



RASHMIKA ON CLOUD NINE

Actor Rashmika Mandanna crosses the milestone of 20 million followers on Instagram

LEISURE

P2



GRAND VICTORY

Britney Spears' father agrees to step down as conservator of her estate, seemingly ending a bitter legal battle

INTERNATIONAL

P10



NEW COACHES FOR OFC

Joaquin Valerio Olivera and Jose Mascaros Balaguer join Odisha FC coaching staff ahead of eighth season of ISL

SPORTS

P12

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PLUS II ARTS RESULTS TODAY

BHUBANESWAR: After declaring the results of Plus II Science and Commerce streams July 31, the Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE), Odisha, will announce the results of Plus II Arts and Vocational streams for the year 2021 Saturday. Candidates can view and download their scorecards by visiting the official websites <http://chseodisha.nic.in/> or <http://orissaresults.nic.in/>. Though the results were to be announced before July 31 as per the Supreme Court order, the board and state government had appealed to the apex court demanding some time to declare the Plus II Arts and Vocational results.



KANDAHAR FALLS. KABUL NEXT?

KABUL: The Taliban completed their sweep of the country's south Friday as they took four more provincial capitals in a lightning offensive that is gradually encircling Kabul, just weeks before the US is set to officially end its two-decade war. The insurgents have taken half of the country's 34 provincial capitals in recent days, including its second- and third-largest cities, Herat and Kandahar. While the capital of Kabul isn't directly under threat yet, the losses and advances elsewhere further tighten the grip of a resurgent Taliban.

MORE P10

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MAJESTIC VIEW: The Yacht Club of Hyderabad celebrates 75 years of India's Independence at Hussain Sagar Lake in Hyderabad, Friday.

PTI PHOTO

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Henceforth, one has to clear physical test for getting poll ticket!

MARKET WATCH			
INDEX			VARIATION
SENSEX	55437.29	▲	593.31
NIFTY	16529.10	▲	164.70
DOLLAR	74.61	▲	₹0.03
EURO	87.19	▼	₹0.10
GOLD	₹46,921	▲	₹558
SILVER	₹63,316	▲	₹1456

WEATHER			
	BHUB	CTK	
TEMP MAX	34.7°C	34.0°C	
TEMP MIN	26.0°C	25.5°C	
Humidity	78%	75%	Forecast
Rainfall	Nil	Nil	Light rain very likely

Treatment first, testing later for symptomatic children

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: In view of the possible third wave of Covid-19, the Odisha government plans to give timely treatment to symptomatic children without waiting for their test reports.

Director of Medical Education and Training CBK Mohanty said: "All the symptomatic children will be tested for Covid-19 as per the ICMR norms. We have now planned that if a child with Covid-19 symptoms comes for treatment, we would start treatment as soon as possible before testing. We would be confirming the test reports later. We will not delay the treatment."

The state health department Friday told the media that the government could open new dedicated 'children only Covid hospitals' if any



such demand arises in the future. "If needed we can set up standalone Covid hospitals for children in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar. These could be set up in other big cities as well," Mohanty said.

Mohanty also said that district task forces could make special attempts to streamline the works related to the care of children and

"If needed we can set up standalone Covid hospitals for children in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar"

CBK MOHANTY | DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

preparedness of health institutions. "The formation of district task force will strengthen the efforts of the state government to monitor the works undertaken to safeguard the health of children in view of the possible threat from the third wave of the pandemic," the official said. Mohanty said all Collectors and CDMOs would soon start working in the task force. "There will be 610 ICU beds across the state. Medicines for children and adults are almost the same and the procurement is on. We are prepared for the third wave," he said.

What was need for new IT Rules: HC

AGENCIES

Mumbai, August 13: The Bombay High Court Friday asked the Union government what was the need to introduce the recently notified Information Technology Rules, 2021 without superseding the existing IT Rules that came into effect in 2009.

A bench of Chief Justice Dipankar Datta and Justice GS

Kulkarni reserved its order on two petitions seeking an interim stay on the implementation of the new Rules. The pleas, filed by digital legal news portal Leaflet and journalist Nikhil Wagle, raised objections to several provisions in the new Rules and said these were likely to have a 'chilling effect' on a citizen's right to free speech as guaranteed by the Constitution. The petitioners

also claimed the Rules went beyond the scope of the parent IT Act as well as the reasonable restrictions imposed on speech and expression by Article 19 (2) of the Constitution.

Friday, the bench said orally that it was inclined to grant limited relief to both petitioners over serial number nine of the new Rules that related to adherence to a code of ethics.

Tamil Nadu cuts petrol price by ₹3

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 13: The DMK government in Tamil Nadu Friday announced a tax cut of ₹3 on petrol per litre and holding the Centre responsible for increase in the cost of fuel, said the onus of providing relief to end consumers lay with the Union government.

Finance Minister Palanivel Thiaga Rajan, presenting the Revised Budget for 2021-22 to the Assembly, announced the tax cut. "I am happy to inform the House that this government has decided to reduce the effective rate of tax on petrol by ₹3 per litre and thereby provide major relief to the toiling working class people in the state. This measure will result in a loss of revenue of ₹1,160 crore a year," the Finance Minister said.



"Nowhere is this dilution of the spirit of federalism more apparent than in the taxation of petrol and diesel at the pump," he said. The overall Union levies on petrol were increased from ₹10.39 per litre in May 2014 to ₹32.90 per litre, now. Similarly, the levies on diesel were increased from ₹3.57 in May 2014 to ₹31.80.

Even as the Union government's cesses and surcharges were increased, the basic Union excise duty was brought down sharply. Hence, in 2020-21 even as the revenue to the Union government from petrol and diesel went up by 63 per cent from the revenue in 2019-20, the share of the states declined sharply, the Minister said.

Tusk reveals woolly mammoth's lifetime journey

REUTERS

Anchorage, August 13: A woolly mammoth that roamed Alaska 17,000 years ago covered enough ground in its 28-year lifetime to nearly circle the globe twice, an analysis of one of its tusks suggests.

The findings, detailed in a study published in the journal Science, show how the male mammoth went through infancy and youth as part of a herd, but died alone from starvation in Alaska's northernmost mountains. "This really is one of the very first insights into the life history of an Arctic woolly mammoth," said Matthew Wooller of the University of Alaska at Fairbanks, co-lead author of the study of the now-extinct

ancestor of the modern elephant. The mammoth's movements were traced through analysis of isotopes in one of its well-preserved tusks.

To generate more than 400,000 data points for the study, the scientists sliced open the tusk, exposing the layers that were added as the animal grew. Those layers, Wooller said, are like "sugar ice cream cones stacked one inside of each other." In its early years, the mammoth-named Kik by

researchers after the river where its remains were found - moved around the area that is now the Lower Yukon River region, Wooller said.

Though glaciers extended far south at the time, much of Alaska, including that region, was glacier-free. Alaska areas that are now boreal forest were grassy steppe-like terrain, ideal for grazers such as woolly mam-

moths, he said.

"It was probably hanging out with the herd, with its mother and other members of the herd," Wooller said. At age 15 or 16, the mammoth dramatically increased the distance and range of its travels, heading periodically to points much farther north and higher in elevation.

It's likely that the mammoth left the herd then, Wooller said. Its behaviour mirrored patterns in some modern elephant herds, in which maturing males are "encouraged, and I would put inverted commas around that word," to strike off on their own, he said. In its later years, the mammoth roamed some routes that caribou use today, Wooller

said. It is possible that the mammoth, as it travelled seasonally to find food, shared migration paths with ancient caribou, he said. Its demise likely came at the Arctic gravel bar where its remains were found in 2010. The combination of two tusks and a partial skull there "gives us pretty good confidence that that's where it died," Wooller said.

At the end, it endured nutritional stress, the tusk analysis showed. "It looks like in its last year of life it slowed down to not much moving around," Wooller said. "We have kind of a smoking gun of what killed it." The study does more than just satisfy curiosity about extinct Ice Age creatures.

Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT)
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(An Institution of Eminence)

17th Annual Convocation
Date: 14th August 2021 | Time: 11.00 a.m.
Virtual Mode

Chief Guest
Shri Dharmendra Pradhan
Hon'ble Minister of Education and Skill Development & Entrepreneurship Govt. of India

Convocation Address by
Professor Jean-Marie Lehn
Nobel Laureate in Chemistry (1987), France
He will receive Honoris Causa Degree.

KIIT-DU will also confer Honoris Causa Degrees on:

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi (Amma)
Spiritual Leader, Guru & Humanitarian

Shri Vallabh Bhansali
Co-founder, ENAM Securities; Founder, Desh Apnayen Sahayog Foundation & Founder-Director, FLAME University

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leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES You will be the focus of everyone's attention today – for your visual appeal or for your abilities. Ganesh suggests that you should make the best of the opportunity and recharge yourself. You can accomplish quite a lot with the energy you gain.

TAURUS It is highly unlikely that you will be emotional and sentimental today, predicts Ganesh. Adopt a laid-back attitude towards life to feel at ease. Public servants will have encouraging and affirmative results in their efforts. Your competency will be put to test at the work place.

GEMINI You will be in the mood to spend the day doing the things that you really love. You will consider helping people in need and will be in a generous mood. Your charitable bent of mind will bring you elevated social status and improved self-esteem, says Ganesh.

CANCER You may face unwanted events and circumstances. As a result you will feel sad, yet you will wriggle out of it with your efficiency. Put in efforts in studies, says Ganesh. remember that in success destiny is one per cent and effort 99 per cent.

LEO You will spend an enjoyable day with your favourite relatives and friends. In the office also, you will be afforded rare co-operation from all your colleagues. Financial gains are indicated. It is a good time for lovers, who will experience an intimate bond with their partners, says Ganesh.

VIRGO You are born with a talent for business. Your organisational skills too are flawless. Ganesh advises you to use all your creativity, innovative ideas and ability to motivate others to make progress in your business. Ganesh says you may freely express yourself and make full use of your sharp judgement.

LIBRA Ganesh says that you will be more careful about your outward appearance and will try to enhance it further. Towards the evening you may impress people around you when you attend a social function. Those of you who are single can put forth a marriage proposal to their beloved today and it will be accepted.

SCORPIO Your stars indicate splurging of money today. And this time, you do it for your near and dear ones. After all, what is money without friends and family? You may even go out of your way to make them happy by entertaining them with outings and celebrations.

SAGITTARIUS Staying away from home, for a long business trip may be painful. But, when you strike great deals, it's worth it. Besides good returns from business, Ganesh also has many other surprises in store for you. Be hopeful!

CAPRICORN Celebrations are in the offing and all the near and dear ones are invited to the party. Today, you will enjoy yourself to the fullest, feels Ganesh. You will get the desired profits in the business irrespective of how hard you have worked to achieve them.

AQUARIUS Today will not be your day. You will find it difficult to create a peaceful environment in your home and adding to the woes will your children who will be making things even more difficult for you to handle. There may be some family disputes also, and green-eyed neighbours will try to add fuel to the fire.

PISCES You will race ahead of your competition today. No matter what field you are in, you will find yourself at an advantageous point, well ahead of your contemporaries. You will be able to complete the task at hand with lesser effort than required.



QUIT ACTING TO MAKE LIFE MANAGEABLE: CAMERON DIAZ

Former actress Cameron Diaz, who has not appeared in a feature film since the 2014 film *Annie*, has revealed that she quit acting in order to make all parts of her life more manageable. Diaz began to realise when she was 40 that things needed to change.

ZOE KRAVITZ HAS LOST COUNT OF HER TATTOOS

Actress Zoe Kravitz does not know how many tattoos she has and sees the ink as a 'beautiful form of adornment'. She reportedly has as many as 56 tattoos across her body, but she can neither confirm nor deny that number.



'Isn't easy to shift from one character to another'

Mumbai: Yami Gautam has her diary full as she has several movies lined up such as *A Thursday*, *Dasvi* and *Lost*. The actress says it isn't easy to shift from one character to another and believes a character should not suffer because of tight schedules.

The 32-year-old actress will play a crime reporter in Aniruddha Roy Chowdhury's *Lost*, a kindergarten teacher, who takes children as hostages in *A Thursday* and an IPS officer in *Dasvi*. She also has the spooky adventure comedy *Bhoot Police* in the pipeline.

Yami said: "I have always wanted to play versatile roles. I am glad that film-makers have faith in me with their material and are offering diverse projects. It isn't easy to shift from one character to another."

"I remember being on the sets of *A Thursday* just a day after wrapping *Dasvi*, and immediately after that, I was in Kolkata for *Lost*. I believe a character should not suffer because of the tight schedules."

The newly-married actress says one should not take 'pride in exhaustion'.

She added: "And for that, an actor should take a moment to breathe or just spend time with family in order to avoid burning out. One should not take pride in exhaustion. We need to start respecting that little space for a better performance."



Aamir in AP for shooting of Laal Singh Chaddha

Kakinada: Star Aamir Khan has arrived in Andhra Pradesh town in East Godavari district for shooting of his upcoming movie *Laal Singh Chaddha*.

The actor along with other unit members visited various locations Friday and Saturday for the shoot.

The shooting was scheduled at Amalapuram, about 60 km from Kakinada, Friday while the unit will shoot some more scenes at Kakinada beach Saturday.

Khan checked into a hotel in Kakinada, where tight security arrangements were made. The private security personnel did not allow anyone to meet the actor in view of Covid-19 pandemic.

Laal Singh Chaddha stars Kareena Kapoor in the female lead. Telugu actor Naga Chaitanya is also playing the role of an army officer. This is the first Hindi film for Naga Chaitanya, son of leading actor Nagarjuna. Being produced by Aamir Khan Productions, *Laal Singh Chaddha* has already completed most of the shooting in Srinagar, Ladakh, Kargil, Chandigarh and other locations.

Rashmika gains 20mn followers on Insta

Mumbai: Actress Rashmika Mandanna, who keeps treating fans with stunning posts on social media, recently crossed the milestone of 20 Million followers on Instagram.

To celebrate the milestone, Rashmika treated her fans with 20 moments of her firsts. From her first movie ticket to her first picture in Bollywood, the actress took a trip down memory lane and shared a video.

Sharing the video on her handle, Rashmika wrote, "For 20 Million love you've given me. I want to take you through 20 moments of my firsts.. " She used BTS' hit song 'Butter' in the video.

Soon after she posted the video, the comments section got filled with love and praise from her fans. Elli Avram also dropped a heart emoji on her post. Since she used BTS' song, fans started asking her if she also follows the band. One of the fans also wrote, "wth!? butter? omg yayy. rashmika should talk about BTS more often" while another fan wrote, "Hope u meet bts soon." One of her fans also wrote, "I purple you"

After hitting 20 million followers, Rashmika also treated fans with a gorgeous picture of herself. She stunned in a yellow tube bodycon dress. AGENCIES



Nila Madhab's Kalira Atita to be screened at Melbourne film fest

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: National Award winning film director Nila Madhab Panda's Odia film *Kalira Atita* (Yesterday's past), highlighting the perils of climate changes, will be screened in the Indian Film Festival of Melbourne (IFFM).

IFFM is the largest festival of its kind in Australia, celebrating the best of Indian cinemas in all its forms. The festival presents a diverse selection of movies that encapsulates the best Indian movies and those from the Indian sub-continent. The online event is slated to open August 15 as scheduled.

Talking about the selection, director Panda says "I wanted to send a message to the world through this movie. A climate crisis is upon us now



and an appropriate action is the need of the hour. I am trying my best to tell the real incidents through my films and draw people's attention towards such serious matters. It's a great

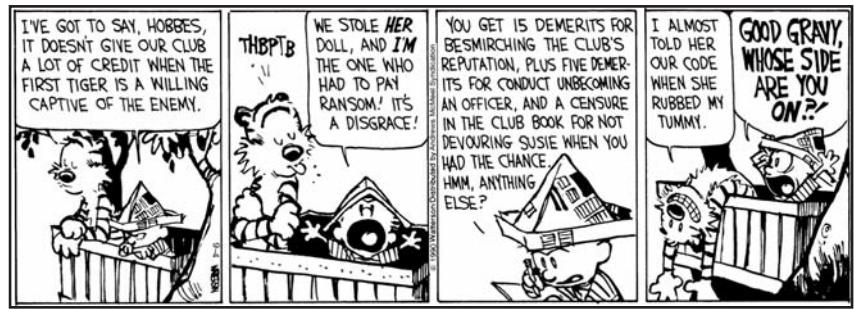
honour for our team to be at IFFM."

The film was screened at the London Indian Festival in July 2021 and will also be screened at Prague International festival in October 2021.

