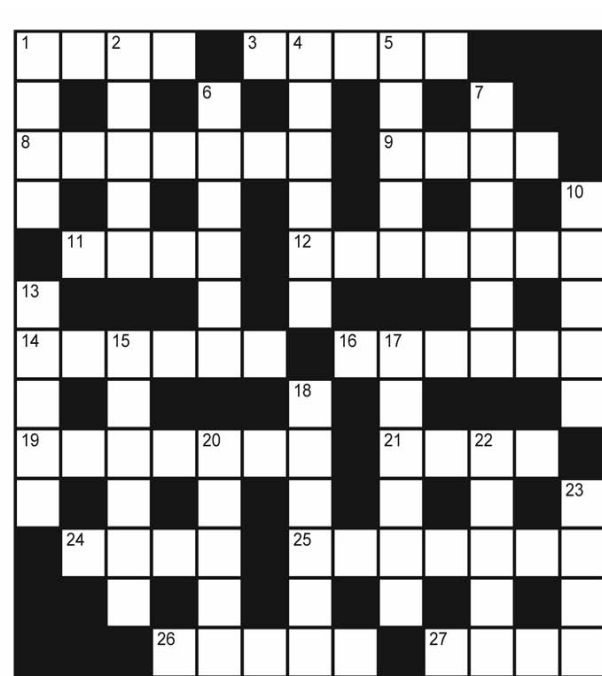


BREVITY



FUN post

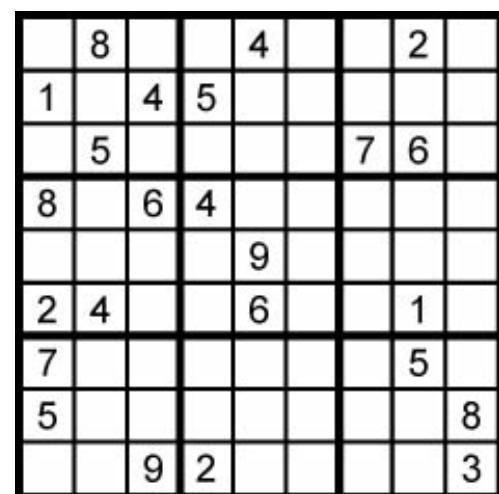
CROSSWORD



- Across**
1 Unexciting
3 Songbird's call
8 Origin of the universe theory (3,4)
9 Emanation
11 Trifling
12 Without weapons
14 Respectful greeting
16 Sock pattern
19 Ill will
- Down**
1 Balance sheet item
2 Vantage point
4 Hardship
5 Wool producer
21 Cajole
24 Mostel of Fiddler fame
25 One in the dock
26 Shade of green
27 Buck the odds
- 6 Up-to-the-minute**
7 Cross
10 Venomous snake
13 Loan shark's interest rate
15 Cavalry member
17 Like
18 Compact furniture
20 Kind of layer
22 Seating request
23 Jittery

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



'Current exam system promotes rote learning, needs overhaul'

POST NEWS NETWORK
BHUBANESWAR: The education system bore the brunt of Covid-19 pandemic as lockdowns and shutdowns left the sector paralysed for more than a year. Amid a raging debate about impact of exams on children's mental health, many feel that current exam system promotes rote learning and hence needs an overhaul.
 This year, the government had decided to hold Class X and XII board exams with a 100-day-window to complete the courses but later CBSE, ICSE, CHSE and BSE exams were cancelled in view of the second wave of the pandemic. Evaluation was made by assess-

the Class X board exams optional and Comprehensive and Continuous Evaluation system (CCE) was implemented as per Right to Education Act (2009) mandate. Parents and teachers preferred the stressful board exams over the decision, leading to the removal of CCE.
 She added, "I think it is wrong to ask for an alternate evaluation process or scrapping



The present marking process is not doing any good to the students as it is leaving them unskilled and not ready for a tough world ahead
BN PATNAIK | CHAIRMAN, CONFEDERATION OF ODISHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

A system that helps in holistic development of a student should be carved out and marks should not be the only concern

ing students' performances in previous exams. The 15-month-long conundrum shot off two very important questions. Is the current examination system effective and necessary? If not, then should it be scrapped completely?
 Shweta Agarwal, a child rights activist working for children's access to formal and non-formal education, said that there has always been a debate around how our exam oriented rote learning system is bad for the children's mental health. In 2010, CBSE made

of board exams for the entire system needs to be changed on ground level. Day-to-day classroom interactions need to be made more intriguing."
 Another child education activist Sujit Mohapatra said, "Our examination system is promoting rote learning and creating undue stress on children, often via their par-

ents. Earlier, exams were important in determining which college one would join for intermediate courses, and that had a major bearing on how one performed in entrances for professional courses. It was seen as a major determinant in one's life then. But now, people obsess themselves over too many unnecessary exams instead of learn-

ing and acquiring knowledge."
 Educationist Naba Kishore Pujari opined that the government's move to put high school exams on hold is a timely decision looking at the upsurge of Covid cases. Many states have also followed the suit. But this will have a psychological impact on students as they have toiled hard to appear for the exam. While this will have a long term impact on students' higher education, this remains the only option. So, the government should be flexible in the graduation system so that it does not harm students' future.

BN Patnaik, educationist and chairman of Confederation of Odisha Public Schools, said that the present marking process is not doing any good to the students as it is leaving them unskilled and not ready for a tough world ahead. In this situation, the focus should be on improving their skills. That can be done through practical work and assignments.
 BSE president Ramashis Hazra said, "The examination system in this country is an age-old practice and we cannot do away with it all of a sudden. The board has started the offline exam for those who had problems with the assessment."

Prasanna Bisoi, a parent and co-chairman of parents' federation, said that the examination system should be made more proactive and technology can help on this front. A system that helps in holistic development of a student should be carved out and marks should not be the only concern.

Experts: NEP to foster multidisciplinary approach

POST NEWS NETWORK
BHUBANESWAR: It was indeed a historical occasion when India decided to revise its National Education Policy (NEP) after 34 years. Many educationists and experts welcomed the education policy for its provisions of bringing the much needed changes in the Indian education system while some others said it would promote multidisciplinary approach in higher education.
 The NEP 2020 is expected to bring changes in the education system in the country and upgrade it as per international standards.
 Recently, India celebrated the first anniversary of formulation of NEP 2020. The Union Cabinet had approved the NEP July 29 last year.



BOOST TO INDIAN LANGUAGES, ART AND CULTURE

The NEP 2020 is expected to open a gateway for promotion of Indian languages, arts and culture, as prioritised in chapter 22 of the policy document. The NEP 2020 chapter 22.9 says, "Outstanding local artists and crafts persons will be hired as guest faculty to promote local music, art, languages, and handicraft, and to ensure that students are aware of the culture and local knowledge where they study. Every higher education institution and even every school or school complex will aim to have Artist(s)-in-Residence to expose students to art, creativity, and the rich treasures of the region/country." "Cultural awareness is very much important for the children. This would help them with a sense of identity and belonging," said a teacher of a government high school. He also highlighted severe scarcity in skilled language teachers in India. "Language teaching must be improved in the country. It should be more experimental. Moreover, there should be focus on ability to converse and interact," he opined.

DRAWBACKS OF THE POLICY

Many experts expressed their concerns over the thrust on mother tongues in education. They opined that thrust on mother tongues may not be a good idea for the NEP 2020. "Introducing teaching in mother tongues for each subject in educational institutions will create problem. Bringing out study materials in mother languages will be a challenging task. It needs to be addressed," said an educationist.
 Studying for four years to complete graduation may be discouraging. "Some students may leave their study midway," said a principal of an English medium school.
 Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently said that NEP does not make it mandatory to teach children in their mother tongues. According to the PM, the new education policy only suggests imparting early education in regional language/mother tongue.
 "Private schools won't give up English as medium of education while government schools may stick to the regional languages. This will create a gap between the students of the rich and the weaker sections," said an educationist.

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Top Ranks in CLAT 2020

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CBSE XII Board 2021 Results	Above 75%	First Class	CBSE XII Board 2020 Results	Above 75%	First Class
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	Commerce 98.3%	100%		Commerce 97%	100%
	Humanities 100%	100%		Humanities 94%	100%

* percentage calculation is based as per CBSE examination bye-laws for Class XII

SAI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL - SIS

SIS CBSE X Board 2021 Results

287 students scored above 75%

Above 60%	100%
Above 75%	97.6%
Above 90%	65.6%

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CBSE X Board 2021 Results

91.7% students scored above 75%

Above 60%	100%
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Prime accused in ₹641cr GST fraud case nabbed in Capital

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The State GST Enforcement Wing Thursday arrested one of the prime accused in a fake invoicing racket worth around Rs 641 crore from the Capital city.

The accused identified as Basant Kumar Pattnaik along with his partners - Gurdit Dang and Sujay Maitra - had illegally availed and subsequently passed bogus Input Tax Credit (ITC) worth Rs 115.10 crore to various businessmen.

The enforcement wing had earlier arrested Dang and Maitra July 15, 2021.

Pattnaik is the owner of Omm Shree Ganesh Traders while Maitra is the Director of Smartageis Trade

Venture Private Limited of Rourkela. Dang is the managing partner of Tirupati Traders and authorised representative of M/s Satguru Metals & Power Pvt Ltd.

The GST officials claimed that Pattnaik had confessed to the crime during the interrogation. He used to collect identity documents like PAN, Aadhaar, Bank Passbooks of gullible and tax-illiterate persons like the plumbers, drivers, unemployed youths and housewives from Rourkela, Jagatsinghpur, Sundargarh, Angul, Jharkhand and other places of the state.

He would collect the above documents 'under the pretext of engaging them in different companies and in some cases to provide regular monthly income of Rs 5,000 per

month'. Subsequently, the accused persons would use the documents fetched from the victims to generate GST registration numbers and open current accounts in different banks.

In this case, the State Commissionerate of CT & GST said, "After GST registration, Pattnaik, in collusion with others, was engaged in bill trading without actual receipt and supply of goods to defraud the State exchequer."

Pattnaik along with Amit Beriwal and Subash Chandra Swain had committed invoicing fraud worth Rs 219.61 crore and illegally passing ITC Rs 39.53 crore to traders. He committed the crime by creating six fake firms.

Offline teaching for Class IX from Aug 16

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The School and Mass Education (S&ME) department Thursday released the notification directing the reopening of schools for Class IX from August 16.

"Government is pleased to allow reopening of schools in respect of Class IX of Government, Government aided and private educational institutions, coming under the jurisdiction of S&ME Department and supposed to appear the examinations under BSE, CBSE and ICSE and other Boards recognised by Government of Odisha, with effect from 16th August, 2021," wrote Satyabrata Sahu, Principal secretary of S&ME, in a release.

"The teaching hours for Class-IX students will be from 9 am to 12.30



pm excluding Sundays and public holidays. Students are allowed to attend classes either on online mode or offline mode in consultation with their parents," the release read.

Attendance has not been made mandatory for students in offline mode.

The hostels for Class-IX students will also start operating from August 16 and the standard operating procedures (SOPs) issued by the department earlier will be applicable while opening the hostels.

However, the guidelines issued by both Health & Family Welfare department and Special Relief

All the stakeholders are to follow Covid appropriate behaviour scrupulously, the S&ME department said

Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief Secretary, Disaster Management (SRC-cum-ACS) from time to time will be followed strictly.

Besides, all the stakeholders are to follow Covid appropriate behaviour scrupulously, the department said.

Earlier, physical classes for Class 10 and 12 students had been resumed in schools and colleges across the state July 26, after a gap of more than three months owing to the restrictions enforced for containing the spread of Covid-19.

Missing student's body found in Mahanadi

Cuttack, August 5: Two days after he went missing, the body of a college student was recovered from Mahanadi river near Jobra anicut here Thursday.

Deceased Tusarkanta Sahu, 20, was an undergraduate commerce student at Christ College here, sources said. Sahu had left home on his scooter for some work Tuesday evening. But, he did not return home. Sahu's father Hrusikesh, a jeweller at Chandi Square here, had lodged a complaint in this regard with Cantonment police. Hrusikesh alleged that some people had kidnapped his son over an alleged love affair.

In his complaint, Hrusikesh claimed that Tusarkanta had a quarrel with five of his friends over some issues prior to the incident.

Police had launched a probe and interrogated some of Tusarkanta's friends in connection with the incident. They had found



Tusharkanta's scooter lying abandoned near Madhusudan bridge, sources said.

Police and fire brigade personnel recovered the college student's body from Mahanadi during a search operation, sources added.

Tusharkanta's family members, meanwhile, alleged that some people had killed the 20-year-old and dumped his body in Mahanadi. "The body has been sent to SCB Medical College and Hospital for postmortem. We will move forward with our investigation after receiving the autopsy report," said Cantonment police in-charge Dinakrushna Mishra.

Covid-19 toll at 6,236 as govt confirms 68 more fatalities

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Odisha's Covid-19 tally soared to 9,83,523 Thursday as 1,342 more people tested positive for the infection, while 68 fresh fatalities pushed the coastal state's coronavirus death toll to 6,236, a Health official said.

As many as 775 new cases were reported in quarantine centres, while 567 infections were detected during contact tracing, said the official, adding that the daily test positivity rate stood at 2.02 per cent.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, reported the highest number of new cases at 477, followed by Cuttack (164). These two districts together accounted for 47.7 per cent of the total daily caseload reported in the past 24 hours.

Only Boudh did not register any new case, while 27 other districts reported less than 100 fresh infections each.



Khurda also recorded the highest number of fresh fatalities at 13, followed by Puri and Sundargarh (12 each) and Cuttack (11).

The state now has 13,516 active cases, while 9,63,718 people have recovered from the disease so far, including 1,630 Wednesday. Fifty-three coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities to date.

Khurda district has the highest number of 4,217 active cases followed by Cuttack (1775). These two districts have 44.3 per cent of the total active cases in the state.

The Test Positivity Rate (TPR), however, has been recording a marginal rise in the last four days from 1.53 per cent August 1 to 2.02 per cent in the past 24 hours.

For the third time, all the 30 districts in the state registered the TPR less than 5 per cent and as many as 17 of the total 30 districts in the state recorded TPR less than one per cent.

Odisha has thus far tested over 1.63 crore samples for Covid-19, including 66,146 in the last 24 hours, said the official, adding that the cumulative positivity rate stands at 6.01 per cent.

The state has thus far inoculated over 1.71 crore people, of whom 40.38 lakh have received both doses, the official added.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has expressed concern over the heavy rush of people in markets during the unlock process and warned that complete lockdown would be imposed if they do not follow the Covid guidelines strictly.

RS hails Odisha govt's support to hockey teams

New Delhi, August 5: The Rajya Sabha Thursday acknowledged the support of Odisha government to the Indian Hockey team by coming forward to sponsor both Men's and Women's Hockey Teams for five years in 2018.

