



SANYA LOVES ROMCOMS

Actress Sanya Malhotra says she is organically attracted to light-hearted romantic comedies

LEISURE P2



LIFE AT STAKE

The pandemic has killed an estimated 80,000 to 180,000 healthcare workers from January 2020 till May this year, the WHO said

INTERNATIONAL P10



TEST RESCHEDULED

The suspended fifth and final Test between India and England has been rescheduled to June next year

SPORTS P12

MOVIE SET MISHAP

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Prop gun fired by actor fatally hurts cinematographer

Santa Fe, Oct 22: Actor Alec Baldwin fired a prop gun on a movie set and killed the cinematographer. The director of the Western being filmed was also wounded, and authorities are investigating what happened.

Halyna Hutchins, cinematographer on the movie "Rust," and director Joel Souza were shot Thursday on the rustic film set in the desert on



Alec Baldwin

the southern outskirts of Santa Fe, Santa Fe County Sheriff's officials said.

A spokesperson for Baldwin said there was an accident on the set involving the misfire of a prop gun with blanks, though a charge without a metal projectile is unlikely to kill at a moderate distance. Sheriff's spokesman Juan Rios said detectives were investigating how and what type of projectile was discharged. The Santa Fe New Mexican re-

ported Baldwin was seen Thursday outside the sheriff's office in tears, but attempts to get comment from him were unsuccessful. Hutchins, 42, was airlifted to the University of New Mexico Hospital, where she was pronounced dead by medical personnel, the sheriff's department said. Souza, 48, was taken by ambulance to Christus St Vincent Regional Medical Center, where he is undergoing treatment for his injuries.



HIGH-RISE HELL: A fire erupted on the 19th floor of a 61-storey residential building in south Mumbai, sending panic waves among the residents and resulting in the death of one person, Friday.

Gobinda recreates murder

■ A bag seized from the house of Gobinda's aide Radheshyam contained a mobile phone which was believed to be Mamita's

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, Oct 22: A team of police officials from Bolangir took Gobinda Sahu, the prime accused in the Mamita Meher kidnap and murder case, to the under-construction stadium at Mahaling in Kalahandi district Friday morning to recreate the crime scene.

Gobinda was taken to the spot in the wee hours to prevent the law and order situation from getting out of hand. DIG (northern range) Deepak Kumar and Bolangir SP Nitin Kusalkar were present at the crime recreation scene.

Gobinda narrated at the crime scene about how he had killed and buried Mamita.

The prime accused, who is the president of the school where Mamita worked and is known to be close to Minister of State for Home, DS Mishra, confessed that he had cleaved the body and set it on fire before burying it in the



Prime accused Gobinda Sahu recreates the crime scene in front of police officials near the under-construction stadium at Mahaling in Kalahandi district, Friday.

school compound from where it was later exhumed.

The family members of the 24-year-old teacher have demanded capital punishment for the culprits involved in her kidnapping and killing. "We will get justice when the culprits are hanged," the teacher's parents said.

Meanwhile, a bag was found in the house of Gobinda's aide Radheshyam, Friday. The bag contained a mobile phone, a charger,

some medicines and three pairs of women's clothes. It is believed these were Mamita's belongings. Police are however yet to disclose whether the items belonged to Mamita.

Two other persons who were earlier detained by the police - Puskar Bhoi and Muni Gupteswar Tandi - have turned approvers for the police. Bhoi is the driver of the JCB earthmover which was used to dig the pit, while Tandi is a staff of the school where Mamita worked.

Ex-MP Pradeep Majhi walking over to BJD

■ Majhi, who has considerable influence among tribals, is most likely to join the ruling party this month when CM Naveen Patnaik visits Nabarangpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: In a major jolt to Congress ahead of the panchayat polls due in early 2022, Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) working president and former MP Pradeep Majhi resigned from the party's primary membership Friday.

The resignation letter was sent to the party's interim president Sonia Gandhi. "With profound respect and obedience, I beg to state with extreme sorrow and pain that I have decided to resign from the primary membership of the Indian National Congress," he stated in the letter.

A prominent tribal leader and former MP from Nabarangpur Lok Sabha constituency, Majhi said that he wanted to serve people while



being in the Congress, but the grand old party 'lacks enthusiasm.'

"The organisation of the party was extremely well managed by your dynamic leadership which gradually declined due to recalcitrant persons occupying pivotal posts at different levels, and now the party has almost lost its credibility which may take a long time to revive," he pointed out in the letter.

Sources close to Majhi said that the former parliamentarian is most likely to join the ruling Biju Janata Dal (BJD) along with supporters this month when Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik visits Nabarangpur.

Majhi has considerable influence among the tribals of Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Why are you charging so much for petrol? Even the PM has said he's providing COVID vaccine for free!

Central counting of votes for panchayat polls: SEC

■ The counting will be done at block level instead of booth level, which is a major change this time

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The State Election Commission (SEC) has decided to conduct central counting of votes during the upcoming three-tier panchayat elections.

Speaking to reporters here Friday, State Election Commissioner Aditya Prasad Padhy said the counting will be done at block level instead of booth level, which is a major change this time.

He said that the ballot boxes will be stored in strong rooms at block level after the polling is over. More ballot boxes will be required for the central counting - at least one ballot box for each polling booth, the Commissioner said.

The Odisha Small Industries Corporation (OSIC) and SECs of other states have been asked to

provide additional ballot boxes, he stated.

As the electoral roll had been last revised in January 2021 for the purpose of panchayat elections, collectors have been asked to prepare the updated voters' lists.

Padhy further said that the collectors have been instructed to submit a report by October 26 after completion of delimitation of wards and reservation of seats in their respective districts.

The collectors have been directed to identify and keep vote counting centres ready at block headquarters by November 5. Earlier, they were asked to appoint polling officers and complete the process by October 25, Padhy said.

Temporary polling stations will be set up in areas having no proper facilities, he added.

The Commissioner has also directed the collectors to repair and paint ballot boxes to be used in the elections. An amount of ₹1.16 crore has been sanctioned to the districts for this purpose and collectors have been asked to complete the work by November 15.

Fuel prices hiked for 3rd straight day

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 22: Petrol and diesel prices Friday touched an all-time high across the country after rates were hiked for the third consecutive day by 35 paise per litre each.

The price of petrol in Delhi rose to its highest-ever level of ₹106.89 a litre and ₹112.78 per litre in Mumbai, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.

CITY PRICES
Petrol: ₹107.84 (+0.36)
Diesel: ₹104.32 (+0.39)

In Mumbai, diesel now comes for ₹103.63 a litre, while in Delhi, it costs ₹95.62 per litre. There was no change in rates October 18 and 19, prior to which prices were hiked by 35 paise per litre each on four straight days.

Petrol price has been hiked on 19 occasions since September 28, when a three-week-long hiatus in rate revision ended.

Olive Ridley turtle nesting site facing sea erosion risk

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, Oct 22: Massive sea erosion near the confluence of river Rushikulya and the Bay of Bengal in Ganjam district has posed a threat to the mass nesting of Olive Ridley turtles this year, wildlife activists said.

A 6-km stretch from Puruna Bandha to Bateswar near the river mouth was considered as the second largest mass nesting site after Gahirmatha in Kendrapara district in the state where lakhs of the endangered marine turtles nest between November and February every year.

The forest department expressed hope that natural restoration will take place in the affected beach in the coming months and there will be no negative impact on the mass nesting of the turtles.

The place of the confluence has changed due to massive sea erosion. While Rushikulya earlier used to meet the sea at Puruna Bandha area, the new



location is New Podampeta, around 2.5-km away.

More erosion occurred when the high tidal waves lashed on the beach Wednesday due to the full moon, said Rabinranath Sahu, secretary of the Rushikulya Sea Turtle Protection Committee.

"At present, very limited space is left on the beach for mass nesting. The sea is destroying the site," Sahu said.

PK Mohanty, professor of Marine Science at Berhampur University, also expressed fear that a decrease in the space of the rookery, coupled

with sea pollution, would affect the mass nesting.

Berhampur DFO Amlan Nayak confirmed the change of location of the river mouth and erosion of the beach in the mass nesting site.

He, however, hoped that the beach might be redeveloped naturally in the coming months after withdrawal of the rain and it would facilitate the mass nesting of Olive Ridley turtles.

About three years ago, similar erosion had occurred at the beach, but natural restoration took place through deposition by the sea.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VAIATION
SENSEX	60821.62 ↓ 101.88
NIFTY	18114.90 ↓ 63.20
DOLLAR	74.89 ↑ ₹0.01
EURO	87.09 ↓ ₹0.08
GOLD	₹48,007 ↑ ₹603
SILVER	₹65,986 ↑ ₹973

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	34.2°C	32.4°C
TEMP MIN	23.0°C	23.0°C
Humidity	72%	85%
Rainfall	NIL	NIL

Forecast: Light rain very likely

'Was offered ₹300cr to clear deal of Ambani'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 22: Meghalaya Governor Satya Pal Malik has claimed that during his tenure in Jammu and Kashmir, he was told he would get ₹300-crore bribe if he cleared the deals of 'Ambani' and an 'RSS-affiliated man'.

Malik, however, claimed he cancelled the deals, and praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for supporting his decision by saying there is no need to compromise on corruption. Malik had been appointed as the Jammu and Kashmir Governor August 21, 2018. He was transferred to Goa in October 2019. "Soon after I was posted to Jammu and Kashmir, two files came to me," Malik said in a purported



Meghalaya Governor Satya Pal Malik

video shared on Twitter Thursday. "In one, Ambani was involved, and in the other was a prominent officer of the Sangh (RSS). I was told that there was a scam involved."

The Jammu and Kashmir

National Panthers Party has questioned the silence of the BJP-led Central government over the 'sensational disclosure'. JKNPP chairman and former minister Harsh Dev Singh said it is strange that

'business tycoons and political syndicates' who had attempted to bribe the Governor have been allowed to go scot free. "The fate of the files for which ₹150 crore each was offered to the then Governor should be made known to the public as Malik was relieved from J&K shortly thereafter," Singh said in a statement.

Meanwhile, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti Friday sent a legal notice to Malik seeking ₹10 crore compensation for his alleged 'defamatory' remarks against her. The notice comes days after Malik allegedly said Mufti was a beneficiary of the now-abandoned Roshni scheme which aimed to grant proprietary rights to occupants of state land for charges.

US WILL DEFEND TAIWAN IF CHINA ATTACKS: BIDEN

AGENCIES

Washington, Oct 22: US President Joe Biden said that Washington was committed to coming to Taiwan's defence if it comes under attack from China - a stance that seems in opposition to America's stated policy of 'strategic ambiguity', CNN reported.

Asked twice during CNN's Town Hall Thursday whether the US would protect Taiwan if China attacked, Biden said it would.

"Yes, we have a commitment to do that," he said. Biden has made similar statements in the past, only to have the White House say longstanding US policy had not changed toward the island. The

US provides Taiwan defensive weapons, but has remained intentionally ambiguous on whether it would intervene militarily in the event of a Chinese attack, the report said.

Under the 'One China' Policy, the US acknowledges China's claim of sovereignty over Taiwan. In recent weeks, Beijing has sent dozens of warplanes near into Taiwan's Air Defense Identification Zone.

A White House official attempted to clarify Biden's comments on Taiwan after the Town Hall, saying the President was "not announcing any change in our policy and there is no change in our policy" in his remarks about China and Taiwan, the report added.

leisure



GWYNETH PALTROW 'BARELY HAD ALCOHOL' SINCE COVID DIAGNOSIS

Actress Gwyneth Paltrow was diagnosed with Covid in 2020, and since then she's hardly had any alcohol at all. She shared with Chelsea Handler on her *Dear Chelsea* podcast: "It's been a long year of barely any alcohol, I mean I've had a sip here and there but very rarely."

ADELE'S EASY ON ME IS MOST-ADDED SONG IN US RADIO HISTORY

English singer-songwriter Adele's *Easy On Me* has been recognised for setting first-day records for Spotify streams and YouTube views. It has broken several records on radio, including becoming the most played song in US radio history.



FORTUNE FORECAST

GaneshSpeaks.com
accuracy • reliability • trust
FOR ASTROLOGY DIAL 55181

ARIES
If your work has anything to do with money, today you will be busy counting your riches! If you've applied for a loan, it may get sanctioned today. Look for variety, says Ganesh, and you may find your day filled with smiles and what not.

TAURUS
You are likely to be mentally alert and watchful today, says Ganesh. Creativity will run through your veins no matter what you attempt. You may dabble in performing arts, designing, graphics or special effects. Your charm will play Pled Piper to the opposite gender today.

GEMINI
Your physical appearance and personal attitude will see a marked improvement today, predicts Ganesh. A well-groomed you will climb up the popularity chart among peers, friends and members of the opposite sex. You will keep people under your spell with your wit and wisdom both at the workplace and at social gatherings.

CANCER
You will be firing all cylinders in the creativity department, says Ganesh. Even your colleagues may pitch in, and will give you new ideas to make your work better. Those looking for a new job will ace the interview and clear the selection process as easily as clearing the fog from their glasses.

LEO
Karmic balance dictates an equitable distribution of joy and sorrow, says Ganesh. So if your day seems drab and depressing today, rest assured, your evening shall be all the more refreshing and exciting. Surround yourself with family and friends, as you will receive royal treatment from them.

VIRGO
Play dodge ball with prejudice today. Do not let intolerance find shelter in you today, advises Ganesh. Instead, chances are you will seek to find love, affection and goodwill among those around you. Stay away from negativity as it may bog you down.

LIBRA
Lights, camera, and action! Be prepared as the limelight is focused on you on this very motivating and inspiring day, enabling you to attract excellent public praise. Today is an encouraging day to set in motion innovative projects, especially for those who desire to be their own masters and embark upon fulfilling self-financed ideas.

SCORPIO
You are most likely to resent the dominating and overbearing nature of your partner today. Patience will probably go to the dumps in this case then. But Ganesh advises you to sit together and resolve all personality clashes and quarrels in view of the larger scheme of things.

SAGITTARIUS
The nerd in you will rise to the fore today. Religious literature will catch your fancy. Ganesh also sees you diving deep into pages of detective tomes, murder and science fiction. Au contraire, find some relief from the roller-coaster by listening to some soothing music.

CAPRICORN
The chances of you meeting financial success are few, but they are there nonetheless, says Ganesh. If you really want to improve your account balance and settle all the burgeoning debts, focus on what all needs to be done, and get it done without delay.

AQUARIUS
The day is taxing. You may find that others have dumped their share of work on you. But you are not one to admit defeat, and will deal with the challenge squarely, says Ganesh. You will outwit your opponents, and toast your success by starlight!

PISCES
While your day is unlikely to be very satisfactory, keeping your expectations low will help lessen your disappointment, says Ganesh. However, the evening is likely to be as refreshing as your day was depressing, with all the socialising in store for you.

Romantic comedies attract me: Sanya



Mumbai: Actress Sanya Malhotra says she is organically attracted to light-hearted romantic comedies, and that's probably the biggest reason for her to do the film *Meenakshi Sundareshwar*.

Sanya Malhotra along with co-star Abhimanyu Dassani, filmmaker Vivek Soni and entire Netflix and the Dharmatic creative team were at the trailer launch of *Meenakshi Sundareshwar* in Mumbai.

Talking about her reasons for picking up *Meenakshi Sundareshwar*, which is a romantic comedy about a newly-wed couple facing LDR- Long Distance

Relationship, Sanya said, "The romantic bit of the script made me choose it. Because as an audience I am also craving to watch romance, nowadays I am organically attracted to light-hearted romantic comedies, so that was the main reason I was attracted to the character and script. For me, it was love at first sight with Meenakshi's character. I also wanted to work with Dharmatic Productions, it was my dream."

Sanya will be seen playing the role of a south Indian girl from Madurai. So when asked about playing the Madurai girl on-screen despite being a Punjabi, she added, "The role being difficult, see every character has its own journey, as an actor you have to do your homework before you step in front of the camera. But I think Vivek Soni was really helpful and we did a couple of readings before going on sets that really helped me to know my character really well."

Kajol misses her 'baby girl' Nysa



Mumbai: Actor Kajol, who is currently vacationing with her son Yug and other family members in Moscow, is missing her daughter Nysa's presence there.

Kajol took to Instagram Friday and posted a throwback picture with Nysa. In the image, the mother-daughter duo can be seen twinning in white. "Miss you baby girl," she captioned the post. Actor Dia Mirza reacted to the picture with red heart emojis. One user called them 'the most beautiful girls in the world.'

Nysa, after completing her studies at Mumbai's Dhirubhai Ambani International School, enrolled in the United College of Southeast Asia in Singapore in early 2018.

'2021 is my biggest birthday present'

Mumbai: Parineeti Chopra is having a working birthday this year, which she tags as her 'biggest present' as she has received appreciation for her films which the actress didn't get in the last couple of years. Parineeti, who turned 33 Friday, in a chat with IANS, talked about her celebrations this year.

She said: "I am in Nepal right now and I am shooting for Sooraj Barjatya's film called *Uunchaai*. It's going to be very much a working birthday and I am very excited because I have been shooting and travelling a lot this year. This is what I had imagined how this year's birthday would be given the kind of year that I have had. So it is perfect and I am excited."

The actress is over-the-moon with the response she has got for her releases *The Girl On The Train*, *Saina* and

Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar. She tags 2021 as her biggest birthday present.

"Lot of my friends and family have been joking about what do you want as a birthday present...I have been telling them that I have already got my birthday present. 2021 was my birthday present."

She added: "The kind of accolades and appreciation I got for my films which I hadn't get in the last couple of years was the biggest birthday present for me so I already feel that on the work front, I am in a great place...We have been shooting for the past two weeks in Nepal. A working birthday in middle of the mountains is exactly what a 2021 birthday should be for me. So I am feeling humble and thankful." IANS



Kartik's Dhamaka trailer clocks over 38 million views

Mumbai: Kartik Aaryan's performances and the box-office numbers of his films have made him the most sought after star of B-town. The actor has so far worked in rom coms, dramas and comedies but that's about to change as he will be soon seen in a powerful role in the upcoming action thriller titled *Dhamaka*.