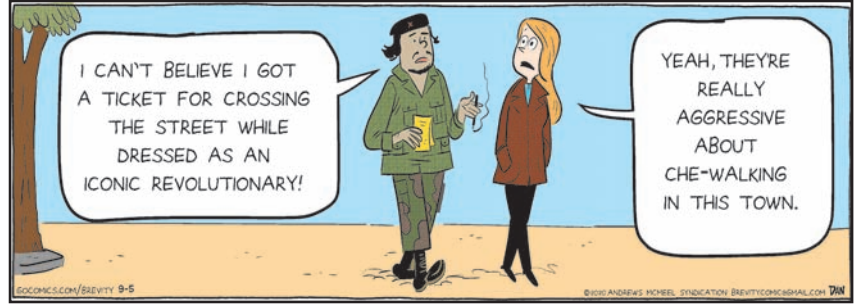
PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

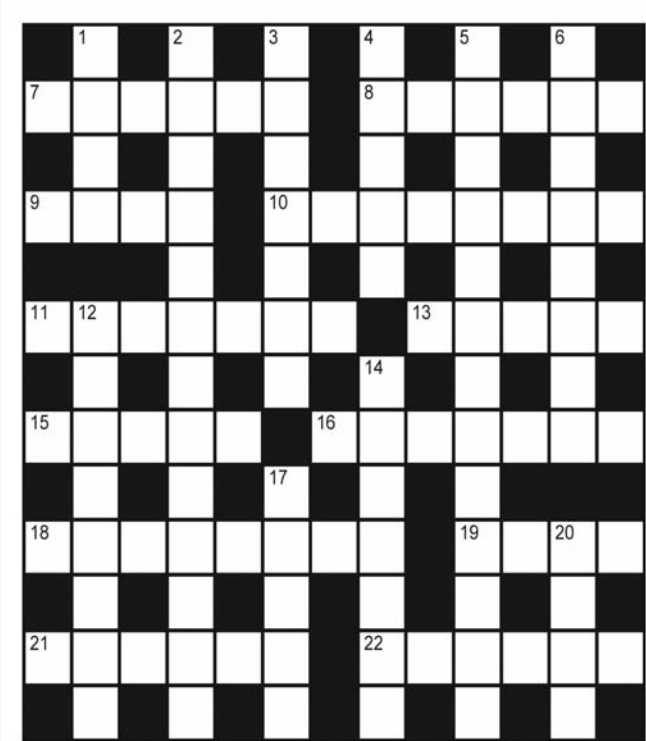


BREVITY



FUN post

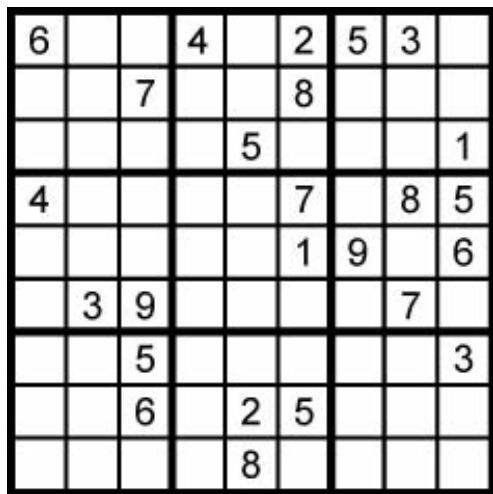
CROSSWORD



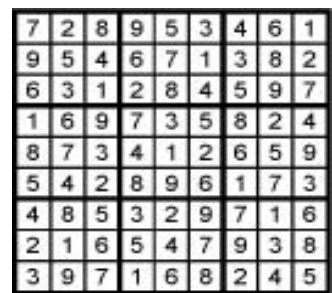
- Across
- 7 Bedroom item
 - 8 Voucher
 - 9 Leg hinge joint
 - 10 Prematurely
 - 11 Disrespectful
 - 13 Orange yellow
 - 15 Pricked
 - 16 Braided
 - 18 Fertile
 - 19 Jumpy
 - 21 Distinctive flag
 - 22 Once used to whiten laundry
- Down
- 1 Destroy
 - 2 Window covering (8,5)
 - 3 Type of cloud
 - 4 Keen
 - 5 Automatic firearm (10,3)
 - 6 Some highways (4-4)
 - 12 Automobile
 - 14 Sugar pill
 - 17 Set
 - 20 Male person

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

Hurdles for 26 investment plans cleared

POST NEWS NETWORKS

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The Project Monitoring Group (PMG) of the Cabinet Committee on Investment (CCI) Friday took stock of 26 big investment projects worth ₹73,531 crore in sectors like steel, power, coal mining, railways and highways. The committee addressed all the major issues that were flagged by project developers, said sources.

The committee reviewed 17 railway projects worth ₹22,027 crore, two power projects of ₹14,944 crore, two oil & gas projects of ₹18,858 crore, two roads & highways projects of ₹2,302 crore, one coal mine project of ₹9,897 crore and two cement industry projects of ₹4,500 crore.

Around 70 per cent of the projects were facing issues related to forest clearance, distribution of compensatory awards, forest diversion, right of way certificate, possession of land, shifting of public utilities and wildlife clearance among others. The project-wise bottlenecks were discussed at the

TIMELINES SET



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The Chief Secy set timelines for completion of various tasks by the departments and agencies concerned

meeting.

Chairing the meeting, Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra asked the district administrations concerned to extend proactive support for timely implementation of the projects. He also set timelines for completion of various tasks by the departments and agencies concerned. Mahapatra also directed the project proponents to expedite the work.

Industries secretary Hemant

Sharma said, “As of now, all major issues raised by project developers have been addressed and the projects have been put on track.”

He asked the project proponents to update the status of projects in the CCI-PMG website regularly so that the emerging issues could be attended to.

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) Additional Secretary Sunita Dawra said this joint exercise is

OJEE-2021 from Sept 6

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The dates of the much awaited Odisha Joint Entrance Examination (OJEE-2021) were announced Friday. The exam which was originally scheduled for June had to be postponed due to Covid-19 and will now be conducted from September 6 to 18. “The entrance test will be conducted in Computer Based Test (CBT) mode for all the courses in three shifts. The shift-wise complete schedule of the examination is displayed on the official websites of OJEE (www.ojee.nic.in / www.odishajee.com). Information on SOP for the examination and downloading of admit card shall be notified later,” said OJEE Chairman SK Chand.

The candidates and their parents were advised to keep visiting above websites for the updates.

Sibo Sankar SCBA pick for judgeship

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 13: The search committee of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), after scrutinising several candidates, has shortlisted the name of practicing lawyer in Supreme Court, Sibor Sankar Mishra, for elevation to Orissa High Court as a judge.

The search committee constituted by the executive committee (EC) of the SCBA has shortlisted names of 48 Supreme Court lawyers to be considered for elevation to 17 High Courts as judges.

Significantly, the search committee was constituted to facilitate the process of identifying deserving and meritorious Supreme Court practitioners for elevation to various High Courts. The committee had met on six occasions via videoconferencing and shortlisted 48 lawyers after scrutinising 69 names that came before it for consideration.

Sexual harassment charge against 2 forest officers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, August 13: A woman forester of Nuapada forest range under Chilika Wildlife Division has levelled sexual harassment and corruption charges against two of her seniors.

The woman ranger has lodged a complaint in this regard with Bhubaneswar Regional Chief Conservator of Forests (RCCF), sources said.

As per the complaint, Nuapada ranger and Chilika Divisional Forest Officer (in-charge) have misappropriated around ₹3.5 lakh from the funds meant for a nursery and plantation work at the forest range.

The duo was allegedly seeking sexual favour from the woman forester. They had also touched the forester inappropriately at the forest division office, said the complaint.

An audio clip of the purported

telephonic conversation between the woman forester and Nuapada ranger went viral recently.

The forester alleged that the two officials were regularly harassing her. “They had threatened me to withhold my salary and take disciplinary action against me while seeking sexual favour. I had raised all these issues with the RCCF. Subsequently, the RCCF had formed a committee to probe the allegation. No action has been taken against the two officials even though the committee had completed its probe some days ago,” said the forester in her complaint.

Chilika DFO (in-charge) Sarat Chandra Mishra, however, rejected all the allegations made by the woman forester. “The woman forester concerned was not doing her duty properly. She had made all these allegations after she was issued a warning in this regard,” he said.



HONING SKILLS

Lifeguards conduct a mock drill on Puri beach, Friday, to demonstrate rescue skills

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	20,65,28,905	18,53,32,375	43,53,282
India	3,21,17,826	3,13,02,345	4,30,254
Odisha	9,92,375	9,75,999	6,757

NCB seizes 20kg opium in City; 3 from UP held



The opium seized by the Narcotics Control Bureau

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The central drug law enforcement agency Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) Friday seized opium weighing 20 kg by intercepting an Uttar Pradesh-bound container here. The sleuths arrested three persons including the driver of the vehicle.

The accused were identified as Vijay Bhan, 38, of Faijullapur under Aliganj police limits, Suraj Pal, 60, of Gurwa in Sirauli police limits, and Surendra, 22, of Tigai Dant Nagar under Bisharatganj police station. All of them belong to Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh.

According to NCB sources, the accused persons had been on the radar of the agency for their alleged involvement in the illicit drug trade in the past. They are active members of an inter-state drug trafficking racket, engaged in illegal trade of drugs across India.

Following some specific inputs, the NCB sleuths here intercepted the Bareilly-bound container in City. The packets were concealed

Odisha has turned into a key transit route for illegal transport of ganja, opium and brown sugar across the country

in a specially made cavity at the back side of the driver's seat. The seized contraband, sourced from Jharkhand, has been valued at around ₹25 lakh.

“This seizure and arrest is an important breakthrough on the scene of inter-state drug trafficking and is one of the biggest seizures of opium in Bhubaneswar. Through this seizure, NCB is aiming to neutralise a major inter-state drug trafficking syndicate involved in trafficking of opium across the country,” said the NCB Bhubaneswar sub zone.

On the other hand, the Quick Action Team (QAT) of the Commissionerate Police (CP) Friday seized brown sugar worth ₹26 lakh during a raid at Shantipalli basti

1.26kg brown sugar seized

BHUBANESWAR: Three persons were arrested with brown sugar worth ₹1 crore in Khurda, police said Friday. Acting on a tip-off, the Special Task Force (STF) of the state Crime Branch recovered 1.26 kg of brown sugar from near Khurda bus stand Thursday evening, Director General of Police Abhay said. The arrested were identified as Aftab alias Md Saiyaz of Cuttack, Muna alias SK Kamruddin of Bhadrak and Sourav Pattanaik of Khurda, he said, adding that the STF also seized other incriminating materials from their possession. A case (28/2021) under Sections 21(C) and 29 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985 was registered against them, the state police chief said.

under Saheed Nagar police limits here. The cops also arrested four drug peddlers for possessing and selling brown sugar.

Odisha has turned into an important transit route for illegal trade of ganja, opium and brown sugar across the country. This apart, the increasing seizure of ganja and brown sugar indicates towards the drug peddlers' success in spreading their tentacles throughout the state.

The officials of state and central law enforcement agencies revealed that the seizures of contrabands by the agencies are only the tip of the iceberg.

Let's save humanity even in death: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: On World Organ Donation Day, Friday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik appealed to people to come forward for organ donation and save lives.

“Let's save humanity even in death,” said the Chief Minister while conferring the prestigious Suraj Award on the family members of late Bipin Pradhan who donated his vital organs before death. On behalf of the Chief Minister, Aska MLA Manjula Swain and Ganjam Collector handed over a cheque of ₹5 lakh to Bipin Pradhan's wife Renu.

Bipin belongs to Bhatapara area of Ganjam district. His family members decided to donate six of his vital organs before death at Kiran Hospital in Surat.

Naveen said that celebration of this day strives to encourage and inspire people to donate their precious organs after death to save lives.

Thanking family members of late Pradhan for supporting and promoting these human values,

Suraj Award 2021 was conferred on the family members of late Bipin Pradhan who donated his vital organs before death

Naveen said that they have displayed exemplary compassion and humanity by donating his vital organs. This sacrifice is an act of human empathy and nobility, he said.

Patnaik said that the inspiring and humanitarian act of the parents of late Suraj Behera, who voluntarily donated the organs of their deceased son to save lives of many other persons, will remain an example for society and boost the movement of organ donation in Odisha and India as well.

The state government has instituted Suraj Award in memory of late Suraj whose family members donated his organs before his accidental death to save a number of lives. Secretary to CM (ST) VK Pandian moderated the programme.

Solar energy now illuminating remote villages

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 13: With the penetration of solar energy into the remote and hilly areas of the state in the past few years, several of these cut-off villages would be illuminated at night.

Kholibithar in Boden block of Nuapada district is one such example. The village had never seen electricity and the locals were using kerosene lamps to light up their homes when the darkness falls.

The village streets used to wear deserted look at night due to the prevailing darkness and fear of wild animals straying into residential areas from nearby forests. However, things have changed a lot. Now, each household in the village has LED lights and the streets have been equipped with solar lamps.

“With the utilisation of solar energy, the situation has changed a lot. Now, kids do not face any difficulty in studying while there are no hindrances in carrying out household works at night. Now,



The mini solar grid at Kholibithar in Nuapada district

OP PHOTO

the villagers have started using electrical devices,” said Rina Chinda, a villager.

A mini solar grid installed in the locality is now catering to the electricity needs of the villagers of Kholibithar. Due to its hilly terrain, electricity connection to the village would have been an uphill task for the authorities concerned.

Kholibithar is not the only village which has been benefited by the solar energy. The Odisha Renewable Energy Development Agency (OREDA) claims that a total of 24 villages in Komna block of Nuapada district are now using solar energy as part of the rural electrification scheme.

Residents of several hilly and

cut-off areas of the state are being encouraged to use solar energy as the efforts to supply thermal or hydroelectricity through wires are facing several hindrances, said sources in the Energy department.

According to government data, more than 392 villages in Odisha are using renewable sources of energy while a majority of them have

GREEN INITIATIVE

A mini solar grid installed in Boden block of Nuapada is now catering to the electricity needs of Kholibithar villagers

More than 392 villages in Odisha are using renewable sources of energy while a majority of them have opted for solar energy through de-centralised distribution projects

Odisha had capacity to produce 582.04 MW of renewable energy by the end of July while the coastal state aims at producing up to 2.2GW of clean energy by 2022

opted for solar energy through de-centralised distribution projects.

According to the latest data of the Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Odisha had capacity to produce 582.04 MW of renewable energy by the end of July while the coastal state aims at producing up to 2.2GW of clean energy by 2022.

Govt examining Pal panel report on HC benches

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 13: The state government Friday informed the Orissa High Court that it is examining the Justice CR Pal Commission's report regarding setting up of permanent HC benches in Western and Southern Odisha.

A division bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice BP Routray posted the hearing to October 27.

According to sources, the state government had March 8, 2019 published a notification regarding formation of a committee, headed by additional Chief Secretary, to look into issues related to the setting up of permanent benches of Orissa HC in Western and Southern Odisha.

Challenging the validity of the notification, lawyer Sibashankar Mohanty filed a PIL with the HC. While hearing the PIL March 30 this year, the HC had asked the state government to come up with an affidavit in this regard.

In its affidavit, Home department joint secretary Samarendra Dhal informed the HC about the March 8, 2019 notification. The state government said that setting up of permanent benches of Orissa HC in Western and Southern Odisha will help people of the region to have hassle-free access to legal services. The state government is committed to ensuring welfare of the people and that it was contemplating on the report of the Justice CR Pal Commission.

Notably, the CR Pal panel was appointed March 11, 2008 to study and report appropriateness of setting up HC benches other than the principal bench in Cuttack. The commission submitted its report March 31, 2014.

ECoR Central Hosp gets new OPD, OT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The East Coast Railway (ECoR) Central Hospital at Bhubaneswar has come up with a new OPD Complex in a bid to treat patients coming for OPD consultation separately amidst the ongoing pandemic and to prevent the spread of Covid-19 among the patients.

ECoR General Manager Vidya Bhusan inaugurated the new OPD complex and renovated operation theatre (OT) at the Railway Central Hospital here Friday afternoon.

The OT has been renovated for augmenting the tertiary level care in surgical services at the hospital. Health care workers and other relevant staff have also been felicitated for their relentless service in the field of Covid care. Altogether, 82 frontline health care staffers were felicitated on the occasion.

Additional general manager Sudhir Kumar, principal chief medical director K. C Sahoo, Medical Ditector A K Sethi were present on the occasion, along with other principal heads of departments.

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AFFIDAVIT

I Usha Oram, Son-Prakash Oram residing at Vill- Hapriya Bahal, PO- Jayantpur, Teh: Jujumura, Dist.: Sambalpur (Odisha) and my Son Prakash Oram serving with 4 MAHAR (BORDERS) have changed my name in my Son's service document from Ushabati Oram to Usha Oram.

I Dulla Surya Rao, S/o Dulla Satyanarayan of Village- Dhanger, PS/Dist.- Bargarh do hereby declare that myself Dulla Surya Rao and D. Suresh is the same and one person and henceforth the same be declared in all intends and purpose in future.

CM announces interest-free loan, housing for weavers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Weaver community in the state, which has been hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic, could heave a sigh of relief as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced housing facility and interest-free loans for them as part of a special package Friday.

Under the package, 15,000 loom pits would be made concrete in phases in next three years at Rs 7,000 per unit. "As many as 15,071 loom pits out of the 31,342 have already been made concrete. The state aims to concretise the remaining 15,000 in next three years," said a source.

The state government will provide house-cum-work sheds to around 3,000 weaver families on priority basis. So far, 11,695 house-cum-work sheds have already been provided to the beneficiaries. "Under the package, light and fan would be provided to the weavers to help them work for a longer period without any hassle," added the source.

It has been decided to ensure housing to all eligible weaver families on a priority basis. The beneficiaries will be selected in accordance with the guidelines of state Panchayati Raj department.

The package focuses on facilitating interest-free loans up to Rs



SOME RELIEF

THE STATE GOVERNMENT WILL PROVIDE HOUSE-CUM-WORK SHEDS TO AROUND 3,000 WEAVER FAMILIES ON PRIORITY BASIS

The package focuses on facilitating interest-free loans up to ₹50,000 to the weavers

UNDER THE PACKAGE, 15,000 LOOM PITS WOULD BE MADE CONCRETE IN PHASES IN NEXT THREE YEARS AT ₹7,000 PER UNIT

AS MANY AS 15,071 LOOM PITS OUT OF THE 31,342 HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE CONCRETE

50,000 to the weavers. The Chief Minister directed the officials to ensure that genuine beneficiaries avail the loan without any issue.

Arrangements would also be made to develop community infrastructure like godowns and sale centres for the products of the

weavers, the Chief Minister said.

The CM announced the package expressing concern over the deteriorating financial condition of the weavers due to loss of livelihood, market shutdowns and poor demand even after the graded unlock.

Bargarh logs highest Covid fatalities at 13

Odisha currently has 10,809 active cases, while 9,74,756 patients, including 1,177 Thursday, have recovered from the highly infectious disease

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Odisha Friday registered 1,193 new Covid-19 cases, taking the tally to 9,92,375, while 60 fresh fatalities pushed the toll to 6,757, a Health department official said.

Of the 1,193 new cases, 695 were from quarantine centres and the rest detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported as many as 425 new cases followed by Cuttack at 161. Kalahandi and Subarnapur districts did not report any new case, the official added.