The Upper House praised Lovlina Borgohain and the Indian Men's Hockey Team for winning Bronze Medal in the Welterweight category of Women's Boxing and Men's Hockey events respectively in Olympic Games 2020 being held in Tokyo, Japan.

The House hailed the support provided by the Odisha government to the Indian Hockey teams.

"With their outstanding performance, Indian Men's Hockey team which defeated Germany brought glory to the country by winning a medal after more than four decades. Their achievement is the culmination of the collective efforts of various stakeholders including the Government of Odisha



headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, who came forward to sponsor the Men's and Women's Hockey Teams for five years since 2018, for their continued support and unwavering faith showed in our players, topped up by the sheer hard work and determination of each player of the Hockey Team," Deputy Chairman Harivansh said.

CM distributes aid to dairy farmers

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday disbursed special Covid assistance of Rs 11 crore to over 1 lakh dairy farmers of the state. Each dairy farmer has received assistance up to Rs 6,000.

About 3,700 milk producers' cooperative societies and 2.63 lakh dairy farmers produce milk through Omfed. As many as 1,292 women cooperative societies and 1,05,000 women dairy farmers are also there.

Patnaik said that the state government is always with the poor and working to protect their interests.

In order to lessen the burden of the pandemic on poor, the government has distributed more than Rs 2,000 crore directly to the bank accounts of small shopkeepers, small farmers, street vendors and women members of Mission Shakti, he added.

Gadakana housing project for EWS to be ready by year-end

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The Bhubaneswar Development Authority (BDA) Thursday stated that it will complete construction of 17 blocks of its housing project for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) at Gadakana by the end of this year.

As part of its Housing for All (HFA) plan, the BDA had decided to come up with affordable housing units for the EWS by launching the Slum Rehabilitation and Informal Settlements project.

As per the plan, seven affordable housing projects have been launched across the city which will have 8,162 dwelling units for the EWS.

"The construction work for the EWS housing project is in progress and will be completed by the end of this year. Once finished, the site will have 1,392 units, 48 shops and one community hall. Although Covid

Seven affordable housing projects have been launched across the city which will have 8,162 dwelling units

had delayed the progress, we are now aiming to finish the project in less than a year," said a BDA official.

It can be mentioned that apart from the housing settlement of EWS at Gadakana, the BDA had also launched Nilamadhav Awasi Yojana at Chandrasekharpur, Affordable Housing Project at Chandrasekharpur, Mahaveer Awasi Yojna at Gadakana and Shanti Nagar Awasi Yojana at Satya Nagar. While some of the projects have been taken on public-private partnership mode, the others have been taken on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode.

Writer Paramita to receive Sarala Puraskar

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Noted Odia fiction writer Paramita Satpathy will get the 42nd prestigious Sarala Puraskar for her novel 'Abhipreta Kala'. The book was published by Paschima Publications, Bhubaneswar in the year of 2016.

Satpathy will receive a cash award of Rs 5 lakh along with a citation.

The annual Sarala Puraskar, instituted by eminent Odia industrialist Late Bansidhar Panda and Late Ila Panda in the year 1980, has been continuously awarded by Indian Metals Public Charitable Trust (IMPACT). IMPACT is the charitable wing of Ferro Alloys Ltd., the leading fully integrated producer of Ferro Alloys in India. Sarala Puraskar is recognised as the foremost literary award of Odisha. It is one of the finest contributions of IMPACT in glorifying Odia literature. The Ekalabya Puraskar too has been instituted by IMPACT to encourage promising sports talents of Odisha. The traditionally given awards 'Bansidhar-Ila Panda Sangeet Sammana' and 'Chitrankala Sammana' will be declared soon.

Heritage building tag sought for Jharsuguda post office

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has written a letter to his Cabinet colleague Ashwini Vaishnaw demanding heritage building tag for 126-year-old Jharsuguda post office building.

"It is understood that the Jharsuguda post office was established in 1895 after the commissioning of Jharsuguda railway station on Bengal Nagpur Railway (BNR) line. This 126-year-old post office has played a pivotal role in the modern history of Jharsuguda since Indian freedom movement till its establishment as a major commercial hub in Western Odisha," Pradhan said in his letter.

He appreciated the effort of India Post to recognise Indian postal service's rich historical, social and cultural significance by declaring such old iconic post offices as heritage post offices and undertaking suitable restoration and maintenance activities.

At present, 36 such heritage post office buildings are being maintained by India Post across Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh,

At present, 36 heritage post office buildings are being maintained by India Post across Bihar, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal

BJP MP for skill devpt centres in Kalahandi, Nuapada districts

New Delhi, August 5: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP Basanta Kumar Panda Thursday urged Union Education and Skill Development Minister Dharmendra Pradhan to establish skill development centres in the Maoist-affected blocks of Kalahandi and Nuapada districts.

In a memorandum to the Union Minister, the Kalahandi MP said that Kalahandi and Nuapada have been classified as aspirational districts by the Niti Aayog for priority development works. Establishing skill development centres at Thuamul-Rampur and Madampur-Rampur blocks of Kalahandi and Boden block in Nuapada will help honing the skills of unemployed youth of the locality, said the Lok Sabha MP.

The parliamentarian also urged Pradhan for setting up of more schools in his constituency. Panda urged the Union Minister for Kendriya Vidyalayas in Madampur-Rampur block and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas in every sub-division of the aspirational districts.

Heavy rain in 3 districts today

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Thursday warned that heavy rain could be seen in three districts of the state Friday.

The department in its yellow warning for heavy rain said, "Heavy rainfall very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Sundargarh, Jharsuguda and Bargarh." The department also said that light to moderate rain or thundershower could occur Friday at many places over the interior Odisha and at a few places over coastal Odisha.

The weathermen also said that cloudy sky could be seen over the state Capital Friday while light



rain might be observed in different parts of the City. The maximum temperature here could go upto 31°C. No special warning was issued for the fishermen.

The department, meanwhile, noted that in the last one day, the high-

est rainfall of 11.2mm was recorded in Koraput while majority of the districts reported scanty rainfall. The highest temperature in the state Thursday was reported from Gopalpur at 34.2°C while the lowest was recorded from Phulbani at 19°C.

Rural housing scheme eludes bona fide beneficiaries: BJP

Bhubaneswar, August 5: The state unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Thursday alleged large-scale irregularities and a scam of around Rs 1,000 crore in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in Odisha and demanded exemplary action against officials involved in the scam.

BJP state president Samir Mohanty said that PMAY was announced in 2015 to provide

pucca houses to the economically weaker sections in rural as well as urban India.

But the benefits of the scheme continue to elude the genuine beneficiaries as pucca houses are being allotted to ineligible rich and BJD workers in Odisha.

Mohanty said that BJP activists are being attacked as and when they highlight the issue of corruption in the allotment of houses under the scheme.

Although a central team communicated to the state govern-

ment about a large-scale corruption in the allotment of houses under the scheme, the state government kept mum.

The BJP leader said that a high-level team of the BJP visited the Kubera panchayat under Tihidi block of Bhadrak Wednesday and interacted with the eligible beneficiaries and family of those arrested by police.

A few of the saffron party workers in Kubera have been arrested by police a couple of days back while protesting

against the corruption in allotment of pucca houses to ineligible beneficiaries.

Mohanty said that several eligible beneficiaries have been deprived of pucca houses in the panchayat.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi is working with an objective to provide pucca houses to all eligible beneficiaries by 2022, but the BJD government here is distributing houses on party lines and to the influential," Mohanty said.

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LACK OF FOCUS, CONCENTRATION DURING CLASSES, POOR CONNECTIVITY, LACK OF TEACHER-STUDENT CONNECT ARE SOME OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS IN ONLINE CLASSES



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Online classes became a new normal for students and teachers during the Covid time. The pandemic has forced

up to 45 minutes each while for Class 9 to Class 12, four sessions of 30-45 minutes duration have been recommended.

However, these online classes have started giving more problems than solutions for everybody including students, parents and teachers.

Online learning often requires students to be self-guided, manage their time and motivation, and complete tasks, assignments, or projects in required time. However, other students may find fewer distractions at home, making it easier to focus on tasks. Learning from home also gives students a way to develop independence

the closure of schools and has impacted millions of children of the country who are enrolled in schools.

For online classes of Class 1 to Class 8 students, the Union HRD ministry has recommended two online sessions of

Atashi Mohanty, a teacher from a city school, said, "Online classes have many challenges. The main problem we face during online classes is the noise of children. In normal classes, we have control over students to stop the noise because they are in one physical

classroom. But in online classes, the noise control is not that easy. To stop noise of the children we sometimes have to mute them and teach each student one by one which consumes more time than usually given by the ministry. The network problem is the biggest problem as we take classes from home due to which many times classes get disconnected in the middle."

Most of the time children do not focus on classes, said Seema Biwas, another teacher. Many times parents leave the children believing they are attending classes but instead they start playing games. Working parents do not have the time to keep an eye on children during classes. Writing has been totally absent from online studies, she said.

Sangeeta Sahoo, a parent, said the Covid lockdown and online classes are definitely impacting children as they are not getting human interaction with the teachers and friends in schools. As parents we tried to make them study on computer for a limited period and try to connect them with nature in our own way.

A teacher-student relation is about respect which is getting less and less nowadays as students are not interacting in a personal way in school, Biswas added.

Health expert and psychiatrist Amrit Pattojoshi said, "The problem we see in online classes is lack of focus and concentration which

leads to lack of gaining knowledge from classes. In recent times, we have seen cases of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children who are attending classes online. When schools were closed, some students may have had trouble adjusting to online learning without a teacher present to support them."

Online learning often requires students to be self-guided, manage their time and motivation, and complete tasks, assignments, or projects in required time. However, other students may find fewer distractions at home, making it easier to focus on tasks. Learning from home also gives students a way to develop independence.

We also notice that retention power of students goes down

due to constant watching of computer and mobile. Many students are not able to clear their doubts in online classes due to lack of interaction, he said.

The solution is that the system can be created to bring the students in limited

groups to schools for specific day. For example, even number roll number students can attain the school on some days and odd roll number students can attend on some other days. There can be a mixture of online and offline classes. At the end there needs a collaboration and support between parents and teachers.

Most of the time children do not focus on classes. Many times parents leave the children believing they are attending classes but instead they start playing games. Working parents do not have the time to keep an eye on children during classes. Writing has been totally absent from online studies

SEEMA BIWAS | TEACHER

Techies become mentors in aspirational dists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Several techies and qualified engineers passed out from premier institutions like IIT, NIT, NISER came forward to join the mission of imparting quality education to engineering students in backward areas in Odisha and many other colleges which were not confined to state capital or well connected areas.

Many of them, after the declaration of aspirational (backward) districts of Odisha by NITI Aayog, have decided to chose a different terrain to serve the society, especially in such districts where availability of qualified teachers becomes a Herculean task. With the

intervention of the Human Resource Ministry and collaboration of the state government, around 65 professionals from premier institutions like IIT, NIT, NISER came forward to join the mission of imparting quality education to engineering students in backward areas in Odisha and many other colleges which were not confined to state capital or well connected areas.

According to the ministry, these young minds that recently passed out from these institutions joined several government engineering colleges in Odisha under the Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP)

scheme. The scheme was started by the Union government where the World Bank also extended their support for the mission. The four-year project which started in 2017 is likely to get over in September this year.

The Union government, however, buoyed by the success of the mission and enthusiasm of young professionals wants to continue the scheme further. According to the statement of the ministry recently furnished before the Lok Sabha in July this year, the ministry has planned to extend the services. "The Government of India has been making continuous efforts to ensure that the focus state gov-

ernments prepare a sustainability plan for the Technical Education Quality Improvement Programme (TEQIP-III), so as to avoid academic standstill beyond the project period i.e 30th September 2021. Ministry of Education has written to the Chief Secretaries of focus states requesting to plan for continuation of activities undertaken during TEQIP-III, for maintaining the quality of technical education," a written statement from the ministry said.

According to sources, VSSUT-Burla, NIT-Rourkela, Government Colleges of Engineering at Keonjhar and Kalahandi, IGIT (Sarang) and Parala Maharaja

Engineering College (Berhampur) got support under the scheme in terms of quality faculty and other training and support. Several of these young passed out students joined several of these institutions as Assistant Professors.

These fresh graduates as per the mandate of the scheme were put on a three-year contract period at a salary of ₹70,000 per month. A total of 65 faculty members were chosen for Odisha engineering colleges out of the 5000 applicants from the premier institutes who opted for going to the remote areas and developing states of the country to teach the enrolled students in government engineering colleges.



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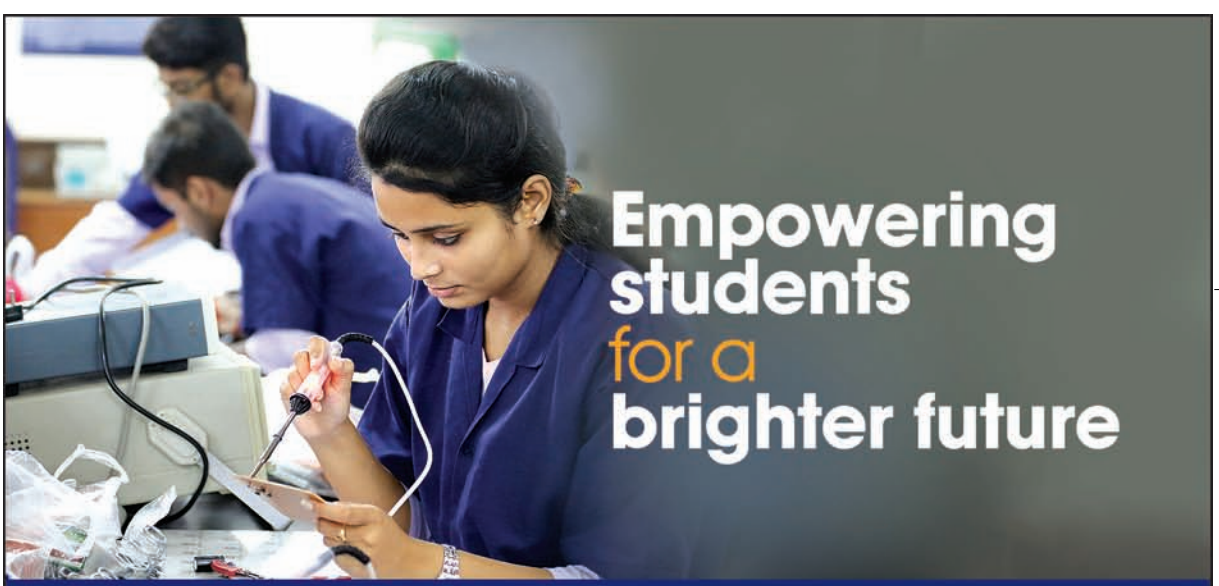
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FOCUS CLIMATE CHANGE

APOCALYPSE WHEN?