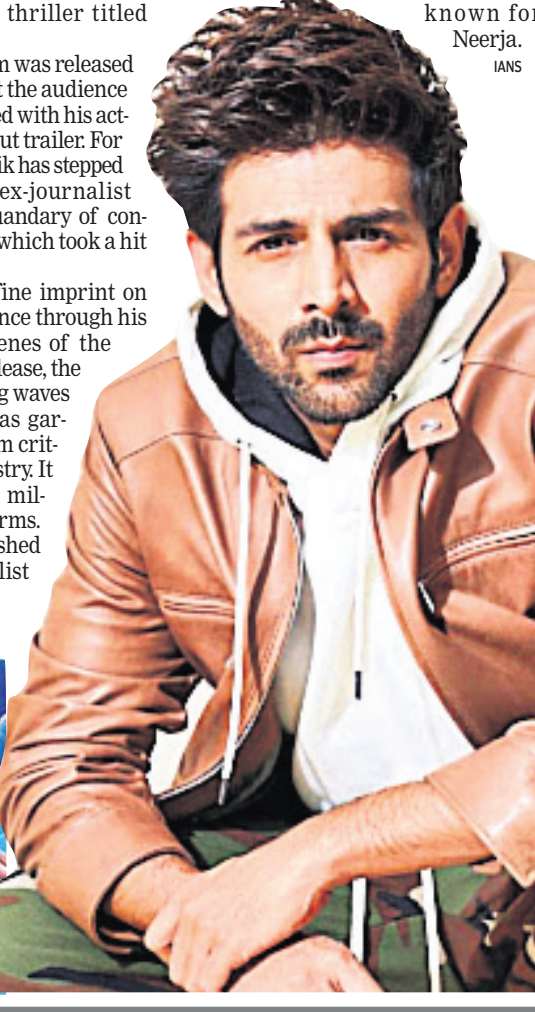
The trailer of the film was released recently and Kartik left the audience completely shell-shocked with his acting chops in the finely cut trailer. For his role in the film, Kartik has stepped into the shoes of an ex-journalist caught between the quandary of conscience and his career which took a hit following an incident.

The actor leaves a fine imprint on the minds of the audience through his act in the opening scenes of the trailer. Ever since its release, the trailer has been making waves on the internet and has garnered rave reviews from critics, audience and industry. It has registered over 38 million views across platforms.

The scruffy yet polished look of him as journalist

Arjun Pathak has wowed the audience. The film's gripping narrative clubbed with Kartik's hard-hitting portrayal have unanimously received a thunderous applause from all around.

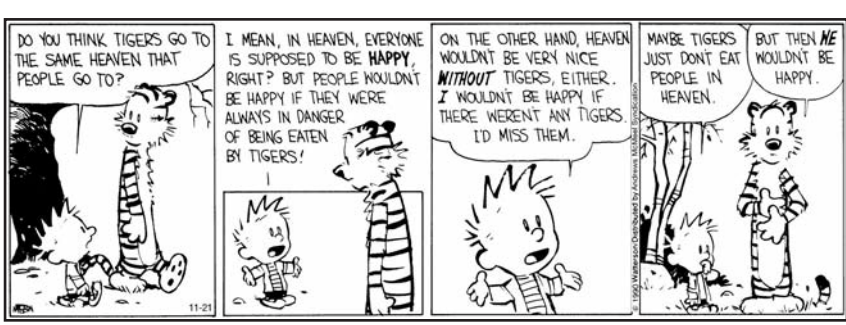
Dhamaka is directed by Ram Madhvani who is known for *Neerja*.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

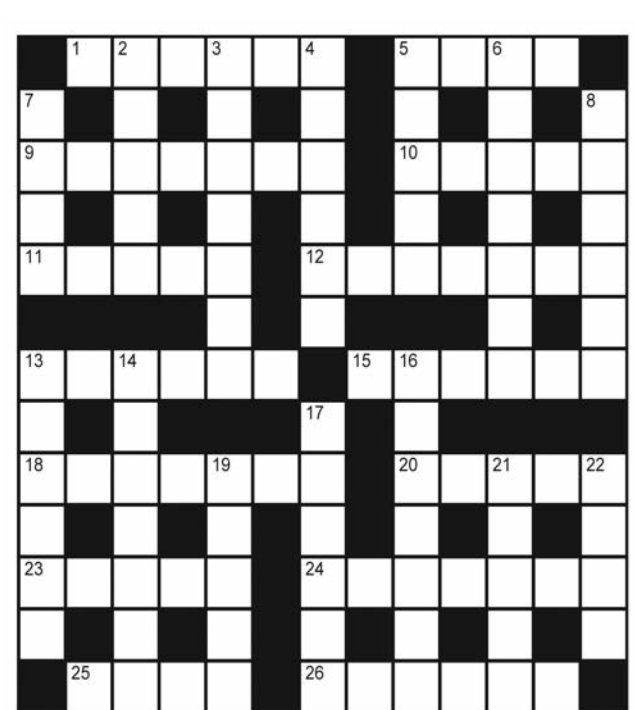


BREVITY



FUN post

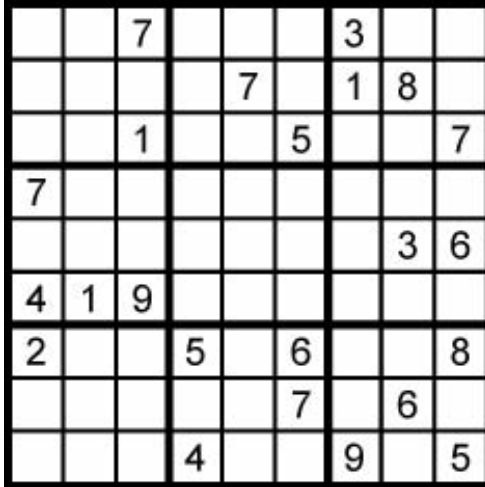
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Perspicacity
 - 5 Sulk
 - 9 ___ of Panama
 - 10 Scent
 - 11 Femme fatale
 - 12 Ivory Coast capital
 - 13 Universe
 - 15 Dishes
 - 18 Comparison
 - 20 Infant's illness
 - 23 Barbaric
 - 24 Family starters
 - 25 Carnival sight
 - 26 Ruby-red fruit
- Down**
- 2 Provide food for
 - 3 Souvenir
 - 4 Capital of the Bahamas
 - 5 New Zealand native
 - 6 Propeller plane
 - 7 Intentions
 - 8 Trident parts
 - 13 Kind of encounter
 - 14 Height
 - 16 Swiss city
 - 17 Short-sighted
 - 19 Young hooter
 - 21 Recluse
 - 22 Wine holder

SUDOKU

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



SOLUTIONS

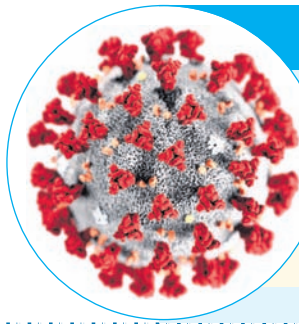


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



TAKING STOCK

Puri Collector Samarth Verma visits Nimapara Government High School to take stock of upgradation of infrastructure



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	24,34,59,433	22,05,98,137	49,48,554
India	3,41,43,236	3,35,14,449	4,53,042
Odisha	10,37,523	10,25,025	8,301

ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES AT SOUTH CITY HOTEL

Tamando IIC shunted, constable suspended

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The inspector in-charge (IIC) of Tamando police station was Friday shunted and a constable, Prasanna Behera, was placed under suspension in connection with flagrant violation of norms at South City Hotel.

The Commissionerate Police took the action against Tamando IIC for not initiating any action against the authorities of South City Hotel which was found operating illegally in Patrapada area under his jurisdiction.

The Commissionerate Police came to know about the violation of norms at the bar of South City Hotel while investigating the murder case of Manish Anurag, son of senior journalist Navin Das, sources said.

During investigation, it was also found that the hotel was being run by the kin of an influential policeman following which DCP Umashankar Dash asked an additional DCP to probe the case and submit a report at the earliest.

Police Commissioner Saumendra Priyadarshi has transferred



PRASANNA BEHERA WAS PLACED UNDER SUSPENSION FOR ILLEGALLY RUNNING THE HOTEL THROUGH ONE OF HIS KIN. SOUTH CITY HOTEL OWNER PRADYUMNA JENA HAD REPORTEDLY INCURRED HEAVY LOSSES AND LEASED OUT THE HOTEL TO BEHERA'S BROTHER



The Commissionerate Police took the action against **Tamando IIC Pramod Kumar Pattnaik** for not initiating action against the authorities of South City Hotel which was found operating illegally in Patrapada area under his jurisdiction

seen dancing in a bar in a viral video.

During investigation, the additional DCP found that Behera was actively involved in the management of the hotel while the lease was in his brother's name. It was also found that the licence of the bar had expired in September.

The police had earlier sealed the bar for operating till midnight in violation of the Covid-19 guidelines.

A team of the Commissionerate Police Friday raided the hotel and seized liquor bottles, DJ music sets and several bundles of fake ₹10 and ₹50 notes from the bar. Sources claimed that the fake ones were being flung at the bar girls. A case has been registered in this regard.

The police are interrogating Jena and Behera by detaining them at the Tamando police station. The duo could be arrested if they fail to give satisfactory answers to various issues regarding the hotel and its bar, said a police officer.

Manish Anurag and his accused friends had partied at the bar before the former's murder October 9, 2021.

CMC destroys 20 qtl adulterated food items



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 22: A team of Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) Friday destroyed around 20 quintal adulterated food items after carrying out surprise checks at a few makeshift eateries on Mangalabag Hospital Road here.

The civic body officials sealed one of the eateries and asked eight others to keep their shutters down until obtaining food licence.

"During the check, we found the eateries preparing and serving substandard food items under un-

hygienic condition. Besides, they had no food licence, which is a must. We'll intensify the drive further," CMC city health officer Satyabrata Mohapatra said.

Sources said the CMC's move came in the backdrop of allegations of roadside eateries serving adulterated food items to those visiting the SCB Medical College and Hospital here.

Food safety officer Pratikhya Das Mohapatra and sanitary inspector Bhagawan Lenka among other officials were present during the checks, sources said.

12,214 students chosen for PG admissions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The Higher Education department Friday released the list of students who have been selected for admissions to the public universities and colleges in the state during the first round of selection from October 23 to 28.

Altogether 12,214 students have been selected for the first round PG admission in 14 universities and 59 colleges in the state. Out of 12,214 students, 4,713 are male and 7,501 are female. The intake capacity of the educational institutions is 15,000. There are 2,392 Scheduled Caste (SC) students who have been selected for the admission while the number of Scheduled Tribe (ST) students stands at 2,685.

As per the notification, the selected students have to report to the institution for taking admission for first round selection from October 23 to 28. They can deposit the admission fees through SAMS [Student's Account] portal till October 25, 2021.

After that the department will publish the provisional allotment of seats for second round selection.



Out of 12,214 students, 4,713 are male and 7,501 are female while the intake capacity of the educational institutions is 15,000

tion which is scheduled for November 4, 2021.

The second round admission will be conducted from November 5 to 9.

Earlier, the Higher Education department conducted the common PG entrance test for admissions to PG courses in state public universities and autonomous colleges from August 23 to September 3 following which the subject-wise and statewide merit list was published October 12.

BMC to promote digital payments

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: In a bid to promote Digital India initiative, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) is all set to tie up with mobile payment platform, Paytm, to facilitate cashless transaction for City's street vendors.

As per sources, the civic authority has chalked out a plan to implement the digital payment and cashless transaction services at over 9,000 vending stores. The civic body will roll out the cashless transaction services in the vending zones within three months.

"We have sent the list of street vendors across Bhubaneswar to Paytm. If a vendor transacts digitally at least 25 times in a month, he/she will get cash rewards by the company which will get directly deposited to their bank accounts. The payment platform will also come up with a proposal of loan facilities for shopkeepers subscribing to the online payment system," a BMC official said. Earlier in June, the IndusInd Bank had partnered with TPCODL to introduce a fully digital network for facilitating electricity bill payments across 300 semi-urban and rural regions in the state.

Niranjan meets Sonia on political scenario in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Oct 22: Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) president Niranjan Pattnaik Friday met Congress president Sonia Gandhi at her residence in New Delhi to discuss the emerging political scenario in the state.

Following the meeting with Sonia, Pattnaik said that he pri-

marily discussed the ways to strengthen the grand old party in Odisha and the law and order situation in the state. He also said that there is huge discrimination and violence against women in the state. Congress will build a movement on this in coming days, he added.

Pattnaik said that he also held discussion with Sonia on the resig-

nation of former MP Pradeep Majhi.

Reacting on Majhi's resignation from the party, Pattnaik said that he took the decision in a restless mind. "I had told him to stay calm and we would take care of him," said Pattnaik adding that he wishes that Majhi gets same respect as he had in Congress party wherever he goes.

'50% jump in breast cancer among middle-aged women'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 22: There has been a 50 per cent jump in middle-aged women (aged 35-50 years) reporting cases of breast cancer in India for the last three years, said doctors at a private hospital here Friday.

The estimates are based on outpatient department (OPD) records by doctors, the Indraprastha Apollo Hospitals said in a statement.

"Based on our records during the past three years, we have observed that 50 per cent women reporting breast cancer and related manifestations have been between the age of 35 to 50 years," said Dr Ramesh Sarin, Senior Consultant, Surgical Oncologist, at the hospital, in the statement.

"With our hospital-based consultation data for breast cancer, it is found that though 53 per cent of the reported cases are in the initial stages of cancer and 47 per cent are in the advanced stages of cancer by a total of 20 per cent in stage 4 and 27 per cent in Stage III cancer," he added.

Breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in women, and accounts for almost 30 per cent of the entire cancer burden reported among women.

With limited awareness and hesitancy towards preventive diagnosis, one in every 20 women is diagnosed with this cancer.

The pandemic-induced hesitancy



THE REASONS FOR EARLY AGE CANCER COULD BE FAULTY GENES INHERITED FROM PARENTS, OR HISTORY OF BREAST OR OVARIAN CANCERS IN THE CLOSE FAMILY

CERTAIN LIFESTYLE CHOICES ALSO CONTRIBUTE TOWARDS THE RISK OF DEVELOPING BREAST CANCER IN YOUNG WOMEN SUCH AS LIMITED OR LOWER AMOUNT OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND INCREASING OBESITY AND SMOKING

to visit hospitals led to a lot of women delaying treatment or ignored early sign and symptoms, hence adding to the evident spike in cases.

"The survival or cure rate falls drastically from early stage to advanced stages. In our own series, 90 per cent of women in Stage I and II survive for more than 10 years while only 30 per cent survive in Stage III and 5 per cent in stage 4," Sarin said.

"We need to increase the detection up to 70-80 per cent in early stages of cancer by making women aware of the early signs and symptoms of breast cancer for achieving a better cure rate with proper management of the disease," the physician added.

The reasons for early age can-

cer could be faulty genes inherited from parents, or history of breast or ovarian cancers in the close family. Certain lifestyle choices also contribute towards the risk of developing breast cancer in young women such as limited or lower amount of physical activity and increasing obesity and smoking.

Excessive consumption of alcohol and oral contraceptives also has a debatable association with increased risk of breast cancer in younger women.

As a reason, women are highly advised to be watchful towards their sedentary lifestyle patterns and any newly observant signs of a breast cancer like a lump, discharge or discoloration of breasts, the doctor said.

Hiked bus fares come into effect in state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: New tariffs of buses by the Odisha State Road Transport Corporation (OSRTC) came into effect Friday amid a record hike in fuel prices.

Petrol and diesel prices Friday touched an all-time high across the country after rates were increased for the third consecutive day by 35 paise per litre. In Bhubaneswar, petrol now comes for ₹108.02 a litre and diesel costs ₹104.47 per litre.

"The OSRTC bus tariffs have been revised with effect from October 22, 2021, and will apply to all five categories of buses," the corporation tweeted.

Ordinary buses will charge 92 paise per km as compared to the previous rate of 85 paise per km, while express buses will charge 96 paise per km against the previous rate of 90 paise per km.



Similarly, the deluxe and AC deluxe bus fares have been hiked to ₹1.35 per km and ₹1.63 per km, respectively. For super-premium buses, passengers will have to pay ₹2.53 per km against the previous rate of ₹2.12 per km.

Last Saturday the State Transport Authority had revised the bus fares from Bhubaneswar to other towns in the state for various categories of buses.

DIWALI AHEAD



A vendor displays idols of Lord Ganesh and Goddess Laxmi in Dolamundai area of Cuttack ahead of the Diwali festival, Friday

Oppn intensifies stir over Mamita murder



BJP women wing activists lodge an FIR at Capital police station OP PHOTO

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: Opposition parties in Odisha Friday stepped up their stir demanding the sacking of Minister of State for Home, Dibya Shankar Mishra in the Kalahandi lady teacher kidnap and murder case, and questioned Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik's silence on the issue.

The prime accused, who is the president of the school where the lady teacher worked and is known to be close to the minister, Friday confessed that he had cleaved her body and set it on fire before burying it in the school compound from where it was later exhumed.

Family members of the 24-year-old Mamita have demanded capital punishment for the culprits involved in her kidnapping and killing. "We will get justice when the culprits are hanged," the teacher's parents said.

The protest by opposition against the incident spread to northern Odisha during the day as BJP and JMM staged a black flag demon-

stration in Baripada town when CM visited Mayurbhanj district for launching and distribution of smart health cards under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY).

The activists attempted to show black flag to CM when he was returning to the helipad. They, however, failed to reach near Patnaik's vehicle due to tight security, police said. The activists raised slogans demanding dismissal of the minister, statement from CM and justice for the lady's family. The demonstration turned violent when a section of ruling BJD activists allegedly attacked the BJP activists and left three of them injured. The three injured were admitted into government hospital in Baripada after receiving blows on their faces. Both BJP and JMM have lodged separate FIRs at Baripada town police station blaming BJD activists for the attack.

Sub-divisional police officer KK Hariprasad said that police have so far arrested two persons on the charge of creating disturbance during the CM's visit to

Mayurbhanj. More people may be rounded up as investigation is on, he added.

In another incident of opposition protest, women activists of BJP Mahila Morcha barged into the Capital police station here and filed an FIR against Mishra. They also demanded the minister's arrest.

"It is a shame for women across the state and the country. We have filed an FIR demanding the minister's arrest. If no action is taken, BJP Mahila Morcha will intensify the stir," BJP spokesperson Urmila Mohapatra said.

Senior BJP leader Surama Padhi said, "Let CM come out with a statement saying that his minister is innocent and he has no role in the killing of the lady teacher. It is high time CM assured the women of Odisha that they are safe and secure in the BJD regime."

Leader of Opposition in Odisha Assembly and senior BJP leader PK Naik demanded verification of the call detail record of the minister and the prime accused. He said that according to media reports, the prime accused had spoken to a powerful person for about two minutes after killing the lady teacher. The deceased woman's family too had alleged that Mishra was involved in the incident. He also demanded ₹2 crore compensation for the deceased's family and a government job for a family member.

Meanwhile, a section of Youth Congress activists reportedly hurled rotten eggs at the parental house of the minister in Bhawanipatna and demanded his resignation along with a fair probe.

A five-member team of Odisha Mahila Congress, led by its president Bandita Parida, visited the lady teacher's house in Bolangir and demanded stringent action against the prime accused and the sacking of the minister.