Bargarh recorded the maximum number of fatalities at 13, Cuttack at 11 and Bolangir at six. Five fatalities each were registered in Angul, Jagatsinghpur and Sambalpur; four in Deogarh and three each in Dhenkanal and Jajpur. According to the Health department, the list of fatalities does not reflect deaths that have occurred on a particular day. It gives details of past deaths for which the audit process has been duly completed and the cause identified as Covid-19.

Odisha currently has 10,809 active cases, while 9,74,756 patients,



including 1,177 Thursday, have recovered from the highly infectious disease. The positivity rate stands at 5.87 per cent.

Over 1.68 crore samples have been tested so far, including 71,197 Thursday. Meanwhile, anticipating the arrival of the third wave, the government has asked authorities concerned to form a district-level task force for management of the Covid-19 situation.

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS) of the Health department, PK Mohapatra, in a letter to all Collectors, Municipal Commissioners, hospital superintendents and medical officials said that the state needs to be in "full preparedness for capacity building to be able to tackle the high number of cases expected during the predicted third wave of the pandemic."

Heavy rainfall likely in nine districts today

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The regional office of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) Friday warned against heavy rainfall in nine districts of Odisha Saturday.

"Heavy rainfall is very likely to occur at one or two places over the districts of Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Gajapati, Rayagada, Nuapada, Kalahandi, Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj," IMD said in its warning of adverse weather for Saturday.

The department also added, "Thunderstorm with lightning is very likely to occur Saturday at one or two places over the districts of Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput, Malkangiri, Kalahandi, Nabarangpur, Nuapada, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Sonepur and Deogarh."

The weathermen reiterated the warning of heavy rain till August 18 and said that there could be decrease in rainfall activity from then. The department, however, stated that very heavy rainfall could also be witnessed in some parts of the state August 16 and August 17. The state Capital could see one or two spells of rainfall or thundershower Saturday while the maximum temperature in the city could go upto 34°C.

'Fit India Freedom Run 2.0' at Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 13: The National Cadet Corps (NCC) Group HQ here Friday organised 'Fit India Freedom Run 2.0' at Janakinath Bhawan here as part of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', which celebrates 75 years of India's Independence.

Sources said around 125 cadets from various educational institutions under the aegis of NCC Group HQ Cuttack took part in the programme that aims to encourage people to take up fitness activities such as running and sports in their daily lives as it would keep obesity, laziness, stress and anxiety at bay.

Col Rajinish Kapoor, Group Commander NCC Group along with Lt Col Umesh Marwaha, Officer Commanding 4 O CTC flagged off the event at 7am before garlanding Netaji's statue at Janakinath Bhawan, the ancestral house of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose at Odia Bazar in the Millennium City.



The 86th state-level students' convention of All India Students' Federation in progress at the federation office at Unit-VI in Bhubaneswar, Friday

OP PHOTO

Sexual abuse: NHRC seeks ATR from Chief Secy, Keonjhar SP



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Friday directed the Chief Secretary and Keonjhar Superintendent of Police (SP) to submit action taken report (ATR) on the alleged sexual abuse of a minor who was found to be pregnant in a shelter home in the district. The officials have been asked to submit the ATR within four weeks of the receipt of the order.

The issue came to fore when the officials of an NGO running a shelter house in Keonjhar registered a case with the Keonjhar Town police alleging sexual abuse of a minor tribal girl by one Anshuman Mohapatra. Earlier, the accused had been arrested by the cops in a property dispute case around eight months ago. Police had rescued the 11-year-old orphan girl from the house of Mohapatra during the raid. Later, the District Child Welfare Committee members and Police had sent the girl to the shelter home which is run by the complainant.

The victim fell ill in June and was rushed to a local hospital where the doctors revealed that she was pregnant for seven months. Subsequently, the girl informed the police that Mohapatra had brought her to his house to work as a house maid few years ago. He used to sexually abuse her whenever his wife went to her maternal house.

Treasure trove of temple artefacts found

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 13: A team from the group 'Rediscover Lost Heritage' (RLH) Friday claimed to have discovered a treasure trove of old temple idols and panels at Laudanki village near Satasankha on Bhubaneswar-Puri road.

The six-member team, which was conducting a survey of Ratnachira valley, came across the ancient idols Thursday while inspecting the precincts of the ancient Gateswar temple in the village located just 15km from Pipili and 40 km from Bhubaneswar.

Anil Dhir, the team leader, said that the assortment of nearly two dozen artefacts was discovered beneath a big garbage heap at the rear of the temple kitchen. The team had earlier discovered surface remains of an ancient temple strewn around the complex which comprised of carved stone blocks.

Deepak Kumar Nayak, the chief co-ordinator of RLH group heading the Ratnachira project, says that the identified images include a three-feet tall Kartikeya image in Mayurasana, a two-feet tall Ganesh in Ardhaparayanika, a two-feet tall Mahisasishmardini image, a seven-hooded serpent image of Manasa besides an assortment of temple panels with intricate carvings of Alasyakanyas, Brushavas and Nara Vidalas.



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A small brass mask of Lord Shiva was found too. The antiquities, except the brass mask, can be dated to a period between the 9th to 12th Century C.E. The artefacts have been kept inside the temple and the authorities have been informed



and Nara Vidalas.

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Nayak said.

Local villagers had told the team that many old images had been recovered during restoration of the temple by the state Archaeology department in 1999. These images had been kept aside by the authorities for transportation to the

state museum. However, with the temple inundated during 1999 Super Cyclone, the trove was lost. Officials too forgot about the recovered images, and those have since then been lying buried in the garbage heap for the last two decades, Dhir said.

The team members included conservation architects Aloukika Mohanty, Subhashish Dash, Suman Prakash Swain and Sitakanta Mishra. The team had earlier discovered a very early stone temple at Birapurussottampur; just four km from the present find.

According to Dhir, like the Prachi valley, the Ratnachira valley too is a treasure house of many archaeological wonders, most of them being obscure remain unknown and un-documented. Legend has it that Lord Rama had drawn the river to quench Sita's thirst, using her pearl ring to chart its course. The ancient river, which now runs dry for most of the year, and its valley have many myths and legends associated with it.

Dhir has appealed to authorities to conduct a proper survey of the temple complex. Excavations at the site will yield rich finds, he believes.

Ex-diplomat's driver nabbed for theft

Bhubaneswar: Commissionerate Police Friday arrested the driver of former IFS officer Abasar Beuria on charges of theft. The accused was identified as Suman Pradhan, 30, of Digapahandi in Ganjam. Sources said the former diplomat Thursday lodged a complaint with Saheed Nagar police in connection with theft of several gold chains offered to the deities in a separate room of his house near Sparsh Hospital. The police arrested Pradhan after they found all 22 stolen gold chains concealed inside the pillow on the bed of the accused. Pradhan along with another person used to stay in the servant's quarter at Beuria's residence. Pradhan, who had a set of duplicate keys of Beuria's residence, allegedly stole the chains and stashed them in the pillow late Wednesday night. He was Friday sent to judicial custody after the court rejected his bail plea.

Looters snatch lady's chain in City

Bhubaneswar: Unknown miscreants one a bike snatched away the gold chain of a lady near Vani Vihar here Friday night. The victim identified as Renubala Behera is reportedly a faculty at the Ramadevi University. Sources claimed that Behera was returning home on her vehicle when the miscreants snatched away her chain. Meanwhile, Behera sustained grave injuries after falling off the scooter.

Include BGU in online portal: HE dept

Bhubaneswar: Higher Education (HE) department Friday directed the National Informatics Centre, Odisha State Centre to include Birla Global University (BGU) in 'serviceonline.gov.in' portal for verification of certificate at university end. In a letter, Additional Secretary of Higher Education department Birendra Korkora said that the certificates issued by the BGU, Bhubaneswar is required to be authenticated by Higher Education department in order to enable the students to go abroad for service and higher studies. Therefore the name of this university is required to be included in the portal.

Pilot facility for slurry transportation

Bhubaneswar: CSIR-Institute of Mines and Minerals Technology (IMMT) organised an interactive meet on hydraulic transportation of ores, minerals and industrial wastes at its campus here Friday. The meet, which saw participation of prominent industries and experts, included discussions on different aspects of the hydraulic transportation system. Claiming to develop a world-class pilot scale test facility for transportation of high and low concentration slurry, Chief Scientist P K Senapati said that the technology would help industries in developing design parameters for commercial iron ore slurry pipeline.

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UNREST AT KHARASROTA PROJECT SITE

AUL, RAJKANIKA ON BOIL; 24 ARRESTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara/Rajkanika, August 13: Even as tension mounted in Aul and Rajkanika blocks in Kendrapara district over the mega drinking water project on river Kharashrota, police arrested 24 people Friday on charge of vandalism at the project site that had taken place Thursday.

Following a face-off between proejct opponents and police at the project site, Rajkanika police registered two cases against protesters who had vandalized the as-sets of the project developer.

Meanwhile, police arrested Krushnachandra Panda, a member of the Kharasrota Banchao Sangharsh Samiti from a farm house at Santasara under Gonda police limits in Dhenkanal Friday while 23 others were arrested in their area.

SP Sandeep Sampat Madkar said though prohibitory orders had been imposed on the project site, locals protesting the project under the banner of Kharasrota Banchao Sangharsh Samiti marched into the area, assaulted police and de-stroyed properties worth lakhs of rupees.

Meanwhile, police are trying to identify many other people in-volved in damaging the infra-structure and equipment at the project site.

While stringent action will be taken against the accused, addi-



FILE PHOTO

P Sandeep Sampat Madkar said despite prohibitory orders at the project site, angry locals violated the order, assaulted police and destroyed properties worth lakhs of rupees

tional forces have been deployed in the area to ensure project work continues smoothly, it was learnt.

The arrests have triggered tension in the area. On the other hand, KBSS president Duryodhan Mohanty alleged that people were

enraged after police action against them and police tried to implicate the agitators in false cases.

“The project work can’t go ahead by browbeating local people. Police had planned to arrest 5,000 people, but 50,000 people were ready to face arrest,” he added.

Notably, over the past few months, numerous public protests have rocked Rajkanika area – from Jal Satyagraha to human chain – against the state government’s mega drinking water project to divert water from Kharasrota river to 91 panchayats in the adjoining Bhadrak district.

The locals under the banner of Kharasrota Banchao Sangharsh Samiti had been preventing officials

from doing work on the proposed project since 2019.

Recently, the district adminis-tration has imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 for two months in three panchayats under Rajkanika block from August 10 to October 8 in a bid to expedite the proposed mega drinking water project.

The residents of Aul and Rajkanika blocks in Kendrapara dis-trict intensified their protests against the proposed drinking water project on Kharasrota river at Rajkanika’s Bharigada Thursday.

The villagers had fought a pitched battle with police, leaving many villagers and police personnel injured.

Online exams for FM varsity students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasure, August 13: Fakir Mohan University Friday conceded the students’ demand to hold online examinations given the difficul-ties ensued by the Covid pandemic. This followed protests by the stu-dents, Friday.

Buckling under pressure, the university authorities announced that the Plus-III third semester ex-aminations in all affiliated col-leges will be conducted online.

The decision was announced by FM University Vice Chancellor Dr Santosh Tripathy Friday.

It may be noted here that the university authorities had issued a notification August 7, stating that the third semester examina-tions will be conducted offline August 23.

The notification had infuriated the students of the colleges affil-iated to the university. They pointed out that Covid situation in Balasure and Bhadrak districts has not be-

come normal while bus services are not available in some areas. It will create problems in communica-tion during examinations, the ag-itating students argued.

Students from 92 affiliated col-leges staged a sit-in in front of the Fakir Mohan University gate, de-manding to conduct Plus III third semester examinations through online mode. The students alleged that transport facilities are yet to resume and Covid-19 cases are still being detected in the district.

Students said, “Offline mode is not a feasible arrangement when Covid situation has not relented fully. If exams are held offline, stu-dents will face a lot of problems.”

Students of 92 colleges had sent a memorandum August 9 to the Collector, the secretary of the higher education department and the higher education minister, seeking online examination.

Emerging during the protests, the VC reached out to the students and announced the decision.



4 killed as ambu collides with tanker in Rayagada



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, August 13: In a tragic road mishap, as many as four per-sons were killed and another se-riously injured after the ambu-lance they were travelling in colli-ded with a tanker near Manjurukupa under Ambadala police limits in Rayagada district Friday.

The identities of the deceased and the injured were not known by the time the report was filed.

According to sources, a woman was admitted to Bissamkatak gov-ernment hospital. She succumbed while undergoing treatment. Carrying her body in an ambu-lance, four persons were returning to Kapilbhata village of Bangomunda area in Bolangir dis-trict.

As they were nearing Manjurukupa village, the ambu-lance had a head-on collision with a tanker on its way from Jharsuguda to Tikiri, leaving three dead on the spot.

Local people immediately res-cued two critically injured pas-sengers and rushed them to Muniguda government hospital. While undergoing treatment, one succumbed. Police reached the spot, recovered the bodies and sent them for post mortem.



Ahead of Independence Day, a woman and her daughter selling national flags at Golei Bazaar in Sambalpur Friday,

OP PHOTO

BIZ TIME

Govt approves cancer hospital in Bargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, August 13 : The state gov-ernment Thursday approved setting up of the much-awaited cancer hos-pital in Bargarh district. The hospital is to be constructed on an area of 1,36,508.79 square feet and will be a five-storey structure.

According to an official letter (No-22817, dated-11.08.2021) issued by the health department, the proposed hos-pital is to be constructed at a revised estimate of ₹90.27 crore. An additional ₹30 crore has been allocated for pro-curement of medical equipment, after completion of the building construction. The project proposal was initially sub-mitted for approval with an estimated expenditure of ₹10.49 crore for the building, the letter stated.

The new hospital will consist of spe-cial wards like radiation therapy, sur-gical oncology and medical oncology. Efforts are on to complete the project within the stipulated time frame.

However, the department also said that technical sanction by the com-petent authority shall be ensured before inviting tenders for the project. Guidelines relating to implementation of GST must be followed including norms for engagement of consultant.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had earlier announced to set up the cancer hospital in Bargarh district.

As drought looms large, Umerkote farmers plan to flee dist

POST NEWS NETWORK

Umerkote, August 13: Farmers in Umerkote area of Nabarangpur district are staring at an uncertain future due to scanty rainfall. Fearing drought, the distressed and de-pressed farmers demanded waiver of their loans failing which they will sneak away to other states to work as labourers there.

“During this time of the year, it should have been raining continu-ously and the agricultural activities should have been at great pace. Farmlands should have been full of water. But the real pictures are disheartening,” they lamented.

Agricultural activities have come to a halt. Paddy fields have developed cracks. And, farmers are praying for rains.



Around 80 per cent of Nabarangpur district’s population is involved in cultivation for earn-ing livelihood. This tribal-domi-nated district is devoid of indus-

tries. The irrigation facility is also nothing to write home about. The district has Bhaskel Irrigation proj-ect, but it hardly meets the re-quirement.

If the govt does not realise our problems and not take steps like loan waiver, we will have no option but to flee to other states in search of works, farmers said

According to the information shared by the government, Umerkote received 394mm rain in July. It re-ceived 76.6mm by August 12, which is far less than the normal rain for the period, resulting in agricultural activities not being started in 20 per cent of lands.

“The amount of rainfall in the first half of monsoon was encouraging.

But it has since been playing truant. In case of manure or seed short-age, we can take the matter up with the government. But in case of scanty rainfall, whom we will plead with,” asked some worried farmers.

As of now, the question of re-paying the bank loans and loans from village money lenders has been haunting them. “If the gov-ernment does not realise our prob-lems and not take steps like waiv-ing of loans, we will have no option but to flee to other states in search of works,” they added.

When contacted, Umerkote tehsil-dar Himanchal Majhi said, “We will collect reports from rural areas and agriculture department and submit them to the state govern-ment. The government will then take a final decision in this regard.”

No let-up in drug peddling in north Odisha

BROWN SUGAR WORTH ₹7LAKH SEIZED, 2 PEDDLERS ARRESTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, August 13: Amid reported proliferation of drug smuggling in various parts of north Odisha, police arrested two drug peddlers in Bhadrak Friday and seized 70 gm of brown sugar worth ₹7 lakh from them.

The arrested were identified as Ajay Das (35) of Patharadi in

Charampa and Satyanarayan Acharya of Lanjipalli in Berhampur. Police seized cell phones, a bike and cash from them.

Reports said, police got an inkling of drug peddling in Sabaranga area. A police team raided the area and arrested the two. The duo were procur-ing drugs from Jaleswar area and selling them in other areas. Police registered a case and produced them in court Friday.

SDPO Sarthak Ray, addressing a presser, said that further investigation to learn from where the banned drug

is being supplied is on. The probe will try to find out the people involved in the illegal business.

It was alleged that despite raids by police and excise officials, there is no let-up in drug peddling in north Odisha districts.

In the last five months, police and excise officials have seized drugs worth nearly ₹2 crore in Bhadrak, Balasure and Mayurbhanj districts, reports said.

In April, Bhadrak rural police, while carrying out night patrolling, had seized 320 gm of brown sugar

worth ₹31 lakh and arrested two drug peddlers at Ranital. The main kinp-in of the drug racket had, however, managed to escape. All the two drug peddlers were carrying drugs from Jaleswar area to Bhadrak.

It was alleged that Jaleswar has still been a hub of drug peddling in north Odisha. Drugs are supplied from various parts of West Bengal.

Similarly, Baripada town police had seized 417 gm of brown sugar during a raid in the town April 13. The sized brown sugar was val-ued at ₹40 lakh.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF DISTRICT MEDICAL & PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER, RAYAGADA
DISTRICT PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT
NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION
E-mail: dpmunhrmayagada@gmail.com Phone: 06856-235357
No.6653/DPMU/NHM/2021 Date 12.8.2021

TENDER CALL NOTICE
No. E-331:- Sealed Tenders are invited from the registered Contractors (C & B Class) of P.W.D/Water Resources/R.D./PHD Govt. of Orissa/ C.P.W.D. Contractors for the following works to be eventually drawn up in P.W.D P1 forms in conformity with the Detailed Tender Call Notice.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Total No's of Day Care Subcentre
1	New Construction of Day Care Subcentre-Cum-Health Wellness Centre at SC Level.	27 Nos.