System change is required to avert potential catastrophes such as climate change-induced weather events, declining agricultural productivity, and future pandemics. But it is difficult to get people to tackle such threats in concert when most perceive only a slow deterioration

In his elegiac memoir *The World of Yesterday*, which he wrote while in exile from the Nazis, the Austrian writer Stefan Zweig observed that most people cannot comprehend the prospect of catastrophic changes in their situation. Things can get incrementally worse for a long time without prompting a reaction. Once catastrophe strikes, it is too late to act.

Dramatic changes are occurring in our times, too, and we must hope that it is not yet too late to address them. Unfortunately, sufficiently urgent, coordinated, and decisive action will likely be difficult to mobilize when most of us — like the proverbial slowly boiling frog — perceive change to be incremental. So, it is worth asking what we might be facing if the worst happens.



Daine Coyle

DRAMATIC CHANGES ARE OCCURRING IN OUR TIMES, TOO, AND WE MUST HOPE THAT IT IS NOT YET TOO LATE TO ADDRESS THEM

Climate change-induced weather events are one obvious type of catastrophe. These could render uninhabitable large, densely populated parts of the planet, and it might already be impossible to avert large-scale population movements stemming from them. Many climate victims might seem far away — tiny Tuvalu in the Pacific is frequently portrayed as one of the first likely casualties. But recent weather events point to areas closer to global centers of power — such as Florida, the cities of China's Yellow River valley, Seattle, and New Delhi — either flooding or becoming too hot for humans.

Governments and international organisations should therefore start preparing for the prospect of millions of future climate refugees. According to the United Nations, there were 79.5 million displaced people globally at the end of 2019, the biggest number it had ever recorded, and more than at any time since the huge, forced migrations in the aftermath of World War II. Continued global warming means that the number will likely increase.

Worse still, climate change, combined with biodiversity loss and soil degradation, threatens to cause a downward spiral in agricultural productivity. That would undo many

of the gains of the Green Revolution that has enabled the Earth to sustain its 7.9 billion people.

As such, we need a new Green Revolution that goes beyond genetic modification of crops to encompass social and economic changes such as land reform, altered diets, and different business models. Failure to change current intensive, industrialized farming practices rapidly and at scale will result in crop failures and increasing hunger. For net food importers like the United Kingdom, the post-war plenty we have grown used to could become a thing of the past. But how are we to bring about the system change needed when, despite the pandemic, supermarket shelves are still full?

Another type of disaster related to ever greater human incursions on nature is the increasing frequency of zoonotic diseases that leap from animal hosts to humans. The extraordinary Covid-19 pandemic has driven this message home to the world — Ebola, SARS, and MERS were earlier warnings — and there are more such health crises to come. The period in history when infectious disease seemed to have been tamed is likely over. Similarly, the spread of anti-microbial resistance means

some old infection battles have restarted. And if an even more virulent novel coronavirus emerges in the next few years, will we be prepared for another upheaval like the one we have all experienced over the past 18 months?

These kinds of events will put immense pressure on existing political systems, whether they are democracies or authoritarian regimes. Today, only a Panglossian observer would foresee an imminent return to the trend toward liberal democracy that characterised the latter part of the twentieth century. On the contrary, the need to deal with more emergencies could make the West more authoritarian. And the retreat from multilateralism to geopolitical clashes could accelerate, fueling a vicious cycle that makes it ever more difficult to tackle global problems.

Perhaps these gloomy thoughts are merely a sign that their author needs a summer holiday. But with Zweig's warning in mind, it would do no harm to consider the "what if". What if this is the time for large actions, not small ones? What would they be?

The UN Food Systems Summit in September and the UN climate conference (COP26) in Glasgow in November are obvious oppor-

tunities to move from incremental reform to significant progress. But averting all of these potential catastrophes requires system change; they are what are known as "wicked problems," for obvious reasons. And it is difficult to get people to tackle them in concert, especially when most people currently perceive only a slow deterioration.

The challenge is really one of leadership: a small number of global political leaders could agree to address some of these wicked problems in the common interests of all. But at the same time, universities and research institutes need to dismantle the disciplinary silos and career structures that reward only narrowness and incremental discovery. Climate scientists need to integrate their work with that of political scientists, and epidemiologists should do the same with economists. Analysing the risks of catastrophe creates the obligation to act now.

The writer is Professor of Public Policy at the University of Cambridge, is the author, most recently, of Markets, State, and People: Economics for Public Policy.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM PANDEMIC & ECONOMY

The summer of disaster

The world is facing two disasters that are making the Covid-19 crisis doubly worse than it ought to be. The first is the rise of the Delta variant, which is twice as contagious as and 1.5-2 times deadlier than the original coronavirus. The second disaster is that Global North governments have not committed the resources to increase vaccine production to the scale needed to immunise the global population by the end of this year. Worse, the longer we drag our feet, the more likely that the immunity furnished by vaccines and previous Covid-19 infections will begin to erode.

Given these problems, it is too early to start talking about the "post-pandemic" world economy. Public health should remain the top-line priority. As for the economy, the focus should be on keeping the basic economic engine running and avoiding a massive increase in poverty. With the Delta variant running rampant, we should postpone efforts to restore economies to full-employment "normalcy" until after we have achieved some combination of vaccine and acquired herd immunity.

After all, since we cannot know what state the global economy will be in six months from now, we don't yet know which policies will be most

appropriate for driving a smooth and sustainable recovery. By the same token, we should reject proposals to "cool down" the world economy in order to avoid some shadowy inflationary spiral or a return of bond-market vigilantes in the future. The Delta variant should be met not with cooling but with warming.

Outside of a few truly informed experts who unfortunately are rarely heard above the noise, our ignorance about the pandemic's range of possible trajectories is immense. We have no clear global picture. All we can do is consider narrower samples.

The United Kingdom serves as one petri dish. The country has suffered from incompetence and widespread carelessness. And no, Prime Minister Alexander Boris de Pfeffel Johnson did not do it all on his own, though he certainly has maintained his modus operandi of lying and somehow continuing to "fail up." Without the rapid arrival of safe and effective vaccines, the country almost surely would have lost many more people to Covid-19 than the 130,000 (0.2% of the population) that it already has.

The well-performing East Asian countries offer a second petri dish. After long proving effective, their world-beating spread-control mechanisms are now cracking under

the pressure of the Delta variant. We can conclude that these measures are necessary but not sufficient, with their uses limited to buying time for universal vaccination programmes.

A third petri dish is the United States. The lesson here is not that an inept government can stumble into herd immunity because it has the power of the Global North's biotech industry behind it. Nor are there lessons to draw about an evolving virus overcoming any and all infection-suppression measures. The real lesson from the US is that it is in a league of its own. More than 600,000 people have died from Covid-19, and that figure seems poised to rise by another 100,000 in the coming months.

If this conspiratorial word salad sounds crazy, consider the terrifying fact that around one-quarter of the American population apparently believes it (or at least some part of it). One-fifth of Americans think that the US government is using Covid-19 vaccination to implant microchips into their bodies. Tens of millions of Americans have found sufficient reason to run a 1% risk of death by refusing an extremely effective, extremely safe, widely available vaccine.

Consider the implications of this successful act of brainwashing. A

country where malevolent, cynical media and political operatives can trigger such deep psychological fractures in a significant share of the population is extremely vulnerable to a wide range of threats. What will Americans fall for next? Even if the next mass psychological hacking effort is motivated merely by a desire to sell more ads, what social destruction might it leave in its trail?

The bottom line today is the same as it was a year ago; when stage-three trials first suggested that the mRNA vaccines against Covid-19 were a huge success. The obvious next step is to cut through the bureaucracy and open the money spigots to mobilise as many resources as are needed to get high-quality vaccines into every arm in the world as fast as possible. We can sort out the financing and regulatory approval issues later.

It has been a full year since the biotech wizards gave us the tools that we need to beat the virus. Why are we still in the situation we are?

The author is Professor of Economics at the University of California, Berkeley and a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

My love is not a hunger of the heart, my love is not a craving of the flesh; it came to me from God, to God returns.

SRI AUROBINDO



Morning in the Middle East

What are we to make of the reshuffling of relations and shifting alliances in the Middle East? Diplomacy has gained momentum among bitter foes; cracks have appeared among close friends. Regional powers like Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, and Egypt are recalibrating their foreign policies and restoring relations with estranged neighbours. The United States and Russia have renewed their regional rivalry, and China has entered as a new competitor.

The shifting geopolitics could make the Middle East the scene of a fierce and truly global competition. But they also could defuse regional rivalries, by bringing together countries that historically loath one another. Much will depend on the main factors behind the new realignments: America's regional retrenchment, China's rise, and the Covid-19 pandemic's adverse impact on already weak regional economies.

US President Joe Biden has made it clear that the Middle East is not a foreign-policy priority for his administration. Whereas former President Donald Trump built an anti-Iran coalition led by Saudi Arabia and Israel, Biden has sought to distance himself from Saudi Arabia, not least by ending US support for the war in Yemen. His administration has resumed diplomacy to restore the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, from which Trump withdrew the US in 2018, and it has kept Turkey and Egypt (two of Trump's favorites) at arm's length.

With the complete US withdrawal from Afghanistan this month, Biden has made it clear that the US is disengaging from the region's cold war as it pivots to Asia and China. Across the Middle East, there is a widespread belief that America is no longer a real partner.

Moreover, while America pulls back, China is increasingly making its presence known in the region. In March, it concluded a major agreement [2] with Iran, promising \$400 billion of investment over the next 25 years in exchange for steady shipments of oil and gas. On a tour through Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Oman the same month, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi affirmed his country's commitment to the region's security and stability. In an obvious dig at the US, he said that China will propose foreign interventions and act as an honest broker in resolving persistent conflicts in the region.

Wang also dangled the prospect of a Chinese free-trade agreement that would bring tens of billions of dollars in investment opportunities, by linking China's Belt and Road Initiative with local development projects. This kind of economic sweetener resonates widely in the Middle East, where youth-unemployment rates, poverty levels, and other economic indicators were dismal long before the pandemic. Over the past 18 months, Covid-19 has exacerbated already severe social crises in many countries.

Under these conditions, it is little wonder that regional dialogue and diplomacy are making a comeback. Most local rulers understand that regime security depends more on satisfying the needs of the population than on sectarian incitement and hatred of the "other." Hence, last April, Saudi Arabia and Iran held secret talks [4] to discuss how to end the conflict in Yemen, where a Saudi-led coalition has been fighting a war against Iran-backed Houthi rebels since March 2015.

Saudi Arabia has also reconciled with Qatar (which maintains friendly relations with Iran), after having severed all links with its neighbour in June 2017. In a powerful gesture of rapprochement last April, Saudi Arabia's King Salman formally invited Qatar's emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani, to visit his country.

As a further sign of the broader political reshuffling, the Saudis have also normalised relations with Iraq (an Iranian ally), thus ending three decades of mutual estrangement and hostility. And after years of conflict with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad (another close Iranian partner), Saudi officials recently held secret talks with their Syrian counterparts in Damascus, leading to reports that an agreement on diplomatic normalisation may be forthcoming.

Iran, too, may be on the verge of improving ties with its neighbors, particularly the UAE. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif reportedly plans to visit the UAE soon, after having returned from a diplomatic charm tour through Qatar, Iraq, Kuwait, and Oman in April.

But most important is the possibility of an Iranian-Saudi rapprochement. Although Iran's moderate president, Hassan Rouhani, is on his way out, the hardliner who will replace him, Ebrahim Raisi, says he sees "no obstacles" to establishing diplomatic relations with the Kingdom. A restoration of ties would curtail the civil strife and proxy wars in Syria and Yemen — two of the greatest humanitarian crises in the world today — and also might bring stability to politically and religiously divided countries like Iraq and Lebanon.

Finally, like Saudi Arabia and Iran, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdo an has gone on a diplomatic offensive to mend his country's strained ties in the region, particularly vis-à-vis Egypt and Saudi Arabia. After almost coming to violent blows over Libya last year, Turkey now wants to improve economic relations with Egypt and other regional and global powers.

These recent regional realignments can be explained by changing assessments of the balance of power and converging interests. America's retrenchment has forced regional powers to attend to their own security by mending fences. Regional leaders increasingly recognise that there is nothing to gain from pouring gasoline on a raging fire, as Trump did. Through international diplomacy led by America, Europe,

China, Russia, and Japan, the Middle East can continue on its current path of de-escalation.

Could the international community broker an agreement for a new inclusive security architecture and nuclear weapons-free Middle East, or at least support and encourage the regional dialogue and conflict management that is emerging there? It is no longer wishful thinking to imagine so. Endless conflict may mark the Middle East's past; but it is not the region's settled destiny.

The writer is Professor of International Relations and Middle Eastern politics at the London School of Economics

PROJECT SYNDICATE

LOL

Meter very fast

An Indian cab driver picked up a Japanese man from a hotel. Along the way, they saw a Honda motorcycle overtake the taxicab and the Japanese guy said, "Motorcycle very fast, made in Japan." Then a Toyota car overtook the taxicab and the Japanese guy said, "Car very fast,



made in Japan." When they reached the destination the fare was 1500 rupees. The Japanese man thought the ride was only cost 500 rupees. He asked the driver why the ride was so expensive. The driver said, "Meter very fast, made in India."

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

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Mamata's chance

Sir, West Bengal Chief Minister, the mercurial Mamata Banerjee is on a mission — bringing the Opposition parties together to take on the might of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's BJP in the 2024 general elections. Had she lost West Bengal, the picture would have been different. But she is on cloud nine buoyed by her grand Assembly electoral success. The Trinamool Congress leader smells blood; she knows it is now or never for the Opposition parties to unite on a common platform to dislodge the BJP in three years time. After Narendra Modi swept to power in 2014, it has been a roller coaster ride for him. Yet, his popularity with the masses, as per newspapers and experts, has seen a declining trend due to a host of factors as of today. Mamata hopes to encash the anguish in a cross section against the BJP-led NDA government's poor performance in different spheres. But Mamata has a colossal challenge of bringing leaders of parties — many enjoying power in the states — together because it is impossible for the Opposition to dethrone the BJP by remaining scattered. Many of the regional chieftains are short sighted and hot-headed. Each one of them wears ego on his/her sleeve. Differing ideologies and unbridled ambitions have prevented them from sharing a common stage. Can Mamata change all that?

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

DA relief for pensioners

Sir, Dearness relief (DR) or dearness allowance (DA) for the pensioners and employees are released as per price rise of the essential commodities within a particular period. Since the last few months, prices of all essential commodities have been hiked by leaps and bounds due to rapid increase in fuel prices. Employees who are in service now may manage their livelihood with minimum difficulties but the condition of the pensioners is very pathetic. Pension amount is very little and likely to be treated as fixed amount so pensioners can't absorb the heavy jerk of price rise after managing all types Covid-related expenses, including medicines. The Central government should consider the practical difficulties faced by pensioners and their families in this pandemic scenario and may release the Dearness Relief (DR) for them immediately. Normally, DA/DR for the employees and the pensioners are released at the same time, but as pensioners have been fighting with this limited token amount the DR may be released separately for the pensioners for their survival in this present situation.