LOCO PILOTS' STIR



Loco pilots and assistant loco pilots of East Coast Railway stage a sit-in in front of the Rail Sadan in Bhubaneswar, Friday, to press for their various demands OP PHOTO

'Cuttack parking lots let out to street vendors'

According to the RTI activist, the CMC has identified 23 parking lots in the Silver City, which the civic authorities are supposed to lease out to the highest bidders for a year through open tenders

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 22: Several parking lots of the Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) have been illegally let out to street vendors, incurring huge revenue losses to the civic authority, said an RTI activist here Friday.

This misutilisation of parking lots of the CMC is not only causing revenue losses to the civic body but also aggravating traffic issues in the Silver City here, said Odisha Sookhana Adhikar Abhiyan (OSAA) Cuttack district coordinator Jitendra Sahu at a presser here Friday.

Sahu blamed a nexus between some unscrupulous employees of



the civic body and the vendors for the encroachment of parking lots in the city here.

According to Sahu, the CMC has identified 23 parking lots in the Silver City, one of the major business centres of Odisha. The civic authorities are supposed to lease out these parking lots to the highest bidders for a year through

open tenders. The lease holders will manage the parking lots and collect fees from the vehicle owners. As per the norms, these parking spaces cannot be utilised for any other purpose.

"Of the 23 parking lots, 16 have not been leased out through open tenders. These parking lots have been illegally let out to street vendors. As a result, the CMC is losing revenue to the tune of ₹2 lakh every month," Sahu alleged.

As per the norms, people participating in the tenders must submit affidavits declaring their non-involvement in any criminal cases. But, the lease holders of the parking lots have not submitted any

such affidavits before the CMC, Sahu further alleged.

"Some are using LPG cylinders and electronic gadgets on parking lots located close to filling stations. There is every possibility of fire mishaps. This issue has been raised with the officials concerned but to no avail," Sahu alleged.

Among others, social activists Gyanaranjan Bhuyian, Hrudananda Patnaik, Manoranjan Jena, Deepak Choudhary, Sanjay Jena, Prafulla Nayak, Pranab Biswal and Mahesh Ray were present at the presser.

Despite repeated attempts, CMC enforcement officer Abinash Rout could not be reached for his comments on the issue.

NCB seizes ganja weighing 250kg

Bhubaneswar: The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) sleuths, in a raid Friday, seized contraband cannabis weighing around 250kg from an edible oil tanker in City. They also arrested two persons identified as Sunil Ray and Agindeo Bin. The arrested duo hails from Bhojpur district in Bihar. Acting on a tip-off, NCB sleuths intercepted the truck at Rasulgarh Square here and seized the cannabis concealed in the tanker. The accused duo confessed during the interrogation that they sourced the seized contraband from Koraput district.

WASSUP TODAY BHUBANESWAR

- Inauguration of International Geomintech Symposium, Hotel Swosti Premium, Jaydev Vihar-Nandankanan Road, 11am
- State-level meeting to commemorate Bhagabati Charan Panigrahy, CPI office, Unit-II, 5.30pm

Programmes/announcements for wassup today may be sent to opwassup@gmail.com for record, it must also carry the sender's mobile number for our verification, but not for publication.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Bhatli that I want to change my name from Purnima Raj to Purnima Dash and henceforth I am known as Purnima Dash (29 years) W/o. Manoj Kumar Dash, R/o. Lelehar, P.O.- Uttam, P.S./Tah.- Ambabhona, Dist.- Bargarh, Odisha for all purposes.

PURI MEDICAL COLLEGE TO START WITH 100 STUDENTS

AGENCIES

Puri, Oct 22: The Sri Jagannath Medical College and Hospital will commence the academic season with 100 students, college principal Maya Padhi said Friday.

Taking newsmen here, Padhi said the state government has already appointed seven professors, 51 assistant professors, 87 doctors and 105 support staff besides a principal to run the college.

The administrative work is almost completed and the Medical Council of India (MCI) has permitted a hundred student capacity medical college and hospital in Puri.

Since construction and necessary work for college have been completed, the state is awaiting



the clearance from the MCI to run the college, Padhi said.

Medical college campus hospital is expected to be completed within two years, so the district headquarters hospital (DHH) has been transformed into an extended hospital of the medical college.

The practical of students will begin in their second year. Till the

campus college hospital is established, the DHH facilities will be used for students for practical sessions, she said.

Professors and medical college doctors are treating patients in DHH. Chief minister Naveen Patnaik July 4, 2015 had laid the foundation stone for the medical college and hospital.

Puri man kills self

POST NEWS NETWORK

Janla, Oct 22: A 45-year-old man ended his life by hanging himself from a ceiling fan of his residence at Ogalapada under the police outpost here late Thursday night, an official said Friday.

Police said they have recovered Sarat Kumar Moharana's body that was found hanging from a ceiling fan at his rented accommodation at Ogalapada.

Sources said Sarat, who hailed from Subarnapur under Gop police limits in Puri, had been making a living from an iron nail unit at his house. The incident came to the fore after a few of Sarat's neighbours grew suspicious as there was no usual hustle-bustle at his unit.

According to the deceased's neighbours, he was under depression for the last few days. And that could have driven him to take such extreme step, Nayak said.

No visible impact of Puja crowd on Covid yet: Govt

PNN/AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: The state government Friday said the Dussehra festival had no impact on the coronavirus situation in the state but a clear picture will emerge after 10 days.

Odisha Friday registered 467 new Covid-19 cases, 57 less than the previous day, taking the state's tally to 10,37,523. Meanwhile, three fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 8,301, a Health department official said.

The state's daily new case detection figure has dropped to below 500 after three consecutive days. Odisha had Thursday reported 524 new cases, 559 Wednesday, 556 Tuesday and 340 Monday.

Of the 467 new positive cases detected in 23 of the state's 30 districts, 86 were children and adolescents in the age group of 0 to 18 years. The rate of infection among children now stands at 18.41 per cent against the previous day's 15.64 per cent, he said.

While 272 cases were from quarantine centres, the remaining 195 were local contacts. Khurda district, of which state Capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported the highest of 243 new infections and accounted for almost 52 per cent of the daily count, followed by Cuttack (36).

Seven districts - Deogarh, Gajapati, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Koraput, Malkangiri and Nuapada - did not report any new cases during the last 24 hours.

With 467 persons testing positive for infection out of 66,868 samples tested Thursday, the daily test positivity rate (TPR) stood at 0.69 per cent.

Meanwhile, three more patients

THE STATE'S DAILY NEW CASE DETECTION FIGURE HAS DROPPED TO BELOW 500 AFTER THREE CONSECUTIVE DAYS

THE RATE OF INFECTION AMONG CHILDREN NOW STANDS AT 18.41 PER CENT AGAINST THE PREVIOUS DAY'S 15.64 PER CENT

succumbed to the virus in the state. The fresh fatalities were reported from Khurda, Cuttack and Jagatsinghpur districts. This apart, 53 other Covid-19 patients have also died due to comorbidities, he said.

The coastal state currently has 4,747 active Covid-19 cases while as many as 10,24,422 patients including 573 Thursday, have recovered from the highly infectious disease.

Odisha has thus far conducted over 2.13 crore sample tests including 66,868 Thursday, for Covid-19. The state's positivity rate now stands at 4.85 per cent.

Meanwhile, the state's Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said that the Dussehra festival had no impact on the corona situation in the state. Director of Health Services Bijay Mohapatra said that the third wave of the pandemic seems remote in Odisha.

Asked about the impact of crowding during Dussehra festival, Mohapatra said, "There is no remarkable rise in the cases so far. However, we have to wait for 10 more days to get a clear picture."

He said that registration of around 500 cases daily should not be considered alarming. Of the total daily new infections, around 200 cases come from Khurda district alone, he said.

Unicef urges media to help in war against Covid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: Unicef Odisha, in collaboration with state Health department and the Press Information Bureau (PIB), Bhubaneswar, organised a virtual media sensitisation programme on Covid-19 and vaccination in Deogarh, Sambalpur and Balasore districts.

The programme emphasised on the need to generate awareness on Covid appropriate behaviour and encourage more people to take the Covid vaccine.

Unicef Odisha's Communication and Advocacy Specialist Radhika Srivastava highlighted the role of media during the pandemic. "Media has been playing a crucial role in disseminating information to people during this critical juncture. Lack of information and knowledge as well as spread of incorrect information and myths at this crucial time may lead to increase in



fear like vaccine hesitancy among population. Therefore, I request media to ensure accurate and scientific reporting," she said.

Speaking on important role of media in vaccination, Akhil Kumar Mishra, Director of Regional Outreach Bureau, Bhubaneswar said that media should spread awareness about vaccination and encourage people to get vaccinated. "We have already achieved the milestone of reaching 100 crore

vaccines in the country. However, we need to achieve many more milestones to ensure an even higher coverage. Media has a vital role in keeping communities in tribal areas informed about the vaccination and Covid precautions," he added.

Speaking on the impact of Covid-19, Unicef Odisha's Anil Patnaik spoke on different aspects of post-Covid care and the need to monitor oxygen level with pulse-oxime-

ter and explained the pronging method that would improve oxygen level in a Covid affected body. Patnaik also emphasised on frequent checking of oxygen level in case a person tests positive.

Urging people to follow the Covid norms, Child Health Manager at Directorate of Family Welfare SB Panda stated, "We all have to get vaccinated completely. Even then, we all have to abide by Covid appropriate behaviour that is SMS-Social Distancing, Masking and Sanitisation."

Nilamadhab Satpathy, Assistant District Public Health Officer (ADPHO) at Family Welfare department, Koraput spoke on the efficacy of the vaccines. He said, "All vaccines approved by the government have high efficacy rate. The average efficacy rate of all vaccines including Covaxin and Covishield is 70-75 per cent. So we, without hesitation, should get ourselves vaccinated."

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Farmers fret over pest attack

POST NEWS NETWORK
Nuapada, Oct 22: Drought has affected many parts of Nuapada district while pest attack on surviving paddy has become a cause of concern for farmers, a report said.
According to the report, in some areas, farmers have managed to save crops by making use of lift irrigation points when erratic monsoon had played havoc. Now, the paddy is nearing harvest when pest attack has made farmers a worried lot. Pests like matiagundi, chakada, mahisa and patrapoda have been affecting paddy in Bankapur, Chahal, Padar, Khadabahal, Khirabhadhi, Chandel and Chacharabhati in Padhi and Khasbahal panchayats.
Farmers alleged that at this time of crisis, no agriculture officials venture out to help them in containing pests.
“We have applied pesticides and other chemicals. But they are not working to end the pest menace. Stems of paddy plants get



dried up. Pests keep on spreading all over our farmlands,” some farmers added.
In such situations, farmers have no choice but to buy whatever pesticides available in the market.
It is alleged that pests are attacking sown paddy more than transplanted one. Most farmers voiced their frustration as the diseases are not contained despite application of pesticides. In some cases, leaves of paddy plants get scorched.

Some desperately run from block agriculture office to farmland seeking advice from experts to save their crops, but to no avail.
“Drought has already broken the backbone of farmers. If pest attack is not contained, there will be nothing for harvest,” many farmers observed.
Pest attack is also spreading in parts of other blocks like Sinapalli, Komna and Boden.
Affected farmers lamented that they have invested their money taking loans from cooperative banks and money lenders, but they were worried about paying back the loans when crop has already been damaged by drought.
Affected farmers demanded immediate steps by the department to assess the damage and ensure to facilitate crop insurance claims.
District agriculture officer Suresh Chandra Behera and Khariyal additional agriculture officer Nita Sabar said they would visit the affected areas and steps will be taken soon.



People take out a deity on a street procession on the concluding day of Kothishala Yatra at Sunaribuguda in Ganjam, Friday

CM launches smart health cards in Mayurbhanj

OVER 21.38 LAKH BENEFICIARIES IN THE TRIBAL-DOMINATED DISTRICT WILL AVAIL OF BSKY BENEFITS

POST NEWS NETWORK
Baripada, Oct 22: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik started distributing smart health cards under the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana (BSKY) at Baripada in Mayurbhanj Friday. He also dedicated various developmental projects worth crores of rupees in the district. Foundation stones for many projects were also laid.
Addressing the ceremony for the smart health card distribution here, the Chief Minister described Mayurbhanj as a district known for its rich art, culture and heritage.
“Chhau dance and Jhumar songs of Mayurbhanj have given an identity to Odisha at the national level. The contribution of the district to the overall development of Odisha is incomparable,” he observed.
He said Maharaja Sriramchandra Bhanjdeo and



HE SAID MAHARAJA SRIRAMCHANDRA BHANJDEO AND MAHARAJA PURNACHANDRA BHANJDEO ARE PRIDE OF ODISHA
On the occasion, the Chief Minister gave away smart health cards to some beneficiaries of the district. It was learnt that 21, 38, 941 people in the district will get the benefits of BSKY.
In addition, Patnaik inaugurated various projects worth over ₹2484 crore.
It may be noted here that on 75th Independence Day, the Chief Minister had announced to provide smart health cards to 3.5 crore people in the state under BSKY.
Smart health cards will be provided to 3.5 crore people of 96 lakh families. Each family can avail treatment cost up to ₹5 lakh per annum. Women members can avail this benefit up to ₹10 lakh every year.
Odisha is the first state in the country to have provided such facilities in the health sector. Beneficiaries of National and State Food Security Schemes, Annapurna and Antodaya are entitled to get the

smart health cards.
The beneficiaries can avail health services in more than 200 hospital chains in the country including Odisha.
The Chief Minister during his visit did inauguration and foundation-laying of 539 projects. It was said that the state government is executing mega projects worth ₹3236 crore to ensure safe drinking water to each family across the state.
The irrigation coverage in the district has been expanded due to Subarnarekha project.
He was accompanied by 5T Secretary VK Pandian, Health Minister Naba Das, Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Sudam Marndi and Panchayati Raj Minister Pratap Jena.
Simultaneously many other ministers and MPs also distributed health cards in 26 blocks, two NACs and two municipalities.

Five villages in Bhadrak included under PMAGY

POST NEWS NETWORK
Basudevpur, Oct 22: Five revenue villages under Basudevpur block in Bhadrak district have been included under the Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gramya Yojana (PMAGY).
The objective of including the villages under PMAGY is to bring about a change in the life style of ST/SC people living in rural areas.
The five villages are Kusunibindha village of Sugo panchayat, Dadhibamapur of Jagannath Prasad panchayat, Suan village of Sudarshanpur panchayat and Adhuan village of Adhuan panchayat.
Under the yojana, facilities like road, drinking water, construction and repair of drains, boundary walls, schools, community centres, repair of Anganwadi centres and supply of electricity through solar power will be provided to five villages at a cost of ₹2.20 crore.
Efforts are being made by the administration to improve basic facilities in these villages.
Kusunibindha village has so far received ₹40 lakh. It had received ₹4 lakh in 2017/18 financial year. After full utilisation of funds provided in two phases, the village received ₹36 lakh more to carry out its other developmental works. All the works are at their last stages.
Similarly, ₹45 lakh has been received to carry out developmental works in Adhuan, Suan, Nuagaon and Dadhibamanpur. Meanwhile, various works have

EAST COAST RAILWAY
HIRING OF VEHICLE
Tender Notice No. 10-SBP-TRD-OT-2021-22, Dt.20.10.2021
NAME OF WORK: HIRING OF ONE NON-AC ROAD VEHICLE (TATA SUMO / MAHINDRA BOLERO / SCORPIO OR SIMILAR) ON CONTRACT BASIS FOR THE OFFICIAL USE OF ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ELECTRICAL ENGINEER / TRD / SAMBALPUR OF SAMBALPUR DIVISION FOR A PERIOD OF 23 MONTHS.
Approximate Cost of the work (₹) : 8,35,438.49, Period of Completion : 23 Months
Date and time of closing of tender : 1530 hrs of 11.11.2021.
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.
NOTE : The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigenda issued for this tender.
Complete information including e-tender documents is available in website <http://www.treps.gov.in>.
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer(TRD), PR-483/M/21-22 | Sambalpur

Leakage from Rengali canal poses questions on durability



POST NEWS NETWORK
Jajpur, Oct 22: Water is constantly seeping through the cracks of the left bank canal of Rengali multi-purpose project, along 22-km stretch from Odisha village under Bhuban block in Dhenkanal district to Madhapur village under Sukinda block in Jajpur district.
This has made the local residents sceptical about the future of the canal.
At the same time, farmers have alleged they are not getting water when they require it most to save their crops.
While concerned officials are trying to assuage people's fear, saying nothing as such will happen, local people say if nothing will happen in near future, it cannot be ruled out that there will be no danger in future.
The farmers in the locality alleged that the canal had been silted up due to lack of repair and management, resulting in poor flow of water. “The irrigation department claims that the project is presently irrigating 9,558 hectares of land. But the ground reality is that even half the declared land hardly gets water,” they alleged.
Kharif crop has badly been affected due to shortage of rainfall this year. The farmers were wait-

Superintending engineer, Rengali division, Deepak Behera said leakage of water from the canal is not a problem. A plan is already there to concretise the stretch to stop seeping
ing for water in the left bank canal of the project to save their withered crops. But that did not happen. They alleged that they did not get water only because of the concerned officials' lack of will power and snail's pace of construction work.
The farmers of Baragaji, Bhalukipatali, Garamian, Kankadapala, Kateni, Giringamali, Pimpudia, Gandhapala, Dudhujori, Bandhagaon, Kantapala, Manatira, Madhapur, Badakathia, Odisha, Khukusha and Anala villages alleged that they were not getting water.
In June, July and August, the district received 18, 60 and 52 per cent less rainfall respectively. The farmers who had already started agricultural work in June wit-

nessed seedling blight. During the same period, the farmers of Sukinda block in Jajpur district and Bhuban block in Dhenkanal district were pinning hope on canal water. “Water from the reservoir was released. But the water did not reach farmland because of continuous seeping and accumulation of silt in the canal,” they rued.
So far, only 36 per cent of the construction work of the left bank canal has been completed. The concerned department has estimated that the project would end by July 2024. It was estimated that the project would irrigate 39,416 hectares of farmlands under six blocks in three districts like Dhenkanal, Jajpur and Keonjhar. It now reportedly irrigates 9,558 hectares.
It is said, the project would be able to irrigate 9,000 hectare by July, 2022; another 5,000 hectare by July, 2023 and 15,828 hectare by July 2024.
When contacted, superintending engineer, Rengali division, Deepak Behera said leakage of water is not a problem. A plan is already there to concretise the stretch to stop it. “However, the amount of water the farmers will get will depend on the project's requirement of water,” added Behera.

