



FOR A NOBLE CAUSE

Actor Jacqueline Fernandez cleans up the dirty shores of Mumbai with her team, Monday

LEISURE

P2



CHINA DEFENDS VISA CURBS

China defends its visa curbs which have prevented thousands of stranded Indians from returning to Beijing

INTERNATIONAL

P10



MOEEN RETIRES

England all-rounder Moeen Ali announces retirement from Test cricket to focus on white-ball formats

SPORTS

P12

USHA TRAVELS
OFFER PRICE
BHUBANESWAR
KOLKATA 2533/-*
HYDERABAD 3533/-*
BENGALURU 3533/-*
DELHI 3633/-*
MUMBAI 3733/-*
DUBAI 10,333/-*
9937438896

Diesel up for 2nd consecutive day

New Delhi/Bhubaneswar: Auto fuel prices in the country have maintained stability amidst a volatility in global oil prices, but the oil marketing companies (OMC) Monday increased the pump price of diesel once again while maintaining stability in petrol rates. Diesel prices increased by 25

CITY FULE PRICE	
PETROL	₹102.06 (no change)
DIESE	₹97.41 (+0.27)

paisa per litre in Delhi to ₹89.32 per litre Monday, while petrol prices remained unchanged for the 22nd consecutive day, according to Indian Oil Corporation, the country's largest fuel retailer. Diesel prices have now increased for second consecutive day and three times in last four days taking up its retail price by 70 paisa per litre.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We've been waiting for a year for the lockdown to end so that we can call for a Bharat Bandh!

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIAION
SENSEX	60077.88 ↑ 29.41
NIFTY	17855.10 ↑ 1.90
DOLLAR	74.05 ↑ ₹0.07
EURO	86.43 ↓ ₹0.08
GOLD	₹46,039 ↑ ₹44
SILVER	₹60,760 ↑ ₹805

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
MAX	30.2°C	30.0°C
MIN	25.1°C	24.5°C
Humidity	97%	100%
Rainfall	9.9mm	12mm
Forecast	Light rain very likely	

GARBA GARB



Artistes in traditional costumes participating in a rehearsal for Garba, ahead of Navratri festival in Ahmedabad Monday

UNI PHOTO

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The Leaders' Choice
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CAMPAIGNING FOR PIPLI BYPOLL ENDS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Campaigning for by-election to Pipli Assembly seat ended here Monday evening. The election will be held September 30 while counting of votes will be done October 3 next.

Though 10 candidates including three Independents are in the fray the battle will be fought mainly among three main parties-the BJD, the BJP and the Congress.

Rudra Pratap Maharathi, the son of the former minister Pradip Maharathi is

contesting on a BJD ticket, the BJP has fielded Ashrit Patnaik while BH Mohapatra is fighting on a Congress ticket.

The other parties contesting the by-election are CPIML, RPI, Akhil Bharathiya Hindu Mahasabha and Kalinga Sena. The by-poll was needed following the death of BJD MLA Pradip Maharathy October 4, 2020.

A host of senior leaders of the BJD, the Congress and the BJP have organised street corner meetings and campaigned for their candidates.

BANDH PEACEFUL

■ Buckling under pressure, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar has invited farmers for a fresh round of talks to find ways to end the ongoing deadlock

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The nationwide Bharat Bandh call given by the farmers' union Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) Monday passed off peacefully in the state without any major untoward incident.

The Congress, Left parties and trade unions have supported the strike called by the Samyukt Kisan Morcha in the state.

They are demanding withdrawal of the three laws - Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act. Holding placards and banners, the agitators staged demonstrations at different places including the Capital city, Cuttack, Balasore, Bargarh, Rourkela, Balasore, Khurda, Sambalpur, Bolangir and Angul.

Educational institutions, private offices and shopping malls remained closed while vehicular movement and train service came to a halt as protesters staged road blockade and 'Rail Roko' at different places since morning. The train services resumed after a brief halt



Bandh supporters conducting a motorcycle rally at Rajmahal Square, Monday

as protestors withdrew the 'Rail Roko'. Hundreds of vehicles, especially trucks, were stranded on NH-16 due to the blockade. The bus services of the state-run Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) were suspended from 6 am to 3 pm. Private bus operation was also suspended for the strike.

However, emergency services continued to remain unaffected. The government offices, major public sector banks and offices of central and state PSUs were open with thin attendance. Lok Seva Bhavan, Kharavela Bhavan and Rajiv Bhavan were guarded by security personnel to prevent the entry of agitators. As a precautionary measure, the front gates of the major government offices were closed by 10.15 am. Due to the strike, a few people were seen waiting for buses and taxis in major bus stands and railway stations.

The Navanirman Krushak Sangathan state convener Akshya

Kumar said farmers across the country are angry as Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not pay any heed to their issues. "Today's bandh is symbolic. It will be intensified till PM Modi withdraws the three farm laws," said Sesadev Nanda, another leader of the outfit.

Stating that the Bharat Bandh was successful, state Congress president Niranjan Patnaik said, "Demanding scrapping of three black farm laws, farmers of the country have called for the Bandh and all opposition parties including the Congress have supported it."

The Congress is demanding withdrawal of the three farm laws, provision of MSP in the Act and a freeze on the proposed sale of the vital infrastructure and properties of the country, Patnaik said. "We are observing the bandh demanding the repeal of the three black farm laws," said CPI leader Rama Krushna Panda. **MORE P-9**

Gulab: DMs to file reports in 5 days

■ The cyclonic storm spared Odisha while the southern part of the state experienced heavy rains and medium range windfall

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Cyclonic storm Gulab that made landfall in Andhra Pradesh had no major impact in the state. However, some parts of southern Odisha have experienced heavy rain and medium range windfall.

The cyclone made a landfall at a place in Andhra Pradesh, about 95 km from Gopalpur where a large number of people have been evacuated as a precautionary measure. Special Relief Commissioner PK Jena said 148 mm rainfall was recorded at Potangi block in Koraput district followed by Mahendragarh (89.4 mm) and Mohana (77.2 mm) in Gajapati district. Road connectivity was partially affected due to landslides and uprooting of trees in some places of Gajapati, Koraput and Malkangiri districts, he said.

Jena said the state government has so far evacuated 46,075 people including 1,533 pregnant women, to safer places where the district administrations have made arrangements to provide them dry and cooked food. "The cyclone situation in Odisha remains by and large normal though trees were

uprooted and houses damaged at some places," Jena said.

The road between Vijaynagar and Sunki in Koraput was disconnected due to a landslide while trees fell on Lamtaput-Vishakhapatnam road at Kanchana, disrupting communication, he said.

Trees were also found uprooted on thoroughfares at Kunduli under Pottangi police station limits, he said, adding movement of vehicles was also affected at several places of Gajapati district as roads were blocked due to landslides.

Road transport was disrupted due to falling of trees at Tarlakota in Malkangiri which witnessed heavy rainfall Sunday night while asbestos roofs of several houses were damaged in Raleguda block, a district official said.

Due to overnight downpour, a portion of the National Highway-26 was submerged near government hospital at Sunki Monday. A team of Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force personnel rushed to the area and evacuated people to a nearby large multi-purpose cooperative society office, Jena said.

The Ganjam district administration has sealed Soroda-Daringbadi ghat road, anticipating a landslide due to heavy rainfall Sunday night.

Teams of ODRAF and the National Disaster Response Force have been stationed at affected places to repair roads and remove uprooted trees, he said. **MORE P5**

Don't treat docs as footballs: SC



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Supreme Court Monday pulled the National Medical Commission (NMC) and the National Board of Examination (NBE) over last-minute changes to the syllabus for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) PG Super Speciality exam 2021, emphasising that doctors cannot be left at the 'mercy of insensitive bureaucrats' and warned of issuing strictures, if a solution is not found.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and BV Nagarathna shot a volley of questions at NBE's counsel in connection with the notification, which was issued in the middle of ongoing preparations by the students. "Why has the notice been issued? Students start preparing for super specialty courses months and months in advance," it said.

"What is the need to change before the exam? Why can you not proceed with the changes from the following year?"

"Doctors cannot be left at the mercy of insensitive bureaucrats," it said, telling the NBE and the NMC to hold consultation with Health Ministry to resolve the matter. Unhappy with the NBE counsel's response, the bench shot back: "Don't treat these young doctors as footballs in the game of power. Hold the meeting and put your house on order." The bench told NMC counsel that it was dealing with lives of doctors and added that notice was issued initially and then the pattern was changed.

NBE's counsel submitted changes were in contemplation for some time, and they were enforced after obtaining necessary approvals, and sought to file reply in the matter. Justice Chandrachud said: "This is so important for their career, cannot introduce changes last minute." The bench warned that it will issue "strictures" if authorities fail to find a solution after the meeting. "Please be open to strictures of the Supreme Court if we are not agreeing with you," it said.

Scheduling the matter for further hearing next week, the bench further added that the authorities should deal with young doctors with sensitivity. "You cannot deal with their lives like this," it said.

Naked, they made me walk, says land loser

■ In order that its sins are kept under wraps, the firm has the local admin, the press and the politicians on its side

POST NEWS NETWORK

Tikiri (Rayagada), Sept 27: Our last week's report 'Dust sold as dream' (September 26) highlighting how Utkal Alumina has been exploiting local people and how its misdeeds are shielded by the local administration and go unreported by the media was just the beginning of our quest.

The exploitation of people in Dimindi village under Hatiguda panchayat is just a tip of the iceberg. The plant's surrounding villages are full of such stories.

OP SPECIAL

The metal firm, ably backed by the local administration, media and politicians, is running a well-oiled system to loot local resources and people. In order that its sins are never highlighted, it has kept local administration, press and the politicians on its side. Inaccessibility of locals to media and unavailability of mainstream newspapers in the remote area has rather helped the company.

Whatever few newspapers are available, they never report on local issues.

This shows how the company has put in place a well-yielded template of exploitation. Besides various allurements, the fact that the company's writ runs here, media persons don't muster courage to question and



Felix Behera

report the real stories.

This correspondent reached Nuapada, 12 km from Tikiri mar-

ket September 21. He found no newspapers in local markets. Upon inquiry, the lodge owner said, they do not get newspapers as most of the people living here are non-Odias and do not read Odia newspapers. All lodges and small hotels in the vicinity of the plant are patronized by non-Odias working in the plant. Even lodge and hotel owners are outsiders while some of them are owned by local politicians. Local people have no voice, and even if they oppose, they go unreported.

Felix Behera, a small-time tailor, runs a roadside shop in front of the hospital set up by Utkal Alumina. A tete-a-tete with him revealed that like others he had also lost his land to the firm. He has received only 44 per cent of the compensation. With fear writ large on his face, Felix said he has not received all the benefits that he was promised which includes a job in the plant.

Felix also revealed how the company tried to take his recorded land near the hospital. His repeated pleas before the administration and the police bore no fruits. The tehsildar, who had come to measure the land as per a High Court order, went completely in the company's favour: "The company has silenced senior administration officials with various allurements," Felix said.

So much for the administration and the company. People are not allowed to use their own land for 16 years. The authorities know this but they are silent. People have made rounds of DM's office, tehsildar's office and police stations but to no avail. Every time they remove the com-

pany's boundary wall, it is erected over night. "We were beaten up black and blue and paraded naked on roads whenever we tried to demand our dues," said a co-villager, adding police have cold-shouldered their complaints.

Many more samples of the company's exploitations were seen in other nearby villages such as Dimindi, Bagirjhol, Kucheipadar and Di Karala. The situations in these villages are rather more inhuman.

Desperate people crowd every outsider, who visits the village, for a government abode, a pension or even a ration card. They do not even so much as wait to know who the outsider is and why he is there. The company has snatched away their lands through deceit and even turned their ownerships to its name. **(To be continued)**

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
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FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL \$5181*

ARIES

Ganesh predicts that today you will look up to your family for happiness. Towards the later part of the day, however, there are possibilities of a platonic affair blossoming. Those who are already caught up in a romantic affair, says Ganesh, will experience some thrilling times.

TAURUS

You are likely to show a strong streak of selfishness today, says Ganesh. He urges you not to be too possessive about people or acquisitive about things and objects. Be very particular about this, as your self centred tendencies could cause you a lot of grief. Your judgements, plans and decisions may not be too reliable. Your arguments, too, could fall flat. You could be picking up some electronic gadget, sometime in the evening.

GEMINI

Your heightened sensitivity will make you an emotional wreck today. You will be desirous of solitude and will avoid the company of others. Meditative practices, religious rituals or yoga can help lift your mood, says Ganesh.

CANCER

Today is the day to quit a few bad habits that you had till yesterday. A change in appearance somehow tops your list of things you want to change in yourself. It may be because you are hopelessly in love, or impress a few people at a party. Whatever it is, you will succeed in mesmerising everyone with your new look.

LEO

Rise and shine, says Ganesh, as today will be a sunny day. You will start the day on a very positive note filled with unwavering optimism. Look forward to expressing your views clearly. In fact, the honest opinions you will give at official meetings may push you into the limelight. Remember, compromise without hurting your own dignity. Ganesh expects your soul mate to keep you 'busy' in the evening.

VIRGO

All you barons of business should expect a profitable and progressive day today. Financial institutes will sanction your loans. But also make sure to pay due interest to the love interest in your life, for without their love and support, there is nothing much of interest in life, is there?

LIBRA

Ganesh says today is a good day to start out with new ventures. You shall be interested in fine arts like drawing, classical music, dance etc as the artistic streak in your nature comes to the fore, and their pursuit shall make you happy. Ganesh wishes you luck and success in all your ventures.

SCORPIO

A series of events will keep you occupied, physically and mentally. You will enjoy meeting like-minded people and intellectual discussions with them. You are charged up and look forward to soiree and merry making with loved ones. However, make sure that too much enthusiasm and overexertion does not deteriorate your health.

SAGITTARIUS

All things bright and beautiful in store for you today, predicts Ganesh. Your focus improves as your vision becomes clear and ideas innovative. You may even sort out the troubles that you are going through, since past few days. You are likely to make contacts that would prove beneficial in future. In the evening, look forward to family reunion and merry-making.

CAPRICORN

You have high expectations from all, says Ganesh. Not only that, you also expect miracles from yourself. Naturally, with such high expectations you raise the chances of getting disappointed, also. A stitch in time saves nine. You need to plan out how you want to go about ideas and projects well in advance. Financially, you have a strong day today, however, same cannot be said about your personal life.

AQUARIUS

Positive thinking and intellectual dexterity will get you going today. A jive session, with pizza and punch, will get your afternoon rolling. Ganesh suggests arranging an evening with your loved ones, where you bask in the warmth of their affection.

PISCES

You will find yourself embroiled in tough situations at the work-place today. However, do not let it make you pessimistic. Even if things do not work out as and when they are meant to be, you will find that as the day progresses, things begin to fall in place of their own accord. Come evening, you should see yourself in a much more relaxed state of mind, after a hard day's work, says Ganesh.

LASHANA LYNCH FULFILLS HER CHILDHOOD DREAM

Actress Lashana Lynch has described her *No Time To Die* character Nomi as the woman she hoped to see on screen when I was a 'little girl'. Lynch said, "Nomi is the woman I hoped to see on screen when I was a little girl. She's highly skilled yet vulnerable. She's learning on the job — as I had to."

BEN AFFLECK HEALTHIER THAN EVER, THANKS TO JLO

Actor Ben Affleck has been living a healthier lifestyle ever since rekindling his romance with ex-flame actress-singer Jennifer Lopez. Affleck has been to rehab several times to work on his sobriety over the years, and avoiding alcohol is even 'easier' now that he's back with Lopez.

Jacqueline cleans up Mumbai beach

MUMBAI: Actress Jacqueline Fernandez cleaned up the dirty shores of Mumbai beach with her team, Monday.

The actress, who has founded an NGO for 'create and share stories of kindness' took to her Instagram handle to share a glimpse of herself cleaning the Mumbai beach.

"Beach clean up Mumbai team @jf.yolofoundation @beachplea.seindia" she captioned a happy selfie with her team alongside a short video clip of the shores filled with plastic and other pollutants.

Jacqueline is known for her kind gestures towards humanity. Recently, she was papped helping the needy on the streets. On her way to work, the actress had stopped her car and interacted with a needy person while extending help and the pictures earned her a lot of praise.

Previously this year, during the second wave of COVID-19 in India, she was spotted cooking and serving meals for those affected by the pandemic. Sharing anecdotes from the day, she had said on social media, "Mother Teresa once said, 'Peace be-

gins when the hungry are fed.' I was truly humbled and inspired to visit Mumbai @rotibankfdn today, which is run by former Mumbai police commissioner Mr. D Sivanandan. Roti Bank has prepared and distributed meals to millions of hungry people till date, even during the pandemic. They are the perfect example of what #kindnessbrigade aspires to do and I am honoured to be of help to them during these times. We only live once! Let's make this life worth it by helping others in need and sharing the #storiesofkindness of those around us!"