Ramdas Ray, BHUBANESWAR

3 yrs on, Sports Hub unfinished in Dhenkanal



POST NEWS NETWORK

DELAYED PROJECT

Dhenkanal, August 5: Three years after the project began, the construction of the Sports Hub in Dhenkanal is yet to be completed, locals have alleged.

Sporting activities in the region have been affected triggering dissatisfaction among local sports persons.

For the development of games such as tennis and skating in Dhenkanal district, the then District Collector had envisaged the Sports Hub with a cost of ₹60,00,000 in 2018. Subsequently, a design was drawn up for the project entailing a tennis court, skating ring, indoor badminton hall and pathways.

Later, ₹90,00,000 was sanctioned for the tennis court and skating ring. Similarly, ₹40,00,000 was released for an indoor badminton hall. ₹20,00,000 was again sanctioned from MP LAD for the construction of toilets at the indoor hall. The facility is coming up behind the district agriculture office.

However, the work on the tennis court 120 metres (length) X120 metres (width) has not been completed as yet. The fate of the skating ring is no better either. It is lying half-constructed. The construction of pathways is yet to be started.

Meanwhile, the construction of indoor badminton hall has been completed. But, there are allegations that the work of badminton court

Former Collector had envisaged a Sports Hub at an expenditure of ₹60,00,000 in 2018. Subsequently, a design was drawn up which entails a tennis court, skating ring, indoor badminton hall and pathways

Work on the tennis court 120 metres (length) X120 metres (width) has not been completed as yet. The fate of the skating ring is no better either. It is lying half-constructed. The construction of pathways is yet to be started

is of low quality. Without consulting sports experts, the court has been constructed. As a result, the indoor badminton hall has a simple court made of plywood sheets, instead of a special kind of wooden court. According to some experts, the use of plywood will shorten the life of the court.

According to the experts, another ₹4,00,000 is required to bring the court up to standard.

District sports officer Pradeep Kumar Mohanty said sports experts and personalities should have been consulted before starting the construction work. "Soon, Collector Bhumesh Chandra Behera will take stock of the hub," he added.

When contacted, PWD department executive engineer Manoranjan Biswal said necessary funds had been provided for construction of the facility. The construction work is in its last stage, he added.

Jumbo squad member trampled to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Junagarh, August 5: A member of a forest patrolling squad was trampled to death by a herd of elephants while they were tracking the movement of the animals at Ghana reserve forest near Golamunda village under this forest range in Kalahandi district, Thursday.

The deceased was identified as Jagannath Tripathy, 47, a native of Sanadumerbahal village under Kaleigaon panchayat. Reports said a 12-member squad was tracking the movement of the elephant herd when Tripathy came face to face with the herd.

All other members of the squad managed to escape while Tripathy fell down and was trampled to death by the herd. His body was handed over to his family members after a post-mortem was conducted at Junagarh community health centre.

Junagarh forest ranger Murari Panda assured to provide compensation to the bereaved family after completion of formalities.



As tension flares up during an eviction drive around Samalei temple in Sambalpur, policemen take out a flag march to maintain law and order, Thursday

Bhitarkanika reopens to tourists

64 VISITORS WENT INSIDE THE NATIONAL PARK ON FIRST DAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara, August 5: After remaining out of bounds for visitors for three months starting May 1, the Bhitarkanika National Park (BNP) in Kendrapara district was reopened Thursday.

According to reports, as the park was thrown open after 97 days, a total of 64 visitors entered the park through Dangamala entry point while five tourists each visited through Khola and Gupti entry points.

ACF Manas Narayan Samal and ranger officer Manas Kumar Das received tourists with bouquets.

Tourists are now allowed to visit the park during the day and to stay overnight.

It may be noted here that a ban on tourists' visit to the national park was imposed May 1 till July 31. The ban was clamped due to the mating and breeding season of endangered estuarine crocodiles.

In the meantime, the state witnessed a sharp increase in daily Covid-19 cases. And the state gov-



ernment announced lockdown from May 5, to check the spread of the virus.

Coincidentally, on the last day of the BNP's ban, i.e. July 31, the government announced relaxations to Covid-induced partial lockdown, reopening of malls, cinema halls and parks.

The BNP authorities had then de-

cid to reopen the BNP's gate for the tourists from August 5.

A three-month ban is usually imposed on the visit of tourists to the BNP during the crocodiles' mating and breeding season to give the reptiles a congenial environment and ensure safety of visitors as the crocodiles are generally more ferocious during this season.

ACF SOUMYA DEATH MYSTERY

Kin knocks doors of CM's grievance cell

POST NEWS NETWORK

Paralakhemundi, August 5: As Paralakhemundi assistant conservator of forests (ACF) Soumya Ranjan Mohapatra's death has got murkier with every passing day, a cousin of the deceased, Manas Ranjan Padhi, moved the Chief Minister's grievance cell Wednesday afternoon.

Manas brought up serious allegations against forest minister Bikram Keshari Arukha, saying the investigating police team is yet to crack the death mystery and the minister is trying to hush it up.

"Reports are doing the rounds that the forest minister is putting undue pressure in the case as Gajapati DFO Sangram Keshari Behera and Gurandi police station OIC Mamata Panda are blue-eyed persons of the minister. After my brother



sustained burn injuries, his wife should have informed us first. Instead, she called up the Gurandi officer-in-charge. A plan was made to cover up the case," Manas alleged.

The complainant said that his family members are not happy with the progress in the police probe. Manas demanded an investigation by a Orissa High Court-monitored special investigation team (SIT) or the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). However, reactions of the forest minister to the allegations could not be obtained.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: ST-OT-AMC-HELPLINE/139-230, Dt. 03.08.2021
Name of Work/ANNUAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACT OF SECURITY CONTROL HELPLINE NO-182 (AT PRESENT-139) PROVIDED AT CONTROL OFFICE/ KHURDA ROAD IN KHURDA ROAD DIVISION OF EAST COAST RAILWAY FOR A PERIOD OF THREE YEARS.
Tender value: ₹3,55,400/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹1,180/- (Including 18% GST)
Bidding Start Date: 10.08.2021, Date & Time of Tender Closing: 1100 hrs of 24.08.2021.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders, even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
Complete information including e-Tender documents of the above e-Tenders is available in website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/ corrigenda issued for this tender.
Divisional Railway Manager (S&T)/ PR-265/M/21-22 Khurda Road

Huge cache of cough syrup seized, one arrested in Boudh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Boudh, August 5: A huge quantity of cough syrup worth around ₹3lakh was seized from an SUV on Charichhak-Prurunakatak Road near Purunakatak in Boudh district late Wednesday night. A person was arrested.

The arrested person has been identified as Satambar Bagh, a resident of Gadarpali in Nuapada district.

Purunakatak police were tipped off that a consignment of cough syrup was being smuggled in an SUV Wednesday night. Taking the tip off seriously, the police swung into action



and conducted check on Charichhak-Prurunakatak road. The team later chased and stopped a Scorpio van (OR05AN3333). Upon carrying out a thorough search, the team found 16 boxes of cough syrup, namely Escof Syrup.

According to the police, the consignment was on its way to Bolangir from Bhubaneswar. Registering a case, the police have launched a detailed investigation to bust the racket.

Notably, 14,400 cough syrup bot-

Cough syrup bottles worth ₹20,00,000 were recently seized from a truck in Kandagada forest under Turekela police limits in Bolangir district

tles packed in 90 cartons were seized in Bolangir district May 29. The value of the seized bottles was pegged at ₹20,00,000. They were seized from a truck in Kandagada forest under Turekela police limits.

Life across Kadhipenu river hangs on cable

VILLAGERS SAY COMMUNICATION IS A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR WHICH THEY ARE UNABLE TO VENTURE OUT TO AVAIL OF VARIOUS GOVERNMENT FACILITIES



POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, August 5: The state government has a lot of programmes oriented towards rural development. However, there are about 10 villages in Gunjibadi panchayat of Kandhamal district where development has taken a back seat, a report said.

People in these villages remain cut off from the rest of the world due to absence of a bridge on the Kadhipenu river. Villagers say communication is a major problem for which they are unable to avail various government facilities. Wading through the river water is the only way when they have to venture out

for rations and work. Crossing the river in such manner is always fraught with risks. An iron cable has been drawn overhead from one end of the river to the other. People clutch the cable and cross the river, they said.

Over the years, 14 children including four newborns have died of malnutrition in the area, locals pointed out. They were enraged that the government had not been able to make a bridge across the river till date.

According to reports, Gunjibadi panchayat is at 2 kilometre distance from K Nuagon Chhak on the Raikia road. The Kadhipenu river flows in the area. 10 villages, namely Bagai,

Badali, Shrakapanga, Minamulu, Dakali, Madiraha Tipinigan, Guduripadi, Shrugamaha, Mandarpadar and Kangorika, in this panchayat are situated on one side of the river, where lives of people remain confined for months together owing to lack of connectivity.

The government has set up an Anganwadi centre and a school, but they are across the river. Children are bound to cross the river to reach the school and Anganwadi centre.

"Whenever we want to go out, we have to wade through the river. For eight months, the river remains dry and there is no problem. For the rest four months, life becomes a night-

mare," the villagers said. During these four months, villagers find it difficult to even get their rations.

The primary school has classes up to fifth standard. After Class-5, many children have no other option but to risk their lives for schooling. Many of them drop their studies.

"We have been suffering over years. Nothing is done for our development. When elections come, leaders come with a lot of promises, but their promises fail to realise on the ground," villagers fumed. Lack of road and a bridge has been a major hurdle in our overall development and in availing PDS rations, said Priyatama Pradhan, an ASHA worker.

Members of an SHG narrated their plight. "We have done farming by taking loans from banks. But our produce remains unsold, as we fail to go out to sell it at the market," they said.

"Since I joined as ASHA worker here in 2009, four newborns died due to negligence while 10 kids died of malnutrition," Pradhan said.

Contacted, K Nuagon BDO Sarat Kumar Patra said that an estimated ₹1.5 crore is required for construction a bridge across the river. "The special secretary of the Finance department has been intimated about the bridge. The Collector has informed us about the requirement. I hope, the commuting problem will be sorted out," the BDO added.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DISTRICT MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER, NUAPADA
(District Central Store)
SHORT TENDER CALL NOTICE
Bid Notification No. CDM&PHO/11/RTPCR/DPHL/2021-22
No. E-303: Sealed tenders are invited from registered Firms/Suppliers/Manufacturers/Authorized Distributors for supply of Logistics/Lab/Chemicals, Reagents, consumables under DPHL to the undersigned. Details regarding items with terms and conditions may be downloaded from district website www.nuapada.nic.in. The tenders should reach the Office of the undersigned by Date: 21.08.2021 upto 05 P.M. through Speed Post/Registered Post/Courier only. The tender paper cost is mentioned in the term & conditions of the tender.
The undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd./- Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Nuapada
OIPR-10055/11/0013/2122

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India
On-line registration for Free of Cost Skill Development Training Programmes under
'Pradhan Mantri-Dakshta Aur Kushalta Sampann Hitgrahi (PM-DAKSH) Yojana'
Applications are invited from the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes (SCs), Other Backward Classes (OBC), Economically Backward Classes (EBC), De-notified, Nomadic, Semi-nomadic Tribe (DNT) and Safai Karamcharis including Waste Pickers & their dependents, in the age group of 18 to 45 years.
For Up-skilling/Re-skilling, Entrepreneurship Development Programmes, Short Term and Long Term Skill Development Training Programmes
The interested candidates may register themselves at pmdaksh.dosje.gov.in or on Mobile App "PMDAKSH" to be downloaded from Google Play Store
For more details, please visit the respective Corporations' website.
Implementing Organizations
National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC) - for SCs
(Website: <https://www.nsfdc.nic.in> E-mail: support-nsfcdc@nic.in Toll Free No.: 1800110396)
National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) - for OBC, EBC and DNT
(Website: <https://nbcfdc.gov.in> E-mail: nbcfdc.skilltraining@gmail.com Toll Free No.: 18001023399)
National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) - for Safai Karamcharis including Waste Pickers & their dependents
(Website: www.nskfdc.nic.in E-mail: nskfdc-msje@nic.in Tel: 011-26382476, 77, 78)
davp 38123/11/0002/2122



I am sorry to say the Central government is providing a larger number of vaccine doses to states like UP, Gujarat, Karnataka, which are BJP-ruled. I have no problem if they or any other state for that matter receives higher number of vaccine doses, but I cannot remain a mute spectator to see Bengal deprived

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

'NO PLAN TO BLOCK ANY SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM'

The government has no plan to block any social media platform in the country, the Parliament was informed Thursday



of the day quote

Around one lakh people from a population of 15 lakh plus have eluded the state government's 100 per cent vaccination net so far



PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

The recent India-China military talks on the eastern Ladakh row were constructive and both sides agreed to resolve the remaining issues in an expeditious manner



ARINDAM BAGCHI | MEA SPOKESPERSON

Modi ji has brought black farm laws, which are a threat to the food power of the country. If the food security of the country is to be maintained, then the farmers' respect will have to be restored by repealing these agri laws



PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

ED raids ex-K'taka minister's house

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday conducted searches against former Karnataka minister R Roshan Baig and a Congress MLA in connection with a money laundering investigation into the alleged Rs 4,00,000 IMA ponzi scam, officials said.

42,982 fresh Covid-19 cases

New Delhi: India saw a single day rise of 42,982 new coronavirus infections taking the total tally of Covid-19 cases to 3,18,12,114, while the active cases increased to 4,11,076, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Thursday.

WB flood situation remains critical

Kolkata: The flood situation in West Bengal remained critical Thursday though there was less rainfall, a senior state government official said. The number of deaths due to the deluge remained unchanged at 23 as no fresh fatality was reported from any of the seven affected districts where around three lakh people have been shifted to rescue centres.

No bail for Waze

Mumbai: A court here Thursday gave the NIA one month's time to file charge sheet in the case of an SUV with explosives found near industrialist Mukesh Ambani's residence and murder of Mansukh Hiran, and rejected prime accused Sachin Waze's plea for 'default' bail.

PEGASUS ROW

SC SEEKS CENTRE'S STANCE

The Supreme Court Thursday noted that the allegations of snooping are "serious" if the reports regarding it are correct



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 5: The Supreme Court Thursday said allegations of the Pegasus-related snooping are serious, if the reports in the newspapers are correct, and sought the Centre's stand on petitions, including by the Editors Guild of India and senior journalist N Ram, seeking a probe into the Israeli spyware matter.

Opening the argument, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Ram, submitted before a bench comprising Chief Justice NV Ramana and Justice Surya Kant that Pegasus is a rogue technology, and it is entirely illegal, as it infiltrates into our lives through telephone, and it hears and watches.