MGNREGS SCAM

Projects on endowment land

POST NEWS NETWORK
Nuagaon, Oct 22: Lakhs of rupees have allegedly been embezzled through MGNREGS in Nuagaon area of Nayagarh district. What is surprising is that projects under the rural job scheme have been done on a patch of land belonging to the endowment department, a report said.
Locals have alleged that a huge scam has been committed at different places of Mahipur panchayat where funds meant for pond excavation and road construction have been misappropriated.
They alleged that all such irregularities were committed in the knowledge of local sarpanch, panchayat executive office and a junior engineer while the BDO is sitting pretty cool over the scam.
“When the poor and the landless have been suffering a lot for lack of work scope at the pandemic times, the rural job scheme is being scuttled deliberately to loot public funds,” they said.
As per government guidelines, if any development work is to be done on government or pasture land, permission of the revenue department is taken.
A contractor has dug a pond



and built a road on the land of endowment department with the help of the block administration, it was alleged.
Local people have blamed the block administration for all such illegalities. They have demanded an investigation into the scam and action against those involved in it. ₹8 lakh was spent for renovation of Kusum Dhipa pond while the excavated soil of the pond was used for road construction at Patulisahi, it was alleged. ₹3.54 lakh was sanctioned for the road project.
When contacted, BDO Pramod Kumar Nayak said development work can be done on government land, but permission of the revenue department is necessary. “I will look into the allegation,” he added.

Brown sugar worth ₹2cr seized, 3 held

POST NEWS NETWORK
Balasure, Oct 22: In a major crackdown Thursday, a joint team of Cuttack Excise department and the police from Balasure carried out raid on a house at Bidyadharpur village under Basta block in this district and seized two kilograms of brown sugar, an official said.
According to the source, the value of the seized contraband would be more than ₹2 crore. The joint team has arrested three drug peddlers in this connection. Several incriminating devices were recovered from the posses-

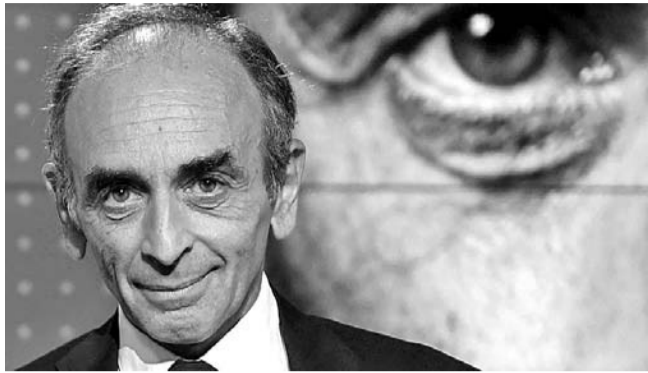
sion of the accused.
The joint team got information that the arrested men had been negotiating with parties to sell the narcotics. Swinging into action, the team conducted the raid leading to the seizure.
On the other hand, the drug peddlers reportedly attacked the personnel during raids and ransacked the vehicles of the team. A case has been registered against the three under Sections 21 (C) and 29 of the NDPS Act, 1985.
A detailed probe into the incident is underway. The arrested trio were forwarded to a local court Friday, the senior official informed.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
SONEPUR (R&B) DIVISION, SONEPUR
No. B-500
E-Procurement Notice
BID IDENTIFICATION No: EE/R&B/SNPR/13/2021-22
E-mail - eepwdsnr@gmail.com Phone -06654-221081
No.4110 Dt. 21.10.2021
1. The Superintending Engineer, Sonapur (R&B) Division, Sonapur on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites Percentage Rate bids in Single & Double Cover System in Online Mode for construction of Road & Buildings Works detailed in the DTCN from the eligible Class of Contractors.
2. No. of work : 07 (Seven)
3. Tender Cost : Rs.10,000/- for Serial No. 1
Rs.6,000/- for Serial No. 2 to 4
Rs.4,000/- for Serial No. 5 & 6
Rs.2,000/- for Serial No. 7
4. Class of Contractor : 'B' & 'A' Class Contractor for Serial No. 1 & 2
'C' & 'B' Class Contractor for Serial No. 3 & 4
'D' & 'C' Class Contractor for Serial No. 5 to 7
5. Date and time available in Website & receipt of Bids : From 10.00 A.M. of 29.10.2021 to 5.00 P.M. of 12.11.2021.
6. Date of Opening of Tender : 15.11.2021 at 11.30 A.M.
7. The Bidders have to participate in Online bidding only, further details can be seen from the Web Site.
8. Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in only.
Sd/- Superintending Engineer
Sonapur (R&B) Division, Sonapur
OIPR-34081/11/0010/2122

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, RWS&S DIVISION, BARGARH
Email: eerws_bgh@nic.in, Ph (O): 06646-233220, Fax: 06646-234626
No. 4122 Dt.21.10.2021
1st CORRIGENDUM TO BID ID No. 01 of 2021-22 & TENDER CALL NOTICE No. 4068 Dt.07.10.2021
No. O-846: Remaining unaltered of all other terms and conditions the following changes are hereby made to Bid identification 01 of 2021-22 & tender call notice No. 4068 dated 07.10.21 of the Executive Engineer, RWS&S Division, Bargarh by virtue of this corrigendum due to some technical problem.
As per Original DTCN As per Corrigendum
1. Date and time of availability of document in the portal: Dt.22.10.2021 to Dt.08.11.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. 1. Date and time of availability of document in the portal: Dt.30.10.2021 to Dt.15.11.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.
2. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal: Dt.08.11.2021 upto 5.00 P.M. 2. Last date/time for receipt of bids in the portal: Dt.15.11.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.
3. Date & time of Opening of Tender: Dt.09.11.2021 at 11.00 A.M. 3. Date & time of Opening of Tender: Dt.16.11.2021 at 11.00 A.M.
Executive Engineer
RWS&S Division, Bargarh
OIPR-25157/11/0003/2122

FOCUS PRESIDENTIAL POLLS

THE TRUMPING OF FRANCE



Eric Zemmour has become an important player in a political game that he hopes to destabilise – though he remains vague about his own possible presidential bid. His political megaphone is CNews, an influential TV channel backed by the billionaire Vincent Bolloré, a major owner of the Vivendi group

idea of Christian France. By playing on the fluid boundaries between the right and the far right, he is taking votes from the Republicans that Le Pen never could have hoped to win.

But while a Zemmour candidacy could hurt the right, it also could serve it. If Zemmour undercuts Le Pen, another right-wing candidate, such as Xavier Bertrand, a current favorite in opinion polls, could prevail as the challenger to President Emmanuel Macron in the election's second round. Macron would have much more to worry about in a runoff against Bertrand, a candidate who could claim broad support, including from leftist and centrist voters who want to prevent a second Macron term at all costs.

Macron could also be hurt by the negative effect that far-right themes will have on the overall debate. He will want to highlight his economic and social achievements, his education measures, and his pro-European convictions. But that will not be easy when campaigning against an opponent who has only "Islam" and "immigration" on his lips. It remains to be seen whether Zemmour will run. Some analysts doubt that he can muster the necessary endorsements from at least 500 mayors. But the 17% of French voters who support his candidacy cannot be ignored. A significant share of the public is clearly disillusioned with the current crop of political elites.

Whatever Zemmour decides, he, along with CNews and other right-wing media outlets, have changed the debate, forcing all candidates to focus on immigration and crime. Macron, too, has had to adjust, reflected in his decision to impose tight restrictions on visa authorizations for Moroccan, Algerian, and Tunisian nationals. Without yet becoming a candidate, Zemmour is already a force in next year's election.

The writer, a political scientist, has lectured in media and democracy at Harvard University and Sciences Po.

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According to a new poll that sent shockwaves through France, Eric Zemmour, the far-right essayist and television talking head, would get 17% of the vote were he to run in the upcoming presidential election. That puts him in second place, ahead of Marine Le Pen of the far-right National Rally.

Known since the early 2000s for his popular television appearances and regular column in the conservative newspaper Le Figaro, Zemmour has become an important player in a political game that he hopes to destabilise – though he remains vague about his own possible presidential bid. His political megaphone is CNews, an influential TV channel backed by the billionaire Vincent Bolloré, a major owner of the Vivendi group. Although its top-rated programmes do not usually attract more than 800,000 viewers, CNews has doubled its audience in four years, putting it in second place among France's four 24-hour news channels.

The company's business model combines topical news coverage with commentaries and debates that simplify complex issues, often featuring extreme positions. The key to both CNews and Zemmour's recent success is that they have absorbed a lesson from Donald Trump: be extreme and provocative. Zemmour's latest high-profile outburst, for example, was to call for a ban on "foreign" names like Mohamed.

While the French far right has been fixated for the past 30 years on Islam, immigration, educational failures, and the alleged decline of French civilization, Zemmour's extremist rhetoric has brought these issues to the fore. "Extremist" is no understatement: in recent years, Zemmour has been convicted twice for hate speech and inciting racial violence.

Zemmour emphasises all the same incendiary topics in his new book, *La France n'a pas dit son dernier mot* (France Has Not Said Its Last Word). By conflating Islam and Islamism, he hopes to stigmatise the entire religion and stoke opposition to immigration. He contends that Muslim immi-

grants will "swamp" and overwhelm Europe's native inhabitants, and that the "Islamisation of city streets" by the new "colonizers" threatens the survival of the French nation. "No small town, no small village in France is safe from savage groups of Chechen, Kosovar, Maghreb, or African gangs who steal, rape, pillage, torture, and kill," he writes.

Not surprisingly, Zemmour blatantly distorts history. The Nazi-aligned Vichy regime, he contends, "protected French Jews" during World War II. His aggressive misogyny and homophobia are similarly de rigueur.

Zemmour wants these themes to be at the center of the debate in the presidential election next spring. France's broadcasting regulator, le Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiodivisuel (CSA), has already decided to treat him as a candidate, tracking his TV airtime so that he cannot claim more than other candidates. The Zemmour phenomenon worries French political parties across the political spectrum, though not for the same reasons. It concerns Le Pen because she hopes to be the candidate representing the far right. Traditionally, the protest vote in France has been divided between populists

and abstainers, and at least until the 2017 election, this tendency mainly favored her party.

To present herself as a legitimate presidential candidate in 2017, Le Pen moderated the party's message and distanced herself from her father (the party's founder and former leader) and his reactionary, racist, and anti-Semitic rhetoric. The following year, she even changed the party's name. But moderation hasn't played well with much of her base, a significant share of which has fled to Zemmour. A poll published on September 28 indicated that support for Le Pen was at around 16%, down from 28% in the first round of the 2017 presidential election.

Zemmour also worries the traditional center-right party, Les Républicains. Whereas many French conservatives would be embarrassed to vote for National Rally in light of its anti-Semitic past, they might view Zemmour, a Sephardic Jew, as an acceptable spokesman for the contemporary right's position on immigration.

Even more misleading, Zemmour has also been posing as a champion of Gaullism, taking up three of Charles de Gaulle's favorite themes: national independence, social policy, and the



Benedicte Berner

ZEMMOUR HAS BEEN POSING AS A CHAMPION OF GAULLISM, TAKING UP THREE OF CHARLES DE GAULLE'S FAVORITE THEMES: NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, SOCIAL POLICY, AND THE IDEA OF CHRISTIAN FRANCE

Do not belong to the past dawns, but to the noons of future.

SRI AUROBINDO



Disinvestment agenda gets a push

The Air India sale is finally done with, fittingly, the Tatas back in the cockpit. But there is no rest for Tuhin Kant Pandey, Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM). Already, he and his department colleagues are looking ahead at their next disinvestment targets. Sources say that the government has now turned its attention to BPCL in the current financial year. Much is also riding on the plan to float an IPO for the Life Insurance Corporation by the last quarter of the current year. It is likely to be the biggest IPO in the Indian stock market.

The protracted but ultimately successful Air India sale has recharged the government's resolve to expedite its disinvestment efforts. It has sent out a clear message that the Centre has the political will to restart the stalled reforms process, of which disinvestment of non-performing public sector companies and financial institutions is a major component.

Pandey and his colleagues in various concerned ministries have been set an unenviable target to achieve – ₹1.75 lakh crore, for the 2021-22 fiscal. But the Air India sale has given a second wind to the government and new energy to the babus to continue their efforts.

Academia calling!

Barely weeks ahead of the Economic Survey and the Union Budget in January, Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) Krishnamurthy Subramanian will move back to academia after his three-year tenure ends in December.

His predecessor Arvind Subramanian had also stepped down, though before the end of his term, in December 2018 citing pressing family commitments and returned to his academic world. Earlier, former Reserve Bank of India (RBI) governor Raghuram Rajan had quit after his much publicised differences with the Centre over policy and returned to teaching.

Clearly, academics still offers a quiet refuge from the hurly-burly of policymaking and politics. Before joining the government, Subramanian taught at the Centre for Analytical Finance at the Indian School of Business in Hyderabad and is noted for his specialisation in banking and economic policy. But among his other contributions to policymaking at the Finance Ministry, he will be remembered for coining the phrase "Thalonomics" in the last economic survey he presided over – the equivalent to the Big Mac Index – to explain the economics of a plate of food in India. It is also learnt that for now, Subramanian has no plans to write a book about his time at the Finance Ministry, unlike his immediate predecessor!

The Centre has reportedly started the process of identifying Subramanian's successor and the buzz is that his deputy, Principal Economic Advisor Sanjeev Sanyal, will now supervise the drafting of the 2021-22 Economic Survey and is a likely frontrunner to take over as the next CEA. Watch this space for updates.

A much-awaited 'homecoming'

This column had reported earlier (August 19) that Shah Faesal, the IAS officer from Jammu & Kashmir who resigned in 2019 in protest against the Centre's policies towards the region, was looking to rejoin the civil service. Now the buzz in babu corridors is that Faesal may be inducted as an advisor to J&K Lt Governor Manoj Sinha in place of Baseer Khan who was recently relieved of his charge.

Faesal's resignation from the service remains a mystery and the government is tight-lipped about it. Sources say that the Centre has still not taken on any decision on Faesal's resignation, and the rules state that in such a scenario the resignation is considered withdrawn automatically! The official stance, according to the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), is that the resignation "is still under consideration".

He had resigned citing personal reasons which had created a stir. Subsequently, Faesal who had formed the short-lived Jammu and Kashmir People's Movement was detained at the Delhi airport, a day before Parliament revoked Jammu & Kashmir's special status. Apparently, the buzz about Faesal's possible appointment as advisor to Sinha is also being fuelled by a flood of praise from him in recent times of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on social media. That alone may not work, or will it? Your guess is as good as mine.

Share a babu experience! Follow [@dilipthecherian](https://twitter.com/dilipthecherian) on Twitter. Let's multiply the effect.

WISDOM CORNER

- Move out of your comfort zone. You can only grow if you are willing to feel awkward and uncomfortable when you try something new. **BRIAN TRACY**
- It is our attitude at the beginning of a difficult task which, more than anything else, will affect its successful outcome. **WILLIAM JAMES**
- You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream. **C.S. LEWIS**

WORDSWORTH

Can of worms

To open a metaphorical can of worms is to examine some complicated state of affairs, the investigation of which is likely to cause trouble or scandal and which you would much prefer was left alone. A recent example appeared in the Washington Times: "Uncovering past ownership, however, can open its own legal can of worms in exposing art theft." It has long since become an overused and overrated journalistic cliché, which rather lends itself to mixed metaphors: "Africa is a huge can of worms and we can no longer stick our heads in the sand" (from the Daily Record of Glasgow of 17 March 2006). The earliest example I've found is from a syndicated article in the Ironwood Daily Globe of Michigan in 1951: "The question of command for Middle East defense against Soviet aggression is still regarded as 'a can of worms' at General Eisenhower's SHAPE headquarters here." The evidence suggests that the original cans of worms were real cans with actual worms in them, collected as bait for fishing. Here's one in a largely forgotten work of 1914, *Diane of the Green Van*, by Leona Dalrymple: "There are times, alas, when even fish are perverse! Thoroughly out of patience, Diane presently unjoined her rod, emptied the can of worms upon the bank, and returned to camp." Fishermen have told me that the most annoying aspect of opening a can of worms is that, being live bait, they crawl out and are difficult to put back. So there may well be an association with the idea of Pandora's Box, as you suspect. It's easy to see how an angler – more probably a non-fishing friend or relative of an angler – who opened a can containing a wriggling mass of worms would see it as something that was best left closed and unexamined.

SPECTRUM WORLD POLITICS

The false promise of AUKUS

The geopolitical story of the last few years has featured Western democracies' gradual awakening to the realities of an increasingly ambitious and authoritarian China. European countries have gone from competing with each other to be China's best friend to sharing the view that China represents a profound, multifaceted challenge.

For example, on global issues such as climate change, European governments must now find a way to work effectively with a difficult partner. On economic and technological issues such as artificial intelligence, China has emerged as a fierce competitor. And on human rights, democracy, and the role of the state in the economy, it is now seen as a "systemic rival".

In addition to becoming more realistic about China, Europeans are also becoming more engaged with Asia. France led the pack in 2016 by signing a deal to provide Barracuda submarines, and by inspiring the rest of Europe to develop a new strategy for the Indo-Pacific. Its position on China in recent years has been light years away from that of British Prime Minister Tony Blair, French President

Jacques Chirac, and German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, who supported ending a European Union embargo on arms sales to China and granting that country "market economy status".

But now France has been shoved aside by AUKUS, a new security and technology alliance between the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom. In Washington and London, this deal to provide Australia with US-made nuclear submarines is being framed as one of the most significant strategic advances in decades, even though it has infuriated France.

For the US, AUKUS comes hot on the heels of its chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan, and thus is being held up as evidence that the Biden administration is serious, competent, and tough on foreign policy. Furnishing Australia with a N-powered submarine fleet will significantly extend America's ability to project power in the Indo-Pacific.

AUKUS is also the first (and so far) only expression of "Global Britain," the newly empowered global player that was supposed to arise after Brexit. The deal is being touted as proof that the UK's "special relationship" with the US is robust. Even the French could ben-

efit from the new arrangement. By pointing to yet another example of American flakiness, France can bolster its own case for pursuing European strategic autonomy.

Since news of the deal broke, there have been attempts to lower the temperature between Western powers. US President Joe Biden has called French President Emmanuel Macron, admitted that the "situation would have benefited from open consultations among allies," and promised more US support for France's anti-terrorism campaign in the Sahel. Now that the French have blown off some steam, many American foreign-policy observers seem to think there will be a return to business as usual. Yet whatever tactical advances the US, the UK, and Australia may have made, the strategic gains to be had from AUKUS are dubious at best.

Yes, the Indo-Pacific is central to America's competition with China, and a well-equipped Australia can enhance US naval control over that theater. But there are other, more important battlegrounds to consider. As we have seen, the China challenge is also about the regulation of AI, global finance, and green technologies and infrastructure. On these issues, the EU has far more to contribute than

Australia or the UK does.

It is in America's own long-term interest that the EU becomes more of a sovereign power capable of participating in the defense of shared Western values and interests. By humiliating France, the one EU member state that has openly embraced deeper engagement in the Indo-Pacific, the Biden administration has made this outcome less likely.