Meanwhile, on the work front, Jacqueline recently appeared in a horror-comedy film released on the OTT platform. AGENCIES

ARJUN BIJLANI WINS KHATRON KE KHILADI II

NEW DELHI: *Khatron Ke Khiladi 11* winner Arjun Bijlani is on 'top of the world', for it has been arduous journey to the winner's trophy and ₹20 lakh in the reality show presented by director Rohit Shetty.

After his victory was announced on Sunday night, Arjun said in a conversation with IANS: "This was such a long and tough journey. I had to do a lot of hard work to perform well in the show. Sometimes I felt like I would give up, but I kept moving ahead and was able to reach the finale."

He added: "And even after I reached that stage, it felt like there was a huge distance between me and the trophy. The finale stunt, moreover, was really tough. I am so happy that I finally won the trophy."

The stunt was performed by Arjun Bijlani, Vishal Aditya Singh and Divyanka

Tripathi. Arjun was able to pip first runner-up Divyanka by 20 seconds and lift the trophy, plus take home the cheque and a car. Vishal gave up midway.

Being on *KKK11* came with its share of dangers, as suggested by the show name. Arjun said: "My left shoulder was dislocated and I was recommended surgery. I chose not to go for that option and I never told anyone about my injury. It was really tough for me to do the stunts. Still, I managed."

IANS

Rasika, Akshay honoured at Iconic Achievers Awards

MUMBAI: Actors Rasika Dugal and Akshay Oberoi have been honoured at the Iconic Achievers Awards this year.

While Rasika has bagged the award of the 'Most Versatile Actor Of The Year', Akshay won the honour of 'The Most Enterprising Actor Of The Year'. Talking about the same Rasika said: "I'm honoured to be recognised as the Most Versatile Actor at Iconic Achievers Award."

Every new role is an experience and an experiment. It is very heartening when that is acknowledged and applauded. I'm grateful to the jury and the audience who have appreciated me in

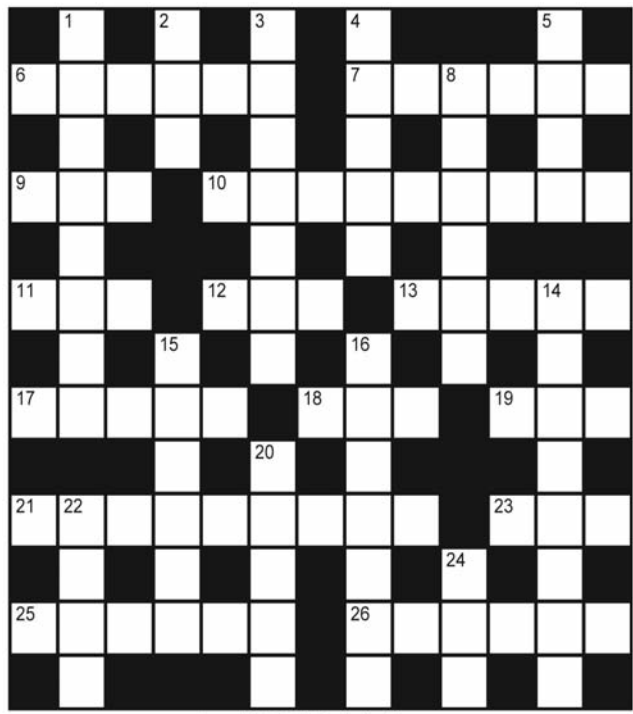
the different roles I have had an opportunity to take on."

"I feel honoured and happy to receive this award. I thank viewers for showing me love and appreciating my performance in every project. There is nothing more satisfying than to see the audience enjoying my work and connecting to the characters I've played," shared Akshay.

On the work front, Rasika will next be seen in projects like *Lord Curzon Ki Haveli* and *Dehli Crime Season 2*. Akshay's upcoming projects include *Inside Edge Season 3* and *Those Pricey Thakur Girls* among others.

FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- 6 Steak choice
- 7 They're nuts
- 9 Chowd down
- 10 Roam
- 11 Kind of trip
- 12 Tube top
- 13 Baby bird?
- 17 City near Düsseldorf
- 18 Barbary beast
- 19 Ornamental carp

- 21 Like some gains (3-6)
- 23 Ultimate degree
- 25 Pressing
- 26 Vacation spot

Down

- 1 Savings accounts (4,4)
- 2 Headlight setting
- 3 African antelopes
- 4 Milky gems
- 5 Before long
- 8 Tooth problem figures
- 15 Paltry
- 16 Shows up
- 20 Express
- 22 Zhivago's love
- 24 Nile viper

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.

5		6			4		3
8					1		
7	3			9	8		
						2	9
			5	2			
			9		1		5
		3		2		4	
			1				
4	2				6		7

SOLUTIONS

A	T	I	L	I	N	G	G	A	U	C	H	E
D	A	O	B	P	H	T						
O	U	T	C	O	M	E	R	O	A	S		
R	E	D	N	O	O	E						
A	P	R	I	L	Z	E	N	I	T	H		
B		E										
L	A	V	I	S	H	B	E	A	C	O		
E												
E	N	I	G	M	A	U	N	I	T	E		
O	T	E	R	S	N	R						
P	R	A	W	N	G	R	I	M	A	C	E	
A	G	O	O	V	E	N						
L	E	E	W	A	Y	D	E	T	E	C		

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU

6	8	3	4	7	5	1	2	9
2	1	4	3	9	6	5	8	7
5	7	9	1	2	8	3	6	4
9	5	6	7	8	2	4	1	3
8	3	7	6	1	4	2	9	5
4	2	1	5	3	9	8	7	6
3	9	5	8	6	1	7	4	2
1	4	2	9	5	7	6	3	8
7	6	8	2	4	3	9	5	1

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

7 EV charging stations in City soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: If things go well, a few strategic locations in the City will soon have at least seven electric vehicle (EV) charging stations, an official said Monday.

This was revealed during a virtual meeting held under the chairmanship of Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) commissioner-cum- Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) CEO Sanjay Kumar Singh.

While seven such stations will come up in the City in the first phase, more such facilities will be added to the state Capital's EV charging infrastructure in phases in accordance with the response.

"While two each EV charging stations will come up near KIIT in Patia area and Esplanade One mall in Rasulgarh area, locations near SUM Hospital, DN Regalia and Krishna Plaza at CRP Square will have one such charging facility each," Singh said.

Malls, public parking lots, hotels, residential complexes, workplaces and highways are among the priority locations shortlisted for setting up of the EV charging stations as the set ups will be used by the public and public transport vehicles as well.



Sources said that the City is going to add a fleet of electric buses to its public transport network.

Market leaders in EV infrastructure in India like Energy Efficiency Services Limited General Manager (EV & EV Charging Infrastructure) N Mohan, Tata Power Company Limited Head (EV & Home Automation Business) Sandeep Bangia, Tata Power Central Odisha Distribution Limited CEO M Shenbagam, senior officials from the state Energy and Commerce and Transport department, Odisha Principal Chief



AT THE HELM

Sanjukta Mohapatra (C), the first-ever female president of the British era Cuttack Club, poses for a photo with club members, Monday

GREEN VEHICLES

Two EV charging stations each will come up near KIIT in Patia area and Esplanade One mall in Rasulgarh area, while locations near SUM Hospital, DN Regalia and Krishna Plaza at CRP Square will have one such charging facility each

Malls, public parking lots, hotels, residential complexes, workplaces and highways are among the priority locations shortlisted for setting up of the EV charging stations

Electrical Inspector Santosh Das and BSCL General Manager Kamaljit Das among others attended the meeting.

Sources said that in a bid to achieve adoption of at least 20 per cent battery-operated electric vehicles in all vehicle registrations by 2025, the state government had August 27 approved the Odisha Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy, 2021.

The policy also aims to promote manufacturing of EV and its components including battery in the state, promote innovation and facilitate research and development in the areas relating to EVs and battery. The state government will extend financial incentives

Cyber fraudsters dupe elderly man of ₹58L

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Cyber criminals have duped an elderly man of ₹58 lakh.

Acting on a complaint lodged by the victim, Gobinda Chandra Parida, 68, the cybercrime wing of the state Crime Branch has started an investigation after registering a case (21/2021).

One Silivia Eric of Berlin in Germany befriended Parida on Facebook August 14, 2021. Subsequently, the con woman and Parida started chatting on Facebook messenger regularly and later on WhatsApp after the latter gave her the phone number. She told Parida that she wanted to send a gift parcel for him on the occasion of her birthday. She requested him to receive the parcel from the courier agencies at Delhi Airport by paying a paltry amount.

August 19, Roysmart courier service asked Parida to deposit ₹28,000 in their account to receive the parcel. The cyber fraudsters continued to demand money on different pretexts.

The victim allegedly deposited ₹57, 40,000 in various accounts of the accused between August and September 2021. He was again asked to give another ₹5 lakh September 10 to get the parcel which he denied and later sought the help of police.



Members of Odisha Ecotourism Foundation spread awareness about cleanliness at Puri beach on the occasion of World Tourism Day, Monday

Nabard sanctions ₹206 crore for 25 road projects

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has sanctioned ₹206 crore to the state government for construction of 25 roads, officials said Monday.

The assistance has been sanctioned under Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) for 25 rural road projects in 11 districts across the state.



The projects with a combined length of 203km are aimed at improving rural road connectivity for 20.48 lakh people in 1,723 villages. The Works department will construct the roads and infrastructure projects will play a key role in supporting the rural economy by improving the livelihoods of people, it said.

The blocks which will be benefited from this road projects are Digapahandi, Khallikote & Purushottampur, Dharakote, Sarada, Jagatsinghpur & Raghunathpur, Binjharpur, Jajpur, Jaipatna, Koksara & Dharmagarh, Narla & M Rampur, Aul, Patna, Saharpada, Telkoi, Patna & Ghatagaon, Kotpad, Koraput & Dasamantapur, Raruan & Sukruli, Rairangpur & Jamta, Ranpur, Nayagarh, Kashipur and Khurda.

This sanction is in line with the priority given by the state government for developing critical rural infrastructure for drinking water supply, irrigation and rural connectivity (roads and bridges).

Plus II second cut-off list out

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The second cut-off list for Plus II admissions in state was released Monday.

The School and Mass Education (S&ME) department released the same on its official website www.samsodisha.gov.in. Applicants will be able to check the cut-off mark list for Arts, Science, and Commerce streams from the mentioned website.

As many as 54,633 students have been selected in the second phase of admission, including 28,844 boys and 25,787 girls and two transgender.

As many as 54,633 students have been selected in the second phase of admission, including 28,844 boys and 25,787 girls and two transgender

been selected in Arts, 2,644 in Commerce, 10,382 in Science, 269 in Sanskrit, and 467 in vocational stream.

Like the first selection, Ravenshaw Junior College stood on top in the second selection cut-off list. Admission of the students in second selection list

starts September 29.

The first cut-off list for Plus II admission was released September 13. In the first selection, as many as 3,86,464 were selected out of the total 4,35,092 applicants. As many as 2,47,906 students opted for Arts stream, 24,560 for Commerce and 1,07,037 students for Science.

Ravenshaw Junior College had topped the first cut-off merit list. The cut-off for Arts stream in Ravenshaw stood at 79.3 per cent while in Science it was 91.33 per cent and in Commerce it was 82 per cent. Admission of applicants selected in first list started from September 14 and concluded September 21.

UNIQUE FEAT

Puri kid earns spot in India Book of Records

POST NEWS NETWORK

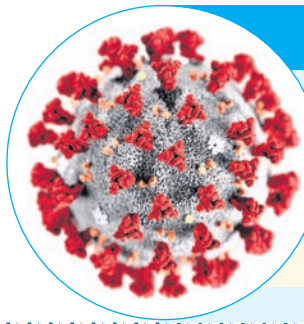
Puri, Sept 27: Two-year-old Debansh Patra, a resident of Parikud area of Krushnaprasad block in the district, has made the state proud by making it into the prestigious India Book of Records.

He won the title by naming 40 animals, 48 birds, 22 vehicles, 22 automobile logos, 38 celebrities, 22 countries, 23 fruits, 27 vegetables, 20 insects, 10 reptiles, 16 musical instruments, 15 historical sites, 26 sports, 12 national symbols, 14 festivals and capitals of 29 states. He also sang the national anthem.

After verifying all the documents, the India Book of Records placed Debansh's feat on the book. He was given a certificate, a gold medal and the book featuring his name. As the news broke, congratulatory messages started pouring in. His mother said that Debansh had started retaining whatever he saw or heard since he was just a year old.

Two-year-old Debansh Patra was given a certificate, a gold medal and the book featuring his name

COVID-19 TRACKER			
	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	23,27,30,163	20,93,72,716	47,64,343
India	3,36,78,786	3,29,31,972	4,47,194
Odisha	10,24,764	10,11,482	8,180



2nd attempt of auction for 11 coal mines begins

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Union Ministry of Coal Monday launched the second attempt of an auction process for 11 coal mines, including three coal mines of Odisha, earmarked for sale of coal.

According to the Union Coal Ministry, three mines in Odisha – Alaknanda, Dip Extension of Belpahar and Burapahar – will go for auction. While Alaknanda and Dip Extension of Belpahar are partially explored, Burapahar is fully explored.

The ministry also informed that out of the 11 mines, six are fully explored and five are partially explored. These were the mines which were offered in the first attempt launched March 25, 2021 and had fetched single bids.

The Ministry of Coal had earlier said that it has executed agreements with the eight successful bidders pursuant to the auction of second tranche of coal mines for commercial mining.



In the first attempt of auction under 11th tranche of auction under CM (S) Act 2015 and under first tranche of auction under the MMDR Act 1957, out of the 38 coal mines, 19 were successfully auctioned.

Out of the remaining mines, four coal mines which had fetched single bid in the first attempt were put up for re-auction in a second attempt by the Ministry of Coal with the same terms and conditions but with the highest initial offer received in the first annulled attempt of auction as the floor price for

the second attempt.

"The auction shall be held online through a transparent two-stage process, on the basis of percentage revenue share. Key features of the auction process include introduction of National Coal Index, ease in participation with no restriction for prior coal mining experience, full flexibility in coal utilisation, optimised payment structures, efficiency promotion through incentives for early production and use of clean coal technology," the coal ministry said.

BJB lab asst's body found

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 27: A day after Debasish Das, a laboratory assistant at BJB Autonomous College in Bhubaneswar, reportedly jumped off the Mahanadi bridge in Jagatpur area, his body was found at Sirlo under Kishannagar police limits here Monday, an official said.

Sources said that his body was sent for autopsy to SCB Medical College and Hospital.

According to Jagatpur police, Das, a resident of Chauliaganj area in the Silver City, along with his driver, was reportedly head-

ing for Tangi when he jumped into Mahanadi Sunday morning.

"When they were crossing the bridge over Mahanadi in Jagatpur area, Das asked his driver to stop the vehicle. As soon as the vehicle stopped, Das alighted from the car and jumped off the bridge," Jagatpur IIC Rabindra Nath Meher had said, quoting Meher's driver.

Although a team of Jagatpur police, along with ODRAF personnel, launched a search operation, they could not find him till Sunday evening.

EAST COAST RAILWAY

Tender No. RPF-KUR-HOV-ASC-KDJR

Name of Work: HIRING OF 02 NOS. OF FOUR WHEELER VEHICLES (I.E. TATA SUMO, MAHINDRA BOLERO, SCORPIO ETC.) FOR TWO YEARS FOR CONDUCTING REGULAR CHECKS, CRIME CONTROL, RAID & SEARCH, TO ATTEND RAIL ROKO, AGITATION, SUNDRY LAW & ORDER PROBLEM, DISRUPTION, INTERFERENCE FOR RAILWAY WORKS BY AGITATORS ON ANTISOCIAL ELEMENTS AND OTHER OFFICE DUTIES ETC. BY RAILWAY PROTECTION FORCE PERSONNEL BY ROAD FOR THE USE OF ASSISTANT SECURITY COMMISSIONER/ KHURDA ROAD & RAILWAY PROTECTION FORCE POST/KENDUJHARGARH.

Advertised Value ₹ 26,08,624.39, Tender document Cost: ₹ 3,540/-, Period of completion: 24 Months.

Bidding start date: 29.09.2021, Tender closing date & time: at 1530 hrs. of 13.10.2021.

Manual offers are not allowed against this tender and any such manual offer received shall be ignored.