The Tender document can be obtained from Civil Section, DPMU, NHM (Contact No. 9439984695, 9439984737, 9439984955) CDM&PHO Office, Rayagada on payment of the cost of the tender paper (Non Refundable) in shape of DD drawn in favour of CDM&PHO, Rayagada payable at any Nationalized Bank at Rayagada during office hours from 16.08.2021 to 31.08.2021 on working day only. The tender paper duly signed by the contractor should be accompanied with the attested copies of valid contract license, GST clearance Certificate, PAN Card and BID Security declaration form. Contractor having work experience will be given preference for selection. The bid document will be selling and received from Dt 16.08.2021 to 31.08.2021 till 5.00 P.M at Office Of Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Rayagada through Regd. post/ Speed Post. No Tender paper will be receive by Hand/ Courier service. The envelope containing the bid documents must be super scribed as "BID FOR THE NEW CONSTRUCTION OF DAY CARE SUBCENTRE - CUM - HEALTH WELLNESS CENTRE AT SC LEVEL UNDER NHM". The Tender will be opened on Dt. 03.09.2021 at 11.30 AM at the office Chamber of CDM & PHO cum District mission Director, Rayagada in presence of the tenderers or their authorised representatives. The tenderers are required to furnish an affidavit about the authenticity of the tender documents along with the tender paper. In Place of EMD, BID Security declaration form to be submitted. The Selected agency will Submit the required EMD, ISD & APSD within 10 Days From the date of selection.

For quality & timely completion of the execution of the works, One agency can take maximum 3 No's work. If the selected agency could not complete the work within the given stipulated time, then the agreement will be stands cancelled without giving any further notice. If any agency found default previously, in such case the said agency will not be taken into consideration & the bids submitted by the agency will not be opened & rejected by the tender selection committee. The decision of the tender committee is final and binding. The successful tenderers are required to execute an agreement in P1 format and submit the work programme on receipt of the work order. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof. **The detail communication regarding tender with list of works, document objection, list of selected agency, work order & other official communication can be available at DPMU, NHM Office, Rayagada or at www.rayagada.nic.in only.**
Sd./- Chief District Medical & Public Health Officer, Rayagada
OIPR-10035/11/0007/2122

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER, CENTRAL RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, BHUBANESWAR
e-mail: se_ccrw@yahoo.co.in
RFP Identification No.: Tender-Online-C.C.19 of 2021 Letter No. 3743 Dated: 09.08.2021

e-Procurement Notice
No. O-532- Name of the Work:- "Consultancy Services for Engagement of a Consultant for Preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) including alignment finalization, hydraulic particulars, geotechnical investigation, preparation of General Arrangement Drawing (GAD), preparation of Good for Construction (GFC) drawing with detailed component structural design, detailed estimate with rate analysis location wise, BOQ & BID documents and vetting from the institutes as mentioned in the RFP etc. for construction of bridges under BSY scheme".
Summary for key dates is provided below:

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding	Last Date & Time of seeking Tender clarification.	Date & time of Opening of Tender
1	2	From To	5	6
Chief Construction Engineer, Central Rural Works Circle, Bhubaneswar	Tender-Online-C.C.-19 of 2021	17.08.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	01.09.2021 up to 5.00 P.M.	31.08.2021 up to 5.30 P.M.
				02.09.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
				To be intimated later on

Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in
OIPR-25082/11/0020/2122 Chief Construction Engineer, Central Rural Works Circle, Bhubaneswar

“Transcendence transfigures; it does not reconcile, but rather transmutes opposites into something surpassing them that efface their oppositions.”

SRI AUROBINDO

Who’s yours? The ‘Babu Superhero’ of COVID

This week we feature another distinguished IAS officer (who was recognised by SpeakIn – Asia’s largest network of experts and thought leaders, for creating impact and inspiration beyond the call of duty. COVID was a testing time and true mettle shown through yet again.

Iqbal Singh Chahal, a 1989 batch officer of the Maharashtra cadre, established a new benchmark in crisis management during the pandemic. As Municipal Commissioner of Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM), Chahal’s “lead from the front” initiatives to effectively arrest the spread of the COVID-19 virus in Mumbai as it suffered the brunt of the pandemic along with the rest of Maharashtra.

His unique decentralised and now internationally praised pandemic fight model consists of more than 26 initiatives like ‘Chase the Virus’ policy, ambulances, doctors, jumbo field hospitals and unique partnership with 144 private hospitals – each operating round the clock – has shown his ability to take bold and often unconventional decisions to successfully implement his plan against a Goliath-like foe – the virus. Chahal is, however, looking ahead and preparing to take on the dreaded “third wave” that is expected soon. Kudos to the officer!

We have been receiving some great stories about outstanding IAS officers from readers and we will try and feature some of them, shortlisted of course, in this column. DKB focuses on the untold stories that buzz around *Babudom*, so don’t send us the familiar stuff, please.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

IPS probationers to train in France

Training is receiving a new fillip. Given the increased reliance on police officers in the upper echelons of the Modi administrative structure, training them is clearly a high priority. As someone who has, on several occasions, helped with training at the National Police Academy in Hyderabad, I can vouch for the fact that investments in training are clearly increasing, under the current government. News of training now being extended via sorties overseas comes as a shot in the arm for those focused on training our police force for the needs of tomorrow.

The French gendarmes are today globally considered among the cutting edge in policing – from crowd control and terrorism to sophisticated cybercrimes. But France is not the only nation to host Indian officials for training. In a similar tie-up, the NPA has been sending IPS probationers to Israel for some time, but the programme was disrupted by the Covid pandemic. The academy is looking at collaborations with Russia and Sri Lanka.

A stint in France will sharpen the skills of the IPS probationers to tackle the evolving policing challenges in India.

Deputation blues again?

Maharashtra’s new deputation policy for IAS, IPS, IFOs, and IRS officers domiciled in the state but working with outside state cadre is likely to start another skirmish within *babudom*. Those most affected by this change are IRS officers.

Under the new policy, IRS and officers from other services such as the Indian Postal Service, Indian Railway Traffic Service, and others can, oddly, get deputation in the state only if their spouses are working with the state government! Meanwhile, the IAS, IPS, and IFOs officers can get deputation for any personal reason. Further, IRS officers and those of their ilk in other services will not be appointed to posts meant for IAS officers – yet another example of the IAS dominance that is resented by other services. Sources say that IRS officers like Pallavi Darade, who worked as Commissioner of the Food and Drugs Administration in the previous government, cannot now hope for such postings. Curiously, the new deputation policy comes barely weeks after a former Chief Secretary Ajoy Mehta came under the I-T scanner regarding a deal for a flat in south Mumbai!

How the IRS and officers of the “lesser” services react to this “bias” against them will be watched closely by many.

Share a babu experience! Follow [dilipthecherian@twitter.com](#).
Let’s multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

“Sorrow is knowledge, those that know the most must mourn the deepest, the tree of knowledge is not the tree of life.”

LORD BYRON

“Use what talents you possess; the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those that sang best.”

HENRY VAN DYKE

“The way you see people is the way you treat them, and the way you treat them is what they become.”

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

WORDSWORTH

■ Cagmag

Cagmag is an intriguing item of British regional dialect that starts to be recorded in the eighteenth century. It has had several senses, all of them disparaging. The oldest references are to geese: Vast numbers are driven annually to London, to supply the markets; among them all the superannuated geese and ganders (called here Cagmags) which serve to fatigue the jaws of the good citizens, who are so unfortunate as to meet with them. A century later, the English Dialect Dictionary lists a number of meanings, starting with this one and moving on to tough, inferior meat or carrion; unwholesome or bad food; worthless items; inferior or spurious things; an animal that is coarse or mongrel bred; and “a term of opprobrium applied to persons”, typically an old woman. Correspondents have told me that elderly relatives have also used it for cheap sugary foods, including sweets and shop-bought cakes, so your father’s sense is certainly known. It was widely used in Lincolnshire, Yorkshire and other counties, but nobody has the slightest idea where it is from. In his Slang Dictionary in 1864, John Camden Hotten notes a suggestion from a correspondent at Trinity College, Dublin, that the word was a corruption of the Greek kakos mageiros, a bad cook, and a learned slang term once known in university circles. Nobody now believes this, but there’s nothing to put in its place. It’s still around in Lincolnshire and also in Nottinghamshire, the Birmingham area and the Black Country (where in 2003 it was said to mean a gossipy old woman).

LOL

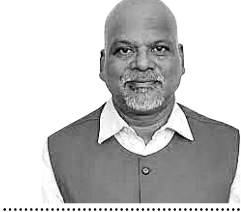
A broken finger

A brunette goes into a doctor’s office and says that her body hurts wherever she touches it. “Impossible,” says the doctor. “Show me.” She takes her finger, presses on her elbow, and screams in agony. She pushes her knee and screams, pushes

her ankle and screams, and so it goes on; everywhere she touches makes her scream with pain. The doctor says, “You’re not really a brunette are you?” She says, “No, I dyed my hair. I’m naturally blonde.” “I thought so,” he says. “Your finger is broken.”

COMBATING CHINA’S COERCION

FOCUS INDO-AUSTRALIAN TIES



Dr DK Giri

IF NEW DELHI ASPIRES TO MATCH BEIJING, IT HAS TO LOOK AND BECOME DIFFERENT FROM CHINA. THE FEAR IS THAT THE CURRENT REGIME IN DELHI IS QUIETLY ECHOING CHINESE SYSTEMS

Former Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbot’s visit to India last week as the special envoy to finalise a Free Trade Agreement has sent a dramatic message to China and the world. If what he said happens, it would mean a radical change for Indian economy and its role in the world. The statements made by Abbot should not be treated as a diplomatic nicety, but a sign of serious geo-political shift in the region.

Abbot said that an FTA between Australia and India would signal the ‘democratic world’s tilt towards India away from China’. Furthermore, in an opinion piece in an Australian daily, he emphasised, “Answer to almost every question about China is India.” There cannot be a greater compliment and support to India.

Why does Australia come so strongly in favour of India? Australia was friendly with China. Abbot himself, when he was the Prime Minister, had signed a bilateral FTA with China in 2015. He had also spread the red carpet to Xi Jinping in 2014 when the latter was on a state visit to Australia. Negotiations between India and Australia for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement began in 2011, and got suspended in 2015: the same time as Australia concluded the Agreement with China.

The reasons for Australia’s change of stance are not far to seek. Primarily it is the realisation of the Western world that they were propping up a dictatorial regime in China. The West invested heavily in China lured by cheap labour; tighter controls and big population. They ignored the interface between politics and economy. As the economy grew, Beijing unfolded its political culture of authoritarianism at home and expansionism abroad. Its coercive positions became manifest. Perhaps Abbot was speaking for all the rich Western democracies when he said, “The basic problem is that China’s daunting power is the consequence of the free world’s decision to invite a Communist dictatorship into the



The reasons for Australia favouring India over China are not far to seek. Primarily it is the realisation of the Western world that they were propping up a dictatorial regime in China while ignoring the interface between politics and economy

global trading network”.

Abbot accused China of exploiting the goodwill of the West. He demurred that China was under-cutting their industries and stealing their technologies. And by doing so, it became a more powerful competitor than the erstwhile Soviet Union. Beijing was rapidly developing its military to match the only super power and, in the process, it has been threatening and intruding into territories of its neighbours, itching to take over a democracy like Taiwan.

On the bilateral front, Canberra was peeved by Beijing’s boycott of Australian products – coal, barley, wine and seafood. China did it as it sensed Australia was cosying up to the US and joining India and Japan to constitute Quad, an alliance aimed at checking Chinese hegemony in the region.

In retaliation, Australia banned the Chinese telecom giant Huawei from communications infrastructure projects, outlawed Beijing’s covert interference in Australian internal politics. Australia demanding an independent investigation into the origins of the Covid-19 pandemic was more annoying for Beijing. In fact, Australia was the first country in

ing points in concluding an agreement. New Delhi is particularly concerned about free trade in Australian farm exports. Likewise, Australia is concerned about Indian workers seeking less restrictive visas to their country. These reservations should be ironed out with mutual understanding and concessions. The Australian High Commission in India was hopeful that Abbot’s visit would “propel economic relationship to its full potential, to the mutual benefit of the Indian and Australian people”.

Now to deal with question whether this would materialise at all, whether India will be the answer to everything in China? All will depend on how New Delhi reacts to such goodwill and the strategic shift shown by the West. New Delhi had misread the Chinese mind 70 years ago, as the West did recently. It is high time that the democracies of the world take on board the threat posed by China. New Delhi can no longer think of engaging and accommodating Beijing but it has to counter China in all areas of diplomacy, economy and defence.

In order to be able to checkmate China, New Delhi needs to strengthen its democracy, because there is a visible downside in India as institutions, including Parliament, are being compromised. The legal system is confused and this distinction has to be recognised. It also has to put the economy back on track. Admittedly, the Covid pandemic disrupted the economies across the world, but Indian economy was in a downturn even before the pandemic. The political climate and trade regime have to be made conducive for trade creation and a clear diversion from China.

If New Delhi aspires to match Beijing, it has to look and become different from China. The fear is that the current regime in Delhi is quietly echoing Chinese systems.

The writer is Professor of International Politics at JIMMC. Views are personal.

INFA

SPECTRUM NATURAL CALAMITIES

Ending the drowning epidemic



Michael R Bloomberg

DROWNING KILLS MORE THAN 80,000 CHILDREN GLOBALLY EACH YEAR AND IS ONE OF THE TOP TEN CAUSES OF DEATH FOR PEOPLE UNDER 25 IN EVERY REGION OF THE WORLD

Each year, more than 80,000 children globally die from a danger that gets little public attention and is not taken seriously enough by governments: drowning. Over 2.5 million people worldwide have drowned over the past decade, and the World Health Organisation reports that drowning is one of the top ten causes of death for people under 25 in every region of the world. These deaths are especially unacceptable because they can be prevented with relatively simple measures.

The problem is particularly severe in low- and middle-income countries, which account for roughly 90% of all drowning deaths. But even in the United States, some 850 children drown in swimming pools, ponds, lakes, rivers and oceans every year. With the exception of birth defects, drowning is the leading cause of death among young children in the US.

Until now, the US, like many countries, has never treated this issue like the serious public-health challenge that it is. Thankfully, there are signs that this is beginning to change. A spending Bill currently moving through the US Congress would allow the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to distribute much-needed drowning-prevention funding to state public

health agencies. It is to be hoped that this legislation will pass.

Meanwhile, the global community took a big step forward in April, when the United Nations General Assembly adopted its first-ever resolution on drowning prevention. This was important, because it recognised drowning as a public-health crisis and created a roadmap that all UN member states can follow in order to save hundreds of thousands of lives per year. The resolution also established an annual World Drowning Prevention Day July 25 to increase awareness of this critical issue.

In Bangladesh, where 80% of drowning deaths of children under five occur within 20 meters of their homes, it was clear that the underlying cause was lack of supervision. So, in 2012, we began a study to understand the effectiveness of community daycare in preventing drowning among children aged four and under. The results showed an 88% reduction in drowning risk among those children attending daycare.

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Following that success, the Bangladeshi government is now considering funding a national drowning-prevention strategy. This will include the continued funding of 2,500 daycare centers, plus the establishment of an additional 5,500 facilities – supporting 200,000 children aged 1-4 – and the provision of survival swim instruction for 360,000 children aged 6-10.

These encouraging results in Bangladesh have led us to expand our work to more countries. In Vietnam, for example, we have partnered with the government to provide survival swim lessons for children aged 6-15. In Sub-Saharan Africa, we are collecting comprehensive data to better understand and prevent drowning deaths – starting in Uganda, where fishing is central to many communities for subsistence and income, and where 80% of drowning deaths in lake-side districts involve young men in boats. We are now working with local partners there to design a program to reduce dramatically – and, we hope, eliminate – such deaths.

Drowning is a global epidemic. And while the root causes may differ along geographic and demographic lines, the deaths are all preventable, because the necessary solutions are relatively simple and straightforward. All that it

takes is the political will to implement them.

Here in the US, Congress is on the verge of taking an important first step in the right direction; but tackling a problem this big – one that kills so many children – requires bold action. My hope is that Bangladesh will become a global leader by fully embracing a comprehensive approach to drowning prevention, and that its success story will spread around the world, inspiring more countries to prioritise the issue and commit to ending this horrendous epidemic.

No child should suffer this terrible and preventable form of death, and no family should have to endure the grief and heartache it causes. We have the ability to throw a lifeline to tens of thousands of children every year. Let’s be the lifeguards they need us to be.

The writer, Founder of Bloomberg LP and Bloomberg Philanthropies, is the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy on Climate Ambition and Solutions, UN Global Ambassador for the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns and the WHO’s Global Ambassador for Non-communicable Diseases and Injuries.

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Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Protecting pachyderms

Sir, It is a matter of grave concern that 121 jumbos died in 22 years in Keonjhar. On August 12, the world observed “Elephant Day” when the government placed the reasons of their deaths and plans to protect this species. The system is making rules and at the same time violating them. According to Dr Iain Douglas-Hamilton, “elephants cannot be manufactured. Once they’re gone, they cannot be replaced.” Elephants and humans share a long history throughout our civilisation. The Asian elephant has lived alongside humans for over 4,000 years and is imbued with reverence and spirituality across many cultures. Elephants are keystone species; they create and maintain the ecosystems in which they live and make it possible for a myriad of plant and animal species to live in those environments as well. The loss of elephants gravely affects many species that depend on elephant-maintained ecosystems and causes major habitat chaos. To lose elephants is to lose an environmental caretaker and an animal from which we have much to learn. Without elephants there will be major habitat changes, with negative effects on many species that depend on the lost habitat. We can save elephants by implementing stronger protection policies for them; stronger enforcement and legislative measures against poaching and illegal trade of ivory; better management of natural elephant habitats and more awareness about the vital role of the elephant in ecosystems.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Parsi New Year

Sir, On August 16 every year, Parsis celebrate their arrival in India and the acceptance of their new homeland. The Parsis were originally from Persia and the term ‘Parsi’ sprouts from a Persian word. During the Islamic invasion in the 7th century, many Zoroastrians migrated to India looking for a new land to call their home, and they landed on the western coast. They may be a small community in a country like India, but like Christians, Parsis too have contributed a lot to the Indian culture over the years. One may come across Nowruz celebrations twice a year. This is because the first Nowruz, which falls on the spring equinox, signifies the beginning of spring and the New Year, according to the Iranian calendar. The Zoroastrians of India and Pakistan follow another calendar known as the Shahenshahi calendar, which does not account for leap years. As such, the New Year falls 200 days ahead and is celebrated August 16, known as Jamshed-i-Nouroz, named after the Persian king Jamshed who started the Parsi calendar.