It is not too late to realign the various strategies being pursued by Western powers. France, the UK, and the US may have generated headlines with moves that feel tactically savvy and emotionally satisfying. But China may turn out to be the strategic winner. Rather than fighting over submarines, Western democracies should be exploring how their Indo-Pacific strategies might complement one another on other critical fronts such as the digital economy, trade, and climate change. Achieving that kind of alignment could provide a foundation for bringing on other major partners such as Japan, South Korea, and India.

The writer is Co-Founder and Director of the European Council on Foreign Relations.

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Mark Leonard

IN THEIR NEW SECURITY AND TECHNOLOGY ARRANGEMENT WITH AUSTRALIA, AMERICA AND BRITAIN HAVE ACHIEVED TACTICAL GAINS AT THE EXPENSE OF STRATEGIC GOALS IN THE INDO-PACIFIC

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, Rusulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Impact of privatisation

Sir, Ninety-four schools across run by the Railways the country have been victims of privatisation. A report sent to the Railway Board by the Cabinet Secretariat says that the number of students in the Railways' schools in 2019 was 15,399. As a rule, the children of Railway employees as well as outside children can study in these schools. According to the Principal Economic Adviser, since the schools have a very low enrollment rate of Railways workers' children, they should be closed. It is important to note that the number of children of Railway employees between 4 and 18 years is 8 lakh and only 2% of them are studying in these schools. The government says that these schools should be closed or merged with Kendriya Vidyalayas. The other options are that these schools should be handed over to the state governments or developed through PPP model. After having closed the schools, the report does not say anything about the future of the school staff and the students? The fact is that the situation has arisen since the government announced the privatisation of the Railways.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Rhino preservation

Sir, The horns of rhinoceros are thought to be of medicinal use. India is home to approximately 80 per cent of world's rhino population whose horns are believed to be aphrodisiac. Recently, nearly 2,500 rhino horns stored in Assam government' treasuries were burnt by the authorities in the Kaziranga National Park. The event was given wide publicity apparently to send a message to the poachers that if it can burn so many rhino horns at one go it means they have no medicinal or ornamental values. China has revoked the ban on the use of "medicinal parts" of rhinoceros long ago. The problem lies in India's close proximity to China. The entire North-East and northern part West Bengal are always on high alert because of their international borders. Rhinoceros poaching is quite common in India with a rare tribe of a North-East going about killing them. Assam shares its borders with Bhutan, so the rhinoceros of Manas National Park are also in special danger. Interestingly, many former poachers have been roped in as rhino conservationists in Manas. With their deep insight on methods and materials that go into poaching, these people are doing a great job in rhino conservation.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

TRIBALS FUME OVER ZP RESERVATION

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Oct 22: Tribals have expressed displeasure over reservation of Zilla Parishad seats for the panchayat elections in Rayagada. They alleged that their interests in political and electoral representation have been completely neglected in seat reservation when a majority of the population in the district are tribals. Only elected tribals can look after the interest of tribal people, they noted.

They warned of boycotting the polls if the decision on seat reservation in some areas is not reversed.

Addressing a presser here, leaders of Adivasi Samaj, a body of tribal people in the district, made it clear that some ZP seats must be reserved for people of scheduled tribes in Kashipur. They warned of observing Kashipur bandh if their demand is not considered before the



Kashipur Zone-A has been reserved for SC women while Kashipur Zone-B has been reserved for SC male and Kashipur Zone-C for OBC people

panchayat elections.

As per 2011 census, the population of scheduled tribe in the block was the highest, but the district administration has totally ignored this fact while proposing reservation of ZP seats.

“Three ZP seats in Kashipur should be reserved for ST people. Or else, we will not allow holding elections in these seats. We will be bound to take law into our hands,” said Upendra Majhi and Gajendra Majhi.

It may be noted here that after the draft list of reservation for panchayat elections, Kashipur zone-A has been reserved for SC women while Kashipur Zone-B has been reserved for SC male and Kashipur Zone-C for OBC people.

The tribal leaders pointed out that they had met the district administration October 16 about the issue. In coming days, MLAs, MPs and observers of different political parties will be intimidated about their demand and concern.

LOCALS SEEK PATTAS FOR FOREST LAND

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sajanagarh, Oct 22: Hundreds of people in the forestland have been deprived of pattas for their dwelling places under the Forests Rights Act in Nilagiri area of Balasore. Over the years, the administration has allegedly failed to provide them pattas. As a result, they and their children are unable to avail of various government benefits.

Upset, locals led by MLA Sukant Nayak submitted a memorandum to sub-collector Harishchandra Jena Friday. These people are living in forest land at Gudibandhi, Hudisahi, Putibandhi, Gangatasahi, Kendua, Bhunala and Deshabandhi. “Records of rights for their dwelling places will ensure availability of many government benefits, apart from improving our livelihood scope,” they added.

In the absence of pattas, their kids have to face difficulties in availing caste, income and residential certificates, they alleged.

Sambalpur: Tusker poaching may be vindicated

DURING AN INVESTIGATION, FOREST DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS HAVE RECOVERED BURNED ANIMAL REMNANTS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Oct 22: The forest department which investigated allegation of a tusker being killed and its carcass being buried in Mundeidumberachua reserve forest near Tharli village under Sadar range of Sambalpur forest, has found some pieces of bones and ash.

This has come in the wake of a reports carried by Orissa POST.

The department Thursday carried out digging at a spot in the jungle and found the animal remains. After getting information, DFO Biswanath Nilambar and ACF Madanlal Sharma visited the spot.

With the recovery of animal remnants, some forest department officials and staff who are said to be involved in burning and burying the carcass are in panic, apprehending action. It has been alleged that they had burnt and buried the carcass of a tusker that was poached for its tusks to conceal the department’s inability and avoid departmental action.

The involvement of forest de-



partment officials and staff and their efforts to hush up the incident can be imagined from the way the investigation was carried out. The probe was carried out without veterinary doctor, wildlife expert, scientific team and sniffer dogs. At the same time, the officials and staff allegedly involved in burying the

carcass hastily dug a pit at the spot. Instead of digging up at four places, they dug only at one place. And the digging was not carried out in presence of higher officials.

If it is assumed that the carcass was not of a tusker, but it can’t be denied that it is of a wild animal. In that case, it was buried after

setting it on fire. Questions are rising that how the forest department staff who were on duty on that day did not get an inkling of it.

After the news spread, it was ACF Sharma who visited the spot for the first time to examine the spot on the day. He expressed the doubt of poaching since there

were wheel marks on the ground. According to an eyewitness, a decomposed carcass of a tusker was lying near a pond that has been dug for wild animals in the forest. While the carcass did not have tusks, it had injury marks. According to him, the animal had died five days ago.

It has been discussed in the locality that the forest department officials and staff got the information but fearing action for their negligence, they doused it with petrol, set it on fire and buried the remnants. Sources said, the recovered bone pieces and ash will be sent to lab to know about the animal.

Meanwhile, two cases have been registered. The first one is an unnatural death case since an animal’s remnants are recovered and the second one is in connection with setting forest on fire as there were signs of fire near the spot.

When contacted, DFO Nilambar said ACF Madanlal Sharma has been given the charge to investigate into the allegation from various angles.

Cannabis plantation worth ₹10cr destroyed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, Oct 22: A joint team of Koraput Sadar and Padua police, District Voluntary Force (DVF) and Excise department officials Friday destroyed cannabis plantation on a 10 acres in the district in the presence of a local magistrate.

Koraput police have intensified their drive against illegal cultivation and supply of the contraband. The joint team got information from a reliable source that Ganja has been cultivated on acres of land in Godiput forest of the district.

Swinging into action, the team conducted a raid and destroyed cannabis plants by setting them on fire. The total cost of the destroyed cannabis would be more than ₹10 crore in open market, a senior official who took part in the drive informed.

“We are conducting joint raids to destroy ganja plantations to stop its smuggling in the region. The special drive started Friday. This year, we target to completely destroy cannabis cultivation from Nandapur, Padua and Lamataput areas of Koraput,” Nandapur SDPO said.

Trailers with forged numbers set free

AN MVI OF CHANDIKHOLE RTO OFFICE HAS GIVEN A CLEAN CHIT TO THE SEIZED VEHICLES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/ Kalinganagar, Oct 22: Three trailers with forged registration numbers were found on the premises of Nilachal Ispat Nigan Limited (NIL) in Kalinganagar area of Jajpur. Officials of the regional transport office at Chandikhole are in a spot.

Police seized two of the trailers October 12. An junior MVI of the RTO had examined the seized vehicles Thursday. He gave the vehicles clean chit. Later, two vehicles were set free, it was learnt.

Reliable sources said the vehicles were released from police custody after owners of the trailers struck a deal with the officials of NINL police and RTO officials.

The seizure of such vehicles had



reminded a similar case that had taken place in Jajpur in 2016. At that time, 28 heavy vehicles with forged registration numbers had been seized by the local RTO.

According to reports, Gurudev Ispat Import Pvt Ltd was awarded a contract in 2019 for loading of pig iron in NINL. Three trailers of

the company were allowed into the NINL premises. However, the three vehicles were not engaged in loading, but were parked there for last two years.

Parking vehicles created doubts among officials of the NINL. The chassis numbers of the vehicles were examined through Bahan

app. It was found that the three vehicles were registered in Patiala in Punjab. As per Bahan App, the model of the vehicles was of Ashok Leyland, but Tata Motors were written on the vehicles.

It was suspected that new engines have been fitted in old vehicles. They carry out their transportation in such shady way.

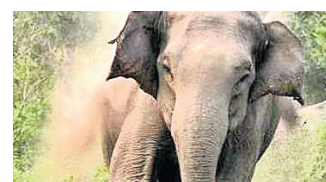
Jumbo tramples morning walker to death

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kaniha, Oct 22: A morning walker was trampled to death by an elephant on Talcher-Pallahara main road near Ekagharhia village of Harihara panchayat under Talcher range and Kaniha block in Angul district Friday.

The deceased has been identified as Jogesh Debata (70), a resident of Ekagharhia village.

Like any other day, Jogesh went out of his house early in the morning for morning walk. He was walking along Talcher-Pallahara main road when he came face to face with an elephant.



Seeing the animal, he started running to escape the attack. But the jumbo kept chasing him. Unfortunately, it caught him in its trunk and in the next moments, it put him on the ground and trampled him to death.

As the news spread, tension gripped the area as local people gathered at the spot and staged a demonstration, holding the forest department responsible for the death. They also demanded compensation for the bereaved family.

“Due to the forest department not being serious about saving people’s lives and properties from elephants, such incidents of man-elephant conflicts are happening on a regular basis. The forest department officials even don’t have knowledge where the elephant herd is camping and roaming,” angry villagers alleged.

On getting information, Kaniha tehsildar Patitapabana Debata, Kaniha ranger who is in-charge of Talcher range Nilamani Dehury and Talcher police reached the spot and tried to pacify the agitating villagers.

Staff crunch hits Angul schools



POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, Oct 22: At a time when the government is taking various steps to bring state-owned schools at par with the private schools, staff crunch has put a spoke in the wheel. Mineral rich Angul district is a case in point.

According to sources, against 1,065 sanctioned teacher posts across the district, there are only 600 teachers. The rest is lying vacant. There are 91 headmasters while the district has 110 headmaster posts.

Moreover, there are many schools in the district that are somehow managing the scene. There are no teachers for important subjects like Mathematics and Science. Out of a total of 141 Mathematics posts, 68 are lying vacant. Out of a total of 131 Science posts, 62 are vacant.

While there are a total of 279 MIL, English, History and Geography teacher posts in the district, 128 posts have fallen vacant. Out of 108 Hindi teacher posts, 46 are lying vacant. The number of sanctioned posts are classical teacher (111), PET (110), trained intermediate (37) and trained matriculate (38) teacher posts in the district. But, there are 46 classical teacher, 46 PET teacher, 30 TI teacher and 25 TM teacher posts lying vacant.

Beside teacher posts, the posts of clerks, peons and night watchmen are also lying vacant at many schools. Out of 110 sanctioned clerk

posts, 20 are vacant. Similarly, 92 peon posts out of 241 sanctioned posts are lying vacant. There are 44 such schools that don’t have night watchmen.

With Science and Mathematics posts lying vacant, teachers of Arts stream are presently taking these classes. As per the information shared by the district education office, there are 60 such schools where Arts teachers are taking Science and Mathematics classes.

Schools are getting smart class rooms, modern libraries and laboratories. “But if a school doesn’t have required number of teachers, what is the use of this infrastructure development,” observed some locals.

In this regard, vice president, Odisha Secondary School Teachers’ Association (OSSTA), Saroj Kumar Panigrahi said most schools are struggling with teaching staff shortage. From October 25, there will be full-fledged classes in the schools. But with the shortage of teaching staff, it would not be that easy to teach students.

When contacted, district education officer Niranjan Sahu said the government is taking steps to fulfill vacant teacher posts. In this regard, advertisements have also been published. Soon the problem will be solved. If this is the situation of schools in the mineral rich Angul district, the situation of schools in the tribal dominated districts can well be imagined.

RALLY FOR RIGHTS



Members of Gaon Sathi Association take out a rally over their multiple demands at Kosagumuda in Nabarangpur district, Friday

OP PHOTO



95% people don't need BJP: Akhilesh

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Oct 22: Taking a pot-shot at Uttar Pradesh minister Upendra Tiwari over his remark that 95 per cent people do not need petrol and diesel, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav Friday said the truth is that those people do not need the BJP.



INTERESTING ALLEGATION

In an interesting twist to the political drama in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party (SP) has alleged that the Congress is being positioned as the main challenger to the BJP by the Yogi Adityanath government itself. A senior SP leader, who spoke to IANS on condition of anonymity, said, "It is clear that the state government is hand-in-glove with the Congress and trying to promote Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's 'struggle'. Whether it is her visit to Lakhimpur Kheri or Agra, she is being deliberately detained so that she can derive media mileage on the issue." He further explained, "The BJP knows that the Congress is a non-player and it suits them to divert attention from the Samajwadi Party which has emerged as its main challenger. The Congress can get media headlines but not votes and that is what the BJP wants."

Tiwari had Thursday said that prices of petrol and diesel were not increased much considering per capita income and added that 95 per cent people do not need them.

"The BJP minister of Uttar Pradesh said that expensive petrol does not bother the general public because 95 per cent of the people do not need petrol. Now, even the minister will not need it as the people will make him 'paidal' (out of power). The truth is that 95 per cent of the people do not need the BJP," Yadav said in a tweet in Hindi. The SP president also asked, "Does Thar need diesel?", referring to the recent Lakhimpur Kheri incident where four farmers were allegedly mowed down by a jeep (Mahindra Thar) driven by BJP workers.

While talking to reporters in Jalaun when asked about rising prices of petrol and diesel, Tiwari had said, "Today, there are just a handful of people who travel in four-wheel vehicles and use petrol. At present, 95 per cent people don't need petrol."

"If you compare with per capita income, the prices of petrol and diesel have not increased much. Today, the opposition parties have no issues with them. You see data

before 2014. What is the per capita income after the formation of the Modi and the Adityanath governments. Today, per capita income has doubled," he had said.

Priyanka to flag off 'Pratigya Yatra' today



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

The yatras will be taken out from October 23 to November 1

Lucknow, Oct 22: Congress General secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will flag-off the three 'Pratigya Yatras' from Barabanki Saturday.

According to the Congress press release, the 'Pratigya Yatra' will commence from Barabanki in the Bundelkhand region and will end at Jhansi via Lucknow, Unnao, Fatehpur, Chitrakoot, Banda, Hamirpur and Jalaun.

Similarly, in the western Uttar Pradesh region, the yatra will start from Saharanpur and will move through Muzaffarnagar, Bijnor, Moradabad, Rampur, Bareilly, Badaun, Aligarh, Hathras, Agra and Mathura.

In Avadh region, the yatra will start from Varanasi and will end at Rae Bareilly via Chandauli, Sonbhadra, Mirzapur, Prayagraj, Pratapgarh and Amethi.

During these 'Pratigya Yatras', Priyanka will hold several meetings. Priyanka, according to party sources, is likely to make announcements like women's reservation in education and jobs, free education for women, farmer's loan waiver and rebate in electricity rates during the yatras.

She has earlier announced that the Congress will give 40 per cent of the total election tickets to women in the state.

Apart from this, she has also promised to give mobile phones and scooty to the girl students.

The Congress is also especially eyeing women voters and is making a conscious effort to neutralize caste-based politics.

UP farmers resent Haryana ban on paddy procurement

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Meerut (Uttar Pradesh), Oct 22: Farmers from western Uttar Pradesh are up in arms against the Haryana government's order of banning paddy procurement from other states, including Uttar Pradesh.

According to reports, the Haryana Police have placed a barricade at the Bidoli border and all the commuters are allowed to pass but only farmers with their tractor-trolleys have been stopped since the past 10 days.

Master Jahid, regional vice-president, BKU, said, "The Haryana Police placed barricades at the border and only farmers are being stopped. We have been selling our crops in Karnal mandi for decades and now they are stopping us. Not a single representative from the Uttar Pradesh government has tried to resolve the issue."

He said the Uttar Pradesh and Haryana governments must set up temporary grain markets on the borders so that farmers could sell their harvest every season and the ban on farmer's entry to mandis must be lifted immediately.

The Haryana Police officials have been requesting Uttar Pradesh farmers to clear blockades set up by them in the border areas.

They claim they have written orders from the state government to not let paddy farmers enter Haryana.

Elephant safari to resume in DTR

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lakhimpur Kheri, Oct 22: Tourists visiting Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) in Lakhimpur Kheri district of Uttar Pradesh will be able to again enjoy the elephant safari from November 1.

The safari was suspended last year to contain the spread of Covid-19. It was feared that the tourists could pass on the virus to the animals.

The elephant safari is one of the prime attractions in Dudhwa. A ride atop an elephant is the best way to spot rhinos

Forest department officials expect tourist footfalls to go up as compared to the previous years.

"All the roads inside the reserve have been repaired and we are expecting a better tourist turnout this season as the previous one came to an abrupt end because of the coronavirus," said Sanjay Pathak, field director, DTR.

Dudhwa normally remains open from November to June. Last year, almost 38,000 tourists visited the reserve forest, but it was shut, generating a revenue of over Rs 75 lakh.

Kheri violence: Union minister's son remanded to police custody again

AGENCIES

Lakhimpur Kheri (UP), Oct 22: Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Mishra's son Ashish Mishra, arrested for his alleged role in the Lakhimpur Kheri violence, was Friday remanded in police custody for two days.