At this, Chief Justice Ramana said: "Before going into all that, we have certain questions. No doubt, the allegations are serious, if reports in the newspapers are correct." However, he noted: "Majority of petitions rely on foreign newspapers, but where is the verifiable material for us to order an inquiry? The surveillance issue came to light 2 years ago, in May 2019. I don't see any serious effort

to raise the issue, why now suddenly?" Emphasising that the petitioners who moved the top court are knowledgeable and educated and they should have made effort to collect more material, he clarified: "We do not say that newspaper reports are not believable."

Responding to this, Sibal said: "I can explain. We do not have the access to many materials. The petitions have information about 10 cases of direct infiltration into phones."

The bench pointed out the petition by Ram says a California court has observed that some Indian journalists and other persons were also targeted, asking: "Where in the judgment does it say that? We didn't see it." Sibal replied that it is not there but insisted that the government should explain why it did not take action and kept quiet. "It takes \$55,000 to penetrate one mobile phone... let them tell us what are the facts."

As the CJI repeated his query: "Why suddenly after two years?.. In 2019, it was reported WhatsApp system was misused", Sibal cited news reports claiming that registrars of the court and one of the former top court judges was also on the snoop target list.

He said only the government can answer "whether the government bought it, used it and why? This spyware is a big threat to everything we stand for as a Republic."

Chief Justice Ramana said: "Government also mean state governments... Truth has to come out. We do not know whose names were there."

Senior advocate Meenakshi Arora, representing CPI-M MP John Brittas, referred to a statement made by the former IT minister in the Lok Sabha on the Pegasus issue that "to the best of his knowledge, there was no unauthorised interception".

She added now it is known that it was done, therefore there should be an investigation.

Senior advocate Shyam Divan, representing Jagdeep Chokkar, said that for a private citizen to find out that a spyware has been turned on him by the government, it is something per se unconstitutional. At this, the bench queried him: "If you know, your phone was hacked, why didn't you file an FIR?"

Senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi, representing a petitioner, submitted it is mass action and the government has to answer questions and court should take cognizance.

After hearing several senior advocates for more than an hour, the bench said there has to be somebody appearing for the government to place its point of view and accept notice, if it is issued. The bench added it is not sure about which petitions among the group of PILs are to be entertained and asked counsel appearing for the petitioners to serve the copy of the pleas on the Centre. The bench listed the matter for further hearing on August 10. Several petitions have been filed in the top court seeking a court-monitored probe into the Pegasus snooping allegations.

Prashant Kishor resigns as Pb CM's principal advisor

AGENCIES

Chandigarh, August 5: Poll strategist Prashant Kishor Thursday resigned as Principal Advisor to Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, saying "he's resigning in view of his decision to take a temporary break from public life".



"As you are aware, in view of my decision to take a temporary break from active role in public life, I have not been able to take over the responsibilities as your Principal Advisor. Since I am yet to decide on my future course of action, I write to request you to kindly relieve me from this responsibility," Kishor said in a letter to the Chief Minister.

The political strategist was appointed as Principal Advisor to Punjab CM March 1 with a token honorarium of Re 1 per month.

RAIN FURY IN MP

Five bridges collapse; thousands evacuated



AGENCIES

Bhopal, August 5: The washing away of five bridges in three days in rain-hit Gwalior-Chambal region of Madhya Pradesh has raised questions over the built quality of the structures developed by the state over the past decades.

The internal note also mentions that there is no record of cost incurred on the bridges built on Datia's Sewda in 1982 and Sheopur's Manpur in 1985. The Ratangarh Basai bridge that got washed away was built in 2010 at a cost of 5.9 crores; the Indragarh-Pichore bridge was completed in 2013, at a cost of 10 crores; the Sheopur Baroda bridge was completed in 2013 at a cost of RS 3.94 crore; while the Gorai bridge in Bhind was completed in 2017 at a cost of RS 13.71

crores. The government has formed a three-member committee to probe the possible "design flaw" in the bridges that got washed away.

PWD minister Gopal Bhargava said, "Government has formed a three-member committee to investigate a possible design flaw in the six bridges that got washed away due to heavy rains in the Gwalior Chambal division in the past three days. The committee will also investigate the quality of construction." Opposition Congress has demanded a high level enquiry to fix accountability.

"Built just a few years back these bridges got washed away like cards? Crores were spent. There should be a high level enquiry and accountability should be fixed," former Chief Minister Kamal Nath said in a tweet.

HINDU TEMPLE VANDALISM

India summons top Pak diplomat

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: India Thursday summoned the Pakistani chargé d'affaires and lodged a firm protest over the "reprehensible incident" of ransacking of a Hindu temple in Punjab province there, and said incidents of violence and persecution of minorities have continued unabated in Pakistan.

Noting that attacks on the freedom of religion of the minority community and their places of religious worship were occurring at an alarming rate in Pakistan while the state and security institutions there have stood by "idly", External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said Islamabad has been called upon to ensure the safety, security and well-being of its minority communities. "We have seen disturbing reports on social media of a violent mob attack on a Ganesha temple in Rahim Yar Khan in Punjab province of Pakistan. The mob attacked the temple, desecrated the holy idols and set fire to the premises," Bagchi said. According to the reports, the attack took place Wednesday He said the mob also attacked surrounding houses belonging to the Hindu community in the area.

Govt trying to 'muzzle' Oppn voice: Congress

AGENCIES

Lucknow/New Delhi, August 5: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday accused the opposition parties of shooting "self-goals" for political gains as he renewed his attack on them over the continued disruptions of Parliament, saying the country cannot become hostage to such "selfish and anti-national politics".

As the prime minister used a hockey reference to target the opposition hours after the Indian men's team scored a spectacular 5-4 win against Germany to clinch the Olympics Bronze medal, the Congress accused the government of trying to "muzzle" the opposition's voice, but said it will not be cowed down and will keep fighting to raise people's issues, including farmers' problems and the Pegasus snooping controversy.

While the Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said Parliament proceedings are being disrupted over the Pegasus issue, alleging the government is shying away from a discussion on it, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad asserted that

the ruling party is ready for a "meaningful" debate in Parliament be it on the Pegasus issue or those concerning farmers. Prasad also claimed there is no "prima facie evidence" to suggest that certain phone numbers were indeed tapped.

"They are engaged in stopping the proceedings of Parliament but 130 crore people are engaged in not allowing them to stop the country." The latest Pegasus story had named Justice Arun Mishra as among those who might have been targeted by the snooping spyware. With opposition parties pointing out that the BJP had also stalled Parliament when the Congress-led UPA was in power, Prasad sought to draw a distinction saying that the then government denied alleged scams involving 2G spectrum allocation and auction of coal blocks.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also attacked the prime minister over the Pegasus snooping row, saying the Israeli spyware was a tool to silence people. Addressing a 'Sansad Gehrao' protest in Delhi by the Indian Youth Congress, he targeted the prime minister over the issue of employment too.

5 terror incidents in Valley on 2nd anniv of Article 370 abrogation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 5: The Kashmir Valley witnessed a series of terrorist attacks on the second anniversary of the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status Thursday.

Officials said there were a total of five terrorist incidents during the day. No loss of life or injury to anyone was reported, they added.

Other than these, there were no reports of any untoward incident in the valley.

Shops and business establishments in some areas of Srinagar remained shut during the day and

public buses did not ply, officials said. Though there was no call for a strike given by any separatist outfit, some areas in the city witnessed spontaneous shutdown, they said.

Giving details of the attacks, the officials said the first one took place at Batpora in the Sopore area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district where militants fired at a police team from a long distance in the morning. There was no loss of life or injury to anyone.

Around noon, an explosion - suspected to be that of an improvised explosive device (IED) - took place near Jamia Masjid in the

Nowhatta area of Srinagar, the officials said. The security forces deployed in the area fired some rounds in air after the explosion, they said.

In the evening, terrorists hurled a grenade on a security forces patrolling team in Mehjoor Nagar here.

Around 20:30 pm, terrorists hurled a grenade at Pulwama Police Station in south Kashmir and it exploded on the roadside outside its main gate, the officials said.

The fifth attack took place around 9 pm when militants hurled a grenade at a security forces' post located at Bemina near Jucker Quarters here which exploded

without causing any loss of life or injury to anyone. Meanwhile, shops in several areas of the city, including Lal Chowk city centre, were closed.

Those in other areas such as south Kashmir's Anantnag district and parts of Budgam, Ganderbal and Kupwara were open.

Shopkeepers in many areas, including Lal Chowk, alleged that police forced them to keep their establishments open.

Many of them claimed police broke open the locks of their shops. There was no strike call given by any separatist group.

The police termed a letter in the

'Around 140 terrorists waiting to infiltrate'

Srinagar: Around 140 terrorists are waiting at launch pads to infiltrate into Jammu and Kashmir and the terror infrastructure across the Line of Control (LoC) remains in place even though India and Pakistan agreed in February to a ceasefire, a senior security official said Thursday. Contending that the ceasefire agreement was more important for Pakistan as it is desperately trying to come out of the "grey list" of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the sincerity of Islamabad could have been gauged if they had dismantled the terror infrastructure.

name of hardline Hurriyat Conference chairman Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who is under house detention, calling for a shutdown "fake". They added that action was being taken against those uploading or sharing the letter: On August

5, 2019, the Centre announced nullification of Article 370 of the Constitution that accorded special status to Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcated the state into union territories - Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

of the day quote

We always had this belief that the physical work space was the center of effective action; which was tested with the pandemic but it also made us aware that work is about what we do and how we do it and not necessarily about where. We have increasingly become mobile and can execute with excellence, virtually

NINA NAIR | SENIOR VP AND HRD HEAD (INDIA AND AMERICAS)

Globally, Starz Play is subscribed by over 30 million users, the India number is a part of that. Our growth in India has been really healthy and at a rapid pace...We are expecting to reach a wide majority of the OTT audience through BingePass offer

ROHIT JAIN | MD (SOUTH ASIA AND NETWORKS-EMERGING MARKETS ASIA), LIONS GATE

Reach the pre-pandemic level will take us a while. It is a big challenge; you have taken a big hit. It is coming out every q-o-q, it is a very challenging time. It will take time at least three to four quarters, provided that there is a consistent supply of good films and there is no third wave or any variant

AJAY BILU | CHAIRMAN AND MD, PVR CINEMAS

SHORT TAKES

Fuel prices remain stable

New Delhi: Oil marketing companies continued to pause fuel price revision for the 19th consecutive day Thursday as wait and watch continues amid fluctuating global crude prices. Global crude prices have swung in all directions in July starting with a low of \$70 a barrel to quickly rise to over \$77 a barrel, only to fall soon below \$70 a barrel and crossing \$75 a barrel later in the month. The oil prices have softened again to just over \$70 a barrel on concerns of growing Covid cases..

Vodafone Idea shares slump

New Delhi: Vodafone Idea's shares fell to their lowest level in over a year, a day after its billionaire non-executive chairman stepped down, fuelling concerns that the Indian wireless carrier may not survive a hefty bill it owes to the government. The company owes roughly ₹500 billion over the next 10 years for use of the airwaves and in licence fees.

Swiggy inks pact with RBML

New Delhi: Food ordering and delivery platform Swiggy Thursday said it has signed an agreement with Reliance BP Mobility Ltd (RBML) to build an EV ecosystem and battery-swapping stations for its delivery partners across the country. The company has also partnered with Hero Lectro and Fast despatch logistics to enable end-to-end delivery of its orders through cargo e-cycles. Making deliveries through EVs is expected to lower the running cost of vehicles by up to 40 per cent.

AAI to spend ₹25K cr for expansion

New Delhi: The Airport Authority of India will spend around ₹25,000 crore in next 4-5 years for expansion and modification to meet the expected growth in aviation sector. Minister of State for Civil Aviation, General VK Singh (ret'd) told the Rajya Sabha, in a written reply, that the Centre has taken several measures for reforms in civil aviation sector by providing top class infrastructure and facilities.



The increasing adoption of aluminium wheels on PVs will limit the growth of steel passenger car wheels. We have started production of cast aluminium wheels at our new plant near Chennai and started export of these wheels to the US market

S RAM | CHAIRMAN, WHEELS INDIA

POWER MARKET ACHIEVES 37% YOY GROWTH

The country's largest power exchange, Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) has reported a 37 per cent growth in the volume of electricity traded at the exchange in July, 2021



ED warns Flipkart, founders of \$1.35bn fine

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 5: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has asked Walmart's Flipkart and its founders to explain why they shouldn't face a penalty of \$1.35 billion for alleged violation of foreign investment laws, three sources and an agency official told Reuters.

The ED has been investigating e-commerce giants Flipkart and Amazon.com Inc for years for allegedly bypassing foreign investment laws that strictly regulate multi-brand retail and restrict such companies to operating a marketplace for sellers.

The ED official, who declined to be named, said the case concerned an investigation into alle-



gations that Flipkart attracted foreign investment and a related party, WS Retail, then sold goods to consumers on its shopping website, which was prohibited under law. A so-called "show cause notice" was issued in early July by the agency's office in southern city of

The ED has been investigating e-commerce giants Flipkart and Amazon.com Inc for years for allegedly bypassing foreign investment laws

A so-called "show cause notice" was issued in early July by the ED in Chennai to Flipkart, its founders Sachin Bansal and Binny Bansal as well as current investor Tiger Global

A Flipkart spokesperson said, "We will cooperate with the authorities as they look at this issue pertaining to the period 2009-2015 as per their notice"

Small retailers welcome ED move

New Delhi: The ED's move was welcomed Thursday by Praveen Khandelwal, secretary general of the Confederation of All India Traders. "We urge the ED (Enforcement Directorate) to not only impose a heavy fine but recommend the government ban both these portals unless they follow the law in letter and spirit," said Khandelwal. The confederation represents millions of mom-and-pop stores in India. In February, a Reuters investigation based on Amazon documents showed it had given preferential treatment for years to a small group of sellers, publicly misrepresented ties with them and used them to bypass Indian law. Amazon says it gives no preferential treatment to any seller. After the story, the Enforcement Directorate sought information and documents from Amazon about its business operations, Reuters has reported.

ASSOCHAM, SAP to help Odisha MSMEs to go digital

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: ASSOCHAM along with SAP Company have taken initiatives to prepare Odisha MSMEs future-ready by providing them access to the global marketplace, digital skilling their workforce and technology to transform their business processes.

ASSOCHAM along with SAP will help the state's MSMEs to go digital as the market witness rise in demand from the sector. Under Global Bharat movement, the companies have chosen Odisha along with two states, West Bengal and Assam.

"We are bringing the Global Bharat movement along with SAP to the local businesses in the state of West Bengal, Assam and Odisha to ensure that MSMEs leverage technology to grow their businesses and become future-ready, leading to overall industry growth," said Akhilesh Jain Chairman MSME Sector Council, ASSOCHAM Eastern region.