Jubel D’Cruz, MUMBAI

Angry over urea crunch, farmers lock tehsil office

THEY LAY SEIGE TO A ROAD BLOCKING TRAFFIC FOR HOURS IN JHARIGAON



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharigaon, August 13: Irrate over shortage of fertiliser, hundreds of farmers took to streets and later locked the tehsil office at Jharigaon in Nabarangpur district Friday. Earlier, farmers had apprised the administration for adequate supply of urea, but nothing was done as farming activities are in full swing, it was alleged. Angry farmers staged a road blockade, bringing traffic to a grinding halt for several hours in the area. They pointed out that insufficient rainfall had already taken a toll on farming while urea shortage has made the situation far worse for the farming now. According to reports, paddy has been cultivated in 8,656 hectares in Jharigaon block while maize was raised in 7,850 hectares in the kharif season. There is a need for 2500 metric tonnes of fertiliser for the

farming. A LAMPS and 45 licensed retailers have been authorised to sell fertiliser. However, till date, 4072 metric tonnes of fertilisers have been sold till date, according to sources in the block agriculture department. The problem is that 60 per cent of maize has been illegally cultivated in forest land in Jharigaon block. These farmers are not entitled to get fertilisers while genuine paddy farmers are unable to get their share of urea at this time. “Shortage of urea has affected farming in the area even as farming activities are in full swing. Despite repeated reminders to the administration. Nothing is done to ensure fertiliser to us. We are bound to stage protests,” farmers said. Farmers locked the main gate of the tehsil office and forced the shops to down their shutters in Jharigaon town. They lay siege to road for hours near the bus stand.

Farmers pointed out that insufficient rainfall has already taken a toll on farming while urea shortage has made the situation far worse for the farming now. According to reports, paddy has been cultivated in 8,656 hectares in Jharigaon block while maize was raised in 7,850 hectares in the kharif season. There is a need for 2500 metric tonnes of fertilizer for the farming. A LAMPS and 45 licensed retailers have been authorised to sell fertiliser. Till date, 4072 metric tonnes of fertilizers have been sold in the block, according to sources in the block agriculture department

BDO Satyanarayan Meher, district agriculture officer Tankadhar Sahu, additional district agriculture officer Bibhu Bhusan Mahakud, block agriculture officer Sunita Singh and ASI Pramod Kumar Khandual tried to convince the agitating farmers, who clamoured for immediate supply of fertilisers. They asked the officials who will be responsible as lack of fertilisers has affected paddy harvest this year. The DAO assured the farmers in a written format that the block will get 4,000 packets of urea and all farmers will be supplied the fertilizer though the LAMPS and licensed traders. It may be noted here that farmers from 12 panchayats, members of Dabugaon Krushak Sangh and Congress workers had blocked SH-39 over short supply of fertilisers.

BJP lambasts govt over delay in Kanpur project



POST NEWS NETWORK

Champur/Joda, August 13: The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) slammed the state government over inordinate delay in execution of the Kanpur irrigation project in Joda area of Keonjhar, Friday. “As the project work gets delayed, its cost overruns with every passing year. Initially, its cost was estimated at ₹86 crore while it has reached ₹2,438 crore,” BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi said. A delegation of the state BJP led by its farmers’ wing president Pradip Purohit visited the project site Friday. They held discussions with officials of the irrigation department. The BJP leaders pointed out that crores of rupees are being

pumped into the major irrigation project, but the latter is nowhere near completion. They said that the project was supposed to be completed by 2022, but a lot of work has to be done here. “35 years have passed since the project work was started. The state government is responsible for the inordinate delay,” Majhi lamented. He added, a team of officials who were present at the site assured the project will be completed in next two and a half years. The BJP leaders said the issue will be raised in the State Assembly to expedite the work of the major irrigation project. They warned that if expeditious steps are not taken, they will take to the streets in coming days.

6 in Nuapada untraceable for 10 yrs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, August 13: Even as labour migration continued unabated in many parts of western Odisha with reports of migrants dying and many remaining untraceable coming in, the administration has no clue about what has happened to those going outside in search of jobs. In most cases, middlemen who take them outside do not report about the condition of labourers, it was alleged. According to reports, the administration and the labour department do not keep records of people going outside. The crux of the problem lies in the system, social activists said. It was learnt that over last ten years, six migrant labourers, who had gone outside the state, have not returned as yet in Nuapada. Their families have urged the district administration to trace their kin. As labour migration problem is acute in Nuapada, local people and people’s representatives under the banner of Garibasena staged protests Thursday here. They have submitted a memorandum to the Collector. They have pointed out that thousands of labourers go outside with registration of their names in their district, but most of them end up being exploited. In some cases, they die either out of torture



Schoolchildren take part in dance, debate and quiz competitions in Athamallik area of Angul district, Friday

OP PHOTO

Process to rehab displaced intensifies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, August 13: The district administration has shown promptness in addressing the problems of families displaced by the Deo Irrigation Project at Karanjia in Mayurbhanj district. Efforts have started to rehabilitate the displaced families. Following a direction of District Collector Vineet Bhardwaj, sub-collector Rajanikant Biswal Thursday visited Batapolasha and Patulidihi villages to take stock of the progress of temporary colonies for displaced families. He is learnt to have directed the officials to complete the work by August end. Meanwhile, preparations have al-



ready started to relocate the rest of the affected families after water being released in the project’s right and left canals. Besides asking the land acquisition officer to distribute compensations among displaced families in advance, Sub-Collector

Biswal directed the block development officer to provide Biju Pucca Ghar to each affected family. He also directed the tehsildar to ensure land documents are distributed among families and all facilities being made available to them in advance.

Sub-collector Rajanikant Biswal took stock of progress of temporary colonies at Batapolasha and Patulidihi villages

He directed officials to provide all government help and make available all facilities for transporting the displaced families and their articles. The Sub-Collector, during his visit, was accompanied by Karanjia SDPO Sudarshan Gangoi, executive engineer of Deo Irrigation Project Anil Panigrahi, chief construction engineer Badal Kumar Sahu.

Bandh call over poor mobile network facility in Phulbani

POST NEWS NETWORK

Phulbani, August 13: Upset over poor mobile and internet connectivity in Gochchapada panchayat under Phiringia block in Kandhamal district, Gochchapada Sachetan Nagarika Manch has given a 12-hour bandh call August 16. According to the villagers, there is a BSNL tower in Gochchapada panchayat. But it is of no use. The users hardly get BSNL signal. Similarly, a Jio tower has been set up in the panchayat for five years but it is yet to be made functional. The villagers are facing lots of problems due to non-availability of network. While students are not able to attend online classes, official works get affected. There is a high school, a forest department office, an SBI branch, a government hospital and other government offices in Gochchapada. The outfit has been demanding early functioning of the two mobile towers in the panchayat. The members have taken up the issue with the administration and concerned departments on several occasions, but to no avail. As per their earlier decision, the manch is observing a dawn to dusk Gochchapada bandh August 16. Emergency service providers including medicine stores, hospital



and fire department will be kept out of the bandh purview. The bandh will be observed peacefully with following Covid-19 guidelines. Gochchapada sarpanch and member of the manch Subhadra Kanhar said they have met administrative officials requesting them to provide network facility. But they are doing what they are best at - giving assurances. “We have no options left but to resort to bandh. Besides functioning of mobile towers, we have also demanded an electricity sub-station in Gochchapada, underground cable from Katringia to Gochchapada and appointment of a permanent lineman in Gochchapada,” she added.



Personnel of fire services removing a fallen tree by cutting it into pieces on a road in Basudevpur area of Bhadrak. A hailstorm had flattened the tree Thursday evening

OP PHOTO

Berhampur GRP registers 197 unnatural deaths in 3 years

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, August 13: Incidents of passengers coming under the wheels during alighting from trains, people being hit by trains on jay-walking tracks and people committing suicide by jumping before moving trains are taking place frequently under Berhampur GRP limits in Ganjam district. As many as 197 unnatural deaths were registered in last three years. The circumference of the Berhampur GRP is 120 kilometres, starting from Chilika railway station in Khurda district to Gunupur, covering Ganjam and Gajapati districts. A total of 197 unnatural deaths were registered at the GRP police station between 2018 and 2020. In 2018, as many as 73 unnatural deaths were registered. Of them, 28 are suicide cases. Of the remaining 45 cases, 18 people were killed after being hit by trains while crossing the tracks, 20 people accidentally came under the wheels and died while getting off trains and seven



In 2018, as many as 73 unnatural deaths were registered. Of them, 28 are suicide cases. Of the remaining 45 cases, 18 people were killed after being hit by trains

people died after falling from trains due to some reasons. Similarly, 67 unnatural deaths were registered in 2019. Of them, 28 people died by suicide by jump-

ing before moving trains, 18 people were killed while crossing the tracks and 21 passengers were accidentally killed while getting off trains. As many as 57 death cases were registered in 2020. Due to the pandemic, passenger trains were cancelled. As the number of daily positive cases has declined, train service has resumed, albeit partially. In spite of this, 45 cases have been registered till August 12 this year. And the number of cases in 2021 is likely to cross 100-mark by the end of the year.

Delta+ variant claims third life Maharashtra

A MUMBAI WOMAN WHO SUCCUMBED TO THE VIRUS WAS FULLY VACCINATED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 13: Three deaths from the Delta Plus Covid variant have been reported from Maharashtra, including one in Mumbai, at a time the state is trying to ease tough restrictions in place for months. A 63-year-old woman who died July 27 is reported to be Mumbai's first Delta Plus death.

A 69-year-old man has also died in Raigad from the strain. An 80-year-old woman from Ratnagiri died last month.

The Mumbai woman, who tested positive July 21, had several co-morbidities including diabetes, according to officials. She was fully vaccinated and among seven patients in the city whose reports turned out positive for the Delta Plus, a mutation of the highly contagious Delta variant that drove the deadly second wave of Covid in April-May.

The results of genome sequencing from the woman's samples arrived Wednesday.

Mumbai's civic body Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) started contacting the seven patients after receiving the results from the state health department.

Two of her close contacts have also tested positive for the Delta Plus.



She didn't have any travel history.

The woman was on oxygen support and was administered steroids and Remdesivir, according to officials. Along with seven samples from Mumbai, 13 more have tested positive for the Delta Plus variant across Maharashtra, according to the state government. Three cases are in Pune, two each in Nanded, Gondia, Raigad and Palghar, and one each in Chandrapur and Akola.

The mutant Covid strain was also found in seven children and eight senior citizens. Maharashtra health department officials are trying to trace people who have recently come into contact with the infected patients.

On Wednesday, the Central government said the Delta Plus has

been detected in 86 cases across the country but there is no "exponential surge" so far.

The most were detected in Maharashtra, followed by Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, Sujit Singh, the chief of the National Centre for Disease Control, told reporters at the Union Health Ministry briefing.

"This variant, through its transmission, has not led to any major exponential surge," Singh said.

The Delta variant, first detected in India, drove the deadly second wave of the coronavirus in April-May that overwhelmed the country's health infrastructure and left thousands desperate for hospital beds, oxygen, medicines and vaccine.

Man arrested for hacking into ECI website

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Saharanpur (UP), August 13: The Uttar Police police has arrested a 24-year-old man here for allegedly hacking into the Election Commission of India (ECI) website and creating hundreds of fake voter IDs, officials said Friday.

Vipul Saini, who has a Bachelor of Computer Applications (BCA) degree, was arrested Thursday from Nakur town's Macharhedi village in Saharanpur district.

During initial investigation, police found that Saini worked at the behest of a person named Armaan Malik from Madhya Pradesh, and created over 10,000 fake voter IDs over three months.

Saharanpur Senior Superintendent of Police S Channappa told PTI that Saini was paid ₹100-200 per ID and when his bank account was examined after the arrest, the police found ₹60 lakh deposited in it.

The account was immediately frozen. Police are investigating the source of the money and trying to find more details about Malik, who, Saini said, used to send him details of the day's work.

Police has seized two computers from Saini's home. Police also said authorities in Delhi will now seek court's permission to take him to the national capital for further probe. It will also be probed if he is linked to anti-national or terrorist forces, they said. According to police, Saini completed his BCA from Gangoh village in Saharanpur district. His father is a farmer.

Cong to start mega mass contact drive

COVERING AN ESTIMATED 90 LAKH PEOPLE ACROSS 30,000 GRAM SABHAS, THE DRIVE WILL BE ROLLED OUT FROM AUGUST 19

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 13: Ahead of the Assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh, the state unit of the Congress has announced that it would mark 75 years of the country's Independence by launching 'Jai Bharat Maha Samparka Abhiyan', a mega public relations drive in the poll-bound state.

Covering an estimated 90 lakh people across 30,000 gram sabhas, the drive will be rolled out from August 19.

During the mega campaign, spanning three days, party leaders would camp in the gram sabhas for 75 hours and discuss issues plaguing locals in these areas.

The announcement comes a day after the Central leadership of the party reconstituted its poll panel for the state.

Party leaders would also mark Rajiv Gandhi Jayanti at these gram sabhas August 20 as 'Sadbhavana Diwas'. They will also take the oath of the Constitution in selected villages on the occasion.

Sharing details of the campaign, Congress state president Ajay Kumar Lallu said, "The history of the Congress since independence is replete with sacrifices. Therefore, on the direction of party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, senior leaders would camp in gram sabhas and wards for 75 hours."



During the mega campaign, party leaders would camp in the gram sabhas for 75 hours and discuss issues plaguing locals in these areas

He informed that during their stay, party leaders and workers would felicitate freedom fighters and their families by presenting them mementoes. Party leaders would also raise the issue of stray cattle as well as those related to farming, unemployment and price rise, among others and hold discussions with locals during their stay. Meanwhile, Priyanka has hit out at the BJP government on the

issue of vacant posts and "stalled" recruitment, asserting that the state needs an alternative that prioritises the youth.

In a tweet in Hindi on the occasion of the International Youth Day, the Congress general secretary asked if the government could promise the youth that when they seek employment, they will get their due, and not threats and sticks.

Lakhs of government posts are vacant in the state and recruitment drives have stalled, she alleged. "An alternative that prioritises the youth is needed in the state," Vadra said.

The Congress has been stepping up its attack on the BJP government over the economy and the alleged rise in unemployment.

Lookout circular against ex-Mumbai top cop Param Bir

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 13: The Thane Police Friday issued a lookout circular against former Mumbai police commissioner Param Bir Singh.

Thane Police commissioner Jai Jeet Singh, despite confirming the development, refused to divulge further details of the case. Police sources, however, said that there are two cases of extortion registered against Singh in Thane and LOCs were issued in both cases.

Recently, July 30, a case of conspiracy, extortion, assault and robbery was registered against Singh and 27 other persons at Thane Nagar police station, where the complainant Ketan Tanna alleged that they extorted money under the pretext of implicating him in a false case. In another instance, Sharad Agarwal, a businessman, in his statement to Kopri police has claimed that he was threatened at Singh's official bungalow when he was the Thane Police Commissioner that he would be falsely implicated if he did not pay up. The case was registered July 23.



National Security Guard Commandos participate in Fit India Freedom Run programme organised as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, celebrating 75 years of India's freedom, at Gateway of India in Mumbai, Friday

AHEAD OF I-DAY

Drug peddlers again attack Mumbai NCB sleuths

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, August 13: For the third time in nine months, a Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) team was attacked by armed drug peddlers, including some foreigners, during a raid late Thursday, officials said here Friday.

The shocking incident happened at Mankhurd in the northeast suburbs of Mumbai when the NCB team was following a tip-off on a gang of foreigner drug peddlers operating from the forests near the railway lines, NCB Zonal Director Sameer Wankhede said.

"The gang of drug-peddlers suddenly pounced on the NCB team with weapons, machetes, and stones. One of the officials suffered a head injury while four others suffered superficial wounds," he said.

This is the second attack on the NCB sleuths in a week and the third in nine months, since the November 2020 incident in Goregaon by aggressive drug peddlers fighting the anti-narcotics actions against them.

However, the NCB managed to



nab one Nigerian and seized a huge haul of drugs comprising 7.5 gms cocaine, 254 gms heroin and 52 gms Mephedrone, totally valued over ₹1 crore in the illicit markets, he said.

Following secret tips that a gang of 4-5 foreigners was conducting the illicit drug peddling business, the NCP laid a trap and intercepted Obiorah Ekwelar of Nigeria's Onisha.

The gang, carrying weapons had become a nuisance for the entire area as they operated from the swampy area near the Mankhurd railway lines with the Thane Creek.

HC grants bail to man accused of being ISIS member

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 13: The Bombay High Court Friday granted bail to a 28-year-old man, arrested for allegedly being a member of the banned terror outfit - Islamic State (ISIS).

A division bench of Justices SS Shinde and NJ Jamadar allowed the petition filed by Iqbal Ahmed Kabir Ahmed challenging an order of a special court refusing bail to him. "The order passed by the special court is quashed. The appellant (Ahmed) shall be released on bail upon furnishing a bond of ₹1 lakh and one or two solvent sureties of the same amount," the bench said. The bench noted that while there existed a bar on grant of bail under the Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), under which Ahmed had been charged, his continued incarceration without any chance of the trial in the case concluding soon, would be a breach of his constitutional right to life and liberty.