It was for the second time that he was remanded in police custody by Lakhimpur Kheri's Chief Judicial Magistrate Chinta Ram. Besides, Mishra, CJM Ram also sent three other accused in the case - Ankit Das, Shekhar Bharti and Latif - to police custody, according to the prosecution's request for their police remand.

The two-day police remand for the four, starting from 5 PM Friday, will end at the same time Sunday. After his arrest October 9, the son of Union MoS (Home) was first remanded to police custody October 11 with the remand period starting October 12 and ending October 15. After the expiry of his first remand period, he had been sent back to the Lakhimpur Jail under judicial custody.

"The Special Investigation Team probing into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence had approached the CJM's court here again requesting police custody of Ashish Mishra alias Monu and three others - Ankit



SIT CHIEF TRANSFERRED

The Uttar Pradesh government Friday transferred DIG Upendra Kumar Agarwal, heading the SIT probing into the Lakhimpur Kheri violence, to Gonda but will continue to supervise the investigation. While transferring Agarwal to Gonda from the UP PHQ, the state police headquarters made it clear that it was a routine exercise and he will continue to head the Special Investigation Team set up to probe into the October 3 violence.

Das, Shekhar Bharti and Latif," Special Prosecution Officer S P Yadav said in a statement.

"After hearing the arguments from the prosecution and defence

counsel, the court remanded the four in police custody from October 22 to 24 for their custodial interrogation," he added.

While remanding the four in police custody, the court allowed their lawyers to watch their questioning from a distance without interfering with the investigation.

The court also asked the police to get the accused medically examination at the start and the end of their remand period.

The court had earlier Thursday remanded four other accused - Sumit Jaiswal, Satya Prakash Tripathi alias Satyam, Nandan Singh Bisht and Shishu Pal - in police custody for three days.

Accordingly, the police remand of all seven accused will end on October 24 evening.

Teachers to wear black badges

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Oct 22: The Karnataka State Primary School Teachers Association has announced that 1.50 lakh teachers across the state appointed by the state government will wear black badges while teaching students.

Shambhulinganagouda Patil, the President of the Association told IANS that teachers are seeking fulfilment of their long pending demands including promotions, implementation of 6th Pay Commission recommendations, transfer policy and others.

"The teachers have already boycotted training programmes by education department from October 4. Black badge protest is the first stage. The children will not have any effect as teachers will discharge



their duties usually. Teachers will stage black badge protests till October 29," he added.

In the second stage, between October 30 and November 10, the teachers would not submit statis-

tics regarding mid-day meal to the department as protest.

In the third stage, the teachers won't update attendance to the department. If the government still does not respond 5,000 elected members of executive committee would stage Bengaluru Chalo programme, he explained.

The teachers' association office bearers have met previous education minister Suresh Kumar in January, 2021. "The delegation has also met the new education minister B.C. Nagesh 45 days ago... the government is showing no interest to fulfill demands," Patil said.

He, however, clarified that this agitation would not affect the children and their curricular activities. Memorandums will be submitted by teachers only after the duty hours.

FESTIVAL OF LOVE



A married woman applies henna on her hand ahead of Karva Chauth in Prayagraj

UNI PHOTO

Special Covid-19 vax drive in K'taka

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Oct 22: The Karnataka government has undertaken a special vaccination drive 'lasika mela' Friday in the state capital to identify those who have not been jabbed and vaccinate them.

Special Commissioner (Health), Thrllok Chandra said 86 per cent people have been inoculated with the first vaccine dose in the city and second dose has been administered to 52 per cent citizens. To increase the vaccination drive in the city, block and lane-level vaccination has been taken up.



"Whoever has not taken the vaccine will be identified and will be vaccinated through special lasika mela throughout the city Friday, and it is urged that citizens take complete benefit of this arrangement," he added.

Chandra said that all eligible citizens in the city should take the benefit of this vaccination drive and vaccine centres should be set up for slum dwellers, street vendors, various industrial workers, construction sites, market places, bus stations, railway stations and other places and citizens must be vaccinated.

Bangalore stands second among the metropolitan cities in India after New Delhi (1,99,03,032) in terms of Covid vaccination.

The authorities have managed to administer 1,42,04,959 vaccine doses in the city.

The positivity rate stood at 0.42 per cent with a total 6,746 active cases in Urban Bangalore.

JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE DENIED

Behmai massacre: Last witness dies waiting for verdict

JANTAR SINGH, WHO DIED THURSDAY, HAD SUFFERED A GUNSHOT WOUND DURING THE BEHMAI MASSACRE CASE IN WHICH 21 THAKURS, WERE SHOT DEAD BY BANDIT QUEEN PHOOLAN DEVI AND HER GANG FEBRUARY 14, 1981

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kanpur (Uttar Pradesh), Oct 22: The last surviving witness in the Behmai massacre case of 1981, Jantar Singh, passed away in a hospital in Lucknow following prolonged illness.

District government counsel Raju Porwal, who is involved in the Behmai trial, said, "Jantar Singh was critically ill and was admitted to SGP GIMS, Lucknow. With his death, his 40-year wait for the court verdict in the case has also ended."

Porwal further said that after the death of complainant Rajaram, Jantar Singh was pursuing the case. However, his death would not make any impact on the case as his evidence had already been recorded by the court.

On February 14, 1981, Behmai village had shot into limelight when Phoolan Devi and her gang raided the village, situated on the bank of Yamuna River to avenge her humiliation and murder of her paramour Vikram Mallah.

Phoolan and her gang rounded up all the men in the village and shot them dead. A couple of villagers had also been injured in the incident.

Witness Jantar Singh had also suffered gunshot injury but had survived since he hid in a haystack. He was the main witness of the prosecution.

"Rajaram, a villager of the same village, had lodged an FIR of the case. After his death, Jantar Singh was pleading the case and used to reach court on every fixed date," Porwal said. Around half a dozen alleged dacoits, including the main

accused Phoolan Devi, have died in the past years and cases against them have been abated. One of the alleged dacoits, Posa, is in jail while accused Shyam Babu, Vishwanath and Bheekha are on bail. The case had twice reached the stage of final verdict, but judgment could not be delivered due to some technicalities.

Before delivering the judgement, the court had summoned the original case diary from the prosecution, but it was found to be missing.

Porwal said, "Though the original case diary was not traceable, a Xerox copy was on record."

Meanwhile, the presiding officer of the anti-dacoity court was transferred. Now, as per law and rules, the new presiding officer will have to hear the fresh arguments of the case. The arguments are likely to start soon.



Phoolan Devi



Jantar Singh

national

of the day quote

Gujarat Congress will be strengthened at all levels and we will certainly defeat the BJP in Gujarat in 2022 assembly polls

RAHUL GANDHI | FORMER CONG PRESIDENT

The government's intention is to ready our armed forces to any circumstances and is moving in this direction with speed

RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

Inflation is increasing because prices of petrol and diesel are increasing day by day and the central government is not bothered about it. They have no idea that people are under distress

ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Harish new AICC in-charge for Pb

New Delhi: The Congress Friday appointed Rajasthan Revenue Minister Harish Chaudhary as the new AICC in-charge for party affairs in the poll-bound Punjab, relieving Harish Rawat on his request. Chaudhary, who was the AICC secretary for Punjab till now, has also been made the in-charge for Chandigarh. The decision follows Rawat's request to the party high-command to relieve him as general secretary in-charge for Punjab affairs in view of the upcoming assembly elections his home state of Uttarakhand.

Ganja plantation busted, 1 arrested

Ahmedabad: Ganja worth ₹2.74 crore being cultivated on three plots in Dahod district in Gujarat was seized, leading to the arrest of one person while two others are on the run, police said Friday. The raid was carried out at a farm in Handi village in Singvad taluka, over 200 kilometres from here, based on a tip off, an official said.

TMC MP Susmita Dev attacked

Agartala: Trinamool Congress said Friday that party Member of Parliament Susmita Dev was brutally attacked at Amtali area near here and sustained injuries when she along with party workers and I-PAC employees was campaigning in a car for a TMC programme. Dev, a Rajya Sabha MP, was campaigning for 'Tripurar Jonno Trinamool' (TMC for Tripura) programme that was launched during the day, the party said.

Court denies bail to Sharjeel Imam

New Delhi: A Delhi court Friday denied bail to JNU student Sharjeel Imam in a seditious case lodged against him for allegedly delivering an inflammatory speech and inciting violence during the CAA-NRC protests in 2019, saying free speech cannot be exercised at the cost of communal peace and harmony. Imam December 13, 2019, had allegedly delivered a provocative speech, which, according to the police, resulted in riots two days later when a mob consisting of over 3,000 people attacked police personnel and torched several vehicles in the Jamia Nagar area in south Delhi.

2 more trekkers found dead

Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand): Two more members of an 11-strong trekking team which had gone missing have been found dead taking the death toll to seven, while a search was underway for the remaining two, officials said here Friday.



1 billion doses' sounds fancy number but the devil is in the details. Only 29 Cr people out of 139Cr are fully vaccinated, which means only about 21% are fully vaccinated. What are @BJP4India leaders celebrating for? For vaccinating just 21% of the population?

SIDDARAMAIAH | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

NEW ANNOUNCEMENT

The Supreme Court Friday said it is a settled law that juvenile claims can be raised even post-conviction and also before the top court



Can India vaccinate all adults by yr-end?

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 22: Tens of millions of Indian adults are unlikely to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 by the end of 2021, despite ample supplies, due to an unusually large gap between the doses of the most widely-used vaccine and growing complacency as cases fall.

The locally-produced AstraZeneca vaccine, which is known as Covishield, has a 12 to 16 week gap between doses, in contrast to the 8 to 12 week gap recommended by the World Health Organisation.

Based on current trends, the Covishield dosage gap means more than 200 million people will be eligible for their second dose only in late January even if all of them were to get their first shot Friday.

Meanwhile, people are growing increasingly complacent about getting inoculated as infections and deaths have fallen sharply in the



Representational image

Bengal cases double

Kolkata: The Covid-19 numbers are on the rise in Kolkata since the end of Durga Puja festivities and now the graph is rising so sharply, safe houses and quarantine centres in the city will be reopened Monday for patients who need to isolate. Kolkata, which appears to be paying the price of puja shopping and pandal hopping, reported 242 new Covid infections this Friday. Last Friday, it was 127. Of these, 150 were fully vaccinated while 15 had the first dose.

past month. The government wants to vaccinate all of the country's 944 million adults by December but some 230 million of them have yet to get even a single dose.

While the Health Ministry did not respond to requests for comment Friday, it told Reuters Monday that its immunisation experts were "actively considering the matter of dose interval between Covishield doses".

NOT A "MAJOR CONCERN" India's immunisation campaign has slowed this month despite the country amassing record stockpiles of vaccine. It comes as cases have fallen to multi-month lows in India after a record rise in infections

and deaths in April and May. India doubled the dosage interval for Covishield in May when supplies were scarce and because government experts felt a longer duration would provide better protection.

Serum Institute of India, which produces Covishield, has nearly quadrupled its capacity since April and can now produce up to 240 million vaccine doses monthly.

But health experts are not too worried about the fact that many people will not get their second doses in 2021, even though they say it would be safer for the population to be fully inoculated as soon as possible.

PM misleading the nation: Cong

The Congress Friday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi accusing him of misleading the country on vaccinations when only 21 per cent of the country's population was fully vaccinated. The opposition party asked the Prime Minister to bring out a white paper on how his government intends to vaccinate all adults by year-end, a promise made by him earlier.

GODLY TOUCH



An artist gives finishing touches to an idol of Goddess Kali ahead of Kali Puja in Dhanbad

PTI PHOTO

India, UK to boost climate initiatives

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: India and the United Kingdom have agreed to strengthen climate initiatives and further their green partnership, Union Environment Minister Bhopender Yadav said on Friday. In a bilateral meeting with a UK delegation led by Foreign Minister Liz Truss, the minister said India will support the UK COP Presidency and that the huge expectations in COP 26 include arriving at a consensus on unresolved issues of the Paris Agreement Rule Book, long-term climate finance, market-based mechanisms, etc.

"Had an engaging bilateral with the UK delegation led by foreign minister Liz Truss. Both Sides agreed to strengthen climate initiatives and further our green partnership. Assured India's support for UK COP Presidency, wishing COP26 would be the COP of action and implementation," the minister tweeted after the meeting. The UK will host the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Glasgow from October 31 to November 12. Stressing that COP26 should also initiate the process of setting the long-term climate finance for the post-2025 period, Yadav stated that India welcomes the UK COP 26 Presidency's five key initiatives on sustainable land use, energy transition, low emission, climate finance, and adaptation.

TRAI warns broadcasters

New Delhi: Telecom regulator TRAI Friday said some broadcasters are "exploiting" the freedom available for a-la-carte pricing of TV channels and warned that it will keep a "strict watch" on them and not shy away from taking action in the "larger interest" of consumers and the sector. With an increase in TV channel subscription rates "impending", the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) said in a statement that the new tariff recently announced by "these leading broadcasters" reflects their intention to raise the prices of driver and popular channels. Driver channels include general entertainment channels (GEC) and sports channels. The telecom regulator, however, did not name any broadcaster.



Bunkers set up in Srinagar to check militant attacks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Oct 22: Security bunkers are making a comeback on the city roads after nearly eight years and more paramilitary personnel are being deployed following the spate of civilian killings by militants in Kashmir over the past two weeks. Sources said constructing new bunkers and putting more personnel on the ground is being done to cut the free movement of militants. "The terrorists have shown that they are moving from one area to another within no time after committing terror crimes. It can only be checked by area domination and cutting the free movement," they said. Official sources said 50 companies of additional paramilitary forces are being inducted into the Valley to shore up the security ap-

paratus, especially in Srinagar, in the wake of the civilian killings. Similar recommendations were also made by a team of interlocutors appointed by the Centre in 2010. The team was headed by veteran journalist Dilip Padgaonkar and professor Radha Kumar and former information commissioner M M Ansari were its members. The situation had improved to such an extent that the then Union home minister P Chidambaram was believed to be favourably disposed towards repealing the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from Jammu and Kashmir in a phased manner. However, this time new bunkers have come up at places where no such thing existed even at the peak of militancy in the valley in the 1990s. Two such bunkers have come up on Barzulla bridge

Coal shortage: Rlys ramps up coal rakes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Amidst coal shortage at thermal power plants, Indian Railways has ramped up the number of coal rakes carrying the dry fuel across the country from 435 rakes per day in the end of September to 487 rakes daily as of Friday, October 22, according to data accessed by PTI.

The national transporter has also issued instructions to all zones to monitor the loading of coal from mines and increase the number of rakes being used to supply coal to powerhouses.

According to the data, out of the 378 rakes which were ferrying coal on October 1, 280 were sent to powerhouses, however, by Friday (October 22), out of a total of 487 rakes carrying coal, 391 were destined for powerhouses across the country. The remaining were diverted to other industries.

Most of the coal is being transported from Coal India Limited (CIL) with the number of coal rakes being ramped up from a total of 254 rakes on October 1, out of which 218 were for powerhouses, to 331 rakes on October 22, out of which 303 were headed to power plants.

On Thursday, the Railways ran a four-km-long train with four engines to supply coal to power plants on a "war footing". The urgency to maintain supply via special trains comes in the middle of coal scarcity reported from across the country.

In fact, sources indicate that the Railways is mulling putting into service special trains just to ferry coal similar to the service undertaken during the shortage of oxygen at the peak of the coronavirus crisis.

NCB summons Ananya again

ACTOR ANANYA PANDAY WAS GRILLED BY NCB OFFICIALS FOR NEARLY 4 HOURS IN CONNECTION WITH THE MUMBAI CRUISE DRUGS CASE



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 22: Hindi film industry actor Ananya Panday appeared before the Narcotics Control Bureau here for the second straight day Friday and was questioned for nearly four hours in connection with her alleged WhatsApp chats with Aryan Khan, son of superstar Shah Rukh Khan, arrested in a drugs case, NCB sources said.

Ananya Panday has been again called by the NCB Monday, a senior official of the central agency said. Her actor-father Chunky Panday accompanied her to the NCB office as he had done Thursday when she was questioned for the first time over chats linked to the case which relates to alleged seizure of banned drugs from a cruise ship off the Mumbai coast early this

month. The father-daughter duo arrived at the anti-drug agency's office located at Ballard Estate in South Mumbai in a car around 2.20 pm, the sources said.

The 22-year-old actor, a new entrant in Bollywood who made her debut in 2019, left the NCB office around 6.20 pm after questioning by the NCB, they said, without providing further details.

NCB Deputy Director General Ashok Mutha told media persons that Ananya Panday has been called again Monday to take the ongoing process further. Asked if the actor has spoken anything about the alleged WhatsApp chats with Aryan Khan, Jain said he can not share details related to the investigation.

To a query on getting any information about drug peddlers during her questioning, the NCB officer said he has no such information with him.

There was heavy deployment of police personnel at the NCB office, where barricades were put up as a large number of media persons had gathered outside.

The NCB is probing the cruise ship drugs case, in which Aryan Khan (23) has been arrested along with 19 others.

Aryan Khan is in jail under judicial custody and his bail plea will be heard by the Bombay High Court October 26.

UPSC: Apex court slams 'scramble' for home cadre

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: The Supreme Court Friday said that successful civil services aspirants have no right to be allocated a cadre of their choice or their home state, and also noted that before selection they opt to serve anywhere in the country "with eyes open" but later "scramble" for home cadre.

The historic judgement in the Mandal case was also cited by the apex court to observe that the candidate belonging to the SC/ST or OBC category, if found suitable by the Union Public Services Commission (UPSC) for selection on merits under general category, "shall be appointed against unreserved vacancies".

The observation of the top court came on an appeal of the Central government against a verdict of the Kerala High Court which had asked it to grant home cadre Kerala to A Shainamol, a Muslim woman IAS officer who was posted in Himachal Pradesh. A bench comprising Justices Hemant Gupta and V Ramasubramanian set aside the verdict of the High Court asking the Centre to grant Kerala cadre to the woman IAS officer. The bench also held that if a candidate hailing from reserved Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), or Other Backward



Class (OBC) category does not take benefit of quota and gets selected in the general category then later he or she cannot take recourse to reservation for getting cadre or place of appointment of choice.

"The allocation of cadre is not a matter of right. It was held that a selected candidate has a right to be considered for appointment to the IAS but he has no such right to be allocated to a cadre of his choice or his home state. As stated above, allotment of cadre is an incidence of service. "The applicant as a candidate for the All-India Service with eyes wide open has opted to serve anywhere in the country. Once an applicant gets selected to service, the scramble for the home cadre starts..." Justice Gupta, writing the 36-page judgement for the bench, said. Referring to the Indian Administrative Service (Recruitment) Rules, the bench said the procedure for allocation of

cadre is a mechanical process and admits no exception except in terms of the rules. "The State has no discretion of allocation of a cadre at its whims and fancies. Therefore, the Tribunal or the High Court should have refrained from interfering with the allocation of cadre on the argument of the alleged violation of the allocation circular," the top court said.