Complete details & tender documents will be available at website www.ireps.gov.in

Sr. Divisional Security Commissioner (RPF), PR-419/M/21-22 Khurda Road

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our client ('Client') is desirous of purchasing the immovable properties more fully described in the 'Schedule' here to and here in after referred to as 'Schedule Properties'. The Owners detailed in the Schedule below have represented to our Client that they are the absolute owners of their respective portions of the Schedule Properties, as detailed in the Schedule here to, with unrestricted rights of alienation over the same.

Notice is hereby given to the general public that any person/s other than the Owners mentioned below, asserting any right, title, charge, lien, or any other interest whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties are hereby called upon to submit to the undersigned, their objections, if any, to the aforesaid proposed purchase of the Schedule Properties. The said objections must be in writing, together with documentary proof of such claim/s, so as to reach us at the address given below within a period of 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this Notice. If no such objections are received, it shall be deemed that none else other than the Owners mentioned below, has / have any right, title, interest or claim whatsoever in respect of the Schedule Properties and our Client would be at liberty to proceed to purchase the Schedule Properties.

SCHEDULE PROPERTIES

All that piece and parcel of properties detailed in the table below situated at Village-, Khasbahal, Chitamara, Tahasil- Saintala, Bolangir District:

MOUZA - KHASBAHAL					
SL. NO.	NAME	KHATA NO.	PLOT NO.	AREA	BOUNDARY
1	Nila Rana, Daitari Rana, Son of Satyabadi Rana	42	194	Ac. 1.46	N- Own S- Prahallad Panigrahi
2	Bishikeshan Rana, Son of Nilamani Rana	94/391	196	Ac. 0.73	N- Own S- Own
			197	Ac. 0.14	
			198	Ac. 3.33	
3	Banshi Sahu, Diba Sahu, Satrugnan Sahu, Gajapati Sahu, Pandaba Sahu, Bhima Sahu All are Sons of Jagabandhu Sahu and Guadei Sahu Daughter of Sanakumar Sahu	61	11	Ac. 1.40	N- Kapurchan Luhura, S- Own
			193	Ac. 0.85	N/S- Own
4	Prahallad Panigrahi, Son of Purustam Panigrahi, Surabati Panigrahi, Wife of Jagatram Panigrahi	49	222	Ac. 1.12	N- Bishambar Rana S- Gramya jungle
5	Bhika Sahu, Son of Dinabandhu Sahu	70	206	Ac. 1.28	N/S- Own
			205	Ac. 0.60	N/S- Own
			201	Ac. 0.99	N- Chitra Lohra, S- Own
			202	Ac. 0.93	N/S- Own
			204	Ac. 0.73	N/S- Own
MOUZA - CHITAMARA					
6	Shyam Sundar Selma, Son of Lachaman Selma	37	407	Ac. 5.44	N- Manbodh Thapa S- Boundry of Khasbahal
			408	Ac. 2.48	N-Own, S-Boundry of Khasbahal
7	Rajamati Chandan, Raimati Bakul, Nura Nag all are Daughter of Laba Bernal	31	241	Ac. 4.06	N-Basti, S-Boundry of Khasbahal
8	Baikuntha Rana, Son of Ratnakar Rana, Dhaneswar Rana, Son of Jhamaka Rana, Chandra Rana, Son of Rajaram Rana, Koushlya Rana Wife of Rajaram rana	24	409	Ac. 0.90	N- Swarna Thapa S- Boundry of Khasbahal
			238	Ac. 2.00	N-Basti, S-Boundry of Khasbahal
9	Benu Chandan, Son of Hira Chandan	23	242	Ac. 0.60	N- Patra Jungle S- Rajamati Bakul
Date: 28.09.2021 Place: Sambalpur Sd./- Sachikanta Mishra, Advocate, Sambalpur HIW OLD GUEST HOUSE COLONY, HIRAKUD, SAMBALPUR -768016, Mob: 9437158744/9337358744, E-mail: sachikant1234@gmail.com					

Asit Tripathy new head of Bhubaneswar Club

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Defeating former chief secretary Bijay Kumar Patnaik, Principal Advisor to Chief Minister and Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) chairman Asit Kumar Tripathy has been elected president of Bhubaneswar Club. The results of the election for various posts were declared Monday. Tripathy won the president's post with a margin of 278 votes.

Similarly, 1996-batch IAS officer Vishal Dev was elected the secretary of the premier club. Tripathy, a former 1986-batch IAS officer, secured 776 votes while his contestant Patnaik, a former 1976-batch IAS officer, got 498 votes. Mahendra Gupta was elected the vice president.

Dev, who is currently posted as Odisha's Finance Secretary, beat his closest rival and outgoing secretary Ashok Chinchela, a chartered accountant, to become secretary of the club, established in 1949. Ashok Mishra has been elected as joint secretary of the club.

2 booked for abetting Tusharkant's suicide

CUTTACK: Jagatpur police Monday arrested two persons on charges of abetting the suicide of Tusharkant Sahu, a student of Christ College here, in August this year. The arrested were identified as Dibyaranjan Behera, 26, of Dargahbazar area and Kaushal Pradhan, 20, of Pithapur area in the Silver City. According to ACP Amarendra Panda, the accused, along with a few others, have assaulted and threatened Tusharkant, 20, on several occasions over his relation with one of his classmates. "This forced a perturbed Tusharkant to commit suicide August 3 this year.

Projects worth ₹16.32Cr approved for Mo School



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The 28th Executive Council meeting of 'Mo School Abhiyan' was held Monday in virtual mode, under the chairmanship of School and Mass Education (S&ME) department Principal Secretary Satyabrata Sahu. The meeting approved projects worth ₹16.32 crore for 1,238 schools in 25 districts of Odisha. Within a month, as many as 16,000 alumni have joined the Mo School mission and have donated ₹5.43 crore for the development of their respective schools. The alumni have contributed ₹1.61 crore in Balasore, ₹50.10 lakh in Jajpur, ₹27.39 lakh in Cuttack, ₹25.87 lakh in Bhadrak and ₹24.92 lakh in Bolangir districts.

Keeping the legacy intact, Balasore has clinched the top spot

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN INCORPORATED IN THE MO SCHOOL ABHIYAN AND IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO EXPEDITE THE PROGRAM IN ALL THE STAND-ALONE HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE STATE

AS MANY AS 16,000 ALUMNI HAVE JOINED THE MO SCHOOL MISSION AND HAVE DONATED ₹5.43 CRORE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR RESPECTIVE SCHOOLS

in terms of the highest number of alumni connected, and for 9th consecutive term, the district has come up with the paramount financial contribution among its counterparts. In a first, Jajpur has climbed

to the second spot in the list with financial assistance worth ₹50 lakh. The district also witnessed the association of record number of alumni members who have pledged their support to their alma mater.

For the first time ever, higher secondary schools have been incorporated in the Mo School Abhiyan and it has been decided to expedite the program in all the stand-alone higher secondary schools in the state. Recently, discussions involving the former students were held at BJB Higher Secondary School, Bhubaneswar.

Addressing the meeting, Sahu had urged to leverage the Mo School program in all the primary, upper primary and higher secondary schools of the state. Alumni of BJB Higher Secondary School contributed ₹2.16 lakh to their alma mater; coupled with a two-fold matching grant from the state government, amounting to ₹6.48 lakh subsequently sanctioned by the Executive Council. Complying with the interest of the present students, the grants will be availed in various developmental projects.

On the other hand, the Executive Council has decided to submit a proposal to the state for the inclusion of government and government-aided composite higher secondary schools in the Mo School Abhiyan.

As the 2nd phase of the '5T High School Transformation Programme' is already underway, the Executive Council has proposed the state to provide a supplementary budget worth ₹887 crore to Mo School.

State registers 444 fresh Covid cases, 5 fatalities



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The state Monday logged 444 new Covid-19 cases taking the state's tally to 10,24,764 while five fresh fatalities pushed the coronavirus death toll to 8,180, a Health department official said.

Of the new Covid-19 cases detected, 59 were in the age group of 0 to 18 years. The rate of infections among children and adolescents now stands at 13.28 per cent. While 258 of the new cases came from quarantine centres, the remaining 186 were local contacts.

Khurda district of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest of 170 new infections, followed by Cuttack (73) and Mayurbhanj (37). Seven districts - Boudh, Gajapati, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Koraput, Malkangiri and Nabarangpur, reported nil cases.

The five fresh fatalities were reported from Nabarangpur (2) and Sundargarh (3). This apart, 53 other Covid-19 patients have also died in the state so far due to comorbidities, he said.

The state currently has 5,702 active Covid-19 cases while as many as 10,10,829 patients in-

Third wave unlikely to hit state: Mohapatra

Odisha is unlikely to bear the brunt of a possible third wave of Covid-19 pandemic, said director of Health Services Bijay Mohapatra Monday. Speaking to reporters, Mohapatra said, "Even though the daily infection graph in the state has witnessed a marginal rise in the last few days, the situation in Odisha is better than other states." The vaccination drive has worked well, Mohapatra added.

cluding 646 Sunday, recovered from the infections. The state's daily test positivity rate stands at 0.70 per cent as 444 reported positive out of 62,715 samples tested for Covid-19 Sunday. The TPR was 0.86 per cent Sunday, 0.83 per cent Saturday, 0.78 per cent Friday and 0.89 per cent Thursday.

The state has thus far conducted over 1.97 crore sample tests including 62,715 Sunday. Odisha's positivity rate stands at 5.17 per cent. Till Sunday, as many as 81,14,978 people have been fully inoculated against the Covid-19, he said.

Trains cancelled as Gulab triggers rain

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: Several trains under East Coast Railway (ECoR) have been cancelled in view of the impact of cyclone Gulab. The trains that have been cancelled are: 08417 Puri-Gunupur Special, 08418 Gunupur-Puri Special, 08528 Visakhapatnam-Raipur Special, 08527 Raipur-Visakhapatnam Special, 08522 Visakhapatnam-Gunupur Special, 08521 Gunupur-Visakhapatnam Special, 08466 Puri-Shalimar Special, 08465 Shalimar-Puri Special, 08516 Visakhapatnam-Kirandul Special and 08515 Kirandul-Visakhapatnam Special.

This apart, the following trains have been cancelled in view of waterlogging and overflowing of rainwater on railway tracks between Visakhapatnam-Vizianagaram-Rayagada Railway Section under Waltair Division of ECoR. These trains are: 08508 Visakhapatnam-Rayagada Special, 08107 Rourkela-Jagadapur Special, 08507 Rayagada-Visakhapatnam Special, 08108 Jagadapur-Rourkela Special, 08518 Visakhapatnam-Korba Special, 08517 Korba-Visakhapatnam Special and 02098 Junagarh Road-Bhubaneswar Special.

Earlier, six trains were cancelled in view of cyclone Gulab which made landfall in Andhra Pradesh. The six trains that were cancelled are: 08445 Bhubaneswar-Jagadapur Special, 08446 Jagadapur-Bhubaneswar Special, 02097 Bhubaneswar-Junagarh Road Special, 02098 Junagarh Road-Bhubaneswar Special, 08127 Rourkela-Gunupur Rajyarani Special and 08128 Gunupur-Rourkela Rajyarani Special.

Study: Smartphone sensor can detect ganja intoxication

A smartphone sensor, much like what is used in GPS systems, might be a way to determine whether or not someone is intoxicated after consuming marijuana, a new study suggests.

The study, which evaluated the feasibility of using smartphone sensor data to identify episodes of cannabis intoxication in the natural environment, a combination of time features (tracking the time of day and day of the week) and smartphone sensor data, had a 90 per cent rate of accuracy.

"Using the sensors in a person's phone, we might be able to detect when a person might be experiencing cannabis intoxication and deliver a brief intervention when and where it might have the most impact to reduce cannabis-related harm," said researcher Tammy Chung from Rutgers University.

For the study, published in the journal Drug and Alcohol Dependence, the researchers analysed daily data collected from young adults who reported cannabis use at least twice per week.

They examined phone surveys, self-initiated reports of cannabis use, and continuous phone sensor data to determine the importance of time of day and day of the week

The study, a combination of time features and smartphone sensor data, had a 90% rate of accuracy

The researchers analysed daily data collected from young adults who reported cannabis use at least twice per week

in detecting use and identified which phone sensors are most useful in detecting self-reported cannabis intoxication.

They found that time of day and day of the week had 60 per cent accuracy in detecting self-reporting of cannabis intoxication and the combination of time features and smartphone sensor data had 90 per cent accuracy in detecting cannabis intoxication.

Cannabis intoxication has been associated with slowed response time, affecting performance at work or school or impairing driving behaviour leading to injuries or fatalities.

Existing detection measures, such as blood, urine or saliva tests, have limitations as indicators of cannabis intoxication and cannabis-related impairment in daily life.

AGENCIES

Jail Adalats in state prisons from Oct 10

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: The state Prisons Directorate, with the help of District Legal Services Authorities (DLSAs), will organise special Jail Adalats in the state October 10. This initiative will help in decongestion of inmates in overcrowded jails.

The Director General for state Prisons and Correctional Services, Santosh Kumar Upadhyay Monday informed the media that such special courts will be held in jails on the fourth Saturdays of every

month. SLSA has recently directed the DLSAs in this regard.

Earlier in March, the state government had announced holding of special courts in the jails in co-ordination with SLSA to reduce the number of inmates in several overcrowded jails, especially the district and sub-jails of the state.

Notably, 22,583 prisoners have been lodged in 87 jails across the state against the approved capacity of 19,824 as on September 27. Most of the prisoners lodged in the state jails are Under Trial Prisoners.

BANDH FOR FARMERS' CAUSE

The nationwide Bharat Bandh, called by the farmers' union Samyukt Kisan Morcha—an umbrella body of 40 farm unions—demanding withdrawal of the three farm laws, passed off peacefully in the state Monday with protesters blocking highways and key roads and squatting on railway tracks in some places. Educational institutions, private offices and shopping malls remained shut



Congress' bike rally in Puri



Badambadi road in Cuttack



Nayapalli in Bhubaneswar



Unit-I market in the Capital city


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Impossibility is only a sum of greater unrealised possibles. It veils an advanced stage and a yet unaccomplished journey.

SRI AUROBINDO



African Chinese

The recent cancellation and revisiting of Chinese contracts by a few African countries - Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Kenya – are being interpreted as a setback to China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This is being read by international observers as a first step that could help Africa’s 54 countries break free from their dependence on China through the latter’s investments, loans and trade worth over \$ 200 billion per annum. China-baiters are also painting an alarming picture for Africa getting into a debt trap craftily laid by China. It is worth noting that China is now Africa’s biggest trade partner with over 10,000 Chinese-owned firms currently operating in the entire African continent. The value of Chinese business in Africa since 2005 amounts to over \$2 trillion. Asia has slipped below Africa as China’s largest market for overseas construction contracts. Infrastructure development projects – be it construction of railway-road networks, airports and hospitals, China’s presence in Africa has become almost ubiquitous. So much so that to keep the momentum going, China recently announced a \$1billion Belt and Road Africa infrastructure development fund. As such Africa’s economic ties with China, especially after the US strategy of thwarting the latter’s ambition to monopolise over South China Sea and control the Asia-Pacific region, are expected to deepen.

What has triggered speculation about growing disillusionment in Africa about China’s trade and investment in the continent is Ghana’s cancellation of the contract of the Beijing Everyway Traffic & Lighting Tech company, which was to develop an intelligent traffic management system for the country. The President of the DRC Felix Tshisekedi has also called for a review of mining contracts previously signed with China. The DRC President expressed his unhappiness over China’s ‘exploitative’ tendency and said those with whom his country had signed contracts are getting richer while the people of his own country ‘remain poor.’ The contract signed with Chinese state-backed firms Sinohydro Corp and China Railway Group was for building roads, hospitals and bridges in exchange for a 68 per cent stake in the country’s Sicomines venture.

The Ghana government cancelled their project because they found Everyway Traffic & Lighting Tech’s work not up to standard. Last year, a Kenyan High Court ordered the cancellation of a \$ 3.2 billion contract between Kenya and China for the construction of the Standard Gauge Railway. The court termed the whole project ‘illegal.’

Africa is fast getting into a Chinese debt trap and the COVID-19 pandemic is accelerating the pace. According to one estimate, China signed 1,141 loan commitments worth \$ 153 billion with various African governments and their state-owned enterprises during 2000 to 2019. The harsh terms and conditions attached by the US and European investors have forced African countries to welcome Chinese investments whose stated policy is not to ‘interfere with the internal matters’ of the recipient countries. This is only a euphemism for overlooking human rights violation and trampling of democratic principles by the Chinese operatives. The US and European lenders, on the other hand, insist on these aspects. Thus, China easily filled the vacuum created by the latter and is using its financial and technical power to exploit the continent’s natural resources. Over a third of China’s oil and 20 per cent of its cotton come from Africa. The continent has roughly half of the world’s stock of manganese needed for steel production. Africa also has significant amounts of coltan needed for electronic goods and half the world’s supply of rare earth elements (REE) used for over 200 high-tech consumer products including cellular telephones, computer hard drives, monitors and defence applications.