The court directed Ahmed to appear before the National Investigation Agency (NIA) twice a week for the first month and then once a week for the next two months. "The appellant shall attend each and every date of the

trial and shall not hamper or get in touch with the witnesses in the case," the bench said. Ahmed was arrested August 7, 2016 and booked under the stringent provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for being part of a terror outfit and under the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The prosecution's case was that Ahmed was part of the ISIS's "Parbhani module", who were purportedly planning to carry out a terror attack on the office of the Superintendent of Police in Parbhani. The NIA, the prosecuting agency in the case, had told the court that as per witness statements, Ahmed and his friends used to gather in the evenings to discuss "atrocities against Islam" across the world, and think about "avenging" such atrocities.

The court, however, took note of the submissions made by Ahmed's counsel, senior advocate Mihir Desai, who said that mere discussions did not constitute the commission of an offence. Desai argued that there was no evidence against the petitioner and that the trial in the case is yet to commence and there are over 150 witnesses to be examined.

Operation Langda: 3,300 'criminals' shot at in UP encounters

SINCE THE BJP CAME TO POWER IN THE STATE IN MARCH 2017, UP POLICE HAVE SHOT AT AND INJURED AT LEAST 3,302 ALLEGED CRIMINALS IN 8,472 ENCOUNTERS

AGENCIES

Lucknow, August 13: On August 12, Afsharun, wanted for robbery and carrying a reward of ₹50,000, was arrested after a police encounter in Ghaziabad wherein he was shot in the leg.

A few days before, August 8, Maniram, wanted in over 35 cases mainly of dacoity and carrying a reward of ₹50,000, suffered bullet injuries on his leg in a police encounter in Bahraich. Police say he allegedly fired first at the team that surrounded him.

August 4, Sachin Chauhan, a murder accused, suffered a bullet injury on his leg in a police encounter in Gautam Buddha Nagar. Officers say Chauhan opened fire at a Noida Police team that apprehended him.

Earlier, June 22, Parashuram, a rape accused, sustained bullet injuries on his leg during a police encounter in Bahraich. Police say



the encounter took place after the accused escaped from custody.

All these do not exist officially. But in private, which some senior officials in UP have named "Operation Langda (Lame)".

Since the BJP came to power in the state in March 2017, UP Police have shot at and injured at least 3,302 alleged criminals as many as 8,472 encounters. Meanwhile, the death toll from these encounters is 146.

Officially, senior police officers deny that there is any specific strategy to maim criminals in encounters as a deterrent for others. In fact, the police have not main-

tained data on how many were left disabled after sustaining bullet injuries on their legs during these encounters. On the other hand, they point out that 13 police personnel were killed and 1,157 more were injured in these encounters that led to arrests of 18,225 criminals.

According to UP Police ADG (Law & Order) Prashant Kumar, the high number of criminals injured in police encounters suggests that killing criminals is not the primary motive of the police. The primary aim, he said, is to arrest the criminals.

"The UP government has a zero-

tolerance policy towards crime and criminals. While on duty, if somebody fires at us, we retaliate, and that is a legal power given to the police. During this process, there can be collateral injuries and deaths. Our people have also been killed and injured. The bottom line is that if someone does something illegal, the police react. However, our main motive is not to kill the person but to make an arrest," Kumar said.

"There is a set procedure based on Supreme Court guidelines on what to do if an encounter killing takes place. This apart, every en-

counter goes through a magisterial inquiry. In court, the victims have all the right to present their case. However, till date, no Constitutional institution has said anything adverse against the UP Police encounters," the ADG said.

However, these encounter killings have not gone unnoticed.

In January 2019, the Supreme Court referred to a string of such killings and said they require "serious consideration". The Opposition parties, too, have spoken out often against these killings, describing them as the state government's "thok do" (finish them) policy.

But, with the next state elections around the corner, officers in Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's government have listed these encounters as an achievement. On several occasions, Adityanath himself has issued warnings, saying the police would not hesitate to knock criminals down "if they did not mend their ways".

According to police data, the Meerut zone in western UP tops the list in encounters (2,839), arrests (5,288), deaths (61) - and injured (1,547). Agra comes next with 1,884 encounters, 4,878 arrests, 18 deaths and 218 injuries. Bareilly zone is third on the list, with 1,173 encounters, 2,642 arrests, seven deaths and 299 injuries.

The Meerut zone also saw the highest number of police personnel injured (435), followed by Bareilly (224) and Gorakhpur (104).

of the day quote

It was difficult to imagine what the present form of India would have been if Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was not there, and added that his 'Hindavi swarajya' was the finest example of good governance

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

Assam had never opposed when Nagaland, Mizoram Meghalaya and Arunachal Pradesh were carved out of our territory

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CHIEF MINISTER

What we have to do as a country and as a society is to be a role model and a beacon for the entire world, this will help India gain a global status for our country and help us emerge as a global power

SACHIN PILOT | CONGRESS LEADER

SHORT TAKES

HP landslide: Toll climbs to 17

Shimla: Three more bodies were recovered from the site of the landslide in Himachal Pradesh's Kinnaur, taking the death toll to 17, while two people were injured on Friday after stones falling down a mountainside hit their bus near the area, a senior official said. Search and rescue operation had to be suspended for several hours Friday as boulders were falling in between at the landslide site near Chaura village in the district, Kinnaur Deputy Commissioner Abid Hussain Sadiq told PTI.

Pak militant killed in Kulgam gunfight

Srinagar: One terrorist who was killed in a gunfight between the terrorists and security forces in South Kashmir's Kulgam district has been identified as a Pakistani, officials said Friday. Police said the killed terrorist was a Pakistani national and an associate of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) commander Lamboo, who was recently killed in an encounter with the police and security forces. 2 security forces' personnel and 2 civilians were injured in the encounter in Kulgam that started Thursday. "Killed terrorist (Usman) is Pakistani and identified as an associate of JeM top commander Lamboo alias Adnan who was recently killed in an encounter. It confirms Pakistan's involvement in attack on BSF convoy," a tweet by the Kashmir Police quoting IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar said.

Girl raped, family stages protest

Jaipur: A four-year-old girl was allegedly raped and murdered in Jaipur, police said Friday. The body of the girl, who was missing since Wednesday evening, was found near a pond Thursday under Narena police station area of the district. "The body was found near a pond, which is around 3 km from her house. She had gone missing from her house on Wednesday evening," Circle Officer Dudu Umesh Kumar said in a statement.

Four killed in wall collapse in Jaipur

Jaipur: Four labourers, including a woman, died and one was injured when a wall collapsed on them on the outskirts of Jaipur Friday. The incident occurred in Gawar Bhrahman village under the Sanganer Sadar police station limits, where the victims were doing plaster work on the wall that collapsed.



We aim to develop a powerful and self-reliant 'Bharat' which is peace-loving, but fully capable of giving a befitting reply whenever challenged

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

KAZIRANGA STAFF GET SATELLITE PHONES

The Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve (KNP & TR) in Assam has become the first national park in the country to be equipped with 10 satellite phones to give its security personnel and forest staff an edge over poachers, officials said Thursday



Bharat Biotech's nasal vax gets nod for Phase 2 trial



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The first nasal vaccine against Covid-19, developed by Bharat Biotech, has received regulator's nod for conducting phase 2 clinical trial, the Department of Biotechnology said Friday. Phase 1 clinical trial has been completed in age groups ranging from 18 to 60 years, it said. "Bharat Biotech's intranasal vaccine is the first nasal vaccine that has received the regulatory approval for phase 2 trials," the DBT said in a revised statement. In a statement issued earlier, the DBT had said the regulator's nod was given for phase 2 and 3 clinical trials. The regulatory approval has been re-

ceived for conducting "a Phase 2 randomised, multi-centric, Clinical Trial of Heterologus Prime-Boost Combination of SARS-CoV-2 Vaccines to evaluate the immunogenicity and safety of BBV152 (COVAXIN) with BBV154 (Adenoviral Intranasal Covid-19 vaccine) in healthy volunteers". This is the first of its kind Covid-19 jab to undergo human clinical trials in India, it said. BBV154 is an intranasal replication-deficient chimpanzee adenovirus SARS-CoV-2 vectored vaccine. "The company reports that the doses of the vaccine administered to healthy volunteers in the phase I clinical trial have been well tolerated. No serious adverse events reported," the DBT said.

Poonawalla opposes mixing of vaccines

Pune: Serum Institute of India chairman Cyrus Poonawalla Friday said that taking a third or 'booster dose' of Covishield, the coronavirus vaccine manufactured by his firm, was desirable. He also said he was not in favour of mixing two difference vaccines, and criticised the Union government for banning exports of vaccines. "I am against the mixing of two different vaccines. There is no need to mix two different vaccines," Poonawalla said, when asked about a recent ICMR study that a cocktail of Covishield and Covaxin was found to have generated better immunity within a small group. If such combination of doses did not work, each vaccine manufacturer will blame the other company, he said. Later, in a statement to clarify his remarks, Poonawalla said such mixing can be resorted to if a particular vaccine is not available at the time of second dose.

SC raps Centre over delay in filing appeals



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Deprecating the endeavour of public authorities in approaching court with no concern for the limitation period, the Supreme Court has said if government feels it is "so inefficient", then it may approach the legislature to extend the time-frame for filing appeals.

The apex court, which noted that the Centre has filed a petition before it against a July 2017 verdict of the Punjab and Haryana High Court with a delay of 1,356 days, dismissed the plea as time barred and imposed a cost of Rs 25,000.

"The special leave petition has been filed by the Union of India with the delay of 1,356 days expecting the court to show indulgence for its gross inefficiency which this court refuses to do," a bench of justices

Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Hrishikesh Roy said in its order passed earlier this week.

The bench said it has "repeatedly deprecated" the endeavour of the government and public authorities to approach the top court with no concern to the period of limitation.

"We have also emphasized that if the government feels that it is so inefficient that it cannot file appeals in time, it is for them to approach the legislature to express their inefficiency and seek extended period to file the appeals," it said.

The apex court was hearing a plea filed by the Centre against a July 31, 2017 verdict of the high court which had dismissed a petition assailing an order passed by the Central Administrative Tribunal, Chandigarh bench.

Twitter transfers its India head to US

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 13: Twitter has transferred India head Manish Maheshwari, against whom an FIR was registered in Uttar Pradesh in connection with a probe related to a video of an alleged hate crime, to the US.

While the company did not specify any reason for the change, it said Maheshwari will move to the US as Senior Director (Revenue Strategy and Operations) and focus on new markets in his new role. Twitter Vice President Japan and Asia Pacific Yu Sasamoto shared the development in a tweet.

"Thank you to @manishm for your leadership of our Indian business over the past 2+ years. Congrats on your new US-based role in charge of revenue strategy and operations for new markets worldwide. Excited to see you lead this important growth opportunity for Twitter," he said.

When contacted, Twitter confirmed the development and said Maheshwari is "moving into a new role based in San Francisco as Senior Director, Revenue Strategy and Operations focused on New



Market Entry". The company did not disclose details around the succession plan after Maheshwari moves to the US.

Before joining Twitter, Maheshwari was the CEO of Network18 Digital. He has also worked with organisations including Flipkart and P&G, among others. Twitter has been facing flak over the past many months for its various actions taken on tweets and accounts of high-profile users as well as delay in compliance with the IT rules that came into effect in May this year.

In June, an FIR was registered

against Maheshwari and some others in connection with a probe related to a video of an alleged hate crime that went viral on social media.

The US-based microblogging platform - which has an estimated 1.75 crore users in India - had courted controversy over the new social media rules, and the Indian government had confronted Twitter over deliberate defiance and failure to comply with the IT rules, despite repeated reminders. On August 10, the Centre had told the Delhi High Court that Twitter was 'prima facie' in compliance with

Twitter interfering in political process: Rahul

New Delhi: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi Friday accused Twitter of being biased and interfering in the country's political process by blocking his account. In a strong attack, Gandhi said Twitter was denying his millions of followers the right to an opinion and termed it as an attack on the democratic structure of the country. The former Congress chief asked whether Indians should allow companies just because they are beholden to the Government of India to define our politics. "It's obvious now that Twitter is actually not a neutral, objective platform. It is a biased platform. It's something that listens to what the government of the day says," he charged in a video message on YouTube.

the new IT rules by appointing a Chief Compliance Officer (CCO), Resident Grievance Officer (RGO) and Nodal Contact Person on permanent basis.

Four held with 55 pistols ahead of I-Day in Delhi

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 13: Ahead of Independence Day, the police have arrested four men in three separate operations and recovered 55 pistols along with 50 live cartridges from them, officials said Friday.

The police said the four were nabbed from various parts of the capital.

The accused have been identified as Rajveer Singh (33) and Dheeraj Kumar (26), both residents of Hathras in Uttar Pradesh, Vinod (48), a resident of Firozabad in UP and Dharmender alias Dharmu (29), a resident of Bharthal in Delhi, they said.

Vinod was serving life imprisonment in a kidnapping case since 2007 and was presently on parole from April this year owing to the Covid pandemic, police said.

"On August 7, police received information that the two UP-based arms suppliers would be supplying firearms at Outer Ring Road near Burari flyover. A trap was laid and Rajveer and Dheeraj were apprehended," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Sanjeev Kumar Yadav said.

In another operation August 9, police apprehended Vinod from Najafgarh-Dhansa Road, police said.

Vinod was also involved in a kidnapping case registered at New Ashok Nagar police station. In that case, he along with his associates had abducted a man and demanded a ransom of Rs 20 lakh from his family members.

Vinod was also presently on parole, the DCP said.

In the third operation Friday, police laid a trap in Dwarka after it got a tip-off that Dharmender, a member of the notorious Kaushal gang, would come there following which he was nabbed. He was wanted in two murder cases lodged in Delhi and Gurgaon in Haryana, Yadav said.



Para Brigade personnel perform during a demonstration of combat free fall by 75 paratroopers, to mark the 75 years of Indias Independence, at BOC Ground in Agra

PTI PHOTO

KHYBER SUICIDE ATTACK

MEA slams Pak for alleging India's role

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 13: India Friday described as "lies" Pakistan's allegations of Indian intelligence support to a deadly bus bombing in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and said it is an attempt to deflect global attention from its role as the "epicenter" of regional instability and a "safe haven" for proscribed terrorists.

At least 13 people including nine Chinese engineers were killed in the suicide attack in Dasu area of Upper Kohistan district last month following which Pakistan had ordered an investigation into it. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on the completion of

the probe, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi accused India's Research and Analysis Wing (R&AW) and Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security (NDS) of carrying out the attack.

"We have seen reports on the absurd comments made by Foreign Minister of Pakistan on the incident in Dasu," Spokesperson in the Ministry of External Affairs Arindam Bagchi said. "This is yet another attempt by Pakistan to malign India, in a bid to deflect international attention from its role as the epicenter of regional instability and a safe haven for proscribed terrorists," he said.

Bagchi was replying to media

queries on the allegations made by Qureshi. "India has been at the forefront of global efforts against terrorism in partnership with the international community, which is well aware of Pakistan's credentials when it comes to terrorism," Bagchi said. "Such desperate attempts by Pakistan at peddling lies and propaganda will therefore find few takers," he said in a statement.

In response to a question on Pakistan's updates on the probe, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying said that the Pakistani side's investigation into the terrorist attack has seen "major progress within a short period of time".

Notification for phasing out single use plastic issued
INDIA IS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION FOR MITIGATION OF POLLUTION CAUSED BY LITTERED SINGLE USE PLASTICS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 13: The government Friday notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, prohibiting identified single use plastic items by 2022.

"Thickness of plastic carry bags is to increase from 50 to 75 microns from September 30, 2021 and to 120 microns with effect from December 31, 2022," a release from the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change said here.

The Gazette notification for the same that was issued late on Wednesday night also has 'Guidelines for Extended Producer Responsibility given legal force.'

The Ministry claimed that the development is in line with the call given by Prime Minister Narendra

Modi to phase out single use plastic by 2022.

Therefore, keeping in view the adverse impact of littered plastic on both terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems, the Ministry has notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, which prohibits identified single use plastic items which have low utility and high littering potential by 2022, the release said.

In the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly held in 2019, India had piloted a resolution on addressing single use plastic products pollution, recognizing the urgent need for the global community to focus on this very important issue. The adoption of this resolution at UNEA 4 was a significant step, the release said.



The manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of following single-use plastic, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene, commodities shall be prohibited with effect from the 1st July, 2022. The items included are:

ear buds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, polystyrene (Thermocol) for decoration; plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packing films

around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, stirrers.

In order to stop littering due to light weight plastic carry bags, with effect from September 30, 2021, the thickness of plastic carry bags has been increased from 50 microns to 75 microns and to 120 microns with effect from December 31, 2022. This will also allow reuse of plastic carry bags due to the increase in thickness.

The plastic packaging waste, which is not covered under the phase out of identified single use plastic items, shall be collected and managed in an environmentally sustainable way through the Extended Producer Responsibility of the Producer, Importer and

Brand owner (PIBO), as per Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. For effective implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility, the Guidelines for Extended Producer Responsibility being brought out have been given legal force through Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021. The Government has also been taking measures for awareness generation towards elimination of single use plastics and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016. A two month long Awareness Campaign of Single Use Plastic 2021 has been organized. The Ministry has also organized pan India essay writing competition on the theme for spreading awareness amongst school students in the country.

international

of the day quote

We have reached a consensus to consult with the leaders of parties outside (the ruling bloc) to approve the confidence motion. This will enable the government to continue managing the pandemic until it is time for elections



I expressed my reverence and paid tribute to those who fought for the country and lost their lives in the last war. I also renewed my war-renouncing pledge and resolve to protect the lives and peaceful livelihood of the people



They (Gupta family) had ensconced themselves quite neatly into the various structures. They had acceptance; they had approval, and they had access; so yes, the red flag having been raised, it was not headed



SHORT TAKES

Russia tells BBC journo to go home

Moscow: Russia has told a BBC journalist working in Moscow to leave the country by the end of this month in retaliation for what it called London's discrimination against Russian journalists working in Britain, state TV reported late Thursday. In an unusual move that signals a further deterioration in already poor ties between London and Moscow, the Rossiya-24 TV channel said that Sarah Rainsford, one of the British broadcaster's two English-language Moscow correspondents, would be going home in what it called "a symbolic deportation."