Digital growth and sustainable development are becoming the norm for businesses to thrive and grow in the current pandemic situation. The Global Bharat movement provides them with open access to SAP Ariba Discovery where any buyer can post sourcing needs and any of the four million suppliers on Ariba Network can respond with their ability to deliver the goods and services required. By accessing the SAP Ariba Discovery offer, MSMEs can enroll themselves as suppliers and access a global customer market.

"With more than 80% SMEs, we understand their technological needs and specific business requirements. Digital transformation is of crucial importance, Subramanian Ananthapad manabhan, Vice-President, Mid-Market, SAP Indian subcontinent.

Sebi mulls measures to improve liquidity in ETFs

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: Markets regulator Sebi is examining steps to improve liquidity in the exchange-traded funds segment on stock exchange platforms.

Globally, passive funds such as index funds and exchange traded funds (ETFs) have emerged as one of the largest asset classes.

"Passive funds in India have tremendous scope to grow as the AUM under passive funds in India is still low as compared to its global peers," the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in its annual report for 2020-21.

Passive funds are low cost products, well diversified in nature and perform in line with the market indices, providing an alternative to actively managed funds to retail investors.

According to the annual report,

Sebi plans to examine measures for the development of passive funds covering various aspects such as increase in the liquidity for ETFs on the exchange platforms by efficient market making and better disclosures and transparency regarding such funds.

The other measures include introducing new ETF products and reviewing the regulatory requirement for new players.

ETFs, with very low total expense ratio as compared to actively managed mutual funds, have started attracting domestic investors' interest. The investment through ETFs has witnessed a gradual increase during the last few years - the proportion of ETF assets under management (AUM) to total mutual fund AUM increased from 2 per cent at end of FY16 to 9 per cent at end of FY21. ETF AUM has almost doubled to ₹2.9 lakh crore at end of FY21 from

₹1.54 lakh crore at beginning of FY21. Also, Sebi plans to further strengthen its supervision of mutual funds. For this purpose, the regulator has already created a separate division for automation of inspection of mutual funds.

Going forward, Sebi said, the division is aiming to add new alerts and cover the entire gamut of quantitative aspects of inspections. Further, in-spirit violations would also be identified and added for surveillance.

"Existing algorithms running for alert generation would be modified on an ongoing basis for all changes in regulatory guidelines," Sebi said. Automation of the inspection process would help in examination of entire data rather than inspection of sample data and also result in early recognition of any possible violations, it added.

PFRDA, NPS Trust ready for separation

FM Nirmala Sitharaman had announced to separate the NPS Trust from the PFRDA with appropriate organisational structure

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 5: The PFRDA and NPS Trust are ready for their proposed separation and have deliberated upon their specific work areas post segregation, and the final go-ahead in the matter is awaited as Parliament has to amend the PFRDA Act, a top official has said.

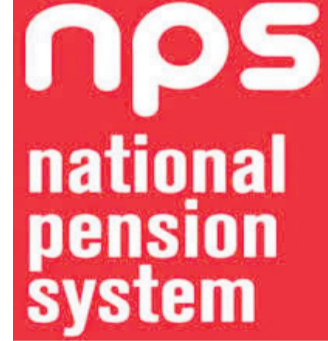
It is expected that the bill for the amendment in the Act may get passed in the ongoing Monsoon Session of Parliament.

The separation is subject to the approval of the Bill for amend-

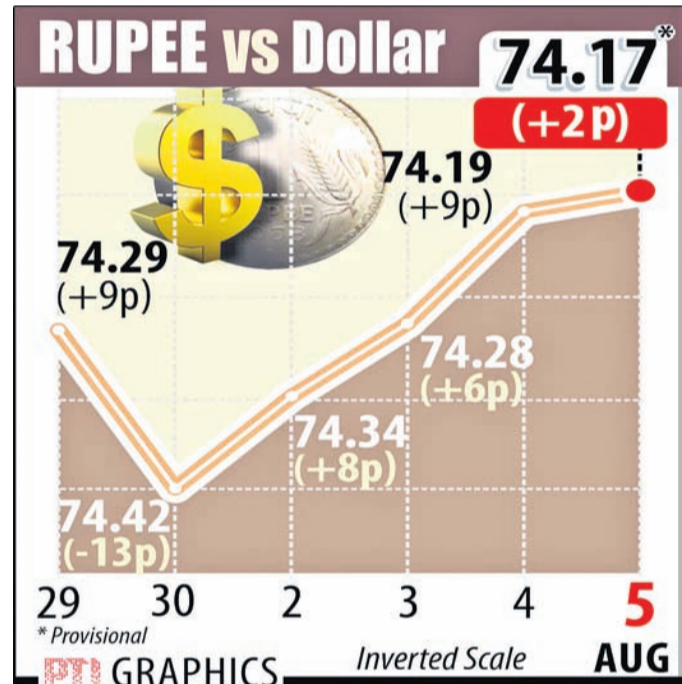
ment in the PFRDA Act, Supratim Bandyopadhyay, Chairman, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA), told PTI.

"What we have done is that now the Trust is allowed to recruit people. Almost 14-15 people have been recruited by them and in the next couple of months they will recruit five more people, taking the total employees count of 20 of their own, which was not there earlier."

"So we are ready for the separation. And together, we have decided what are the jobs to be carried out by them (NPS Trust) exclusively and what are the things



to be looked into by PFRDA," he said. Earlier, the NPS Trust was housed in PFRDA building, but



CHENNAI TURNING INTO A DATA CENTRE HUB

Chennai after being the 'Detroit' of India for housing several automobile makers is turning out to become a major data centre hub

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, August 5: Tamil Nadu's capital city Chennai after being the 'Detroit' of India for housing several automobile makers is turning out to become a major data centre hub.

With the central government and Reserve Bank of India insisting on players to have their data stored in India, the data centre business is getting a boost.

"With three submarine cable landing stations (one more to come), a comfortable power supply position (data centre capacity is generally measured in MW), the availability of market and knowledge pool, Chennai is an ideal location," Nikhil Rathi, CEO and Founder

of Web Werks India Pvt Ltd, a major player told this news agency. Adding further he said the Covid-19 lockdown saw huge amount of data traffic and it is growing.

Web Werks has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tamil Nadu government to build a 20MW data centre here at an outlay of about ₹700 crore and will have a headcount of 100.

For Web Werks, Chennai will be its second largest location in India. The company has its data centres in Mumbai, Pune and Delhi in India. It also has data centres overseas. The Tamil Nadu government is working to come out with a separate policy for data centres to strengthen the ecosystem. "Most common requirements

Company	Location
Ambattur	Vodafone
STTelemedia Data Center	Reliance Jio
NTT Netmagic	Nxtra site 1 (Upcoming)
NTT Netmagic (Upcoming expansion)	Adani Group (Upcoming)
Princeton Digital (Upcoming)	Technoelectric (Upcoming)
ST Telemedia (Upcoming)	Mantra Data Centres (Upcoming)
Siruseri SIPCOT IT Park	Taramani
Nxtra site 1	Sify

of data centres pertaining to housing regulations and power are being worked upon to encourage data centre investments and further downstream investments," the state government said.

Rathi said all buildings cannot house a data centre. The building that houses a data centre will generally need a higher ceiling. "The buildings are machine specific," Rathi added.

According to the state government, there are six submarine data cables with a bandwidth of 14.8 Tbps. The rural areas in Tamil Nadu are also well connected with more than 12,524 village panchayats with a minimum scalable bandwidth of 1 Gbps. As per TRAI, Chennai is among the top five service areas in India for broadband subscriptions.

The state government has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with nine companies for setting up data centres with a total proposed investment of ₹16,927 crore and employment potential of over 9,000 jobs over the last two years. National and international companies, including Yotta, Princeton Digital, ST Telemedia, Netmagic and Adani are in the

process of setting up their data centers in Chennai.

The Ambattur locality in Chennai is the preferred choice for data centre companies owing to its favourable geographical conditions and existing data centre ecosystem. Siruseri is the next ideal destination due to the presence of several IT companies, which offers a great market opportunity, the government said.

Rathi said there is a good market for data centres in Southern cities like Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad owing to the concentration of IT companies, talent pool. He said Tamil Nadu has the single window clearance which eases the regulatory clearance process.

international

76TH HIROSHIMA DAY

EXPLOSION THAT SCARRED JAPAN FOREVER

Hiroshima Day is observed August 6 every year to raise awareness on the disastrous effects of the nuclear bomb and the need to promote "peace politics" among nations. Friday marks 76 years since the US unleashed the world's first atomic bomb attack, August 6, 1945, on the city of Hiroshima, followed three days later by the second and last on Nagasaki, vaporising lives, buildings and Japan's capacity for war. The bombing obliterated nearly 140,000 people instantly and tens of thousands more died later of radiation exposure. Nine days after the Hiroshima bombing, August 15, Emperor Hirohito announced Japan's surrender, ending the WW II



'Hibakusha' plea finally heard

HIBAKUSHA IS A WORD OF JAPANESE ORIGIN GENERALLY DESIGNATING THE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE 1945 ATOMIC BOMBINGS OF HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI

What is black rain?

An estimated 69 per cent of the buildings in Hiroshima were destroyed by the atomic bomb. The debris and soot from this, mixed with the radioactive fallout from the bomb, rose high into the atmosphere in the form of a mushroom cloud. This material combined with the vapour in the atmosphere and came down as dark drops of liquid, which was named as 'black rain'. Survivors of the black rain described it as consisting of large, greasy drops that are much heavier than normal raindrops. Witnesses have been quoted as saying that they saw many desperate survivors of the blast, with their skins burnt and severely dehydrated, drinking the dark fluid to quench their thirst.

What was its effect?

Black rain is full of highly radioactive material, and studies have shown that exposure to it can result in serious illnesses. The rain contaminated everything it came in contact with, and dead fish were reported floating in water bodies and severely ill cattle were seen lying in the fields. Black rain has caused acute radiation symptoms (ARS) in many who were exposed to it, with reports of people suffering from nausea and diarrhoea for weeks. Other ARS include fever, sore throat and loss of hair. Over time, many people who were exposed to black rain have developed cancer.

Sops for survivors



July 31, 2021. Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga said he has decided to grant official medical benefits to 84 Hiroshima residents who were exposed to highly radioactive "black rain" after the city's atomic bombing.

Suga's decision ends a long legal battle by the central government that delayed medical aid for the "black rain" victims, who were outside a government-set boundary used to decide survivors' eligibility for medical care.

July 14, the Hiroshima High Court upheld a lower court's decision that the 84 are eligible for the same benefits as other atomic bomb survivors who were inside the boundary and ordered the government to certify their applications for state health care benefits.

Suga said the government would begin issuing certificates recognizing the plaintiffs as "hibakusha," or atomic bomb victims.

Why Hiroshima?

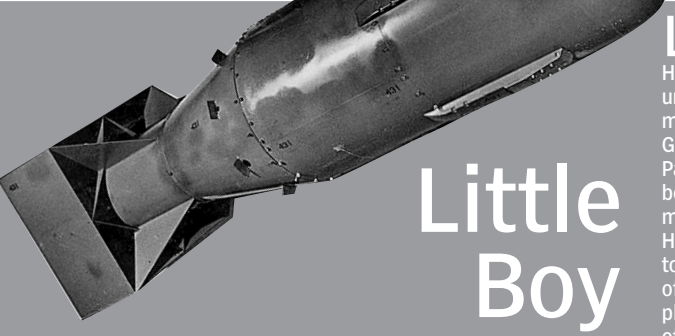
During WWII, Japanese fighters deployed kamikaze tactics and pilots would undertake suicide missions to hit US warships directly.

To prevent more damage from such attacks and force Japan to back down, US President Harry Truman authorised the use of one of the most devastating weapons in the history of war-fighting.

The city was targeted because it held strategic personnel and installations. Hiroshima was the headquarters of the 2nd General Army and 5th Division with 40,000 Japanese combatants posted within the city's limit.

According to sources, around 54% of the deaths in Hiroshima were combatants and slave labourers while 72% of the deaths in Nagasaki were war industry employees and slave labourers.

Hiroshima was chosen as the target because the US wanted to not just force Japan to kneel but also wanted to end its ability to fight wars for years to come.



Little Boy

Little Boy was the codename for the type of atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima. The more than 9,000-pound uranium-235 bomb was loaded aboard a modified B-29 bomber christened Enola Gay (after the mother of its pilot, Colonel Paul Tibbets). The plane dropped the bomb by parachute at 8:15 in the morning, and it exploded 2,000 feet above Hiroshima in a blast equal to 12-15,000 tons of TNT, destroying five square miles of the city. After the war ended, many plans and diagrams related to the making of the bomb were destroyed.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park in the center of Hiroshima, is dedicated to the legacy of Hiroshima as the first city in the world to suffer a nuclear attack, and to the memories of the bomb's direct and indirect victims. The park was built on an open field that was created by the explosion. Every year 6 August, "A-Bomb Day," the city of Hiroshima holds the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony to console the victims. The 'Flame of Peace' has burned continually since it was lit August 1, 1964.



PEACE PARK

Japan learned from the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki that the tragedy wrought by nuclear weapons must never be repeated and that humanity and nuclear weapons cannot coexist

DAISAKU IKEDA | NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT ADVOCATE, JAPAN

Since Auschwitz, we know what man is capable of. And since Hiroshima, we know what is at stake

VIKTOR E FRANKL | NEUROLOGIST AND AUTHOR, AUSTRIA

We are still living in the aftershock of Hiroshima, people are still the scars of history

EDWARD BOND | PLAYWRIGHT AND POET, UK

Covid cases could exceed 200M by next week: WHO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, August 5: The highly-transmissible Delta variant of Covid-19 has now been reported in 135 countries, according to the World Health Organization which said the cumulative number of coronavirus cases reported globally could exceed 200 million by next week.

The Covid-19 Weekly Epidemiological Update dated August 3, released by WHO, said globally 132 countries have reported cases of the Beta variant and 81 countries of the Gamma variant.

The global number of new cases has been increasing for more than a month, with over 4 million cases reported in the past week - July 26 to August 1, the update said.

"This increasing trend is largely attributed to substantial increases in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Western Pacific Regions which reported 37 per cent and 33 per cent increases respectively as compared to the previous week, while the South-East Asia Region reported a 9 per cent increase," it said.

Overall, the number of deaths reported this week decreased by 8 per cent as compared to the previous week, with over 64,000 deaths reported.

The cumulative number of cases reported globally is now nearly 197 million and the number of cumulative deaths is 4.2 million.

At the country level, the high-



Delta reported in 135 countries, Beta in 132 countries and Gamma variant in 81 countries

4 million cases reported between July 26 to August 1

Death rate decreased by 8% as compared to the last week

est numbers of new cases in the past week were reported by the United States (543,420 new cases; 9 per cent increase), India (283,923 new cases; 7 per cent increase), Indonesia (273,891 new cases; 5 per cent decrease), Brazil (247,830 new cases; 24 per cent decrease), and Iran (206,722 new cases; 27 per cent increase).