China doesn’t depend much on Africa for the success of its BRI which is needed for penetrating European markets through the maritime route. For these Chinese investments for BRI are heavily concentrated in Egypt and the Horn of Africa along the route to the Suez Canal.

China’s main interest in pumping in billions of dollars in Africa is to get the 54 African countries on its side to exert pressure on the UN to fulfil its global ambitions. Each of these countries has a vote in the UN and China has been assiduously cultivating them since 1990. These votes have helped China put its nationals as heads of four UN agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). It is the only country, ever, to have held so many directorates at once. China has also been able to greatly influence the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the world has seen how it has been leveraging its position during the COVID-19 pandemic to keep the origin of the virus in Wuhan a riddle yet to be solved.

China’s involvement in Africa has struck roots too deep to be cut off through scrapping of a few contracts. Since the US and the European Union preferred to cede much ground to China in the Dark Continent for the past few decades, it is now very difficult for global forces to start a new narrative in Africa.

WISDOM CORNER

- “

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RALPH WALDO EMERSON
- “

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OSCAR WILDE
- “

Two things are infinite: the universe and human stupidity; and I'm not sure about the universe.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

WORDSWORTH

Peruse

It is now rather a literary word, one that passes the lips of comparatively few people these days. Even in writing it isn’t that common, though it seems to turn up more often in American publications than British ones. Most British dictionaries don’t give a meaning of “to skim over” at all, though some do have a looser sense of “to browse; to read in a leisurely way” as an alternative to the main sense of “to read thoroughly; to examine in detail”. One only, the New Oxford Dictionary of English, notes that “it is sometimes mistakenly taken to mean ‘read through quickly; glance over’”. Much of the time, it’s hard to be sure exactly what modern users had in mind beyond borrowing it as a posh alternative to “read”, as here from an issue of the British Daily Telegraph: “Mr Mogg perused a battered copy of Watership Down and tried to look relaxed.” At times, it doesn’t even have to refer to reading, but can have a broader sense of “to look at, examine”, as here, from the same newspaper: “Many can be seen this summer perusing French and Italian fashions”. This is a survival of one of the older senses of the word in English, which had to do with working through a series of items one by one so as to deal with them in order. At one time it also had a meaning of travelling through an area observantly. However, most people in the past couple of hundred years would associate peruse specifically with reading, but not always with the idea of reading something especially carefully – to Dr Johnson, who used it a lot, it meant no more than read (he defined it thus in his Dictionary), and it’s possible to find many other examples from older writings where that word would have done as well. Dr Murray, in the first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary more than a century ago, wrapped three slightly different meanings in one: “To read through or over; to read thoroughly or carefully; hence (loosely) to read”. Only the second corresponds to the main sense given in most modern dictionaries. You might argue that read itself already has something of the idea of careful attention about it, since we commonly start at the beginning of a text and work our way through to the end. But some authorities would argue that it is only certain grammarians and dictionary makers of the early twentieth century who have foisted on us the idea of thoroughness or care being the essence of the word. The most obvious word with contradictory meanings is the closely related scan.



Ajit Ranade

THE THREE LAWS LEAVE ROOM FOR FARMERS TO BE DISTRUSTFUL OF THE GOVERNMENT

It was one year ago that the three farm laws were passed rather hastily in the Parliament. The laws were issued as ordinances in June, and then converted into bills for passage in Parliament. That was rushed through without much discussion or debate. For laws which are described as far-reaching reforms, surely some discussion should have been allowed? The government’s response is that the underlying issues were known and thrashed out for a long time, as if implying that there was no use wasting any more time debating them. Since the ruling party had its numbers to get a majority vote, the bills passed and got the President’s assent. The supporters claimed this passage of the farm laws as an example of bold reforms and applauded the ability of the government to take this risk and spend political capital. This is a narrow and misguided assessment. Reforms by consensus are better than reforms by stealth or by brute force of majority, especially in areas which affect half the population of the country directly. Besides, agriculture is a State subject as per the Constitution, so consensus building is imperative. Opposition to the ordinance had already begun in June. And then in September, from the very day of the passage of the three laws, widespread agitation started.

Just like the laws, the agitation against them is one-year-old too. It has survived a cold winter; rains and floods, internet blockade and much police action. There have been more than eight successive rounds of negotiations between the government and farmers’ representatives to find some middle ground. All of these rounds have failed. In January the Supreme Court stayed the implementation of the laws, and appointed an experts’ committee to suggest the way forward for implementation. By December much of the global media was describing the outcry as the biggest farm protest in the world. During that month, an estimated 250 million people across the country responded, showing solidarity to the



Saeed Naqvi

THAT AUKUS IS A PURELY ANGLOPHONE GROUPING SHOULD NOT BE A SURPRISE. GAMES HAVE BEEN PLAYED BEFORE TO KEEP SOME CLUBS RACIALLY SEGREGATED

Robert Blackwill, US ambassador at the time of anti-terror fireworks over Afghanistan, had established a tradition of seating guests at lunch around a circular table, where he grandly held forth, initiating a discussion. “Imagine I am Henry Kissinger” would be one of his opening gambits. An idea was tossed up. A discussion followed. The one who spoke the most, ate the least, because all plates were removed in one swoop.

On one such occasion, before soup was served, the ambassador announced with considerable satisfaction that Pakistan’s President Musharraf had decided to join the global war on terror as the frontline state. Seated to my right the late Pranab Mukherjee, was agitated. He whispered his anger to me. It was uncanny. What he whispered was exactly the question shaping up in my mind. I raised my hand: “You are aware that New Delhi had complained consistently about cross-border terrorism from Pakistan particularly since 1989.” Pranab Da completed my question in his typical arrangement of words: “It is most worrying no doubt – you now have Pakistan as the frontline state in your war against terror.. They perpetrate terror against this county.” Blackwill spoke volumes in two brief sentences: “Musharraf has

FOCUS FARMERS’ PROTESTS

ONE YEAR ON



Reforms by consensus are better than reforms by stealth or by brute force of majority, especially in areas which affect half the population of the country directly

protest. One CNN columnist wondered, with such a massive support, if Black Lives Matter or MeToo could be globally trending protests, why were India’s farm protests not trending globally?

One young activist was arrested because she was disseminating a ‘toolkit’ for organising protests! Internet was occasionally shut down to make it difficult for farmers to spread their message. The government threatened Twitter to block dozens of accounts, which the American social networking service complied with. A recent rally in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh attracted a million-plus participants. The agitation is not dying down, and positions have hardened. The repeal of the three farm laws is their demand, nothing less. The detractors claim that the support base is pretty small, and represents only the interest of big farmers and entrenched lobbies of middleman in Punjab and Haryana.

So, what are the three farm laws? Very simply put, they actually relax shackles on the farmers. The first one allows the farmer to sell produce outside the premises of the designated yards (mandis), the second one allows the farmers to directly negotiate and enter into contracts with corporates, the third one relaxes the restrictions of the Essential Commodities Act – relaxes the restriction on storage and transportation of farm produce. All three farm laws are thus a relaxation of constraints on the farmer.

They give new freedoms to farmers. How can that be a bad thing? Well, that is because the concern is about what happens next. The slippery road from these laws to their implications. If government procurement through designated mandis drop, then the MSP support is lost. The government is currently under no statutory obligation to purchase any minimum quantity. The assurance of MSP can be vacuous if no quantity is purchased. The mandi taxes collected on the mandi transactions help build and maintain infrastructure. Is the government planning to dismantle mandis eventually?

Secondly, on contract farming, the farmer is not allowed to seek recourse to courts, in case of a breach of contract. How will a small farmer fight the might and muscle of large corporations? He is supposed to take help from the local district magistrate. But the recent video of a young DM instructing police to break the skulls of protesting farmers does not inspire confidence that the bureaucracy will stand by the small farmer. On the dilution of the essential commodities law also, there is no guarantee that the government will not intervene when food inflation spikes up. The farmers fear that whenever their crops start fetching a higher price, the ‘reform’ law will be suspended to their detriment, and prices will be forcibly capped. This was indeed done for sugar, and export con-

trols and stocking limits were imposed soon after the September passage of the laws. So, all three laws leave room for farmers to be distrustful of the government. And it is here that much action is needed – to rebuild the trust and confidence of the farmer. As such as we get closer to State elections, the farm agitation will be an important and emotive electoral issue.

India’s farm sector needs to be unshackled, but elsewhere. For instance, liberalise land leasing laws. Allow greater play for moneylenders. Make it possible for tenant farmers to access formal credit. Remove the fitful export and import bans on food products. Encourage animal husbandry which is the fastest growing part of agriculture income. Encourage land consolidation, at least of a major bulk of the 140 million small parcels of land across the country. Digitisation of land records and removing ambiguity totally in ownership should go a long way.

The country has very diverse agro-climatic regions, and hence the one-size-fits-all approach will not work. Modifying the Public Distribution System to include millets and local varieties will help farmers as well as the nutritional needs of people. Enable forward and futures markets for farm produce which can eventually complement if not eliminate the need for MSP. Activate and energise the linkage between agriculture universities and extension services. Hybrid varieties at least for non-food crops can vastly increase productivity and incomes. Success of BT cotton is a stark example. Farming needs intellectual and scientific knowledge inputs much more than subsidised water; electricity, credit or fertilisers. Earlier this month we celebrated the 86th birthday of Sharad Joshi, one of modern India’s dynamic, firebrand, indefatigable campaigners for farm reforms and the upliftment of farmers. Following his writings and advocacy would be a good place to start.

The writer is an economist and Senior Fellow, Takshashila Institution.

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SPECTRUM GEOPOLITICS

The hocus-pocus about Quad & AUKUS

PM Scott Morrison on the margins of the UNGA, flatter New Delhi? Pardon my complexes, does not a leader wearing AUKUS plus Quad badges dwarf the one with a frayed Quad pinned to the lapel? I would not go as far as the wag who takes the uncharitable view that the US takes India for granted exactly as secular political parties regard the Muslim vote: where else can they go?

AUKUS must have been in the works for some time but it was sprung upon the world when the US felt the earth move from beneath its feet in Kabul. The furious response from France only disguises anger in EU which is talking of security outside NATO. That AUKUS is a purely Anglophone grouping should not be a surprise. Games have been played before to keep some clubs racially segregated. For instance, when the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 placed a question mark on the need for NATO, Margaret Thatcher, then on a trip to Helsinki, was asked by a reporter: Now that the Soviet threat has gone, what was the justification for Britain’s nuclear deterrent? Thatcher shot back, “We still have a problem in the Middle East.” Thereafter, along with George Bush Sr., she began to put together ‘a coalition of the willing’ ostensibly to oust Saddam Hussain from Kuwait.

Anglophone dominance of the world order since World War II, faced a challenge. Soviet collapse had brought about a reunification of Germany. This at a time when the Japanese economy was booming. French President Francois Mitterrand was among the last to join the ‘coalition of the willing.’ It was the biggest military coalition since 1945 – a grouping of 39 countries. Given their obsession, pundits may be interested to know that Pakistan was part of that coalition. As one who covered the story from Baghdad, I am possibly the only Indian witness who can confirm that the show was run exclusively by the US and Britain.

To revert to AUKUS, yes, the French fury is understandable. Not only was a \$90 billion submarine order being stolen, but an Anglophone dominated world order was being perpetuated. This is what infuriated Macron. It just so happens that the turn of events has also provided Macron with an occasion to fall back on a de Gaulle style nationalism just when his ratings are plummeting and all manner of candidates are tossing their hats in the ring for the next elections.

The writer is a senior commentator on political and diplomatic issues.

IANS

Way forward for banks

Sir, This is in reference to ‘India needs 4-5 SBI size banks: FM’ published in Orissa POST, September 27. India is the world’s fifth largest economy. However, it has no globally competitive lender that can draw the attention of foreign markets. SBI is the 43rd largest bank (it was 55th in 2019) in the world. It is the largest bank in India with a 23 per cent market share by assets and a 25 per cent share of the total loan and deposits market. China has the top four banks of the world. The recent mergers of some banks in India pave the way for consolidation of small banks to form a few large ones. The mergers were gladly accepted by the public and appreciated for the way the transition was managed without hiccups. If we consider from the securities market point of view, the value of public sector banks is highly discounted in comparison to their private counterparts. Mammoths like HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank are aggressively enhancing their market capitalisation owing to their size and penetration in rural areas. A further amalgamation of small banks to form five large lenders is essential to find a place in global markets. The only constraint that will prevail is the government’s intervention in the affairs of public sector banks like priority sector lending and 59-minute approval of loans. This should be done away with if we want to see organic growth in our banking sector.

Tushar Panda, BHUBANESWAR

Flaws in ‘Doing Business’

Sir, This refers to the article ‘Is doing business dead?’ Orissa POST, September 26. Since 2003, the Doing Business has ranked 190 economies based on how easy it is to do business there, taking into account trading regulations, property rights, contract enforcement, investment laws, the availability of credit and a number of other factors. Moving up in the rankings is often cited by developing countries’ governments as evidence that their economies are modernising and growing. However, flaws in the rankings have been clear for several years. Countries found it faster and easier to game the system than to undertake difficult reforms to climb up in the ranking chart. The index itself was incredibly limited in scope. Also, measuring something as nebulous as ‘doing business’ is fraught with methodological and ideological perils. It didn’t actually measure improvements in business-friendliness on the ground. Instead, it relied on analysis of reforms on paper.

N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

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, Rasulgari Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

FERTILIZER BLACK MARKETING, CROP LOSS

Jaipur farmers caught in Catch-22 situation



FILE PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandikhole, Sept 27: Farmers under Barchana block in Jaipur district have been caught in a Catch-22 situation owing to crop loss due following low-pressure triggered rainfall and black marketing of fertilizers, a report said.

Low-pressure triggered rainfall has damaged crops on large tracts of farmlands just sparing paddy cultivation on irrigated farmlands. This might have proved a setback for them but they were determined and were preparing to apply fertilizers to the crops when its black marketing dealt a severe blow.

Reports said that fertilizers are being sold at twice their actual price at Chhatia, Barchana, Dhanmandal, Chandikhole, Balikuda, Balchandrapur and Charinangal areas under Barchana block. Despite this, the district administration is yet to launch a crackdown on the black marketers.

They are visiting the retail stores to buy fertilizers but find that it has disappeared from the stores. Farmers alleged some unscrupulous traders are black marketing

the fertilizer and selling it at exorbitant prices. This situation has been reported from various places under Barchana block in Jaipur district.

Farmers alleged that they now need urea fertilizers to feed their paddy crops. A sack of fertilizer is sold at ₹266 in the market but due to black marketing it is now available for anything between ₹500-600 in the market. Similarly, Gromor and DAP fertilizers are also being sold at exorbitant prices in the market, they said

According to government norms, every primary agricultural cooperative society (PACs) has to give loans to farmers for cultivation and also provide the loanee farmers with fertilizers at government rates. The transaction should be made through the bank accounts of the farmers.

It is alleged that many PACs are lifting fertilizers from the manufacturers but are not selling them to loanee farmers.

Reports said two dealers have been appointed in Barchana block to sell fertilizers to the farmers. According to norms, farmers should produce their Aadhaar

LOW-PRESSURE TRIGGERED RAINFALL HAS DAMAGED CROPS ON LARGE TRACTS OF FARMLANDS JUST SPARING PADDY CULTIVATION ON IRRIGATED FARMLANDS

FERTILIZERS ARE BEING SOLD AT TWICE THEIR ACTUAL PRICE AT CHHATIA, BARCHANA, DHANMANDAL, CHANDIKHOLE, BALIKUDA, BALCHANDRAPUR AND CHARINANGAL AREAS UNDER BARCHANA BLOCK

MANY SMALL TRADERS ARE COLLECTING THE AADHAAR CARDS OF FARMERS AND TAKING THEIR THUMB IMPRESSIONS BUT NOT SELLING THE FERTILIZERS

cards and give their thumb impression to buy the fertilizers at government rates.

However, the reverse is happening here as the dealers and PACs are allegedly selling the fertilizers to small traders in rural areas for a premium. In turn, these small traders are selling fertilizers to farmers at exorbitant prices.

Many small traders are collecting the Aadhaar cards of farmers and taking their thumb impression but not selling the fertilizers. Later, the leftover fertilizer stock is shown as sold. Many traders are trying to keep the gullible farmers from visiting their stores by keeping their shops closed during daytime and only opening them in the evening.