Shainamol secured 20th rank in the UPSC civil services examination in 2006 and she despite belonging to the Muslim OBC category was selected under the general category and was allocated Himachal Pradesh cadre after the Centre sought consent of the Himachal Pradesh government on November 13, 2007. She then moved the Ernakulam Bench of the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) which directed the Centre to allot and accommodate her against "the outsider OBC vacancy in the Maharashtra cadre by virtue of her merit over the candidate already identified and allotted the Maharashtra cadre."

Both the Centre and the IAS officer challenged the verdict in the Kerala High Court which allowed the plea of the government challenging the direction of the Tribunal to accommodate the IAS officer in the Maharashtra cadre was allowed.



PTI PHOTO

on the airport road in Srinagar. Police officials, however, did not comment on the new steps taken in the valley. Police have also snapped internet in parts of Srinagar and in a couple of areas in south Kashmir, and launched a drive against two-wheelers in the city.

IGP, Kashmir zone, Vijay Kumar had said these steps were purely related to terror violence. "Seizing some bikes and shutting down of internet of some towers is purely related to #terror #violence. It has nothing to do with visit of the Hon'ble HM," he

STRICT VIGIL

Security bunkers manned by the central armed paramilitary forces (CAPF) are being set up in many areas of Srinagar

In 2010, more than 50 security pickets and bunkers were removed in Srinagar on the recommendations made by an all-party delegation visiting Kashmir in that year

Nine civilians -- including five non-local labourers and three minority community members -- were killed by militants during the month of October

tweeted on Thursday. The internet services on a dozen towers -- mostly in the areas where non-local labourers were killed in the last week -- were snapped three days ago while police have started stringent checking of documents of two-wheelers plying on the roads.

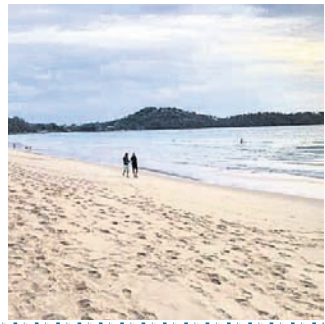
international



India and Australia are working side by side in the Quad grouping to expand vaccine access across the Indo-Pacific
SCOTT MORRISON | AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER

THAILAND TO EASE CURBS

Thailand is accelerating plans to reopen the country to foreign tourists, slashing mandatory quarantines beginning November 1 for fully vaccinated visitors arriving by air from 46 countries and territories



of the day quote

There is a very strong base between the Indo-US relationship which is of trust and that is increasing
TARANJIT SINGH SANDHU | INDIA'S AMBASSADOR TO THE US

Hard-hit businesses and low-risk facilities will be the first to benefit from eased Covid-19 restrictions starting next month
KIM BOO-KYUM | SOUTH KOREAN PM

An avalanche of legal disputes taken before the European Court of Justice is not a solution to the problem
ANGELA MERKEL | GERMANY'S OUTGOING CHANCELLOR

SHORT TAKES

16 killed in blast
Moscow: An explosion and fire at a gunpowder factory in Russia Friday killed 16 people, officials said. The Emergency Situations Ministry said the explosion hit the Elastik factory in the Ryazan region, about 270 kilometers (about 167 miles) southeast of Moscow. Officials initially said that the blast killed seven people and left nine missing, but hours later announced that all those missing were dead. One person was hospitalised with serious injuries, according to local officials.

Flood toll rises
Kathmandu: Nepal Prime Minister and his Cabinet colleagues Friday visited western Nepal -- part of the Himalayan nation hardest hit by the floods and landslides -- to take stock of the situation and ensure relief measures are being implemented. The death toll from the flooding triggered by heavy rains in the country climbed to 111 on Friday, with at least 32 reportedly being injured and 35 still missing, officials said.

Airlines suspended
Beijing: The Civil Aviation Administration of China has suspended five Chinese and international airlines after Covid-19 cases were reported on flights, Samaa TV reported Friday. According to a notice dated October 15, Authority had to take the decision after six cases of coronavirus was confirmed in passengers on Air China flight CA780 (Frankfurt to Changchun) that entered the country October 1.

Children freed
Abuja: Thirty school children, who were kidnapped from a secondary school in Nigeria's northwestern state of Kebbi more than four months ago, were released by their captors, the government said. In a statement, the Kebbi state government confirmed the release, saying that the students have arrived at the state capital Birnin Kebbi and will undergo medical screening and support before being reunited with their families, reports Xinhua news agency.

2 killed in shootout
Mexico City: Two foreigners, including one from India, were killed and three wounded in a shooting at a restaurant in the Mexican Caribbean resort town of Tulum, authorities said Thursday. Authorities said one of the dead women was from Germany and the other from India. The three wounded included two Germans and a tourist from the Netherlands. The shooting broke out Wednesday night at a street-side eatery that has some outdoor tables, right off Tulum's main strip.

BANGLADESH VIOLENCE

KEY SUSPECT TO BE GRILLED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dhaka, Oct 22: A 35-year-old Bangladeshi man, the key suspect who was arrested overnight in connection with a slew of violence against Hindus and mob attacks on temples in the country during Durga Puja festivities, would be interrogated by security agencies, police said Friday.

Iqbal Hossain was arrested from Cox's Bazar sea beach area Thursday night after a massive hunt and is suspected to be the one who placed a copy of the Quran at a Durga Puja venue in Cumilla, some 100 km southeast of Dhaka. Attacks on Hindu temples have been reported in Bangladesh since last Wednesday after an alleged blasphemous post surfaced on social media during the Durga Puja celebrations. Late Sunday night, a mob damaged 66 houses and set on fire at least 20 homes of Hindus in Bangladesh.

"We have arrested (eastern) Cumilla's Iqbal Hossain, who is the key suspect of the one week's of widespread communal unrest from the Cox's Bazar beach," a police headquarters spokesman said. He added that police and other security and intelligence agencies would now interrogate Hossain, whom the police earlier described as a "vagabond". TV footage showed Hossain was brought under heavy security es-



Social media was widely used to spread the unrest, forcing authorities to briefly suspend Facebook and internet connectivity to contain the violence

Attacks on Hindu temples have been reported in Bangladesh since last Wednesday after an alleged blasphemous post surfaced on social media during the Durga Puja celebrations

Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Unity Council said over 70 temples, makeshift puja pavilions and many Hindu households were burnt or damaged across Bangladesh in subsequent violence

corts from Cox's Bazar to Cumilla by road while officials said after initial interrogation he would be produced before a court seeking him to be placed under police remand for next several days.

"We expect the court to order him to be remanded in our custody when several other security and intelligence agencies would interrogate him as well," another police officer in Cumilla said. The violence erupted

October 13 after a copy of Islam's holy book of Quran was found at the feet of a Hindu goddess in Cumilla ahead of the Hindu community's Durga Puja.

Bangladesh Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Unity Council said over 70 temples, makeshift puja pavilions and many Hindu households were burnt or damaged across Bangladesh in subsequent violence which drew sharp international concern.

Six dead in violent clash in Bangladesh

Friday's violence occurred about three weeks after an international representative for the Rohingya refugees was shot to death in the camp in the same sub-district of Ukhiya



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dhaka, Oct 22: Two groups of Rohingya refugees clashed Friday in a camp in southern Bangladesh, leaving at least six refugees dead and 10 others injured, police said. The violence broke out in Cox's Bazar district when one side opened fire, killing four people at the scene, said Shihab Kaiser Khan, commander of the Armed Police Battalion, which oversees the camp's security.

Two others died in a hospital while they were being treated for their injuries, Khan said. It was not immediately clear why the violence broke out, but local media said the two sides were feuding to establish supremacy in the camp over an illegal drug business.

Bangladeshi officials said earlier that some Rohingya groups are involved in serious crimes such as kidnapping and ransom-seeking, and that they use the camps to smuggle drugs from Myanmar, where they lived before arriving in Bangladesh.

Khan said one Rohingya man was detained with weapons but did not provide any further details. He said police were searching the camp for other suspects.

Friday's violence occurred about three weeks after an international representative for the Rohingya refugees was shot to death in the camp in the same sub-district of Ukhiya.

Mohibullah, who was in his 40s, was a teacher who emerged as a key refugee leader and a spokesman representing the Muslim ethnic group in international meetings. He visited the White House in 2019 for a meeting on religious freedom with then-President Donald Trump and spoke about the suffering and persecution the Rohingya faced in Myanmar. Police have made several arrests related to his murder.

More than 700,000 Rohingya have fled to refugee camps in Bangladesh since August 2017, when the military in Buddhist-majority Myanmar began a harsh crackdown on the Muslim ethnic group following an attack by insurgents. They joined hundreds of thousands of others who have fled to Bangladesh over decades.

THE TERROR THREAT

Pak holds talks with Taliban govt



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Oct 22: The Taliban-led interim government in Afghanistan has assured Pakistan that it will not support or allow its soil to be used by terror outfits, including the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), against Islamabad, expressing desire to maintain good relations between the two neighbours.

The statement came during the visit of Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Director General (D G) Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI) Lt. General Faiz Hameed and other members of various ministries to Kabul.

Qureshi had expressed Pakistan's concerns over the presence of the banned terrorist outfits in Afghanistan and their continued support to their affiliates in Pakistan, who have been carrying out terror strikes and bombings in the country.

"The interim Afghan government had given a firm assurance

that it would not allow their soil to be used against Pakistan by the banned TTP and BLA," he said. Even though such assurances have been given by the Taliban in the past.

However, with the Taliban interim government in power, this particular assurance is a first from the interim Afghan Prime Minister Mullah Hasan Akhund. During the visit, the two sides held delegation level talks. As per details, discussions were done on wide-ranging subjects including security, trade, humanitarian assistance and the expectations from the international community from the Taliban led government in Afghanistan.

Qureshi, after returning from his daylong visit to Kabul, termed the visit as highly productive, stating that he could see a visible change in the current Afghan government. He said there was a clear intent to improve ties between the two countries. "I told the Afghan Taliban government that it needed to take confidence building measures to address the concerns of other regional countries on terrorism," he said. "Russia had concerns over the presence of ISIS in Afghanistan; Iran had reservations over the killing of Hazara community, while China was also concerned over the presence of East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM)."

VIRUS IMPACT



A woman wearing face mask to curb the spread of COVID-19 passes through a street cafe in Kyiv, Ukraine AP/PTI PHOTO

India hands over cross-border rail link to Nepal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kathmandu, Oct 22: India Friday handed over the 34.9km-long cross-border rail link connecting Jaynagar in Bihar to Kurtha in Nepal to the Nepal government, a move that is expected to enhance trade and commerce activities as well as people to people linkages between the two countries.

The Jaynagar-Kurtha section is part of the 68.7km Jaynagar-

Bijalpura-Bardidas rail link built under the Government of India's grant assistance of NPR 8.77 billion. Under the grant assistance of

BOOSTING TIES

India, the gauge conversion of a 34.9 kms narrow gauge section into broad gauge, from Jaynagar in India to Kurtha in Nepal, has now been completed, Indian Embassy sources said.

"Once operationalised, the cross-border rail link is expected to enhance trade and commerce activities as well as people to people linkages between the two countries," a statement issued by Indian Embassy said.

The project will pass through the historical city of Janakpur in Nepal and will further boost people-to-people connect between the two countries, the Indian Embassy said.

LIFE AT STAKE

Covid killed 80K-180K health workers till May 2021: WHO

AVAILABLE DATA FROM 119 COUNTRIES, IN THE WORKING PAPER, SUGGEST THAT BY SEPTEMBER 2021, TWO IN FIVE HEALTHCARE WORKERS WERE FULLY VACCINATED ON AVERAGE, WITH CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCE ACROSS REGIONS AND ECONOMIC GROUPINGS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Geneva, Oct 22: The Covid-19 pandemic has killed an estimated 80,000 to 180,000 healthcare workers from January 2020 till May this year, the World Health Organization (WHO) said.

The estimates are derived from a new WHO working paper based on the 3.45 million Covid-19 related deaths reported to WHO as at May 2021. "The backbone of every health system is its workforce. Covid-19 is a powerful demonstration of just how much we rely on these men and women, and how vulnerable we all are when the people who protect our health are themselves unprotected," said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, at the WHO weekly Covid-19 brief-

ing on Thursday. Available data from 119 countries, in the working paper, suggest that by September 2021, two in five healthcare workers were fully vaccinated on average, with considerable difference across regions and economic groupings.

Less than one in 10 have been fully vaccinated in the African and Western Pacific regions while 22 mostly high-income countries reported that above 80 per cent of their healthcare workers are fully vaccinated. A few large high-income countries have not yet reported data to WHO.

"We have a moral obligation to protect all health and care workers, ensure their rights and provide them with decent work in a safe and enabling practice environment.



This must include access to vaccines," said Jim Campbell, Director of the WHO Health Workforce

Department, in a statement. Besides the death of healthcare workers, the WHO is also con-

cerned that an increasing proportion of the workforce are suffering from burnout, stress, anxiety and fatigue. The global health body has called on leaders and policy makers to ensure equitable access to vaccines so that health and care workers are prioritised. Tedros noted that more than 10 months since the first vaccines were approved, "the fact that millions of health workers still haven't been vaccinated is an indictment on the countries and companies that control the global supply of vaccines".

Further, the WHO stated that the Covid-19 pandemic will drag on until 2022, much longer than it needs to, because several poor countries have not received vaccines against the deadly infectious disease. It would be a "moral catastro-

phe of historic proportions" if G20 countries cannot act quickly, said Gordon Brown, former British Prime Minister and currently WHO's Ambassador for Global Health Financing. These nations have pledged to donate more than 1.2 billion vaccine doses to COVAX. According to the WHO, so far, only 150 million have been delivered.

Moreover, just one in seven of the doses promised by pharmaceutical companies and wealthy countries are actually reaching their destinations in poorer countries, new figures from The People's Vaccine - an alliance of charities, have suggested. The vast majority of Covid vaccines have been given in high-income or upper middle-income countries. Africa accounts for just 2.6 per cent of doses administered globally.

of the day quote

Trade today requires a lot of study, deep diving into what practices other countries follow. There are a lot of non-tariff barriers that need to be studied. Wherever we will find unfair, unjust treatment to India, India will have to take reciprocal action

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

I am confident that India can become the edtech capital of the world with the private sector playing a key role and the public sector acting as a facilitator

AMITABH KANT | CEO, NITI AAYOG

My ask here is that we should not compromise on the ethos of the finance for mercurial or ephemeral gains. These gains would anyway accrue to the institutions over the long term if and when it is built on an edifice of trust and mutual benefit

M RAJESHWAR RAO | DEPUTY GOVERNOR, RBI

SHORT TAKES

Forex reserves up by \$1.492bn

Mumbai: The country's foreign exchange reserves rose by \$1.492 billion to reach \$641.008 billion in the week ended October 15, RBI data showed Friday. In the previous week ended October 8, the reserves had increased by \$2.039 billion to \$639.516 billion. The reserves had touched a lifetime high of \$642.453 billion in the week ended September 3, 2021. In the reporting week ended October 15, the rise in the forex kitty was mainly on account of an increase in foreign currency assets (FCAs), a major component of the overall reserves.

NTPC floats 1MT coal import tender

New Delhi: State-run power giant NTPC has floated a tender to procure 1 million tonne of imported coal after a gap of more than two years amid the ongoing shortage of dry fuel at electricity generating projects across the country. The state-run company had last floated a tender to procure imported coal in August, 2019, a senior official said. According to the tender document available on the web portal of NTPC, the coal procured under this tender would be used by various plants of the company.

Nykaa IPO set to open October 28

New Delhi: FSN E-Commerce Ventures Ltd, which runs online marketplace for beauty and wellness products Nykaa, has fixed a price of ₹1,085-1,125 a share for its ₹5,352 crore initial public offering, which will open October 28. The three-day initial public offering will conclude November 1, according to the red herring prospectus (RHP). The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares worth ₹630 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of 41,972,660 equity shares by promoter and existing shareholders, it added.

PVR reports net loss of ₹153cr

New Delhi: Leading multiplex chain operator PVR Ltd Friday reported narrowing of its consolidated net loss to ₹153.13 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2021. The company had posted a net loss of ₹184.06 crore in the July-September quarter a year ago, said PVR in a BSE filing. Its revenue from operations was up nearly threefold to Rs 120.32 crore during the quarter under review.



I want the UK and India to step-up their partnership in critical areas like technology, investment, security and defence. India is the world's largest democracy, a tech and economic powerhouse and a vital strategic partner for the UK

LIZ TRUSS | FOREIGN MINISTER, UK

AIRASIA TO GET INT'L FLYING PERMIT

With AirAsia India getting close to obtaining international flying rights, conglomerate Tata Sons, will in the near future, have four airlines with permits for overseas operations. The development assumes significance since Tata Sons' subsidiary Talace is expected to soon acquire Air India and Air India Express after conclusion of the share purchase agreement (SPA) with the Centre



Paytm gets Sebi nod for ₹16,600cr IPO

THIS WILL BE INDIA'S BIGGEST PUBLIC ISSUE SO FAR, A RECORD THAT WAS PREVIOUSLY HELD BY COAL INDIA, WHICH RAISED ₹15, 200 CRORE OVER A DECADE AGO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Digital financial services firm Paytm has received market regulator Sebi's approval for its ₹16,600 crore initial public offer, a source involved in the process said Friday. The company expects to hit the bourses by the end of this month and is planning to skip the pre-IPO share sale rounds to fast-track listing.

"Sebi has given approval for Paytm IPO," the source said on condition of anonymity. The company's plan of shelving the pre-IPO raise is not related to any valuation differences, the source added.

Paytm is looking at a valuation of ₹1.47-1.78 lakh crore.

US-based valuation expert Aswath Damodaran, who is a professor specialising in finance at the Stern School of Business at New York University, has valued the unlisted shares of the firm at ₹2,950 apiece.

Paytm founder, managing director and chief executive Vijay Shekhar Sharma and Alibaba group firms will dilute some of their stake in the proposed offer-for-sale. Alibaba group firm Antfin



According to the draft IPO documents, the company plans to raise ₹8,300 crore through fresh issue of equity shares and another ₹8,300 crore through the offer-for-sale route

Paytm plans to earmark ₹2,000 crore for business initiatives, acquisitions and strategic partnerships and up to 25 per cent of the total fund raised through the IPO for general corporate purposes

Paytm's merchant base grew to 2.11 crore as March 31, 2021 from 1.12 crore in March 2019, and gross merchandise value almost doubled to over ₹4 lakh crore in the financial year from ₹2.29 lakh crore in FY 2019

(Netherlands) Holding BV is expected to sell at least 5 per cent stake to bring its shareholding below 25 per cent to comply with

regulatory requirements, according to a source. As per the documents, investors selling stake include Antfin (Netherlands) Holding

RBI announces new regulatory norms for NBFCs



AGENCIES

Mumbai, Oct 22: The Reserve Bank of India Friday released a final set of tighter, bank-like regulations for the non-bank finance sector to ensure better monitoring and prevent any failures from having knock-on effects on the rest of the financial world.