US grapples with acute Covid surge

The US hit a six-month high for new Covid cases with over 100,000 infections reported Wednesday, as the Delta variant ravages areas where people did not get vaccinated. The country is reporting over 94,819 cases on a seven-day average, a five-fold increase in less than a month. In the coming weeks, cases could double to 200,000 per day due to the highly contagious Delta variant, said top US infectious disease expert Dr Anthony Fauci Wednesday.

ISRAELI AIRSTRIKES ON LEBANON

AGENCIES

Jerusalem, August 5: Israeli jets struck what its military said were rocket launch sites in Lebanon early Thursday in response to two rockets fired towards Israel from Lebanese territory, in an escalation of cross-border hostilities amid heightened friction with Iran.

The rockets launched from Lebanon Wednesday struck open areas in northern Israel, causing brush fires along the hilly frontier. There was no claim of responsibility for the attack, which came from an area of south Lebanon under the sway of Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrillas. Israel responded with several

FIRST IN SEVEN YEARS



rounds of artillery fire Wednesday before launching air strikes early Thursday, the military said.

"This was an attack meant to send a message ... Clearly we could do much more, and we hope we won't arrive at that

BENNY GANTZ | DEFENCE MINISTER, ISRAEL

"(Military) fighter jets struck the launch sites and infrastructure used for terror in Lebanon

from which the rockets were launched," the military said in a statement, adding that it also struck an area that had seen rocket launches in the past.

Benny Gantz, Defence Minister, said he believed a Palestinian faction had launched the rockets. Small Palestinian factions in Lebanon have fired sporadically on Israel in the past.

The border has been mostly quiet since Israel fought a 2006 war against Hezbollah, which has advanced rockets. Israeli aircraft struck Hezbollah posts in the border area last summer. Israel says its aircraft last struck inside Lebanon in 2014, though al-Manar TV reported one such strike in 2015.

UK, ASEAN partnership over Indo-Pacific push

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 5: The UK has agreed to a new partnership with ASEAN which the British government said Thursday will lead to closer cooperation with the strategically important Indo-Pacific region on a range of issues such as trade, investment, climate change and science and technology.

The UK's Dialogue Partner status, which is the first such pact Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has agreed to in 25 years, puts the country at the heart of the Indo-Pacific, it said.

The 10 member countries of ASEAN are Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia.

Biden's offer to HK citizens

AGENCIES

Washington, August 5: President Joe Biden Thursday offered temporary "safe haven" to Hong Kong residents in the United States, allowing potentially thousands of people to extend their stay in the country in response to Beijing's crackdown on democracy in the Chinese territory.

In a signed memo, Biden directed the Department of Homeland Security to implement a "deferral of removal" for up to 18 months for Hong Kong residents currently in the United States, citing "compelling foreign policy reasons".



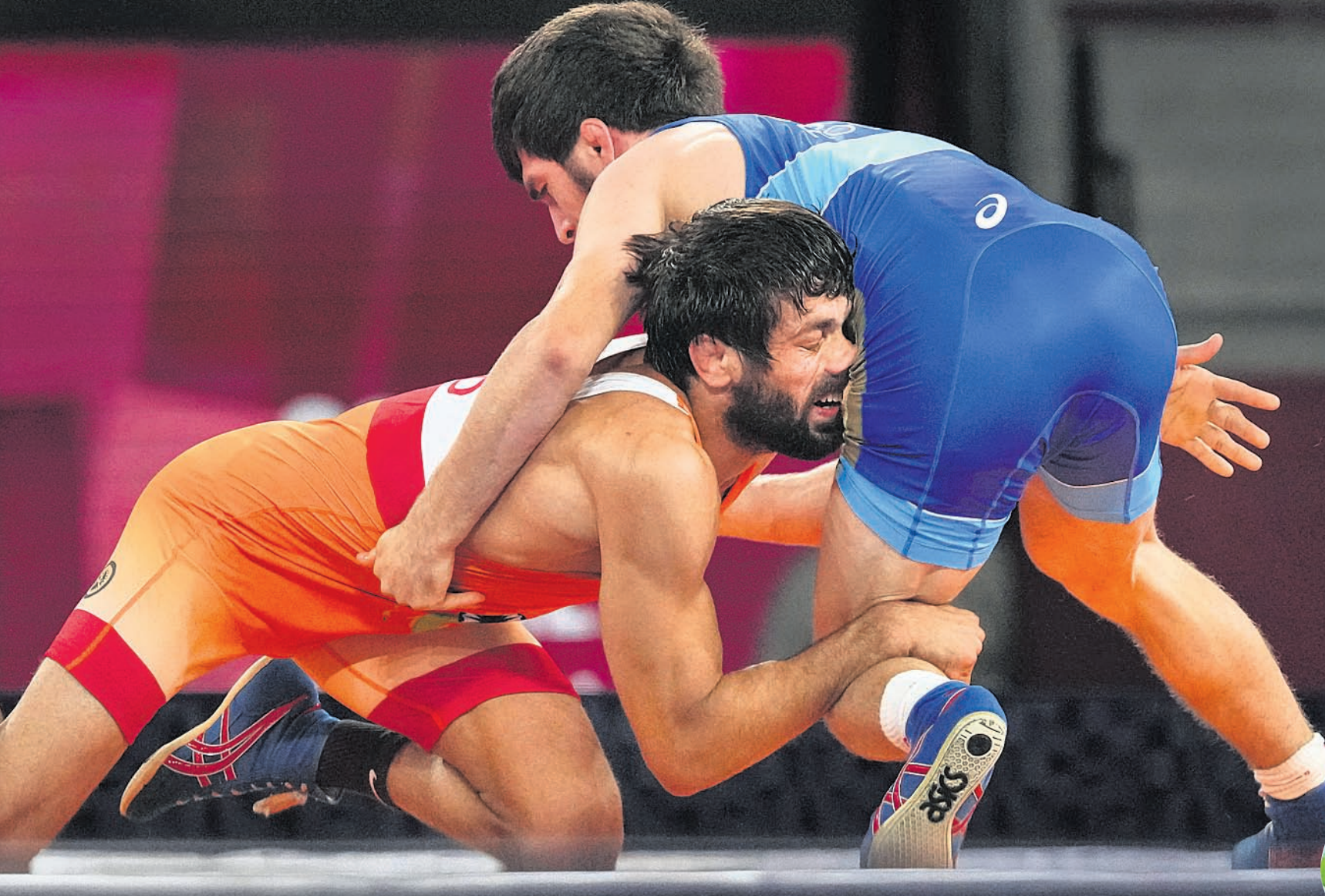
academic freedom, and cracking down on freedom of the press," Biden said in the memo, using the acronym for the People's Republic of China. "Offering safe haven for Hong Kong residents who have been deprived of their guaranteed freedoms in Hong Kong furthers United States interests in the region. The United States will not waver in our

support of people in Hong Kong," Biden said.

The vast majority of Hong Kong residents currently in the United States are expected to be eligible for the program, according to a senior administration official, but some legal conditions apply, such as individuals not having been convicted of felonies.

RAVI'S SILVER LINING

Agony for Deepak Punia and Vinesh on a day of misses for Indian wrestlers



Chiba (Japan), August 5: Ravi Dahiya Thursday became only the second Indian wrestler to win a silver medal at the Olympic Games but Vinesh Phogat's redemption dream came crashing down after a shock quarterfinal exit and Deepak Punia let slip a bronze in the last 10 seconds of his play-off bout here Thursday.

There were huge expectations from Dahiya for a gold medal after his phenomenal semifinal victory but the reigning world champion Zaur Uguev of Russian Olympic Committee dashed those hopes with a comfortable 7-4 win in the men's freestyle 57kg title clash. Dahiya had

lost to Uguev at the 2019 World Championship also. Sushil Kumar, who is now in jail on charges of a murder, is the only other Indian wrestler to have made the final at Olympics.

Dahiya tried every possible trick in his bag but Uguev defended extremely well and kept consolidating his lead with his timely point-scoring moves.

Looking at a bigger picture, Dahiya's silver medal will further inspire the young generation but star Indian wrestler Vinesh was left to endure a second consecutive heart-breaking quarterfinal exit from the Olympic Games after a massive upset defeat at the hands of Belarus' Vanesa Kaladzinskaya.

Vinesh had no answer to the

supreme defence of Vanesa, who got her revenge from the Indian at the biggest stage after suffering a similar embarrassing defeat 'by fall' earlier this year in Ukraine.

Later, Vanesa lost her semi-final to China's Qinyu Pang on criteria after scores were tied 2-2, a result that brought curtains on Vinesh's campaign at the Tokyo Games.

The top-seeded Vinesh, who was a hot favourite for a medal, needed Vanesa to beat the Chinese to rejoin the 53kg competition through the repechage round and push for a bronze.

At the 2016 Rio Olympics, Vinesh had suffered a quarterfinal defeat against China's Sun Yanan after enduring a leg injury and was stretched out of the mat.

In the men's freestyle 86kg category, Deepak Punia came agonisingly close to winning a bronze medal on his Olympic debut but conceded a take-down in last 10 seconds of the play-off against San Marino's Myles Nazem Amine to miss out on achieving the feat.

Deepak's defence was superb throughout the bout but the San Marino wrestler grabbed the decisive two-pointer after getting hold of the Indian's right leg and converted it into a take-down in dying moments of the bout. The 22-year-old Indian, son of a milk peddler in a Haryana village, was leading 2-1 before that take-down but it was not meant to be his day.

Deepak made good use of a

favourable draw to reach the semi-finals but lost to the formidable American David Morris Taylor.

He earlier got past Nigeria's Ekereke Agiomor, the African championship bronze medallist by technical superiority and then prevailed 6-3 over China's Zushen Lin in the quarterfinal.

Young Anshu Malik also bowed out of the 57kg competition after losing her repechage round 1-5 to Russia's Valeria Koblova, the Rio Olympics silver medallist.

Anshu never looked intimidated by a stronger opponent and was leading the bout at one stage on criteria but towards the end, the Russian pulled off a two-pointer to nose ahead.

Aditi Ashok keeps India in medal hunt

AGENCIES

Tokyo, August 5: Indian golfer Aditi Ashok was in contention for a historic Olympic medal after carding a flawless five-under 66 in the second round of the women's competition at the ongoing Games here Thursday.

The 23-year-old rolled in five birdies, which included three in her last four holes, on yet another steamy day at Kasumigaseki Country Club to tie tied second on nine-under 133 with Danish duo, Nanna Koerstz Madsen (64) and Emily Kristine Pedersen (63).

Aditi, playing her second Olympics with her mother, Maheshwari, as her caddie, trails leader — world no.1 Nelly Korda of USA — by four shots.

Korda (67-62) at one stage was 11-under for 17 holes and looked set for a historic sub-60 score of 59 at the Par-71 course. Diksha Dagar returned a 72 to share 53rd place on six-over 148.

Aditi kept herself in prime position of delivering a first-ever medal in golf for India with

MEDAL TALLY				
Rank	Country	G	S	B Total
1	China	34	24	16 74
2	USA	29	35	27 91
3	Japan	22	10	14 46
4	Australia	17	5	19 41
5	ROC	16	22	20 58
6	Great Britain	16	18	17 51
7	Germany	9	9	16 34
8	France	7	11	9 27
9	Italy	7	10	18 35
10	Netherlands	7	9	10 26
65	India	0	2	3 5

birdies on Hole Nos. 2, 5, 15, 17 and 18.

"The last three holes, I had a couple shots that were just a good number for me and I hadn't really had any short approaches all day, maybe just a couple," said Aditi.

With the competition faced with the possibility of being reduced to 54 holes due to impending thunderstorms over the weekend, the slightly-built Indian knows she needs to keep firing at the flags to ensure what would be a monumental podium finish for Indian golf. "This whole week there's going to be so many girls making birdies, especially because the weather's warm and the conditions are favourable," she said.

"I think whatever holes I get to play, whether it's 54 or 72, I'm not really going to sit on anything, I'm just going to try and be as aggressive and make more birdies."

Her strong start in the women's competition has continued to attract plenty of attention on social media at home which Aditi hopes will make the sport more attractive for people in general.

She is dreaming of a medal but is experienced enough to know she needs to stay in the present. "Oh, yeah, for sure," Aditi, who finished 41st in Rio five years back, responded if she was thinking of a podium finish.

"It's kind of like everyone's thinking about it. It's definitely at the back of my mind. But on the course, I'm not really thinking much about it. I'm



just trying to hit the best shot I can hit.

OLYMPICS AT A GLANCE

Indian eves hope to emulate men's feat



TOKYO: They have already surpassed all expectations and the Indian women's hockey team will now look to go a little further and notch up its maiden podium finish at the Olympics when it takes on Great Britain in the bronze medal play-off here Friday. The men's team rewrote history Thursday as it claimed an Olympic medal after 41 years, defeating Germany 5-4 to win the bronze in an edge-of-the-seat play-off match. And having already recorded their best-ever Olympic performance, the Indian women would look to double the nation's joy Friday. But it would be easier said than done for the Indians as they were thrashed 1-4 by Great Britain, who were the defending champions, in the pool stages.



BELGIUM PREVAIL OVER AUSTRALIA

TOKYO: Belgium defeated Australia in a shootout to win gold in men's field hockey. The score was tied 1-1 at the end of regulation time before Belgium won the shootout 3-2. Alexander Hendrickx scored the penalty stroke that put Belgium ahead in the shootout and Vincent Vanasch got the clinching save. Belgium was the 2016 Olympic runner-up. India won bronze earlier in the day with a 5-4 victory over Germany. It was India's first field hockey medal since 1980.

20km race walk: Sandeep Kumar finishes 23rd, Irfan finishes 51st

SAPPORO (JAPAN): National record holder Sandeep Kumar was going strong at second position till near the halfway mark but he faded later on to finish 23rd with a below-par timing in the men's 20km race walk event in the Olympics here Thursday. The 35-year-old Kumar crossed the finish line in 1 hour 25 minute and 7 seconds, well outside his national record time of 1:20:16 which he had clocked in February to qualify for the Olympics during the National Open Race Walk Championships in Ranchi. His two other compatriots, Rahul Rohilla (1:32:06) and KT Irfan (1:34:41) brought up the rear at 47th and 51st with disappointing performances under hot and humid conditions.

INDIA'S SCHEDULE

- ATHLETICS:** Gurpreet Singh in men's 50km race walk event: **2:00am IST**; Priyanka Goswami and Bhawna Jat in women's 20km race walk event: **1:00pm IST**; Indian team in men's 4x400m relay round 1 heat 2: **5:07pm IST**
- GOLF:** Aditi Ashok and Diksha Dagar in women's individual stroke play round 3: **4:00am IST**
- HOCKEY:** India vs Great Britain in women's bronze medal match: **7:00am IST**
- WRESTLING:** Bajrang Punia vs Ernazar Akmataliev (Kyrgyzstan) in men's freestyle 65kg; eighth bout after **8:00am IST** start; Seema Bisla vs Sarra Hamdi (Tunisia) in repechage round of women's freestyle 50kg; second bout after **8:00am IST** start.