Indian businesses attacked in Congo

Kinshasa: A mob attacked Indian businesses and vehicles in Democratic Republic of Congo's capital Thursday, the police said, part of ongoing fallout from a Congolese student's death in Bangalore police custody last week. Several Indian businesses in Kinshasa were looted last week following the death of Joel Malu, a Congolese student in Bangalore. Congo's police said the mob Thursday looted Indian shops and warehouses, set a car on fire and stoned three other vehicles in Kinshasa's Limete neighbourhood in response to a false rumour that a second Congolese national had died in India.

SC opens probe into Bolsonaro

Brasilia: Brazilian Supreme Court Justice Alexandre Moraes Thursday opened a probe into right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro for posting documents to social media from a sealed police investigation into the hacking of a federal election court. The hack of the Superior Electoral Court occurred months before the 2018 election, with Bolsonaro posting the documents last week while persistently claiming that the election system is open to fraud.

Nepal to get 4M Moderna vaccines

Kathmandu: The Nepal government Friday signed a deal with GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, to procure 4 million doses of the Moderna coronavirus vaccine. The vaccine will be imported under the World Bank's financing, according to a press statement by World Bank, Nepal office.



One in four eligible Australians, one in four, are fully vaccinated in this country. One million doses in just four days. That is an extraordinarily extraordinary effort. I want to thank all Australians for clearing the path

SCOTT MORRISON | PM, AUSTRALIA

CHINA'S HANDLING OF PANDEMIC

Numerous videos have surfaced on social media appearing to show Chinese officials locking residents inside their homes as China grapples with a nationwide surge of the Delta variant of Covid-19



Britney's father to step down as conservator

Britney Spears, last month launched a bid to remove her father from the controversial guardianship role that she said amounted to 'abuse'

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Los Angeles, August 13: Britney Spears' father agrees to step down as conservator of her estate, US media reported Thursday, seemingly ending a bitter legal battle with his daughter.

Jamie Spears' lawyer said at the time he would fight the move, disputing his daughter's account. But TMZ and Variety

cited legal documents Thursday in which Spears said he would step back from the role.

"There are, in fact, no actual grounds for suspending or removing Mr Spears as the conservator of the estate... and it is highly debatable whether a change in conservator at this time would be in Ms Spears' best interests," the documents reportedly said. "Nevertheless... he



Taliban nears Kabul as major cities fall

The blitz through the Taliban's southern heartland means the insurgents now hold half of Afghanistan's 34 provincial capitals and control more than two-thirds of the country

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Kabul, August 13: The Taliban completed their sweep of the country's south Friday as they took four more provincial capitals in a lightning offensive that is gradually encircling Kabul, just weeks before the US is set to officially end its two-decade war.

In just the last 24 hours, the country's second- and third-largest cities — Herat in the west and Kandahar in the south — have fallen to the insurgents as has the capital of the southern Helmand province, where American, British and NATO forces fought some of the bloodiest battles of the conflict.

While Kabul isn't directly under threat yet, the resurgent Taliban were battling government forces in Logar province, some 80 kilometers (50 miles) from the capital. The US military has estimated that Kabul could come under insurgent pressure within 30 days and that the Taliban could overrun the rest of the country within a few months. They have already taken over much of the north and west of the country.

In the south, the insurgents swept through the three provincial capitals Friday.

With security rapidly deteriorating, the United States planned to send in 3,000 troops to help evacuate some personnel from



TALIBAN CAPTURE KANDAHAR, HERAT, LASHKAR GAH

US, BRITAIN SEND TROOPS TO GET STAFF OUT

UN FOOD AGENCY WARNS OF 'HUMANITARIAN CATASTROPHE'

VETERAN ANTI-TALIBAN COMMANDER CAPTURED IN HERAT

Af heading towards civil war, warns UK

LONDON: Afghanistan is "heading towards civil war" and terror group Al Qaeda will probably come back as the security situation in the region continues to deteriorate, UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said Friday.

The Cabinet minister was addressing UK media outlets on the government's decision to send in approximately 600 additional troops to facilitate the safe exit of remaining UK personnel in

Afghanistan as the Taliban onslaught gathers momentum.

"I think we are heading towards a civil war, he told the BBC.

With reference to the US withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan since May, he told 'Sky News' I'm absolutely worried that failed states are breeding grounds for those types of people. Of course I am worried, it is why I said I felt this was not the right time or de-

cision to make because, of course, Al Qaeda will probably come back, certainly would like that type of breeding ground.

It comes as the UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) announced that the number of staff working at the British Embassy in Kabul has been reduced to a core team focused on providing consular and visa services for those applying for the UK's relocation scheme.

Quad countries hold talks on Indo-Pacific

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, August 13: Senior officials from Quad nations — the US, India, Australia and Japan — have discussed ways to advance ongoing cooperation in various areas of mutual interest, including strengthening international institutions including the UN, promoting democracy and human rights and supporting countries vulnerable to coercive actions in the Indo-Pacific region.

This meeting sought to build on and implement the historic discussions held between US President Biden, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison, Prime Minister Modi, and Japanese Premier Suga during the inaugural Quad Leaders'

The officials met virtually Thursday as part of regular Quad consultations to advance a 'free and open' Indo-Pacific region

Summit March 12, 2021.

They welcomed the opportunity to continue regular consultations at the ministerial, senior official, and working levels and to hold a second Leaders' Summit this fall, the statement said.

The four democracies acknowledged that global security and prosperity depends on the region remaining inclusive, resilient, and healthy, the statement said.



Demonstrators burn items during a protest against the government's handling of the Coronavirus pandemic in Bangkok, Thailand

REUTERS

FROM YORKSHIRE TO LONDON

11-year-old British lad walking to save planet

JUDE WALKER WANTS PEOPLE TO SIGN A PETITION CALLING FOR A CARBON TAX. CURRENTLY JUST UNDER 57,000 PEOPLE HAVE SIGNED IT. IF IT GETS 100,000 SIGNATURES, IT WILL BE CONSIDERED FOR DEBATE BY PARLIAMENT

AGENCIES

Woburn Sands, August 13: Jude Walker, an 11-year-old boy from Hebden Bridge in Yorkshire, is on an odyssey he hopes will help save the planet: he is walking to London from northern England in a bid to garner support for a carbon tax to tackle carbon emissions.

Partly inspired by activist Greta Thunberg, Walker, has braved hills, rain and doubts along his 210-mile trek to the British Parliament in Westminster, central London.

Global warming is dangerously close to spiralling out of control and the world is already certain to face further climate disruptions for decades, if not centuries, to come, a United Nations climate panel said this month. While most political leaders and investors accept the science behind climate change, there are deep divisions over what must be done to stop it, how radical the response should be - and who should pay for it.

Walker is clear that a carbon tax is a crucial step to slowing down humanity's current path to what he called a dystopian world.

We now know a lot more about climate change and I think a carbon tax would be definitely one of the most useful solutions to it. We really need to make the changes now particularly if you want to avoid the devastating impacts later on

JUDE WALKER



In a response to the petition, Britain said it was the first major economy to legislate for net zero emissions by 2050 and that it was committed to ensuring that polluters continue to pay for their emissions. Walker is walking for 10 miles a day, accompanied on each day's walk with either members of his family or friends. He is due to finish the walk at St James's Park Saturday.

Ahead of the UN climate conference, known as COP26, in Scotland in November, Walker called for serious action to slow climate change.

Man kills five, self in UK's first mass shooting in decade

AGENCIES

Plymouth, August 13: A man who shot dead five people including a very young girl during a six-minute killing spree with a pump-action shotgun was named by British police Friday as 22-year-old Jake Davison, though they said the motive for the murders was unclear.

Davison, a crane operator, started shooting at around 6:00 pm (1700 GMT) Thursday, first killing a woman he knew in a house in Biddick Drive in the southern English city of Plymouth, police said.

He ran out of the house and immediately shot dead a very young girl who was walking her dog in the street along with her male relative.

Davison shot at two other passers-by who were badly injured, then entered a park and shot dead another man before killing another woman in Henderson Place.

He then turned the gun on himself before firearms officers could tackle him. The deadly shooting spree was over in just a few minutes, Devon and Cornwall Police Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer said. "There is no motive," Sawyer told reporters, adding that police were not considering terrorism or any far right associations, though police were trawling through his computer.

"We believe we have an incident that is domestically related, that has spilled into the street and seen several people within Plymouth losing their lives in an extraordinarily tragic circumstance," Sawyer said.

In videos posted on the internet, Davison had complained of not losing his virginity as a teenager and described himself as an "incel" - or involuntary celibate. He complained in the videos of being beaten down by life, the Times reported.

of the day **QUOTE**

There is no IPO plan as of now, because we don't need any money. We are the highest capitalised life insurance company in the country with over Rs 10,000 crore of equity capital and a solvency ratio of 666 per cent

TARUN CHUGH | MD AND CEO, BAJAJ ALLIANZ LIFE

We have doubled our capacity in the last 12 months. Our capacity is growing 100 per cent y-o-y. We were earlier making only enterprise PCs which were mostly desktops. In the last 6-7 months we have started making laptops. Last month we started making consumer segment notebooks as well

SHAILENDRA KATYAL | SITE LEADER AND LENOVO PCSD MD, LENOVO INDIA

The CERT-In empanelment is a matter of pride and a key milestone in our digitalisation journey. Siemens' global expertise and domain know-how in electrification, automation and digitalisation are critical ingredients for providing the highest level of cybersecurity to our customers

SUNIL MATHUR | MD AND CEO, SIEMENS LIMITED

SHORT TAKES

TN plans new industrial parks

Chennai: Setting up of parks for manufacture of defence components, international furniture, electronic vehicle, medical devices, leather products, food products, establishing a Fintech City and coming out with a new "Life Sciences - Research and Development and Manufacturing Policy" are on the cards of Tamil Nadu government.

Adi Godrej to step down

Mumbai: Adi Godrej would step down as the Chairman of Godrej Industries Limited (GIL), and would be replaced by Nadir Godrej, the company announced August 13. Nadir Godrej would also continue to serve as the Managing Director of GIL, the company stated in a regulatory filing. "Adi Godrej will step down as Chairman and from the Board of Directors of GIL. He will continue to serve as Chairman of the Godrej Group and Chairman Emeritus of GIL. Nadir Godrej, who is currently MD of GIL, will take over as Chairman and MD of the company," it said.

'Budget historic, growth oriented'

Chennai: Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Friday termed the budget presented by the Tamil Nadu government as 'historic', 'transformational' and 'growth oriented' with thrust on 'inclusive development'. The trade body's southern region chairman and industrialist CK Ranganathan said the investments announced in the budget would propel the State GDP comfortably to a double-digit growth with greater focus given to industrial infrastructure.

'RBI expected to raise rates'

New Delhi: The RBI is expected to raise key rates by 25 bps at the end of FY22, Crisil Research said in a report. The easy monetary policy regime seems to be reaching its limits, the report contended by assessing the divergence in opinion of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) members in their latest meet. "We expect the RBI to make a more definitive statement by this fiscal end, and raise rates by 25 basis points (bps).



Ad volumes for July are promising, and this has further fuelled growth for the industry. Owing to a significant increase in the number of new brands and advertisers turning to TV, the share of new entrants in the overall pie is the highest in July 2021 over the last three years

AADIYA PATHAK | HEAD OF CLIENT P'SHIPS AND REVENUE, BARC

CCI OKAYS ZOMATO'S STAKE PURCHASE

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposed acquisition of 9.3% stake in e-grocer Grofers by online food delivery major Zomato. The acquisition involves an investment of \$100 million by Zomato in the online grocer



Air travel becomes costlier, govt raises cap on domestic airfares

THE CIVIL AVIATION MINISTRY HAS RAISED THE LOWER AS WELL AS UPPER CAPS ON FARES BY 9.83 TO 12.82 PER CENT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Domestic air travel is set to become costlier as the Civil Aviation Ministry has raised the lower as well as upper caps on fares by 9.83 to 12.82 per cent, according to an official order. India had imposed lower and upper limits on airfares based on flight duration when services were resumed May 25, 2020, after a two-month lockdown due to coronavirus.

The lower caps were imposed to help the airlines that have been struggling financially due to coronavirus-related travel restrictions. The upper caps were imposed so that passengers are not charged huge amounts when the demand for seats is high.

In an order dated August 12, 2021, the ministry increased the lower limit for flights under 40 minutes of duration from Rs 2,600 to Rs 2,900 – an increase of 11.53 per cent. The upper cap for flights under 40 minutes of duration was increased by 12.82 per cent to Rs 8,800.

Similarly, flights with duration between 40-60 minutes have a lower limit of Rs 3,700 instead of Rs 3,300 now, the order said. The upper cap on these flights was increased by 12.24 per cent to Rs 11,000 Thursday.

The flights with duration between 60-90 minutes have a lower



limit of Rs 4,500 – an increase of 12.5 per cent. The upper cap on these flights was increased by 12.82 per cent to Rs 13,200 Thursday.

Now, domestic flights of duration between 90-120, 120-150, 150-180 and 180-210 minutes have lower caps of Rs Rs 5,300, Rs 6,700, Rs 8,300 and Rs 9,800, respectively, as per the ministry's order.

Till date, domestic flights of duration between 90-120, 120-150, 150-180 and 180-210 minutes had the lower limits of Rs 4,700, Rs 6,100, Rs 7,400 and Rs 8,700, respectively.

The lower cap on flights between 120-150 minutes duration was increased by 9.83 per cent to Rs 6,700, as per the new order.

On Thursday, the upper caps on

domestic flights of duration between 90-120, 120-150, 150-180 and 180-210 minutes were increased by 12.3 per cent, 12.42 per cent, 12.74 percent and 12.39 per cent, respectively, as per the order.

The caps mentioned by the government in its order do not include the passenger security fee, user development fee for the airports and the GST. These charges are added on top when the ticket is being booked by the passenger.

The ministry's order Thursday stated that the government has taken this decision of increasing the lower limits as well as the upper limits keeping in mind the "prevailing situation of Covid-19" in the country.

Exports up 49.85% in July to \$35.43bn, trade deficit at \$10.97bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The country's exports surged 49.85% to USD 35.43 billion in July on account of healthy growth in petroleum, engineering, and gems and jewellery segments, even as the trade deficit widened to USD 10.97 billion during the month, official data showed Friday.

Imports during the month also rose by about 63% to USD 46.40 billion, as per the data released by the commerce ministry.

"The trade balance for July 2021 was estimated at USD (-) 10.97 billion as against USD (-) 4.83 billion in July 2020, which is a decline of 127.37%," the ministry said in a statement.



Oil imports soared by 97.45% to USD 12.89 billion. Exports during April-July 2021-22 rose by 74.5% y-o-y to USD 130.82 billion, as against USD 75 billion in the same period last year. Imports during the first four months of the fiscal increased by 94 per cent to USD 172.5 billion.

Commenting on the data, FIEO President A Sakthivel said the global demand during this period has also remained buoyant as the order booking positions of exporters have been impressive.

India, Russia discuss expanding energy cooperation

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: India and Russia Friday discussed expanding cooperation in the energy sector as New Delhi looks at newer sources of oil and natural gas to diversify its import basket. Oil Minister Hardeep Singh Puri held a video interaction with Russian Energy Minister Nikolay Shulginov on furthering energy cooperation between the two nations, the Indian minister tweeted.

India's cumulative investment in oil and gas projects in Russia exceeds USD 15 billion. It is the single largest destination of Indian overseas investment in the oil and gas sector. Russian oil giant Rosneft and its partner in 2017 bought Essar Oil, renamed Nayara Energy, for USD 12.9 billion.

"Had an engaging video interaction with Nikolay Shulginov, Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation @MinenergoGov. Discussed ways to further expand bilateral energy cooperation, a key pillar of bilateral Special & Privileged Strategic partnership," Puri tweeted.

Russia, he said, is the largest investor in India's energy sector and India has made significant investments in the Russian oil and gas sector. "Reviewed the ongoing investments by Indian oil & gas companies in the upstream sector in



Had an engaging video interaction with Nikolay Shulginov, Minister of Energy of the Russian Federation. Discussed ways to further expand bilateral energy cooperation, a key pillar of bilateral special & privileged strategic partnership

HARDEEP SINGH PURI | OIL MINISTER, INDIA

Russia, supply of LNG & crude oil from Russia," he said. "We also reviewed Russian investments in India's downstream sector."

Last year, state-owned IOC signed a deal with Rosneft for the annual purchase of 2 MT of crude oil. This is the first-ever annual oil purchase deal between the two countries. India is also looking to import LNG from Russia and is looking for opportunities for involvement of Indian firms in infra development projects in the Siberian and Arctic regions, the Indian oil ministry had said.

Khimji Jewellers kicks off 'Freedom Sale'



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Khimji Jewellers, one of the oldest and most-trusted jewellery brands in the state brings exclusive 'Freedom Sale' to mark the spirit of Independence. Valid from 13th to 17th August, the five-day sale not only offers exciting shopping experience but also gives its customers yet another reason to celebrate the festivity of independence.

The Freedom Sale exclusively offers flat 50% off on making charge of its exquisitely designed gold jewellery available across all the Khimji stores. Apart from this the sale also offers many exciting discounts on whole range of products.

Speaking on the thoughts behind the Freedom Sale, Mitesh Khimji, Director of Khimji group said, "The taste of freedom is hard

to express for all Indians. Freedom Sale of Khimji Jewellers is aimed at giving multiple reasons to the happiness of our customers. We at Khimji Jewellers value our customers and their sentiments the most.

After so many days of shopping holidays due to lockdown restrictions, the customers experience of a safe and exciting experience of shopping is our priority."

Khimji has its stores in stores in Bhubaneswar, Rourkela, Berhampur and Cuttack. It offers unique collection of gold, diamond, platinum, silver and other precious. Apart from jewelries, Khimji also has a unique collection of top international watches. With a legacy of 85 years since its inception, and gaining the trust of the customers, Khimji has remained as the first choice for the people of Odisha.