A farmer alleged that he recently visited a store but was turned away by the store owner stating that he is yet to receive fertilizers. The store owners are not even putting up boards displaying price list of the fertilizers. Any farmer trying to protest is turned away without giving him any fertilizer.

When contacted, Lokanath Mishra, Block Agriculture Officer, said that his official team is raiding various places but no farmer has come forward to lodge a complaint. He assured that action will be taken on receipt of complaints.



A girl selling bambooware awaits customers at Kamlibazaar in Sambalpur

OP PHOTO

SC sets aside Orissa HC order

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, September 27: The Supreme Court Monday set aside an order of the Orissa High Court that upheld the appointment of a primary school teacher in Singari area of the state.

A two-judge bench of the apex court comprising Justices MR Shah and AS Bopanna held that the High Court had made an error while passing the order as it put reliance on the first selection list, which was set aside by the SAT.

“We are of the opinion that the High Court was not justified and had fallen into error: This is for the reason that the information furnished under the RTI Act showing the name of the respondent at serial number 301 having obtained 114.80 marks was in the select list prepared for the first time, but was the subject matter of litigation and had been set aside. Hence, it was therefore not reckonable,” the SC said.

Significantly, the matter per-

TEACHER'S APPOINTMENT



tains to the selection of a school teacher in 1997. Arati Mohaptra was selected for appointment as teacher in a government primary school in Singari along with 379 others. Mohapatra was awarded 114.80 marks and appointed assistant teacher in 1997.

However, several unsuccessful candidates approached the State Administrative Tribunal in 1999 alleging irregularities and foul play in the selection process. Taking the matter into consideration, the SAT accepted the contention of the applicants and directed the recruiting authority to re-select the

candidates.

Under the re-selection process, the last candidate in the general category had secured 111.53 marks, while Mohapatra scored 109.86 marks. This resulted in Mohapatra losing her job and she approached the High Court. The High Court, while passing the order, had taken into consideration the marks obtained by Mohapatra in the first list, which was set aside by the SAT. The Supreme Court held that the High Court ought to have placed reliance on the same when the re-selection list prepared afresh was acted upon appointment.

Woman throws boiling water on neighbour's daughters, arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Padmapur, Sept 27: Two girls sustained burn injuries after a woman in the neighbourhood hurled boiling water on them following an altercation over a theft at Rajgharpokhari village under Basudevpur block in Bhadrak district, Monday.

The accused was identified as Lipi Sutar of the village. On being informed, police registered a case and arrested the accused. Later, she was produced in the court, IIC Kailash Chandra Khuntia of Nayakanidhi police station said.

Monday's incident occurred after Lipi found her shoes were stolen. She held her neighbour Annasuya responsible for the theft and hurled abuses at them. Annasuya refuted the allegations of her neighbour which enraged Lipi. The latter soon brought boiling water from her kitchen and hurled it on Annasuya's daughters.

JHARIGAON ADARSHA VIDYALAYA

Staff crunch mars quality education

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jharigaon, Sept 27: Shortage of teaching staff at Adarsha Vidyalaya at Jharigaon village in Nabarangpur district has left the students and their parents a worried lot.

With an aim to provide quality education to the children in rural areas like Jharigaon, the school was established in 2017. Villagers were exalted at getting an Adarsha Vidyalaya in their village, thinking their children would also get quality education.

Currently, the school has 405 students studying in Class VI to X. Due to prevailing Covid-19 situation and as per the direction of the state government, students of only Classes IX and X are attending physical classes.

While the school doesn't have a permanent principal, the posts of mathematics, social science, English, art, computer and physical education teacher are also lying vacant. The four teachers serving at the institution now are taking science, MIL, social science and music classes. While the four teachers are sharing the burden, the students are being deprived of quality education.

The parents alleged that shortage of teaching staff and lack of quality education is pushing the future of their children into darkness.

While a 100-bedded girls' hostel building of the school is all set to be inaugurated virtually soon, the parents demanded priority should be given to fill up the vacant posts.



BJP MP DEMANDS PROBE INTO DALIT MAN'S DEATH



FILE PHOTO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 27: BJP MP Suresh Pujari demanded Monday that proper investigation be carried out into the alleged custodial death of a 35-year-old man in Bargarh district.

Pointing out that the death of Gobinda Kumbhar, a Dalit man from Tora village in Bargarh block, had “shaken the conscience of the entire society in Odisha”, Pujari said in a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik that strict action must be taken against erring police officials.

“The Talibanisation of police is not a good sign for a healthy democracy,” the Bargarh MP said in the letter.

Kumbhar had been picked up by

A protest over alleged custodial death of a youth turned violent as police lathi-charged on unarmed protesters in Bargarh, Saturday

the Bargarh town police station Friday in connection with a case of a brawl. The next morning, Kumbhar became unwell and officers of the Bargarh town police station took him to a hospital.

When his condition deteriorated, he was rushed to the district hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival, a police officer had said.

The incident triggered protests by villagers and as the agitators clashed with the police, the law enforcers had to resort to lathi-charge to disperse the mob.

The police had dismissed allegations of torture and asserted they were not involved in any way behind Kumbhar's death.

A senior police officer said on Sunday that there will be an inquiry by a judicial magistrate.

The Human Rights Protection Cell, which is under the Odisha Police, will also conduct a probe, he said.

The guidelines of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) will be followed regarding the post-mortem, the police officer said.

“The circumstances leading to the death of Kumbhar and the apparent signs of injury to his body suggest criminal assaults,” according to Pujari.

He urged Patnaik, who is also in charge of the Home Department, to take serious note of the incident and direct the police to lodge a case under Section 304 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the Indian Penal Code.

The 60-year-old politician stressed that the videography of the post-mortem should be preserved and the deceased's family should be adequately compensated on humanitarian grounds.

PUBLIC NOTICE

By virtue of an affidavit I, Bishwokeshan Harichandan Mohapatra, aged about 44 years, S/o. Dhananjaya Harichandan Mohapatra, resident of Village: Jamuna Jharpada, P.O.- Godiput Matiapada, P.S.- Delanga, District: Puri, Odisha do hereby solemnly affirm and state as follows:

01. That, I am the deponent of this affidavit.
02. That, I have filed my Nomination for Legislative Assembly bi-election for 110 Pipili A.C. and in this regard I do hereby declare that there is no criminal Antecedent against me in any court of law.
03. That, I am nominated as a candidate for said bi-election by National Congress Party (INC).
04. That, I swear this affidavit to be filed before the Election Commission as per direction of Hon'ble Supreme Court, India.
05. That, the fact stated above are all true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Bishwokeshan Harichandan Mohapatra
Deponent

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
BHUBANESWAR (R&B) DIVISION NO III
BHUBANESWAR

No.B-425:-
bbsrrandb03@yahoo.com
60 Estg.No - 5879 Date – 23.09.2021
Government of Odisha “e”-Procurement Notice No (21) of 2021-22
Bid Identification No: - C.C. (R&B) 03

1	Name of the work	Road works
2	Total No of works	7 Nos. works
3	Estimated cost	1) Rs. 15,39,854.00, 2) Rs.38,33,787.00, 3) Rs.26,78,540.00, 4) Rs.22,32,129.00, 5) Rs.22,32,124.00, 6) Rs.22,32,105.00, 7) Rs.33,15,093.00
4	Class of contractor	Sl. No 1 (D & C) & Sl. No 2 to 7 (B & C)
5	Period of completion	2(Two) calendar months
6	Type of tender	Single cover system.(Online)
7	Date & time of availability of bid document in the portal	From 29.09.2021 at 10.00 hrs. to 05.10.2021 upto 17.30 hrs.
8	Last date & time for receipt of bids in the portal	05.10.2021, upto 17.30 hrs
9	Name & address of the officer inviting Bid	Er. Himansu Sekhar Sarangi, Superintending Engineer, Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No III, Bhubaneswar

Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal <https://tendersorissa.gov.in>.

N.B: Subsequent corrigendum / addendum if required shall be available in the website as indicated above
Superintending Engineer,
Bhubaneswar (R&B) Division No III, BBSR
OIPR-34089/11/0007/2122



Government of Odisha
Office of the Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Nabarangpur, Umerkote
e-mail: eerwukt@gmail.com & eerwukt@ymail.com
Letter No. 2569

e-Procurement Notice

Date: 24.09.2021

1. Name of the work	-: Road Works
2. Total No. works	-: 16 (Sixteen) Nos.
3. Approx. Estimated Cost	-: Varies from 0.93 Lakhs to 13.27 Lakhs.
4. Class of Contractor	-: "A", "B", "C" & "D" Class of Contractor
5. Period of Completion	-: As per TCN

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender online for bidding	Last Date & Time of Seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender	
1	2	From 3 To 4	5	6	
Executive Engineer, R.W. Division-II, Nabarangpur, Umerkote	Online Tender/06/ RWD-UKT/ 2021-22	28.09.2021 at 11.00 AM	07.10.2021 up to 5.00 PM	05.10.2021 at 01.00 PM	08.10.2021 at 11.00 AM

Further details can be seen from the Government website: www.tendersodisha.gov.in
OIPR-25103/11/0006/2122
Sd./- Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division-II, Nabarangpur, Umerkote

Vyasanagar: Dug-up roads invite mishaps

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jaipur, Sept 27: Commuters in this district are facing numerous problems as most of the roads in the district are in a dilapidated condition, especially the roads from Dhabalgiri to Chordda Square, Jaipur Road railway station to Dak Bungalow Square and Dala in Vyasanagar town of the district.

What has added to their woes is the whimsical pipe-laying work of Bharat

Gas Resource Limited.

Already damaged by the heavy vehicles plying to and from Kalinganagar industrial area, the roads have now been dug up at many places for the BGRL's pipe-laying work. As a result, accidents are occurring on these roads every day.

To reach Vyasanagar town, there are two roads. One is the Dhabalgiri Square-Mundomal Road, while the alternative route is via Chordda Main Road. This road has been dug up at many places

to lay pipes and the company, instead of filling them up after completing the work, has left them open. At places, crusher dust is being used to fill up the potholes and pits, making the situation worse. At the same time, since the pits don't have signage to warn people, accidents are common.

Few days ago, a motorcyclist was injured after falling into a pit on the stretch from Indira Gandhi College to Chhotraypur. Following the incident, infuriated villagers of Chhotraypur

had a heated argument with the BGRL company officials. Before starting the pipe laying work, the company had entered into an agreement with the Works department agreeing to repair the road after the completion of its work.

“Instead of repairing the roads, the company is getting its work done by filling up the potholes and pits with earth and crusher dust. They have done more harm than good,” apprehended some locals.

Successive govts plied ‘encroachers’ with facilities

THE DISPLACED PEOPLE OF DHALPUR I, II AND III VILLAGES ARE BAFFLED AT THE STATE’S RETRIBUTION AFTER THE GOVERNMENT HAD ‘LEGITIMISED’ THEIR SETTLEMENTS BY IMPLEMENTING SEVERAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS OVER DECADES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhalpur (Assam), Sept 27: Successive governments in Assam, including the one headed by BJP’s Sarbananda Sonowal, plied the villages in Sipajhar area of Darrang district, the scene of a bloody anti-encroachment drive against ‘illegal settlers’ last week, with facilities like electricity connection, fair price shops, banks and schools, before the proverbial long arm of the law came down hard on them.

The displaced people of Dhalpur I, II and III villages are baffled at the state’s retribution after the government had ‘legitimised’ their settlements by implementing several development projects over decades. During a visit to the three affected villages at a ‘char’ (sandbar of the Brahmaputra), a PTI correspondent saw scores of facilities created by the government, including toilets built under the Centre’s ‘Swachh Bharat Mission’. There are five Aadhaar centres on the river island to provide the unique identity cards with a permanent address to people now branded as ‘encroachers’.

The Darrang district administration, however, claimed these structures were set up by ‘earlier governments’ and will be shifted ‘as per rules’. According to different accounts, around 1,200-1,400 houses were razed to the ground on two different days last week, leaving over 7,000 people homeless. The eviction drive, conducted amid stiff resistance by the local people, also left two dead in police firing



A man carries his belongings on his head after his house was demolished during an eviction drive at Gorukhuti in Darrang district, Assam, September 24.

PTI FILE PHOTO

September 23, including a 12-year-old boy who had got his first identity proof, an Aadhaar card, just before he was shot dead. Over 20 people were injured, including policemen.

“After 1983, the government started recognising us as erosion-affected people, who were displaced from different flood-prone lower Assam districts. In the subsequent years, they gave us electricity connections,” said Safer Ali, whose house at Dhalpur-III was demolished September 23. Gradually, schools, health centres, Anganwadi centres, fair price shops, a post office and sub-branches of several banks came up in the ‘char’, he told PTI while showing around the villages.

Around 10 per cent of the houses here were constructed under PMGAY. Almost all the households have solar panels, which were given by the previous governments, including the previous BJP government. If we are illegal here, then why did they give us such facilities?

FAIZUR RAHMAN

“The government also constructed several houses under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana (PMGAY), previously known as Indira Awas Yojana. They gave us solar panels and built septic toilets

at our homes, all under the last BJP government,” Ali said. Several such toilets constructed under the ‘Swachh Bharat Mission’ by PSU oil firm Numaligarh Refinery under its CSR activities are still there, unaffected by the eviction drive. “We were provided with solar panels by the government as power supply is erratic here. If we are encroachers, why did the authority give us all the support to improve our living standard here in Dhalpur?” asked Ali indignantly.

Some of the state-supported facilities are Majarkhanda Anganwadi Kendra run by Social Welfare Department, Pub Dhalpur Lower Primary School, No 3 Dhalpur Pub Chuba LP School,

No 1 Dhalpur LP School, a fair price shop at Dhalpur-III, Dhalpur post office and many sub-health centres. The biggest of the government establishments is the Dhalpur Bhetibazar Char Primary Health Centre, which has multiple concrete houses spread across more than 1,000 square metres.

“In the entire Dhalpur area, which is marked for eviction, we have a huge number of government facilities including three health centres, 38 lower primary schools, two ME schools, 42 Anganwadi centres and 13 fair price shops,” said Faizur Rahman of Dhalpur-I. Dhalpur also has four sub-branches of various banks like SBI, Central Bank, HDFC and Assam Gramin Vikas Bank and around 10 Common Services Centres (CSC) to promote e-governance, he claimed.

“Around 10 per cent of the houses here were constructed under PMGAY. Almost all the households have solar panels, which were given by the previous governments, including the previous BJP government. If we are illegal here, then why did they give us such facilities?” asked Rahman.

When contacted, Darrang Deputy Commissioner Prabhati Thaosen said the government will study and look at how so many state-sponsored facilities came up in Dhalpur. “All that was done earlier. As per government policy, what is to be done with these schools and government institutions will be done according to the rules. These will be shifted as per rules,” she added.

GI tag for Assam’s Judima rice wine



LOCAL FLAVOUR

Judima wine is an essential tradition in the life and culture of the Dimasa tribals, who mainly inhabit Dimapur in Nagaland besides Cachar, Karbi Anglong, and Dima Hasao districts of Assam

The wine has a distinct sweet flavour and takes around one week to prepare while it can be stored for years

Various other tribes in the northeast region traditionally make various types of wine and country liquor and consumed these among themselves

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Guwahati, Sept 27: The traditional Judima wine of the Dimasa tribals of Assam and Nagaland has become the first beverage from northeast India to be awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.

An official of the Assam Agricultural University (AAU) said that the Dimasa tribals prepare the wine from sticky rice and certain herbs. The AAU researched its historical background, utility, and scientific aspects, in close coordination with the Youth Association for Development & Empowerment of Assam’s Dima Hasao district.

A group of AAU scientists including Kishore Kumar Sharma, Gargi Sharma and S. Maibongsa and Gauhati University Professor Uttam Baithari jointly worked on the documentation and other processing of Judima wine to obtain the GI tag. AAU’s Director, Research-Agriculture, Ashok Bhattacharyya said that the GI Registry had shared information last week regarding Judima being granted the official

brand mark. Various organisations, including the YADEM, had long been urging the AAU to take necessary steps to promote the traditional Judima wine and obtain the GI tag for it. Judima wine is an essential tradition in the life and culture of the Dimasa tribals, who mainly inhabit Dimapur in Nagaland besides Cachar, Karbi Anglong, and Dima Hasao districts of Assam. The wine has a distinct sweet flavour and takes around one week to prepare while it can be stored for years. Various other tribes in the northeast region traditionally make various types of wine and country liquor and consumed these among themselves.