Ageless Anderson leads English fightback

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nottingham, August 5: England made inroads into Indian batting line-up with James Anderson's double strike as the visitors failed to build on a solid start to be 125 for four in the rain-hit afternoon session on day two of the first Test. India, who had lost Rohit Sharma (36) at the stroke of lunch, completely lost the plot in the second session.

As it happens often in England, wickets fell in a heap after the 97-run stand between Rohit and KL Rahul (57 batting off 148) was broken. Weather came to India's rescue as bad light stopped play after around 45 minutes of play before rain forced an early tea break.

With dark clouds hovering over a packed Trent Bridge, Anderson did what he does best — attack the off-stump channel and induce the outside edge. He was able to do that in successive balls, sending back Cheteshwar Pujara (4 off 16) before winning the opening battle against skipper Virat Kohli.



Pujara never looked comfortable in the middle and on one occasion offered a no shot to a straight delivery from Ollie Robinson but the DRS saved him.

Anderson eventually had him caught behind and the very next ball he removed Kohli with a beauty that was pitched up in the off-stump corridor and held its line to take the outside edge.

Ajinkya Rahane's run out following a mix-up with Rahul over a quick single added to India's mini collapse, leaving the game evenly

SCOREBOARD	
ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS: 183 ALL OUT	
INDIA 1ST INNINGS	
Rohit Sharma c Sam Curran b Robinson 36, KL Rahul batting 57, Cheteshwar Pujara c Jos Buttler b James Anderson 4, Virat Kohli c Jos Buttler b James Anderson 0, Ajinkya Rahane run out (Bairstow) 5, Rishabh Pant batting 7	
Extras: (B-5, LB-3, NB-8) 16; Total: (for 4 wickets in 46.1 overs) 125 (Day 2 stumps)	
FoW: 1-97, 2-104, 3-104, 4-112	
Bowling: James Anderson 13.1-7-15-2, Stuart Broad 11-1-45-0, Ollie Robinson 15-5-32-1, Sam Curran 7-1-25-0	

n't quite work out as he threw it away after doing all the hard work.

The partnership certainly put England on the back-foot with a deep point being stationed at times to stop the flow of boundaries.

They patiently waited for the loose deliveries and played some delightful drives, keeping the scoreboard ticking with Rahul blending his caution and aggression in equal measure to remain undefeated.

Odisha FC sign Nikhil Raj on loan from Kickstart FC



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Odisha FC has reached an agreement with Kickstart FC over a loan deal of young Indian midfielder Nikhil Raj who will now play for the Bhubaneswar-based side during the upcoming eighth edition of the Hero Indian Super League.

The 20-year-old has been a part of the Karnataka team in two editions of the Santosh Trophy and was awarded the best midfielder in the BDEFA Super Division last season. He went on loan to the Indian Arrows, making nine appearances for them in the last season of the I-League.

Messi to leave Barca

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Barcelona, August 5: Barcelona have announced that Lionel Messi is leaving the club after "financial and structural obstacles" made it impossible to renew his contract. The forward, who has spent his whole career there, had been expected to re-sign after his deal expired in June.

"Despite FC Barcelona and Lionel Messi having reached an agreement and the clear intention of both parties to sign a new contract today, this cannot happen because of financial and structural obstacles (Spanish Liga regulations)," the club said. "As a result of this situation, Messi shall not be staying on at FC Barcelona. Both parties deeply regret that the wishes of the player and the club will ultimately not be fulfilled.

"FC Barcelona wholeheartedly expresses its gratitude to the player for his contribution to the aggrandisement of the club and wishes him all the very best for the future in his personal and professional life."

Last month Messi agreed in prin-



ple to a five-year deal on reduced wages rather than a two-year extension initially discussed. It had been hoped the agreement would keep Barcelona within the boundaries of La Liga's financial fair play regulations but that has proved impossible.

Barcelona needed to move players out to renew Messi's deal and they have not been able to find the solution. The club, whose total debt is about €1.173m, are constrained by the league's salary cap. Messi has agreed to a 50% pay cut, dropping from about €45m basic, after tax, to closer to €20m.

LOST GLORY REGAINED

Naveen congratulates Manpreet Singh & co

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 5: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik congratulated the Indian men's hockey team over telephone after the Manpreet Singh-led side ended a 41-year wait for a medal at Olympic Games, Thursday.

"This historic win at Tokyo Olympics 2020 will inspire generation of sportspersons. All the very best for future," Patnaik wrote on Twitter soon after India sealed bronze medal.

Patnaik also praised the Men in Blue's gutsy performance despite trailing 1-3 at one point during the game. "In the last few days, hockey has brought together every Indian across the globe. The performance of the team will inspire thousands of kids to choose hockey and sports as career. This is the start of a new era of Indian hockey," said Patnaik, who was a hockey goalie in his school days.

The Odisha government will fe-

BIRENDRA LAKRA AND AMIT ROHIDAS BECAME THE FIRST TWO PLAYERS FROM ODISHA TO WIN OLYMPICS MEDAL

ODISHA OLYMPIC ASSOCIATION TO HONOUR LAKRA, ROHIDAS WITH CASH REWARDS OF RS 1 LAKH EACH

licitate the team here August 16 for their historic achievement. "Many congratulations to our hockey team. The whole of India is so excited as well as Odisha of course. We are all behind you and we wish you the very best and we are looking forward to receiving our Indian Olympics hockey team in Bhubaneswar August 16," Patnaik said while speaking the team in a video call.

For participants from Odisha in Tokyo, Patnaik had earlier announced cash awards of ₹6 crore for gold winners, ₹4 crore for silver and ₹2.5 crore for bronze. He had also announced ₹15 lakh for each participant from the state.

OTHER REACTIONS



PRABODH TIRKEY (former India hockey captain): India is young team. India performed exceptionally well, sans the defeat against Australia. Even against Belgium, they played well but lost because of penalty corners. And it is a part and parcel of the game. We won a medal after a long time, thanks not only to the players, but also for the coach as well as support staff. It's a big day for Indian hockey. Both Amit (Rohidas) and Birendra (Lakra) played well throughout the tournament.



LAZARUS BARLA (former hockey Olympian): It was a nail-biting contest. Germany followed their old plans - giving their all in the opening and closing five minutes. They succeeded taking a lead of 3-1. Credit to the Indian players, who didn't back down and fought back to seal the win. India's performance is getting better and better since Odisha government sponsored them in 2018. Winning a medal with the jersey having 'Odisha' written on it, it's a proud moment for us. Amit and Birendra were also played their part brilliantly.



ASHOK MOHANTY (former hockey administrator): India only lost to World No.1 Belgium and World No.2 Australia. Otherwise, the team played well throughout the tournament. We couldn't see the Germany of '90s - the dominating and attacking. Rather it was the Indians who played like that with 'Never say die' attitude. And the credit goes to the players who are dedicated for the sport and coach Graham Reid. After such a huge loss (1-7) against Australia, the way Indians performed, it was possible all because of their team spirit. Amit was excellent and India won the medal mostly because of their strong defense.



KALU CHARAN CHAUDHARY (hockey coach): It can be said that a new era began with the bronze win. It would inspire many to choose hockey. Come to match, the Indians capitalised on their chances against Germany and it was all possible because of strong defense from Amit and PR Sreejesh. If we had grabbed our chances against Belgium, the situation would have been different. Amit was impressive against Germany. Not only in defense, but he helped in attack as well. For me, he is the 'Player of the match'.



MANPREET SINGH: I don't know what to say right now, it was fantastic. The effort, the game, we were 3-1 down. I think we deserve this medal. We have worked so hard, the last 15 months were difficult for us also, we were in Bangalore and some of us got COVID also. We would like to dedicate this medal to doctors and frontline health workers who have saved so many lives in India

GRAHAM REID: It is a fantastic feeling, it has come after a lot of sacrifices that the whole group has made. It takes a long time to get where these athletes have gotten. All the sacrifices that go unseen. I know that apart from the country, this group has been waiting for a medal for a fairly long time and I know how much hockey means to India and I am privileged to help play a part in that

HARMANPREET SINGH: It's a nostalgic moment for us. It's a special moment for every Indian. It's a big achievement. We have made a lot of sacrifices but our focus was on being mentally stronger. In the last 16 months we lived as a family in Bangalore. We were completely shut from the outside world. We were just focussed on our job

I was prepared for everything today because the 60 minutes is like anything. I'm playing hockey for the last 21 years and I just said to myself one thing: 'Take the experience of 21 years, just play that 60 minutes'. Even for the last penalty corner I said the same thing: 'Sree, you worked hard for the last 21 years and this is what you want to do now, that one save'. I did it, and we are on the podium now

PR SREEJESH



Manpreet & co beat Germany to seal historic bronze medal

Tokyo success a 'new dawn'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Tokyo, August 5: A resolute Indian men's hockey team rewrote history as it claimed an Olympic medal after 41 years, defeating a plucky Germany 5-4 to win the bronze in an edge-of-the-seat play-off match of the ongoing Games here Thursday.

The eight-time former gold-winners, who battled a heartbreaking slump in the last four decades, made the resurgence of the last couple of years count in the best way possible with an Olympic medal.

Their bronze, which is worth its weight in gold for the sheer emotion and nostalgia that hockey invokes in the country, became India's fifth medal at the ongoing Games.

Simranjeet Singh (17th, 34th minutes) scored a brace, while Hardik Singh (27th), Harmanpreet Singh (29th) and Rupinder Pal Singh (31st) were the other goal-getters for World No.3 India. Germany's goals were scored by Timur Oruz (2nd), Niklas Wellen (24th), Benedikt Furk (25th) and Lukas Windfeder (48th).

The Indians made one of the most memorable comebacks in the history of the game, fighting back from a two-goal deficit (1-3) to turn the match in their favour.

In the first quarter, the Germans took the lead in the second minute through Oruz. Manpreet's men upped their pace a bit in the second quarter and the play worked wonders as Simranjeet scored a brilliant goal with a reverse hit from top of

the German circle after being fed by Nilakanta Sharma's pass.

The Indian defence once again gave away the lead to Germany, committing soft errors in a span of two minutes. Christopher Ruhr was the creator for Germany turning over from just outside the Indian circle and then slipped the ball onto Wellen who scored with a reverse hit past Sreejesh.

A minute later, it was Surender Kumar who was dispossessed just outside the Indian circle and Constantine Staib passed it on to Furk, who found the net. Although stunned, India made a comeback scoring twice in a span of three minutes. In the 27th minute, India secured their second penalty corner and Hardik scored from a rebound after Harmanpreet's flick was saved by custodian Alexander Stadler.

Two minutes later, India secured another penalty corner and Harmanpreet was on target with a powerful flick past Stadler.

After the change of ends, the Indians took the lead when they were awarded a penalty stroke for a push on Mandeep Singh inside the circle. Rupinder stepped up to gleefully grab the chance with both hands. Three minutes later, India doubled their lead when Simranjeet scored his second goal of the day, tapping in Gurjant Singh's pass from the right to take a 5-3 lead.

Germany secured a penalty corner three minutes into the final quarter and Windfeder found the net.



Budding hockey players of Odisha, along with Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera, celebrate men's team's feat at Kalina Stadium

NEW DELHI: Emotions ran high and tears of joy rolled down the eyes of yesteryear stars of Indian hockey, who Thursday described the men's team's historic bronze medal winning feat at the Olympics as "new dawn" for the game in the country.

India's 12th hockey medal in the Olympics came after over four decades. The last time India stood on the podium was at the 1980 Moscow Games where they won gold. The country has eight gold medals in all the Olympic Games.

"I am extremely happy for Indian hockey as a whole because at one time people said that hockey is in ICU, hockey is dead. But now we have witnessed Indian hockey's resurgence," India's only World Cup-winning skipper Ajitpal Singh told this agency.

"It is a very pleasant moment for lovers of hockey. Hockey has again given happiness, I had tears in my eyes honestly. We have reached where we once belonged. It's a remarkable achievement."

Zafar Iqbal, a key member of India's last Olympic gold medal winning team in 1980 Moscow Games, said he had his heart in his mouth in the final few minutes of the match.

"My heart was beat-

ing very heavily when Germany were pressing hard in the final few minutes. (But) History has been made. We have crossed that jinx. It's a miracle. It's to going to have a big impact on the game. It will revive the sport in country. It's a new beginning, a new dawn," he said.

Olympian and former coach of the national side, Joaquim Carvalho had tears of joy in his eyes and said it's a red letter day for Indian hockey.

"Very important for India hockey because we have not got any victo-

ries in hockey for long and this win will definitely give a big boost to the promotion and development of the game in the country," he said.

Former India coach Harendra Singh broke down after watching the historic win. Singh had made a big contribution in shaping this side as the team in Tokyo consists of many junior players whom he guided to the Junior World Cup title in 2016.

"I salute (chief coach) Graham Reid.

NATION LAUDS MEN IN BLUE

The nation is hailing and celebrating Indian men's hockey team's historic bronze medal-winning feat at the Olympic Games. Let's take a look at some reactions...



NARENDRA MODI: Historic! A day that will be etched in the memory of every Indian. Congratulations to our Men's Hockey Team for bringing home the Bronze. With this feat, they have captured the imagination of the entire nation, especially our youth. India is proud of our Hockey team.



ABHINAV BINDRA: An emotional moment for the entire nation, a moment of pride. The long wait has ended! Congratulations to the Indian Men's Hockey team for their splendid achievement.



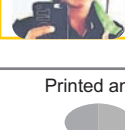
SACHIN TENDULKAR: Congratulations to each & every member of the hockey contingent on winning the #Bronze (medal) for India! A fantastic hard fought win. The penalty corner save by Sreejesh in the dying moments of the game was amazing. Entire (India) is immensely proud!



MAHESH BHUPATHI: Lion Hearts!!! Can't say enough about the attitude, first coming back and then holding on. Congrats Hockey India on making history. Truly emotional moment for the country.



ANURAG THAKUR: A BILLION CHEERS for INDIA! Boys, you've done it! We can't keep calm! Our Men's Hockey Team dominated and defined their destiny in the Olympics history books today, yet again! We are extremely proud of you!



HARMANPREET KAUR: 41 years was a long wait. Well done boys - Manpreet Singh and Team. You've been stunning on the field. We are all so proud of you. Jai Hind.

ROLL OF HONOUR

YEAR	PLACE	MEDAL
1928	Amsterdam	Gold
1932	Los Angeles	Gold
1936	Berlin	Gold
1948	London	Gold
1952	Helsinki	Gold
1956	Melbourne	Gold
1960	Rome	Silver
1964	Tokyo	Bronze
1968	Mexico City	Bronze
1972	Munich	Bronze
1980	Moscow	Gold
2021	Tokyo	Bronze