CM inaugurates PSA oxygen plant in Paradip

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik inaugurated the first PSA oxygen plant which is installed at Paradeep Covid Hospital is now ready to use. This 100 LPM PSA plant worth Rs 18 lakh is contributed by Paradeep Phosphates Limited (PPL) and is manufactured & supplied by M/s Nitrogen Engineers, Mumbai who are pioneer in installing such PSA plants across the country.

Under the supervision & guid-



ance of Ranjit Singh Chugh, Chief Operating Officer and AK Tiwari, General Manager (Technical Services), this plant will cater to 20 hospital beds at a time and will be

a great relief to patients amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Citizens of Jagatsinghpur district will be immensely benefitted. This was dedicated to the people by the CM, virtually at a function held at Tirtol in presence of Sambit Routray, MLA Paradip and Bijay Shankar Das, MLA, Tirtol.

Jagannath Khuntia, General Manager-HR, Sudhi Ranjan Mishra, Head (Corporate Affairs) and Soumyashree Omprakash Sahoo, Manager (CSR) were also present during the occasion.

BIZ BUZZ

Airtel, Jio end spectrum agreement



New Delhi: Bharti Airtel Friday announced the closure of its agreement with Reliance Jio Infocomm to transfer the 'Right to Use' of Airtel's 800 MHz spectrum in three circles to Jio. Airtel said it has received Rs 1,004.8 crore (net of tax) from Jio for the proposed transfer. Besides this, Jio will assume future liabilities of Rs 469.3 crore relating to the spectrum, the statement added. Bharti Airtel's deal with Reliance Jio Infocomm involves the transfer of the 'Right to Use' of Airtel's 800 MHz spectrum in Andhra Pradesh (3.75 MHz).

Adani, Birla, Nita Ambani among top philanthropic leaders

Washington: Indian business tycoons Gautam Adani, Nita Ambani and Kumar Mangalam Birla are among 100 Indians in the list of corporate leaders who have made a mark through their philanthropic activities across the world. The list, which is first of its kind, was released on Thursday by Indiaspora, a US-based diaspora body, with guidance from nine jurors and drawing from multiple sources, including reputed studies, earlier verified lists and publicly shared documents. "Topping the list are industrialist Gautam Adani, Nita Ambani and Kumar Mangalam Birla from India, and Monte Ahuja, Ajay Banga and Manoj Bhargava from US" the list said.



BoM opens new branch in Bhadrak



Bhadrak: Bank of Maharashtra (BoM), one of the leading public sector banks has opened a new state-of-the-art branch at Banta located in Bhadrak district. With the opening of this branch, BoM now has a total of 15 branches in Odisha. The new branch will cater to all basic banking transactions and also specific needs of customers, offering the entire spectrum of banking products and financial services covering retail, agriculture & MSME sector. The bank offers various unique products to its client, based on their needs like ATM-cum-debit card, secured internet banking, 24x7 customer care centre and mobile banking amongst others.

'74% Indian mid-market businesses optimistic about economy'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 13: Amid revival in the economy, post the severe impact of Covid-19 second wave, 74 per cent mid-market business leaders in India are optimistic about the Indian economy, as against 69 per cent globally, according to a survey by Grant Thornton.

For the first time since the start of the pandemic, Grant Thornton's global index of mid-market health is back on an upward trajectory.

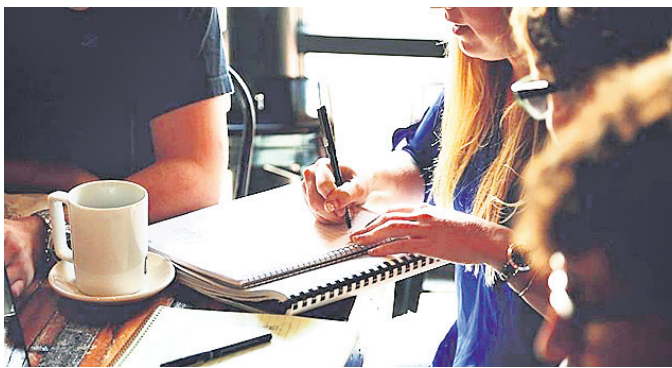
As per the Global Business Pulse, the outlook remains more or less the same, compared with H2 2020 survey results, but one can see a much stronger outlook by the mid-market businesses outlook

pointing towards a wider economic recovery.

"Indian economy is on a steady path of recovery. India's long-term fundamentals remain strong and supported by various policy reforms, the investment and business activity are likely to gain full steam ahead as things open further in India and overseas," Grant Thornton Bharat National Managing Partner, Tax, Vikas Vasal, said.

"Living with the pandemic is inevitable, however, businesses are now better equipped than before in ensuring that the recovery remains stable," he said.

At the heart of this recovery is a much stronger outlook by the mid-market business. Around 69 per



WITH 57% OF FIRMS LOOKING TO EXPAND THEIR GEOGRAPHIC SALES FOOTPRINT THIS YEAR, INTERNATIONAL SALES AND A LARGER GLOBAL FOOTPRINT APPEAR TO BE A REAL PRIORITY FOR BUSINESSES

cent are expecting to grow their turnover in the next 12 months, while 68 per cent are expecting an

increase in profitability.

The improved outlook chimes with the World Bank's forecast of

a 5.6% growth in the world economy in 2021 and what it terms as "its strongest post-recession pace in

80 years". Also, investment sentiments by these businesses are tilting towards technology (70%), R&D (68%), staff skills (66%), and physical plants and machinery (65%).

Vasal noted that initiatives such as 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', and Production-Linked Incentive Schemes, have opened several avenues for business in the country to expand their horizons and compete globally.

"The survey has tracked shifts in attitudes towards internationalisation during this pandemic. With 57% of companies looking to expand their geographic sales footprint this year, international sales and a larger global footprint appear to be a real priority for businesses," he said.

INDIA STILL IN CONTROL

India strike late to leave 2nd Test evenly poised as England reach 119/3 at stumps after Anderson's 5-wicket haul restricts the visitors to 364 on day 2 at Lord's

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 13: India evened things up with a massive breakthrough in added time but skipper Joe Root continued to bat gamely and keep England in the hunt in the second Test here Friday. At stumps after an engrossing second day's play, England were 119/3 after batting for 45 overs, having bowled India out for 364 in their first innings. Root was batting on 48 and giving him company was Jonny Bairstow on 6.

The canny Mohammed Shami (1/23) made the breakthrough when he had Rory Burns (49) trapped in front of the wicket with a delivery that jagged in after landing.

The visitors threatened with Mohammed Siraj's (2/34) two wickets in two balls before Burns and Root nearly navigated through a tricky final session with a partnership of 85 runs.

With Virat Kohli deciding to continue with Siraj after the tea break instead of handing the red cherry to the more experienced Shami or Jasprit Bumrah, the very impressive pacer lived up to his captain's expectations with his twin strikes with his first two deliveries.

First he had Dominic Sibley playing a loose shot to be caught at short midwicket by KL Rahul – it was a replay of his dismissal at Nottingham – and then the pacer crashed through the defence of comeback man Haseeb Hameed, giving him a golden duck on his return. That was followed by Siraj giving



LORD OF LORD'S: James Anderson reacts after dismissing Ajinkya Rahane, Friday

ing the batsman a silent send-off.

However, the duo of Root and Burns did the repair work admirably as they frustrated the visiting team bowlers with their mix of caution and aggression. On the day, Root also went past Graham Gooch to become England's second highest scorer in Test cricket, with only

Alastair Cook now ahead of him.

Earlier, the evergreen James Anderson (5/62) exhibited complete mastery over his craft on way to a 31st five-wicket haul to wrap up India's first innings much earlier than expected.

Thanks to Anderson's exploits and a fine supporting act by Mark



IMPRESSIVE SHOW: Mohammed Siraj celebrates after getting a wicket

Wood (2/91) on day two, England got an opportunity to bat in the second session and reached tea at 23 for no loss. This was the 39-year-old Anderson's seventh five-for at the hallowed Lord's, four of them coming against the Indians.

Resuming at 276/3 with overnight centurion Rahul (129) and vice-captain Ajinkya Rahane (1) at the crease, India, however, ended up losing seven wickets for 88 runs while squandering the solid platform.

With their enterprise, the flamboyant Rishabh Pant (37) and all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja (40) threatened to take the game away from the hosts, but Anderson and Wood had other ideas as the later got rid

of the dangerous left-handed duo while his senior teammate worked his magic at the other end.

The Lord's turned red to mark the 'RedForRuth Day' to raise awareness and funds for the Ruth Strauss Foundation, named after former England skipper Andrew Strauss' late wife, who died of non-smoking lung cancer at the age of 46.

BRIEF SCORES

INDIA 364 (KL Rahul 129, Ravindra Jadeja 40, Rishabh Pant 37; James Anderson 5/62); **ENGLAND 119/3** (Rory Burns 49, Joe Root 48 batting; Mohammed Siraj 2/34, Mohammed Shami 1/23). **Match to continue.**

Question raised over Krunal's Covid case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: The COVID-19 positive case of Krunal Pandya during the white ball tour of Sri Lanka has raised questions about BCCI's medical officer on tour delaying RT-PCR test by a day, leading to eight players missing out on two T20I games.

It has now emerged that Krunal, after sensing symptoms like throat pain, had immediately red-flagged team's accompanying doctor Abhijit Salvi July 26 but neither was a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) done right away nor was the player immediately isolated.

In fact, despite throat pain, the team doctor allowed the player to attend the team meeting and only July 27 morning was his RT-PCR Test done. The reports came late in afternoon after which BCCI and SLC decided to jointly postpone the game by a day as eight of his close contacts were also tested.

Initially all of them tested negative but later before the team left Sri Lanka, Krishnappa Gowtham and Yuzvendra Chahal were also found to be positive.

The Indian white ball team led by Shikhar Dhawan and coached by Rahul Dravid played three ODIs and three T20 Internationals winning the first series 2-1 and losing the shortest format 1-2.

"Krunal had throat pain July 26 and he followed the protocol informing the medical officer. It is strange that he should have been immediately isolated with a Rapid Antigen Test (self test kit) done. But nothing of that sort happened," a BCCI source privy to developments in Sri Lanka, told this agency on conditions of anonymity.

"Although Rapid Antigen Test is



not conclusive but it's the first part of protocol. But I can confirm, Krunal despite throat pain attended team meeting."

"In fact, another question that's being raised is how come BCCI's medical team in Sri Lanka agreed to testing every fifth day whereas in IPL, testing is done every third day," the source added.

"Thanks to secretary Jay Shah, who intervened and the crisis of a series cancellation was averted by isolating all close contacts. His move saved the series and also helped the Sri Lankan Cricket board. But had the medical team been pro-active, the situation could have been averted," the BCCI insider said.

The man in question Salvi was contacted by the news agency for his side of the story. "I will not make any comments," Salvi said.

The T20 series defeat was primarily due to India only having four specialist batsmen with as many as eight close contacts of Krunal were put in mandatory isolation after the player tested positive.

Best I have seen KL bat: Rohit

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 13: KL Rahul batted with an uncluttered mind and perhaps was at his best while executing the plans to perfection during his superb hundred, feels opening partner Rohit Sharma.

Rohit himself scored an attractive 83 and added 126 for the opening stand with Rahul, who ended the first day of the second Test unbeaten on 127 before getting out early on the second day adding just two runs to his score.

"It was probably the best I have seen KL bat and he was in control from ball one till we finished the day today. Very much in control," Rohit said after the day's play Thursday.

"At no given point, it looked like he was confused or thinking too much. He was very clear with

his plans and when you trust your plans, it definitely works. I thought today was his day and he made it really count," the senior player said.

Rohit's own innings laid the foundation and he seemed happy that both him and Rahul were able to control their minds while facing the new ball and cut down the risky shots.

"That's the challenge of Test cricket. You may have lot of shots in your book but when you know that conditions are against you, you have to keep talking to yourself and you have to cut down the shots that are unnecessary especially with the new ball," Rohit explained.

"Once you play and get the feel of the pitch and conditions, then may be you can try and play some shots. We respect the con-

ditions here and it's also important to go out and implement plans. That is something us as a batting group have done reasonably well – right from Australia tour to today."

He feels that batsmen now understand their roles better. "Our batters now understand their role which is the most important thing and I think they are playing by their roles."

When asked what kind of discussions he had with Rahul as they opened in England for the first time, the answer was a signature Rohit.

"Honestly, there was no discussion as KL was not supposed to play the first game and Mayank (Agarwal) was supposed to play that game.

"Unfortunately, he (Mayank) got hit on his head and he missed

out due to concussion and then only KL stepped in. Once we went out to bat, we were discussing about what we need to do and things like that. Yes, first time I have played with KL in Test cricket but I have batted with him a number of times."

Battling testing conditions can feel very lonely and if the batting partner is communicative, it makes the job a lot easier.

"We know each other's games and we understand each other's games. And it's important to keep talking in the middle. It can be very lonely out there, if you are not communicating and I feel it's nice to have a partner who is willing to communicate and take the game forward. KL and myself – our mindsets are pretty similar and we want to take the game forward."



SOLID DUO: KL Rahul and Rohit Sharma walk off the field after rain forced umpires to take early lunch on the opening day of the second Test at the Lord's, Thursday

Olivera, Balaguer join OFC coaching staff



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, August 13: Odisha FC Friday roped in Spanish duo of Joaquin Valerio Olivera and Jose Mascaros Balaguer as goalkeeping coach and strength and conditioning coach respectively ahead of the eighth season of the Indian Super League.

After retiring from professional football, goalkeeping coach Olivera was associated with different Spanish clubs and has UEFA 'B' goalkeeper coach and UEFA 'A' Licence.

"I am very excited about this new project and eager to start working. I am sure it will be a very good season and I will do my best and contribute to the Club with all my experience," Olivera said in a release.

Strength and conditioning coach Balaguer joins the Bhubaneswar-



based club with more than 20 years of experience in fitness training in football.

"I am happy to sign for Odisha FC and looking forward to come down to India for the ISL. I am very excited for the new project and hope that we can achieve a lot for the Club," he said.

Speaking about the two new members in the coaching team, OFC head coach Kiko Ramirez said, "Mascaros is going to help the team to be in a top condition. He has a lot of experience in top teams in the first division in Spain and with his experience, he will connect quickly with the squad."

"Similarly, Valerio has a lot of experience working in top teams, and belonging to the staff of Rafa Benitez. We are lucky to have both of them on board in this big project."

Sonam apologises; WFI waits for Vinesh's reply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Young wrestler Sonam Malik Friday responded to the notice she received from the national federation for "misconduct", conveying that she won't repeat the mistake even as Vinesh Phogat's emotional outburst could not cut ice with the sports body.

The Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) had Tuesday suspended Vinesh for indiscipline on three counts during the Tokyo Olympics and also issued notice to 19-year-old Sonam, who had sought help of SAI staff in procuring her passport before leaving for the Games.

"Sonam has replied to the notice and promised that she won't re-



peat it. The federation will soon take a decision on the matter," a WFI source said.

Vinesh has spoken about the mental trauma she has been going through post her Tokyo Olympics debacle but it seems it has not convinced the WFI. She wrote that

she may not return to the mat.

"The federation is awaiting a response to the notice. WFI has nothing to do with what she writes otherwise," said the source. Vinesh has time till August 16 to respond to WFI.

The federation had said the Vinesh threw tantrums after reaching Tokyo from Hungary. She not only refused to stay near her Indian teammates but she also did not train with them during the competition, according to the WFI.

Vinesh also chose to wear the name of a private sponsor on her singlet instead of the Indian contingent official sponsor, forcing the WFI to suspend her. Several phone calls to Vinesh went unanswered.

15 players, 8 officials allowed per team

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, August 13: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has allowed participating nations in the upcoming T20 World Cup to bring 15 players and eight officials for the tournament in the UAE.

An official of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) confirmed on Friday that the ICC had set September 10 as the deadline for participating nations to submit their final 15 players and eight officials, including the coaches and support staff.

"The ICC has also allowed all participating nations to bring additional players with their squads because of the COVID-19 situation and bio-secure bubble but the concerned boards will have to bear the costs of these additional players,"



he told this agency. "The ICC bears the expenses of only 15 players and eight officials." The T20 World Cup, the first since 2016, will be held from October 17 to November 14 in Oman and three venues in the UAE – Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Sharjah.

The qualifying tournament of eight nations including Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Ireland will be played until September 23 in Oman and one

venue in the UAE. Four teams will qualify for the Super-12 stage which begins from September 24 in the UAE.

"It is now up to the boards to decide how many additional players they want to have with their main squads given the COVID-19 situation because if any player tests positive or they are injury issues, the teams can take replacements from their additional players."

The ICC has informed the boards that they can make any last-minute changes in their squads until five days before the quarantine period for teams begins. "But the boards have to send their squads by 10th September." The tournament was scheduled to be held in India but due to the COVID-19 situation, the ICC moved it to UAE.

Chanu sees heightened interest in weightlifting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 13: Star weightlifter Mirabai Chanu has observed a heightened interest in the power sport since her silver medal-winning feat at the Tokyo Olympics and expects more women to compete at the highest level in the near future.

Speaking at an event organised by Adidas here Friday, Mirabai said the amount of love she has received from fellow Indians since her feat last month has left her overwhelmed.

"It wasn't like that before Tokyo but I am seeing a marked interest in weightlifting for the first time. It makes me confident that more women will represent India in the next Olympics."

"The sport is a lot about strength and power but there is not a lot of difference between weightlifting and other sports. I see lot of youngsters taking up to the sport es-

pecially women," she said.

The performances from Indian women stood out in Tokyo whether it was Chanu's outing on the opening day or PV Sindhu's bronze or the hockey team reaching the semi-finals for the first time. India golfer Aditi Ashok also became a household name by finishing a highly creditable fourth after being in medal contention till the very end.

"It is all about hard work and women are working as hard as anyone and the results are for all of us to see," said Mirabai when asked about women excelling in sports.

"I have received a lot of love from fellow Indians ever since I have come back. This is a big moment for me. To win a medal for India is a dream come true."

Mirabai, the second weightlifter to win an Olympic medal after Karnam Malleswari, now has her sights set on Asian Games and Commonwealth Games next year.