Many fruits, horticultural and agricultural products of the northeastern states have already got the GI tags for their speciality but it is for the first time, that a wine has received this marking. Last week, Manipur’s Tamenglong orange and Hathei chilli, grown in the hill districts of Tamenglong and Ukhrul, respectively, and Mizoram’s ginger were accorded the GI tag.

HC sets aside Kerala order banning online rummy

GAMING COMPANIES OPINED THAT BANNING ONLINE PLAYING OF RUMMY WAS ARBITRARY WHEN THE PHYSICAL FORMAT OF THE CARD GAME WAS PERMITTED

AGENCIES

Kochi, Sept 27: The state government’s decision to ban online rummy was Monday set aside by the Kerala High Court which said the game would not amount to gambling, as claimed by the LDF government. This comes on the heels of the Madras High Court judgement that struck down the Tamil Nadu government’s blanket ban on online skill games.

Justice TR Ravi set aside the Kerala government’s decision, saying it was arbitrary and unconstitutional. The order came on the petitions by several online gaming companies against the state government’s notification banning online rummy.

In February, 2021, the Kerala Government through a notification issued under the Kerala



Gaming Act prohibited online rummy. A petition was filed by several gaming companies, challenging this amendment.

The state government was of the view that online rummy played for stakes amounts to gambling and thus, was prohibited. The gaming companies opined that banning online playing of rummy was arbitrary when the physical format of the card game was permitted.

The two consecutive High Court judgements further put the Karnataka Bill under a huge amount of scrutiny. The Karnataka Bill banning online games of skill had evoked a wide range of opposition from several industry and trade bodies. The powerful trade organization CAIT said that the bill threatens the thriving Indian gaming start-up sector and will end up

encouraging illegal offshore gambling and betting apps which operate in the online grey market.

IAMAI, the leading internet industry body, said that the bill may hurt Karnataka’s position as the country’s start-up hub and lead to job and revenue losses. The Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS) said the Bill appears to be misguided since it penalises legitimate businesses by treating them at par with illegal online gambling, betting, and wagering platforms. The All-India Gaming Federation (AIGF) said that the bill is highly regressive and will be a huge setback to Karnataka’s reputation as a start-up and tech hub.

The bill was sharply criticised in the Karnataka Legislative Council where members said the Bill does not distinguish between

games of skill and games of chance. Former IT Minister of Karnataka, Priyank Kharge, tweeted that the Bill has not been thought out by the government and that the state hasn’t bothered looking at the recent judgement which struck down TN Govt’s Police & Gaming Amendment, which is on the same line.

The Bill has also evoked sharp condemnation from the gaming and esports community in India and Karnataka who have said that the bill will greatly affect the budding gaming community of the country.

The online gaming industry in India has grown over the past few years. Foreign investors have shown growing interest in backing Indian gaming startups since last year as the COVID-19 pandemic drove people stuck indoors towards such games. India currently has more than 400 online gaming startups and, as of 2020, had around 360 million gamers, according to an EY-AIGF report. Online gamers are expected to grow to 510 million by 2022 and the industry will be worth \$2 billion by 2023, the report said.

The Dream11 and MPL platforms, offering paid contests with cash prize for players, have expanded rapidly in recent months with extensive marketing and hires. Dream11 is seeking a U.S. listing by early next year, local media has said.

‘Kerala back to old normal’

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 27: Kerala is back to the ‘old normal’ at a time when the whole world is moving towards a ‘new normal’, as another hartal day was celebrated in the state, said technocrat G. Vijaya Raghavan here Monday.

The Bharat Bandh observed in Kerala was near total as barring private vehicles, no public transport was in operation and shops, establishments, markets were all closed and that too it’s on a day when the World Tourism Day is being celebrated.

Raghavan is the first CEO of the now fledgling Technopark – the IT headquarters of the state, located in the state capital city and served as a member in the Kerala State Planning Board, besides being one of the most sought after personality, every time a new IT company set its sights to set shop in the state.

Known for his cryptic comments, Raghavan visibly upset on the total shutdown in the state, said he is not questioning the cause for which the hartal has been called or discussing the merits or demerits of the agitation.

“One thing that we will all notice is that across the country it is called a ‘bandh’ in Kerala it is ‘hartal’. Across the country except for certain small pockets life is normal while in Kerala life is disrupted, in most places in Kerala people were



The Bandh observed in Kerala was near total as barring private vehicles, no transport was in operation and shops remained shut

forced to close their shops and establishments. Government-run KSRTC stopped working, all exams were postponed,” said Raghavan.

“When I checked with people around the country I was told that farmers are protesting but that has not affected other businesses or factories from functioning and except in areas where there are protest marches etc life is normal. In fact that is the case even in Punjab and Haryana,” pointed out the technocrat.

He further said that the com-

mon people are the worst affected as they have no means to protect themselves and are forced to stay away from work and they get no wage and a day’s income is lost.

“It is high time we change our methods of protest. A protest is successful and makes an impact only when it affects the person or group of persons against whom the protest is targeted at. What is happening in Kerala is we are proving to the world that, come what may, we will continue with our dated forms of protest without realising the damage that this is being inflicted to the state and the impact it will have on the biggest mission of the state to create new jobs,” he said.

“One thing is sure Kerala is back to the ‘old normal’ while the whole world is moving towards a ‘new normal’,” added Raghavan.

Bandh fails to evoke response in Assam

AGENCIES

Guwahati, Sept 27: Assam remained unaffected by the Bharat Bandh Monday as public transport operated as usual, markets were open and offices registered usual attendance.

The opposition Congress, which supported the bandh, did not organise any protest programme in the state.

In Guwahati, members of the SUCI (Communist) took out a protest rally in the morning, raising slogans against the three farm laws. They were detained by the police near the Ulubari point.

There were no reports of any other protest or demonstration from across the state. Congress state president Bhupen Bora urged the people to come out on the streets in support of the bandh, but party workers were missing.

Congress spokesperson Bobbeeta Sharma said the party had ap-

pealed to the people to spontaneously support the Bandh.

“People should realise themselves how the government is ignoring core issues. The appeal of our state president was to the people to come out on their own to support the farmers’ cause,” she said.

The Rajior Dal and Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti (KMSS) also extended their support to the bandh.

The 10-hour bandh was called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, demanding repeal of the three farm laws.

Farmer groups have alleged that these laws will end the ‘mandi’ and the MSP procurement systems and leave the farmers at the mercy of big corporates, even as the government has rejected these apprehensions as misplaced and asserted that these steps will help increase farmers’ income.

Activist’s ‘organic theatre’ to promote natural farming

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Thiruvananthapuram, Sept 27: A theatre activist and former producer of a popular Malayalam TV channel is promoting a concept of organic farming and the rich culture associated with it through theatre, zeroing in on a supernatural being named ‘Kadampan Moothan’ spoken about in rural areas and inspiring farmers.

Sudheer has named his mission ‘organic theatre’. Talking to IANS on how he launched such a project, Sudheer said: “We are eating food but never bother to produce what we eat and then complain that the food we eat is laced with pesticides. Nothing productive will come out of this and I wanted to change this and promote the concept of organic farming among the people, especially the youngsters, and formed Wide Inspiration, Wide Aspiration (WIWA).”

He said that the idea of Organic Theatre is brushing up tradition and folk culture that has been part of the culture of Kerala but has been forgotten for years. While re-



searching on indigenous and organic farming practiced by several communities, he got to know about ‘Kadampan Moothan’, who, according to villagers and farmers, was a supernatural entity whose role was to protect the farmers, inspire them in times of hardships and reversal, and also to give encouragement and persistence to

farmers from being burnt out due to despair.

This inspired Sudheer who created a character, of the same name, who travels from village to village to promote organic farming with his beautiful song and makes farmers aware of their talents and their willpower.

“Kadampan Moothan renders

songs on the never say die attitude of the farmer who does everything to commence farming on a land that was immersed in floods. He also sings about the hard work being put up in growing a crop and on the determination of a farmer,” he said.

To popularise Organic Theatre, ‘Kadampan Moothan’ is dressed in an interesting costume of natural

products, mask, and headgear made of straw, and has now become the mascot. Sudheer knocked several doors to promote organic farming using Organic Theatre but disappointment was the result initially. Since 2013, he has been relentlessly trying for this project and in 2014, received the support of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). He, along with a team of his WIWA, took 2 acres of land at Vellarada, on the Kerala-Tamil Nadu border, and inspired people to take up organic farming and promote the culture associated with the farming.

Organic Theatre and farming are now synonymous with Sudheer and he is now travelling to various areas of the state to take classes on the rich culture associated with the place where they live and how organic farming is to be done.

“Kadampan Moothan” has become popular among the people of the state, thanks to the hard work and drive of Sudheer whose main idea is folklore and culture of the area and how the cultivation of crops is being inspired by this.

of the day quote

Considering farmers' demands will not be like bowing down in front of anyone as farmers are also people of our country

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

The solution to the ongoing protests against the three agri laws of the Centre can be achieved only through dialogue and not in the courts of law

RAKESH KAITAK | FARMER LEADER

We will get permission to start charter flights in a few days. We have sought permission

PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Gujarat gets first female Speaker

Gandhinagar: Monday saw the first woman Speaker of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly, Dr Nimaben Acharya who will preside over the two-day Monsoon session which began Monday. She was escorted to her chair by Gujarat chief minister Bhupendra Patel, former speaker Rajendra Patel and Leader of Opposition Paresh Dhanani.

Two gangraped in cyber cafe

Kannauj (UP): Two girls were allegedly held hostage and gang raped in a cyber cafe in this district when they had gone to get some documents photocopied, police said Monday. Four men took hostage of the two girl students at the cafe September 13. The accused also extorted Rs 10,000 from the girls, threatening to circulate the video.

12 stranded in HP's Spiti Valley

Shimla: Twelve people, comprising trekkers belonging to West Bengal and porters have been stranded in Himachal Pradesh's remote Spiti Valley, officials said Monday. Two trekkers died due to high-altitude sickness. They were heading to Khemengar Glacier. As per the information received by the local administration from two trekkers, who reached Kaza Monday some 320 km from the state capital on foot, a group of 12 people are awaiting evacuation.

Gulab: Heavy crop damages reported

Amaravati: Cyclone 'Gulab', which crossed the Bay of Bengal coast near Kalingapatnam Sunday night, caused widespread rains in several districts of Andhra Pradesh Monday and also left a trail of destruction. Agricultural and horticultural crops in over 1.63 lakh acres suffered damaged due to the heavy downpour in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari and Krishna districts, Agriculture Minister K Kanna Babu said.

Building collapses

Bangalore: A three-storey building rented out to 'Namma Metro' construction workers near the city's Lakkasandra area, collapsed Monday, police sources said. No one was inside when the building came down, and no casualties have been reported, they said.

Militant killed

Srinagar: A militant was killed and three soldiers were injured as the Army foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district, officials said Monday.



Vaccination is key for the revival of the tourism sector and India has already vaccinated more than 85 crore people

G KISHAN REDDY | UNION TOURISM MINISTER

EX-GOIA CM LUIZINHO FALEIRO RESIGNS FROM CONGRESS

Former Chief Minister of Goa and Congress veteran Luizinho Faleiro, resigned as an MLA and a primary member of the party Monday claiming the state party unit is run by a "coterie" of leaders even as he praised Mamata Banerjee saying the country needs a leader like her to take on Prime Minister Narendra Modi



Farmers stage nationwide stir

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: Several trains were cancelled, highways and key roads blocked and many thousands stranded for hours Monday as a nationwide 10-hour shutdown against the Centre's three agri laws disrupted lives across parts of India, particularly in the north.

The impact of the 6 am to 4 pm Bharat Bandh, which saw demonstrations in many places, passed off relatively peacefully with no reports of injuries or serious clashes. It was felt the most around Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, the centre of the farm protests, and also in large pockets of Kerala, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Odisha.

Protesters blocked highways and arterial roads and squatted on tracks in several places from morning as the shutdown called by the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of 40 farmer unions got underway.

The blockade was lifted at 4 pm. The day marks one year since President Ram Nath Kovind gave his assent to the three controversial laws and 10 months since thousands of farmers set up camp at Delhi's border points to voice their protest.

Though large parts of India were untouched by the shutdown, north India felt the pinch with about 25 trains being affected and massive jams that prevented the cross border movement of commuters as well as trucks carrying essentials.

The Delhi-NCR region, including the satellite towns of Gurgaon, Ghaziabad and Noida, where thousands cross the borders each day was particularly hit.

Farmers blocked other roads



A farmer during Bandh at Ghazipur border in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

TEN-HOUR MOVEMENT

A farmer, who was protesting at the Singhu border died due to cardiac arrest	The farmers had exempted emergency services, all essential services, medical emergency and rescue and relief work including personal emergency from the bandh	Hundreds of people had to spend restless hours in their stranded vehicles as chaos reigned on the busiest roads
	The Samyukta Kisan Morcha had assured that the bandh will be enforced in a voluntary and peaceful manner	

leading into the national capital, including at Ghazipur in western Uttar Pradesh Not far away in Sonipat in Haryana, some farmers squatted on tracks. In nearby Patiala in Punjab, too, members of the BKU-Ugrahan sat on the tracks to register their protest. Punjab saw a complete shutdown in many places, including Moga, where farmers blocked national highways. Farmer leaders from Punjab have, in many ways, spear-headed the year-long protest.

In neighbouring Haryana, highways in Sirsa, Fatehabad and

Kurukshetra were blocked. Many non-NDA parties extended support to the bandh. These included the Congress, Aam Aadmi Party, Samajwadi Party, Telugu Desam Party, Bahujan Samaj Party, Left parties and Swaraj India. The YSR Congress government in Andhra Pradesh had also announced support to the Bharat Bandh. In West Bengal, life was largely unaffected but Left activists blocked roads and railway tracks in many places.

RJD and CPI members blocked railway lines in Patna, Ara, Jahanabad and Madhepura in



ONE YEAR OF FARM LAWS

The three laws -- The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020 -- were passed by Parliament in September last year. Farmer groups have alleged the laws will end the 'mandi' and the MSP procurement systems and leave farmers at the mercy of big corporates. The government has rejected these apprehensions as misplaced and asserted that these steps will help increase farmers' income.

Bihar and several roads were closed too but markets were mostly open and offices registered usual attendance. Most private schools in the state were, however, shut.

In Kerala, where the strike was supported by the ruling LDF and the opposition Congress-led UDF KSRITC bus services were off the road with almost all trade unions in the state taking part. People who had to travel opted for private modes of transport while others stayed home.

The shutdown did not have any major impact in the initial few hours in Karnataka with all busi-

ness and establishments functioning normally and transport services available. However, attempts to organise a 'Rasta Roko' at national and state highways led to disruption of vehicular movement in some places, especially in Bangalore. The government and farmer unions have held 11 rounds of talks so far, the last being January 22, to break the deadlock and end the farmers' protest.

Talks have not resumed following widespread violence during a tractor rally by protesting farmers January 26.

China installs new shelters for troops

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: China has put in place new modular container-based accommodations for its troops in several high-altitude forward areas on its side of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh in response to Indian deployment in the region, people familiar with the developments said Monday.

The people cited above said China's People Liberation Army has been feeling the heat of the Indian response to its "misadventure" in the region last year and that the Chinese military has been forced to go for long deployments and boost infrastructure in the region. They said the Indian response to the Chinese actions last year, particularly after the Galwan Valley clashes, surprised the neighbouring country and that it deployed troops in areas where it never used to earlier. "Our strategy is hurting them. They are reacting to our response. We have forced PLA to go for forward deployment and boost infrastructure," said one of the people.

They said the new deployments are appearing to be affecting the morale of the Chinese troops as they were not used to operate in such difficult terrain.

PROVOKING NATURE

The shelters were installed in locations near Tashigong, Manza, Hot Springs and Churup

The new container-based accommodations were built in addition to the additional military camps that the Chinese military had set up last year

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the LAC in the sensitive sector

The people said India is also ramping up construction of tunnels, bridges roads and other critical infrastructure in eastern Ladakh and other areas along the nearly 3,500-km LAC.

They said China is also significantly enhancing its airbases and air defence units near the LAC in eastern Ladakh.

The border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted May 5 last year following a violent clash in the Pangong lake area and both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 27: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Monday said that digital infrastructure was taking everything from 'Ration to Prashasan' (ration to administration) to the common Indian in a fast and transparent manner.

Prime Minister Modi was speaking after launching the 'Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission' through a video conference. Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that the campaign for strengthening the health facilities, that have been going for the last seven years, is now entering a new phase.

"Today we are launching a mission that has the potential of bringing a revolutionary change in India's health facilities," Modi said. The Prime Minister underlined that with 130 crore Aadhaar numbers, 118 crore mobile subscribers, about 80 crore Internet users and about 43 crore Jan Dhan bank accounts, there is no such big connected infrastructure anywhere in the world.

"This digital infrastructure is bringing everything from ration to administration (Ration to Prashasan) to the common Indian in a fast and transparent manner.



Under this, a unique digital health ID will be provided to the people, which will contain all the health records of the person

The way technology is being deployed in governance reforms today is unprecedented," the Prime Minister said.

The Prime Minister pointed out that the 'Arogya Setu' app helped a lot in preventing the spread of corona infection. He lauded Co-WIN for its role in making India achieve a record administration of about 90 crore vaccine doses today, under the free vaccine campaign.

Continuing with the theme of the use of technology in health, the Prime Minister said that there

has also been an unprecedented expansion of telemedicine during the Covid pandemic period. So far about 125 crore remote consultations have been completed through e-Sanjeevani.

"This facility is connecting thousands of countrymen living in far-flung parts of the country every day with doctors of big hospitals of cities while sitting at home," he said.

The Prime Minister remarked that Ayushman Bharat-PMJAY has addressed a key headache in the lives of the poor and so far more than two crore countrymen have availed the facility of free treatment under this scheme, half of which are women.

The Prime Minister emphasized that diseases are one of the key reasons to push families into the vicious cycle of poverty and women of the families are the worst sufferers as they always relegate their health issues to the background.

DILIP GHOSH HECKLED BY TMC SUPPORTERS, EC SEEKS REPORT

AGENCIES

Kolkata, Sept 27 : BJP national vice-president Dilip Ghosh was Monday pushed and heckled by alleged TMC supporters, prompting his security officer to whip out a pistol in Bhabanipur assembly constituency, where West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee is in the fray, as political temperature rose on the last day of electioneering.

Ghosh demanded deferment of the September 30 by-poll till the situation has normalised, while the Election Commission sought a report from the state government on the incident. BJP MP Arjun Singh faced "go back" slogans by ruling TMC workers while campaigning for party candidate Priyanka Tibrewal. National TV channels showed Ghosh being pushed and heckled on a road as a

BHABANIPUR BYPOLL

posse of security guards tried to shield him. A suspected TMC supporter could be seen grabbing a securityman by the collar who swiftly pulled out a pistol to scare away the crowd. The incident occurred when Ghosh had gone inside a vaccination camp in Jodubabur Bazaar area in the constituency, where by-poll will be held September 30.

TMC supporters present at the spot shouted slogans demanding that he leave, alleging that he was campaigning at a state-run vaccination programme which was not permitted.

SC grants 4 months to TN election panel for local body polls

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The Supreme Court Monday granted four more months to the Tamil Nadu State Election Commission's (TNSEC) for concluding the poll process for the urban local bodies elections in the state.

The top court, June 22, had granted an opportunity to the TNSEC to conduct by September 15 this year the local body polls in nine new districts carved out of four existing ones in Tamil Nadu and had warned it of contempt action in case of non-compliance. "Even if the reasons are very silly, we want to give some more time," the bench said and asked senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the state poll panel, as to how much time he wanted for the TNSEC. Please grant time till April end of next year, Rohatgi said. "Four months time," the CJJ said, which was accepted by the state poll panel. During a brief hearing, the bench expressed surprise over the consent of the PIL petitioner S Shankar, who had earlier filed the plea for holding of the local body elections, in the grant of extra time to the poll panel.

Earlier, the bench had taken strong note of TNSEC plea seeking 6 to 7 months more for concluding processes related to local bodies elections, saying the government can go for all elections except the local bodies.

Today's kids will face more climate disasters: Study

TODAY'S CHILDREN ARE SET TO SUFFER MORE CLIMATE DISASTERS IN THEIR LIFETIME AS COMPARED TO THEIR GRANDPARENTS, ACCORDING TO A NEW RESEARCH

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 27: During his or her lifetime, a child born in 2021 will experience on an average twice as many wildfires, between two and three times more droughts, almost three times more river floods and crop failures, and seven times more heatwaves compared to a person who's for instance 60 years old today, researchers have said.

This will be the situation worldwide climatically under the current greenhouse gas emission reduction pledges by governments across the world, a topic for negotiation at the upcoming world climate summit COP26 at Glasgow in the UK. World leaders will be discussing mitigation and adaptation measures to be taken to keep the global temperature rise to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to the pre-industrial era.

Based on data from the Inter-sectoral Impact Model Intercomparison Project (ISIMIP), researchers have shown in the journal 'Science' how today's children will be hit much harder by climate extremes than today's adults. The study 'Intergenerational inequities in exposure to climate extremes' was published on Sunday, according to a release by Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK), Germany. "Our results highlight a severe



Representational image

threat to the safety of young generations and call for drastic emission reductions to safeguard their future," said lead author Wim Thiery from Vrije Universiteit Brussel. "We even have strong rea-

sons to think that our calculations underestimate the actual increases that young people will face."

Regarding droughts, heatwaves, river floods and crop failures, people under the age of 40 today will

live what the researchers call "an unprecedented life".

"The good news: we can indeed take much of the climate burden from our children's shoulders if we limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius by phasing out fossil fuel use," says Katja Frieler who is co-ordinating ISIMIP. She's a leading scientist at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and co-author of the study.

"If we increase climate protection from current emission reduction pledges and get in line with a 1.5-degree target, we will reduce young people's potential exposure to extreme events on average by 24 per cent globally. For North America it's minus 26 per cent, for Europe and Central Asia minus 28 per cent, and in the Middle East and North Africa even minus 39 per cent. This is a huge opportunity."

For instance, under a scenario of current insufficient climate

policies, dangerous heatwaves that affect 15 per cent of global land area today could increase to 46 per cent, hence triple by the end of the century. Yet limiting warming to 1.5 degrees, which is the ambition of the Paris Climate Agreement signed by almost all countries worldwide, would reduce the affected land area to 22 per cent. "This is more than today but significantly less than with unmitigated warming," she said.

The analysis is the first of its kind. To assess age-dependent extreme event exposure, the researchers took a collection of multi-model climate impact projections from the ISIMIP project building on the work of dozens of research groups worldwide. The researchers combined this with country-scale life-expectancy data, population data and temperature trajectories from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the release added.

international

of the day quote

The current dispute in the country is not between the military and civilians, but it is between those who support democratic civil transformation and those who seek to block it

ABDALLA HAMDOK | SUDANESE PM

Impossible for us to recognise Taliban

LUIGI DI MAIO | ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

Thank Minister of Finance and Public Credit @R_Ramirez_O for receiving me. Discussed Mexico's response to the Covid challenge

S JAISHANKAR | MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS OF INDIA

SHORT TAKES

44 killed

Sanaa: At least 44 people were killed as heavy fighting continued between Yemeni security forces and the Houthi militia in the oil-rich province of Marib amid intensified airstrikes, a military official said. "Twenty-eight members of the Houthi rebel group and 16 soldiers of the pro-government Yemeni forces were killed during the past 24 hours in Marib's fighting," the official told Xinhua news agency Sunday. The Houthi fighters carried out simultaneous attacks against several positions controlled by the pro-government forces in the southern and northwestern areas of Marib, he said.

Quake jolts Manila

Manila: An earthquake measuring 5.7 on the Richter scale jolted Manila Monday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said. The institute said the quake, which struck at 1.12 a.m. local time, hit at a depth of 74 km, about 23 km northeast of Looc town, reports Xinhua news agency. It said the quake, which was tectonic in origin, can trigger aftershocks and cause damage.

1 dead, 20 injured

Athens: An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of at least 5.8 struck the Greek island of Crete Monday, killing one person and injuring 20 others, while damaging homes and churches and causing rock slides near the country's fourth-largest city. The quake sent people fleeing into the streets in the city of Heraklion, and schools were evacuated. Repeated aftershocks — described by witnesses as feeling like small explosions — rattled the area, adding to damage in villages near the epicenter. "The earthquake was strong and was long in duration," Heraklion mayor Vassilis Lambrinos told private Antenna television.

China defends visa curbs

Beijing: China Monday defended its visa curbs which have prevented thousands of stranded Indians from returning to Beijing, saying they are "appropriate" to control the spread of COVID-19 and do not target India alone, but are applied to even Chinese citizens coming back from overseas. Responding to questions on Indian ambassador to Beijing Vikram Misri's criticism of China's prolonged stringent travel restrictions, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying also ruled out the easing of the curbs in the near future.



Nuclear weapons must be eliminated from the world and a new era of dialogue, trust and peace must begin

ANTONIO GUTERRES | UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL

Instagram pauses the development of Instagram kids, geared towards children under 13, so it can address concerns about access and content



Germany embarks on tricky search



Front from left, Franziska Giffey, top candidate of the SPD for Mayor of the German city of Berlin, Olaf Scholz, top candidate for chancellor of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), and Manuela Schwesig, member of the SPD and governor of the German state of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, pose with flowers at the party's head-quarter in Berlin, Germany, Monday. The center-left Social Democrats have won the biggest share of the vote in Germany's national election. They narrowly beat outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel's center-right Union bloc in a closely fought race that will determine who succeeds the long-time leader at the helm of Europe's biggest economy

AP/PTI PHOTO

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Berlin, Sept 27: Germany is embarking on a potentially lengthy search for its next government after the center-left Social Democrats narrowly beat outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel's center-right bloc in an election that failed to set a clear direction for Europe's biggest economy under a new leader. Leaders of the parties in the newly elected parliament were meeting Monday to digest a result that saw Merkel's Union bloc slump to its worst-ever result in a national election, and appeared to

put the keys to power in the hands of two opposition parties. Both Social Democrat Olaf Scholz, who pulled his party out of a years-long slump, and Armin Laschet, the candidate of Merkel's party who saw his party's fortunes decline in a troubled campaign, laid a claim to leading the next government. Scholz is the outgoing vice chancellor and finance minister and Laschet is the governor of Germany's most populous state, North Rhine-Westphalia. Whichever of them becomes chancellor will do so with his party having won a smaller share of the vote than any of his predecessors.

UK mulls army help to ease fuel shortage

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 27: Lines of cars formed at British gas stations for a fourth day on Monday, as the government mulled sending in the army to help ease the supply disruptions, triggered by a shortage of truck drivers. As unions called for emergency workers to be given priority for fuel supplies, Petrol Retailers Association chairman Brian Madderson said training had been taking place "in the background" for military personnel to drive tankers. The government said it had "no plans at the moment" to deploy troops, but was making preparations just in case. Government ministers were meeting Monday to discuss the fuel squeeze. The Petrol Retailers Association, which represents almost 5,500 independent outlets, said Sunday that about two-thirds of its members had run out of fuel, as the truck driver shortage set off rounds of gas panic-buying. Long lines of vehicles have formed at many gas stations around Britain since Friday, causing spillover traffic jams on busy roads. Tempers have frayed as some drivers waited for hours. The Conservative government insisted the UK had "ample fuel stocks", and blamed the problems on consumer behaviour. "The only reason we don't have petrol on the

forecourts is that people are buying petrol they don't need," said Environment Secretary George Eustice. Critics urged the government to solve the fuel shortage problem quickly so it does not have damaging spillover effects on health care, police operations and other crucial sectors. Dr Chaand Nagpaul at the British Medical Association said health care workers and other essential services staff should be "given priority access to fuel so they can continue their crucial work and guarantee care to patients". Christina McAnea, general secretary of the Union trade union, said the government should use its emergency powers to designate gas stations for emergency workers only. "Ambulance crews, nurses, care workers, teaching assistants, the police staff and other key workers mustn't be left stranded or forced to queue for hours simply to get to a pump," she said. The haulage industry says the UK is short as many as 100,000 truckers, due to a perfect storm of factors including the coronavirus pandemic, an aging workforce and an exodus of foreign workers following Britain's departure from the European Union last year. Post-Brexit immigration rules mean EU citizens can no longer live and work visa-free in Britain, as they could when the UK was a member of the bloc.

Closely fought race

Both Social Democrat Olaf Scholz, who pulled his party out of a years-long slump, and Armin Laschet, the candidate of Merkel's party who saw his party's fortunes decline in a troubled campaign, laid a claim to leading the next government. Neither Scholz nor a weakened Laschet has much leverage. The only other option that would have a parliamentary majority is a repeat of the "grand coalition" of the Union and Social Democrats. That is the grouping that has run Germany for 12 years of Merkel's 16-year tenure and has often been marred by squabbling, but this time it would be under Scholz's leadership with Merkel's bloc as junior partner. There is little appetite for that, however. Merkel's outgoing government will remain in office until a successor is sworn in, a process that can take weeks or months. Merkel announced in 2018 that she wouldn't seek a fifth term.

Who gets the job looks likely to depend on whom the environmentalist Greens and the business-friendly Free Democrats — parties that traditionally belong to rival ideological camps — decide to join in government. Neither Scholz nor a weakened Laschet has much leverage. The only other option that would have a parliamentary majority is a repeat of the "grand coalition" of the Union and Social Democrats. That is the grouping that has run Germany for 12 years of Merkel's 16-year tenure and has often been marred by squabbling, but this time it would be under Scholz's leadership with Merkel's bloc as junior partner. There is little appetite for that, however. Merkel's outgoing government will remain in office until a successor is sworn in, a process that can take weeks or months. Merkel announced in 2018 that she wouldn't seek a fifth term.

Afghanistan, Myanmar will not address UNGA

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, Sept 27: Afghanistan and Myanmar "withdrew" their participation from the General Debate of the high-level 76th session of the UN General Assembly, a spokesperson for the President of the 193-member world body said. According to the latest list of speakers for the last day of the General Debate on Monday, Afghanistan and Myanmar are not listed to address the session, even as previous provisional speakers' lists had the countries' diplomats listed to speak at the General Debate. When asked why Afghanistan and Myanmar are not listed as speakers for the final day of the General Debate, Monica Grayley, Spokesperson to the President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly Abdulla Shahid, confirmed that "we have received information that the Member State withdrew its participation in the General Debate which was scheduled for today". Grayley said Myanmar withdrew its participation "some time back and Afghanistan over the weekend, when we heard of it." On Friday, spokesperson for the Secretary-General, Stephane Dujarric had said that "as for now, the Afghanistan representative inscribed on the list for Monday is H.E. Mr. Ghulam M. Isaczai," the Permanent Representative.

POWER CRUNCH



Steam billows out of the cooling towers at a coal-fired power station in Nanjing in east China's Jiangsu province Monday. Global shoppers face possible shortages of smartphones and other goods ahead of Christmas after power cuts to meet government energy use targets forced Chinese factories to shut down and left some households in the dark

AP/PTI PHOTO

Jinnah's statue destroyed in blast



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karachi, Sept 27: A statue of Pakistan's founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah has been destroyed in a bomb attack by the Baloch militants disguised as tourists in the coastal city of Gwadar in the troubled Balochistan province. The statue, which was installed in June at Marine Drive - considered a safe zone - was blown up by explosives placed beneath the statue on Sunday morning, Dawn newspaper reported on Monday. The statue was completely destroyed in the blast, it added. Babgar Baloch, a spokesman for the banned militant organisation Baloch Republican Army, claimed responsibility for the blast on Twitter; BBC Urdu reported. The matter was being investigated at the highest level, Gwadar Deputy Commissioner Major (retd) Abdul Kabir Khan was quoted as saying by the BBC Urdu. He said that the militants who destroyed Jinnah's statue by planting explosives entered the area as tourists. According to him, no arrest has been made so far but the investigation will be completed in a day or two. "We are looking into the matter from all angles and the culprits will be caught soon," he said. "The demolition of Quaid-e-Azam's statue in #Gwadar is an attack on Ideology of Pakistan. I request authorities to punish the

Balochistan has been witnessing a spate of low-level violence for years

perpetrators in the same way as we did with those behind the attack on Quaid-e-Azam residency in Ziarat," Balochistan's former Home Minister and current Senator Sarfraz Bugti tweeted. In 2013, Baloch militants blasted a 121-year-old building used by Jinnah at Ziarat and raked it with gunfire, triggering a fire that blazed for four hours, destroying furniture and memorabilia. Jinnah spent the last days of his life there as he suffered from tuberculosis. It was later declared a national monument. Born on December 25, 1876, Jinnah served as leader of the All-India Muslim League from 1913 until Pakistan's creation on August 14, 1947. He then served as Pakistan's first governor-general until his death in 1948. Balochistan has been witnessing a spate of low-level violence for years. Baloch militants consider the elite of majority Punjab province exploiting the mineral resources of Balochistan. Nationalists blame Punjabi dominated security forces of Pakistan as responsible for highhandedness in the southwestern province, an allegation denied by the armed forces and federal government.

Japanese princess' fiancé returns for delayed marriage

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, Sept 27: Japanese Princess Mako's fiancé returned to Japan Monday for their marriage, which was suspended for more than three years because of a financial dispute involving his mother. Kei Komuro, 29, arrived from New York, where he studied law and plans to work as a lawyer, with his hair in a ponytail, a bold statement by Japanese standards for someone marrying a princess in the tradition-bound imperial family. Mako, also 29, is a niece of Emperor Naruhito. She and Komuro, who were classmates at Tokyo's International Christian University, announced in September 2017 their intent to marry the following year, but the financial dispute surfaced two months later and resulted in their wedding being suspended. The financial dispute involved whether 4 million yen (\$36,000) his mother received from her former fiancé and spent on Komuro's education in Japan was a loan or a gift. Komuro left for New York in 2018 to study law, and this is the first time he has returned since then. He made no comments at the airport, bowed silently and left in a car. He and Mako are to hold a news conference after his two-week coronavirus quarantine, according to Kyodo News and other Japanese media. The couple is expected to register their marriage in October and start a new life together in New York. His mother's financial dispute was an embarrassment for the imperial family and divided public opinion. Mako's father, Crown Prince Akishino, asked Komuro to provide a clear explanation and expressed mixed feelings about the marriage plans. Many Japanese said the marriage should be scrapped, while others said the couple should pursue their romance.

OXFORD STUDY

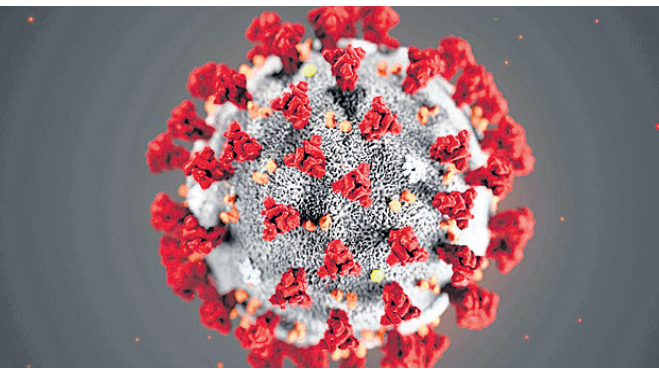
Covid slashed life expectancy by most since World War II

ACROSS MOST OF THE 29 COUNTRIES, MALES SAW LARGER LIFE EXPECTANCY DECLINES THAN FEMALES, ACCORDING TO THE RESEARCHERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Sept 27: The COVID-19 pandemic led to biggest decrease in life expectancy since the World War II, and wiped out years of progress on mortality, according to a study published Monday by the University of Oxford. The research team assembled an unprecedented dataset on mortality from 29 countries, spanning

most of Europe, the US and Chile - countries for which official death registrations for 2020 had been published. The study, published in the International Journal of Epidemiology, found that 27 of the 29 countries saw reductions in life expectancy in 2020, and at a scale which wiped out years of progress on mortality. Women in 15 countries and men in 10 countries were found to have a lower expectancy at birth in 2020 than in 2015, a year in which life expectancy was already negatively affected by a significant flu season. "For Western European countries such as Spain, England and Wales, Italy, Belgium, among others, the last time such large magnitudes of declines in life expectancy at birth were observed in a single year was during WW-II," said study's co-lead author Jose



Manuel Aburto, from Oxford's Leverhulme Center for Demographic Science (LCDS). "However, the scale of the life expectancy losses was stark across most countries studied, with 22 countries included in the study experiencing larger losses than half a year in 2020," Aburto said. The researchers noted that fe-

males in eight countries and males in 11 countries experienced losses larger than a year. It took on average 5.6 years for these countries to achieve a one-year increase in life expectancy recently, while the progress was wiped out over the course of 2020 by COVID-19, they said. Life expectancy, also known as

period life expectancy, refers to the average age to which a newborn lives if current death rates continued for their whole life. It does not predict an actual lifespan. Across most of the 29 countries, males saw larger life expectancy declines than females, according to the researchers. The largest declines in life expectancy were observed among males in the US, who saw a decline of 2.2 years relative to 2019 levels, followed by Lithuanian males (1.7 years), they said. "The large declines in life expectancy observed in the US can partly be explained by the notable increase in mortality at working ages observed in 2020," said study co-lead author, Ridhi Kashyap from LCDS. "In the US, increases in mortality in the under 60 age group contributed most significantly to life expectancy declines, whereas across

most of Europe increases in mortality above age 60 contributed more significantly," Kashyap said. The team's analysis also shows that most life expectancy reductions across different countries were attributable to official COVID-19 deaths. "While we know that there are several issues linked to the counting of COVID-19 deaths, such as inadequate testing or misclassification, the fact that our results highlight such a large impact that is directly attributable to COVID-19 shows how devastating a shock it has been for many countries," Kashyap said. "We urgently call for the publication and availability of more disaggregated data from a wider range of countries, including low- and middle-income countries, to better understand the impacts of the pandemic globally," she added.

of the day quote

With the increasing market demand for processed food, there shall be demand for technologies for food, beverages, dairy, edible oil, processing and packaging solutions. Indian OEM's will have great market opportunities in Egypt

AJIT GUPTA | AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT, TRADE PROMOTION COUNCIL OF INDIA

We are an emerging economy and very aspirational economy and the development is linked to the energy consumption ... so obviously we cannot be wishing away fossil fuels so early. They have a role to play

SM VAIDYA | CHAIRMAN, IOC

We are committed to building a top-quality enterprise and creating value for all stakeholders. We are grateful to all EdTech companies who have pioneered the transformation in India

ANIL AHUJA | FOUNDER AND CEO, 88TUITION

SHORT TAKES

Sebi revises risk mgmt rules for MFs

Mumbai: India's market regulator Monday tightened risk management rules for mutual funds, including specifying guidelines to identify, measure and report various risks, in an effort to protect the interest of investors. The new rules mandate the appointment of a chief risk officer, creation of risk management committees and maintaining metrics such as investment risk, liquidity risk and credit risk for each scheme, SEBI said.

IFIN to sell 62 NPA accounts

Mumbai: IL&FS Financial Services (IFIN) has put its non-performing asset (NPA) portfolio of approx ₹4,300 cr up for sale as part of plan to bring down overall group level debt. The sale of NPA would be done under Swiss Challenge with the new board already having received a binding bid. The seller who have already received a bid, publishes the bid and invite third parties to match or better it. The process also allows the entity which submitted the first bid then to match or better the best bid which comes out of the Swiss challenge process.

AIPNBOA organises executive body meet

Bhubaneswar: All India Punjab National Bank Officers' Association (AIPNBOA), Bhubaneswar Circle, organised executive body meeting in the City. The association elected Bailochan Sahoo as the Circle Secretary, who was the Circle President. Arabinda Satpathy, the present circle Vice-President, has been elevated to the post of President by the executive body members. The executive body also nominated Purna Chandra Rout as Vice-President. The association said that the general body meeting will be held October 23, 2021.

RBI sets WMA limit at ₹50K cr

Mumbai: India's Reserve Bank Monday said that ₹50,000 crore has been set as the 'Ways and Means Advances' (WMA) limit for the Central government during the H2FY22. In financial parlance, the WMA is a mechanism used by the RBI, under its credit policy, to provide advances to states banking with it, to tide over temporary mismatches in the cash flow of their receipts and payments.

BPCL to invest ₹1L cr to become future-ready

THE INVESTMENT WILL HELP BPCL PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE WHERE CONVENTIONAL FUELS AND ZERO-CARBON MOBILITY IN FORM OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES AND HYDROGEN WILL CO-EXIST

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: Privatisation-bound Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) plans to invest over ₹1 lakh crore over the next five years in raising petrochemical production capacity, gas business, clean fuel and augmenting marketing infrastructure, its chairman Arun Kumar Singh said Monday.

The investment will help BPCL prepare for the future where conventional fuels and zero-carbon mobility in form of electric vehi-



The firm is looking to have both solar and wind power generation capacities and would look to convert electricity thus generated into green hydrogen -- the cleanest form of hydrogen

BPCL, which has a portfolio of 45 MW of renewable capacity, plans to increase it to 1,000 MW in the next five years

This would benefit the company in various ways -- diversification, offsetting GHG emissions arising from fossil fuel portfolio

The company is also setting up an ethanol production unit at Bargarh, Odisha with a production capacity of 100 kilolitres per day

cles (EVs) and hydrogen will co-exist, while giving it India's second-largest fuel retailer is looking to create a 1,000 MW portfolio of renewable power generation ca-

capacity, mostly through acquisitions while also invest in biofuels and hydrogen, he told reporters. It is targeting to convert 7,000 out of over 19,000 petrol pumps

We are notifying it today evening or tomorrow...we have decided to extend the policy until March 31 (2022)...and in the (new) financial year, we can start with the new policy

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

MULTIPLEX SHARES SURGE

Shares of India's top cinema chain operators, PVR Ltd and INOX Leisure, Monday surged past their highest levels from pre-lockdown days after the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka took steps to reopen movie halls



Icra raises FY22 GDP growth hopes to 9%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 27: Ratings agency Icria Monday revised up its 2021-22 real GDP growth estimate for India to 9 per cent from the earlier 8.5 per cent.

A ramp-up in Covid-19 vaccination, healthy advance estimates of kharif (summer) crop and faster government spending were the factors which led to the revision, the agency said in a statement.

It can be noted that after the 7.3 per cent contraction in 2020-21, there were expectations of a higher growth number in 2021-22.

However, the second wave of Covid-19 infections early into the fiscal year, which spread even in the hinterland, made analysts more circumspect.

"The widening coverage of Covid-19 vaccines is likely to boost confidence, which will in turn re-energise demand for contact-intensive services, helping to revive the portions of the economy affected most by the pandemic," its chief economist Aditi Nayar said.

The robust kharif harvest is likely to sustain the consumption demand from the farm sector while



the expected acceleration in the central government spending after the withdrawal of the earlier cash management guidelines will recharge this key driver of aggregate demand, she added.

The key risk to its revised projection of 9 per cent GDP growth is a potential third wave and the existing vaccines being ineffective against newer mutations of the virus, she said.

Nearly three-fourths of Indian adults could receive their second vaccine shot by the end of 2021 if the average 7.9 million doses a day recorded between September 1-26 is sustained, Icria estimated.

The Centre's spending contracted 4.7 per cent in April-July 2021 year-on-year, and stood at 28.8 per cent of the 2021-22 Budget Estimates, the agency said, expecting a higher government spending to boost growth in second half of the year.

AFTER BRIBERY CHARGES

'Amazon is East India Co 2.0'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 27: After labelling bribery charges against Infosys, Panchjanya, a journal with RSS leanings, has now opened an attack on Jeff Bezos founded Amazon, with a cover story calling it the second generation of the East India Company that entered India with business interests but ended up colonising the country for 200 years.

The cover story with Bezos picture accuses Amazon of indulging in corrupt practices after allegations of bribery surfaced against it. Panchjanya has also accused Amazon for insulting Hindu values through Prime Videos movies and content.

"Amazon too wants to have sole rights on the Indian market. For this it has started taking steps to encircle the political, economic and indi-



vidual freedom of people here. It is accused of floating shell companies to capture the e-market platform, of bribing to have policies in its favour, and of airing programmes opposed to Indian culture through Prime Videos," the

Panchjanya says in a gist of its cover story.

The cover refers to allegations Amazon's legal representatives bribed Indian officials, and questions "What did it (the company) do wrong it needed to bribe... Why do people consider this company a threat to indigenous entrepreneurship, economic freedom and culture?"

The cover story said Amazon invested in India with a promise to help small traders get a larger platform to sell products, it actually floated its own companies to do the same. The company floated supplier entities such as Cloudtail and Apiria in which it had significant stake and indirect control.

Amazon, the world's largest online retailer, has initiated an investigation into the conduct of its legal representatives in India. The Morning Context reported.

BIZ BUZZ

itel forays into home audio category

New Delhi: In a bid to make the festive season more exciting, India's most trusted smartphone brand itel announced that it has entered into home audio category with the launch of four new soundbars in the country. Exclusively available on Amazon, the new line-up of itel soundbars caters to the ever-growing demand of at-home entertainment and the aspirations of audio enthusiasts, delivering dynamic sound output through advanced features. itel has introduced India's first soundbar -- SE-SB1040 WL -- with a 25.4 cm wireless woofer raising the bar of immersive home entertainment. "The need for immersive home entertainment has taken a center stage with enormous demand for premium audio products to elevate the audio experience," Arijet Talapatra, CEO, TRANSSION India, said in a statement.



Force Motors drives in all new Gurkha

New Delhi: Force Motors Monday launched the all new version of its sports utility vehicle Gurkha with price starting at ₹13.59 lakh (ex-showroom). The Pune-based company said that customers could pre-book the Gurkha with the dealers by paying ₹25,000. The first deliveries of the model, which competes with Mahindra Thar, are expected to begin in the second half of the next month, Force Motors said in a statement. The customers would be able to test drive the Gurkha at the dealerships before mid-October, it added. Built on a ground-up modular architecture platform, the new Gurkha comes with a BS-VI compliant 2.6 litre (91 HP) diesel engine. The Gurkha 2021 comes with an all-new wider and longer body, full new interiors, a new crash compliant, high strength chassis, new coil spring suspension on all four wheels to achieve the right balance in ride quality on multiple surfaces -- tarmac, rough rural roads and off the road.



Govt to borrow ₹5.03L cr in H2 FY'22

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 27: The government will borrow ₹5.03 lakh crore in the second half of the current fiscal to fund the revenue gap for reviving the pandemic-hit economy, the finance ministry said Monday.

During the first half, the government has raised ₹7.02 lakh crore by issuing bonds, the ministry said in a statement. Out of gross market borrowing of ₹12.05 lakh crore projected for FY 2021-22 in the Union Budget, ₹7.24 lakh crore (60 per cent) was planned to be borrowed in first half (H1).

The effective borrowing in H1 of FY 2021-22 was ₹7.02 lakh crore. The Government now plans to borrow the balance ₹5.03 lakh crore in second half year (H2) of FY 2021-22, it said. The H2 projection also factors requirements for release of balance amount to states on account of back-to-back loan facil-



ity in-lieu of GST compensation during the year, it added.

According to the Budget for 2021-22, the government's gross borrowing was estimated at ₹12.05 lakh crore, while net borrowing was pegged at ₹9.37 lakh crore in the financial year beginning April 1.

Gross borrowing includes repayments of past loans. Repayment for past loans in the next financial year has been pegged at ₹2.80 lakh crore. The government raises money from the market to fund its fiscal deficit through dated securities and treasury bills.

India emerges as Dubai's 2nd biggest trade partner



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Sept 27: India has emerged as Dubai's second biggest trading partner after China with the over-

all volume touching 38.5 billion dirham in the first half of 2021, according to official data released Sunday. Trade with India grew 74.5 per cent year-on-year to 67.1 billion

dirham from 38.5 billion dirham in H1 (first half) 2020. China recorded 30.7 per cent growth year-on-year with total trade with Dubai standing at 66.3 billion dirham in H1 2020.

In H1 2021, the USA traded 32 billion dirham with Dubai, up 1 per cent year-on-year from 31.7 billion dirham. Saudi Arabia came fourth with 30.5 billion dirham up 26 per cent from H1 2020, followed by Switzerland at 24.8 billion dirham.

The total share of the five biggest trade partners in H1 2021 amounted to 241.21 billion dirham compared to 185.06 billion dirham in H1 2020, up 30.34 per cent.

Gold topped the list of commodities in Dubai's H1 external trade at 138.8 billion dirham (19.2%

of Dubai trade), followed by telecoms at 94 billion dirham (13%). Diamonds came third in the list at 57.3 billion dirham (8%), followed by jewellery at 34.1 billion dirham (4.7%), and vehicle trade at 28 billion dirham (4%).

Dubai's non-oil external trade surged 31% in the first half of 2021 to reach 722.3 billion dirham from 550.6 billion dirham in the corresponding period in 2020.

Exports grew 45 per cent year on year in H1 2021 to 109.8 billion dirham from 75.8 billion dirham, which supports the goal of the 10 x 10 program (one of the nation's 'Projects of the 50' initiatives) to increase the UAE's exports to 10 global markets by 10% annually.

Imports rose by 29.3% year-on-year to 414 billion dirham from 320 billion dirham. Re-exports grew 28.3% year-on-year to 198.6 billion dirham from 154.7 billion dirham. Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of The Executive Council, said Dubai has reinforced its status as one of the world's fastest growing business hubs.

"Dubai's existing sea and air network will be expanded to cover 200 new cities around the world. We are confident that we will continue to build on our growth momentum to achieve our ambitious sustainable development projects and plans," he said.

Struggling MI face inconsistent PBKS