The central bank has gradually moved towards tighter norms for non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) since one of the biggest firms - Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services - collapsed in late 2018 amid fraud allegations.

The following year Dewan Housing Finance Corp and Altico Capital defaulted on payments, while Srei Infrastructure Finance joined the list of defaulters in 2021.

"Many entities have grown and become systemically significant and hence there is a need to align the regulatory framework for NBFCs keeping in view their changing risk profile," the RBI said.

"The top layer will ideally remain empty. This layer can get populated if the Reserve Bank is of the opinion that there is a substantial increase in the potential systemic risk from specific NBFCs

The new framework will have a four-tier structure with only about 25 to 30 of the 9,000-plus NBFCs in the top two tiers with the strictest regulations

in the upper layer. Such NBFCs shall move to the top layer from the upper layer," RBI said.

The central bank said NBFCs not using public funds or having any exposure to consumer funds have a different risk profile and need different regulatory treatment and the RBI will draw up separate regulations for them.

It also said that exposure to capital markets, both directly and indirectly, as well as to commercial real estate will be treated as sensitive areas for NBFCs and that the firms will need to fix board-approved internal limits for such exposures separately.

It also set a ceiling of 100 million rupees per borrower for financing subscriptions to initial public offerings and allowed individual firms to set even more conservative limits if they want. The IPO funding ceiling will take effect in April, the central bank said.

PhonePe starts charging fee for mobile recharges

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: Walmart group's digital payments firm PhonePe has started charging processing fees in the range of Re 1 to ₹2 per transaction for mobile recharges done for value above ₹50, even through UPI.

The company is the first digital payments app to have started charging for UPI-based transaction which is being offered for free by its competitors. Like other players, PhonePe is also charging processing fees for payments made through credit cards.

"On recharges, we are running a very small-scale experiment where a few users are paying for mobile recharges. Recharges below ₹50 are not charged, recharges between ₹50 and ₹100 are charged Re 1 and above ₹100 are charged ₹2. Essentially, as a part of the experiment, a majority of users are either not paying anything or paying Re 1," a PhonePe spokesperson said.

PhonePe has the largest share in terms of UPI transactions among the third-party apps. The company had recorded over 165-crore UPI transactions on its platform in September, clocking over 40 per cent share among the app segment.

According to a Bernstein report released in July, PhonePe and Google Pay continue investing in providing customer incentives and spend on marketing at 2.5-3.0 times while Paytm has streamlined marketing spend from 1.2 times of revenue in financial year (FY) 2017, to 0.4 times in FY20, and now at 0.2 times of revenue (FY21), while growing merchant payments share across wallets, UPI, PoS, and online payments.

SBI donates ₹35L under CSR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 22: Under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities, State Bank of India, Bhubaneswar Circle has donated ₹10 lakh to 'Parichay Foundation' and ₹25 lakh to 'Agridedic NGO', an official said Friday.

CS Setty, Managing Director of SBI, handed over the cheques to the organisations for setting up the projects in the presence of Vidya Krishnan, Chief General Manager, Bejoy Kumar Kuzur, General Manager (NW-II) and other officials. Setty in his inaugural speech, said, "SBI always stands with the people and works for the betterment of the society."

Amar Patnaik, Member of Rajya Sabha also attended the meeting virtually. He expressed his sincere gratitude towards the noble cause. Rosalin Patshani Mishra, Founder and President of 'Parichay



Foundation', said that their organisation primarily focuses on women empowerment and girl child education. "Due to lack of electricity, the girl children are unable to study. SBI's contribution is a huge support towards the betterment of girl child education. We, on behalf of Parichay Foundation, thank SBI and their of-

ficials for this kind gesture."

D Satyanarayan, Secretary of Agridedic NGO, said they will install streetlights at temples, ponds and villages where wild animals are entering at night. "We thank SBI and their Bhubaneswar Circle team for this great support in lighting up the villages and villagers life at large in Khurda district."

Amazon wins order for halt on RIL-Future deal

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 22: A Singapore arbitration panel has rejected Future Retail's plea to quash an order from last year that put its \$3.4 billion deal with Reliance on hold, in a boost for its partner Amazon.com Inc which is seeking to block the transaction.

Amazon has been locked in a tussle with Future and accuses it of breaking contracts when it sold its retail assets to Indian market leader Reliance last year. Future denies any wrongdoing.

After the Singapore arbitrator put the deal on hold in October 2020 in an interim decision, Future had appealed to revoke it. The panel has rejected that application. Future said in a statement to Indian stock exchanges Friday.

The arbitration tribunal has



passed a decision dismissing the application to vacate the interim award. Future's statement said. The Company would be deciding on its future course of action based on the legal advice and available remedies in law.

The dispute started after Future, India's second-largest retailer with over 1,700 stores, entered into a deal last year to sell its retail, wholesale, logistics and certain other businesses to Reliance, after Covid-19 hit its operations hard.

BIZ BUZZ

Reliance profit surges 43% to ₹13,680cr in Q2

Bangalore: Billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Friday reported a 43 per cent jump in its September quarter net profit as its businesses from oil to retail fired on all cylinders, growing both sequentially and on a year-on-year basis. Net profit of ₹13,680 crore, or ₹20.88 per share, in July-September compared with ₹9,567 crore, or ₹14.84 a share, in the same period a year back, the company said in a statement. While better realisation and a sharp rise in crude oil prices benefited the old-economy business, retail saw footfalls at stores reach pre-Covid levels and per user earning from telecom business rose. Revenue was up 49 per cent at ₹191,532 crore. Reliance operates four business verticals - the Oil-to-Chemical (or O2C) business includes its oil refineries, petrochemical plants, and fuel retailing business; retail business that houses brick-and-mortar stores and e-commerce; Digital Services that cover telecom arm Jio; and New Energy business.

Yes Bank's Q2FY22 YoY net profit up over 74%

Mumbai: Yes Bank n Friday reported a rise of 74.3 per cent in its net profit for Q2FY22 on a year-on-year basis. The lender's net profit during the period under review rose to ₹225 crore from ₹129 crore for Q2FY21. However, the bank's net interest income declined on a YoY basis to ₹1,512 crore from ₹1,973 crore earned during Q2FY21. In contrast, the non-interest income rose by 30.2 per cent during the period under review to ₹778 crore from ₹597 crore. Similarly, the bank's provisions declined on a YoY basis. It fell to ₹377 crore from ₹1,078 crore. "GNPA ratio at 15 per cent vs 15.6 per cent last quarter, Overdue Book (31-90 days) lower by ₹6,000 crore Q-o-Q," the lender said in a statement. "Resolution momentum continues with ₹987 crore of Cash Recoveries & ₹969 crore of upgrades in Q2FY22." In addition, the bank reported a pickup in new business generation.

Benz rolls out new format of retailing cars

In the previous conventional model, the company was the wholesaler, the dealers were the retailers and customers buy from the dealer at a price that the dealer defines. However, under the new format, Mercedes-Benz India now nationally sets the 'best price'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 22: German luxury carmaker Mercedes-Benz Friday rolled out its new format of retailing cars in India with a 'direct to customer' model, under which it will own now the entire stock of new cars for sale.

Under its 'Retail of the Future' (ROTF), Mercedes-Benz India will retail its new vehicles via appointed franchise partners, by invoicing them directly to the customers.

Mercedes-Benz will also be responsible for processing and fulfilling the customer orders. With ROTF, there will be one nationally set price by the company, which will be uniform across the country, Mercedes-Benz India said.

The company had in June this

year announced the new approach to retailing cars in India which is highly customer centric and promised a seamless, omni-channel and transparent experience to our customers, he added.

Mercedes-Benz India said it has already received over 1,700 units of customer booking through the ROTF in the beta phase.

With the new format of retailing, Mercedes-Benz India said it will offer its customers national stock visibility transparently along with the production pipeline and there will not be any incidental

charges for the customer. Also, VIN (vehicle identification number) will be confirmed during order booking, a feature being offered for the first time in India, the company claimed adding it will offer 14 days for order confirmation.

Customers can book a car by simply paying an amount of ₹50,000 and then the order completion should occur over the next 14 days. For the first time in India, VIN number will be

ROTF is a unique customer centric business model, which caters to the evolving trends of our customers, while empowering our franchise partners by significantly reducing their financial and operational risks in the market

MARTIN SCHWENK | MD AND CEO, MERCEDES-BENZ INDIA



confirmed with order booking thus ensuring complete transparency, the company said.

Stating that ROTF will be applicable only for new car sales, Mercedes-Benz India said it will

not alter the functioning of separate business lines, including customer service, pre-owned cars and allied businesses.

All franchise partners of Mercedes-Benz India have collaborated in implementing 'ROTF' in India, sharing the company's 'customer centric' outlook and co-creating a future-ready business model, it said.

The franchise partners continue to remain brand representatives in the market and are responsible for developing customer relationships. They will be managing operational handling of customer interactions and for developing local market requirements, the company said adding its current showroom infrastructure will continue to remain the same.

India-England Test rescheduled to June



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, Oct 22: The fifth and final Test between India and England, which was suspended due to a COVID-19 outbreak last month, was Friday rescheduled to July next year, a decision that has pushed the start of a limited-overs series between the two sides by six days. The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) announced that the game has been moved to Edgbaston from Manchester and will be a part of India's white-ball tour. The game, which was called off after COVID-19 cases erupted in the Indian contingent, will be held from July 1. "With India leading the series 2-1, the concluding fifth match will now take place from July 1, 2022, at Edgbaston, following an agreement between the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)," said the ECB in a statement. Slotting the Test in the available window has ensured that the limited overs series would now start six

days later from the original plan. There is no addition to the number of white-ball games and it remains the same as originally planned. Had the suspended Test been ruled an abandonment or forfeiture by India, as was speculated extensively, the series would have ended 2-2. The three-match T20 series will begin July 7 at Ageas Bowl with Edgbaston and Trent Bridge hosting the second and third games July 9 and 10 respectively. The ODI series starts July 12 at The Oval while the Lord's will host the second game July 14 and the series will conclude at Old Trafford July 17. "Ticket holders do not have to take any action as all tickets will remain valid for the equivalent rearranged matchday at their host venue," the ECB said. "Host venues will communicate the new fixture details to ticket purchasers and the options available to them, including the time-frame for requesting a refund if they are not able to attend the new

match day," it added. Last month, BCCI President Sourav Ganguly, in an interview to this agency, had made it clear that the rescheduled match would be an extension of the series and not a standalone game. India were leading 2-1 when the match was called off after the visiting players refused to step on to the field following positive COVID-19 cases among its support staff, including head coach Ravi Shastri. After main physio, Nitin Patel, tested positive during the third Test along with Shastri, bowling coach Bharat Arun and fielding coach R Sridhar and junior physio also Yogesh Parmar returned positive tests in the lead up to the series finale at Manchester, making the Indian players jittery about taking the field. The ECB said the pre-planned events at Manchester forced the change in venue for the fifth Test. Manchester will now host the second Test against South Africa August 25 instead of Edgbaston.

Debutants Namibia seal Super 12 berth

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Sharjah, Oct 22: Gerhard Erasmus led from the front with a well-crafted unbeaten fifty to guide debutants Namibia to a historic eight-wicket win over Ireland in the first round Group A match and qualification spot in Super 12s of the ICC T20 World Cup here Friday. Erasmus (53 n o, 49b, 3x4, 1x6) guided Namibia's chase of 126 in the company of David Wiese (28 n o, 14b, 1x4, 2x6; 2/22). Namibia made a quiet start to

their chase scoring 49/1 in 10 overs. Needing 77 off the last 10 overs, Erasmus and Zane Green (24) shared 48 runs for the second wicket before the former joined hands with Wiese to help Namibia join Sri Lanka in the Super 12s from Group A. Earlier, asked to bowl, Namibian bowlers made a strong comeback after Ireland made a brisk start to restrict them to a modest 125/8. Ireland started brightly with Paul Stirling (38) and Kevin O'Brien (25) sharing 62 runs off just 44 balls for the opening stand. But Namibia



TWO SIDES OF EMOTION: An elated Namibia skipper Gerhard Erasmus reacts after winning the match, while Craig Young looks disappointed

pulled things in the last 10 overs picking up six wickets conceding just 54 runs. Jan Frylinck (3/21) was standout for the winners. **BRIEF SCORES** Ireland 125/8 (Paul Stirling 38, Kevin O'Brien 25; Jan Frylinck 3/21, David Wiese 2/22) lost to Namibia 126/2 (Gerhard Erasmus 53 n o, David Wiese 28 n o; Curtis Campher 2/14) by 8 wickets.

LAHIRU KUMARA (3/7), WANINDU HASARANGA (3/9) AND MAHEESH THEEKSHANA (2/3) WREAKED HAVOC TO THE NETHERLANDS BATTING DISMISSING THEM FOR A PALTRY 44 IN 10 OVERS. KUSAL PERERA (33 N O) THEN HELPED SRI LANKA TO SEAL A COMFORTABLE 8-WICKET WIN IN JUST 7.1 OVERS.

TODAY'S MATCHES

AUS v SA
Time: 03:30 pm

ENG v WI
Time: 07:30 pm

TELECAST
Star Sports channels & Hotstar

Sameer stuns Antonsen for last 8 spot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Odense, Oct 22: India's Sameer Verma notched up a stunning straight-game win over World No.3 Anders Antonsen to storm into the quarterfinals but it was curtains for Lakshya Sen at the Denmark Open Super 1000 badminton tournament here. Returning to action after a break, India's double Olympic medalist PV Sindhu Friday bowed out of the tournament after losing in straight games to World No.8 Korean An Seyoung in the women's singles quarterfinals. Sindhu couldn't match her fifth seeded young Korean rival, going down 11-21, 12-21 in 36 minutes. World No.28 Sameer, who had qualified for the World Tour Finals in 2018 after winning three titles, produced a sensational performance to outwit local hero Antonsen 21-14, 21-18 in a 50-minute men's singles battle Thursday. The 27-year-old from Madhya Pradesh will lock horns with 33-year-old Tommy Sugiarto, a bronze winner at the 2014 World Championships. However, it proved to be too daunting a task for Lakshya to



match Olympic champion Viktor Axelsen as he thrashed the Indian 21-15, 21-7 in a lopsided second-round contest. Coming into the match with a dismal 1-5 head-to-head count, Sameer showed great athleticism and tactical acumen to down Antonsen, a silver medalist at the 2019 World Championships. Sameer opened a 2-0 lead before increasing it to 11-6 at the break. The Indian kept his nose ahead, crushing all attempts by the Danish player to make a comeback. He comfortably sealed the opening

game with three straight points. The second game was slightly tighter but Sameer ensured that he held on to his two-point lead throughout after being 5-3 up early on. Sameer entered the interval at 11-8 and didn't allow Anderson to make any comeback. Double Olympic medalist P V Sindhu had also reached the quarterfinals Thursday, beating Thailand's Busanan Ongbamrunphan 21-16, 12-21, 21-15 in 67 minutes. She will take on fifth seeded Korean AN Seyoung in the quarters.

Odisha eves win in Senior Women's National Hockey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jhansi, Oct 22: Odisha and Punjab registered comprehensive victories over Himachal and Andhra Pradesh in their respective pool matches of the 11th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship here Friday. Chandigarh, Haryana, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh also won their respective pool games on the second day of the competition. In the first match of the day, Odisha thrashed Hockey Himachal 18-0 in Pool D, while Hockey Punjab defeated Hockey Andhra Pradesh 12-0 in Pool E. In the other Pool E match, Hockey Chandigarh defeated Hockey Arunachal 5-0, while in Pool A, Hockey Haryana eased past Puducherry Hockey with a comprehensive 25-0 victory. Hockey Maharashtra defeated Hockey Bihar 7-0 in Pool B, while in the final match of the day, Hockey Madhya Pradesh registered a comprehensive 15-0 win over Hockey Bengal.

Stage set for T20 extravaganza

ICC Men's T20 World Cup, also known as the World T20, is all set to take centrestage starting Saturday (October 23) when Australia lock horns with South Africa in a thrilling tournament opener for the main draw (Super 12s) in Abu Dhabi. The T20 extravaganza was shifted from India due to the pandemic to the UAE and Oman. Orissa POST looks at the 12 teams who will vie for the title...

INDIA
Rank: 2
Best Result: CHAMPIONS (2007)
CAPTAIN: VIRAT KOHLI
This will be final assignment for Kohli as T20I skipper of India as he has announced that he is leaving T20I captaincy post WT20. Despite winning hearts and setting records across formats, his leadership has been questioned repeatedly, only because he is yet to deliver in ICC tournaments. However, fans are expecting big this time around considering the appointment of MS Dhoni, who recently led CSK to their fourth IPL title, as mentor of the team for this event.



KEY PLAYER: KL RAHUL & JASPRIT BUMRAH.

AFGHANISTAN
Rank: 8
Best Result: Group Stage (2010, 2012 & 2016)
Captain: Mohammad Nabi
A lot of doubts had prevailed over their participation in the event after the Taliban had taken over the country, but they breathed a sigh of relief after having a chance to fight for their fans. They will be eager to show their immense talent in the tournament.

Key players: Rashid Khan & Mohammad Shahzad.



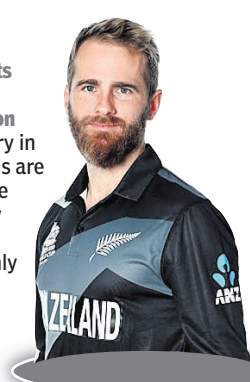
NAMIBIA
Rank: 19
Best result: None
Captain: Gerhard Erasmus
The team is well capable of driving in some attention with the fearless approach. They sealed a historic win over Ireland to earn a Super 12 berth in the event in their maiden appearance at the showpiece event.

Key players: David Wiese & Craig Williams



NEW ZEALAND
Rank: 4
Best Result: Semifinalists (2007 & 2016)
Captain: Kane Williamson
Despite their poor history in the World T20s, the Kiwis are always a formidable side and they will certainly be among the title challengers. The only issue will be the absence of their skipper Williamson for first few matches due to injury.

Key players: Martin Guptill & Lockie Ferguson



PAKISTAN
Rank: 3
Best Result: Champions (2009)
Captain: Babar Azam
Pakistan hardly enter any tournament as the firm favourites, despite having lots of talent in their domestic circuit. They are termed as 'unpredictable' due to their tendency to both implode and explode in unexpected circumstances. So, one can't afford to count Pakistan out.

Key Players: Fakhar Zaman & Imad Wasim



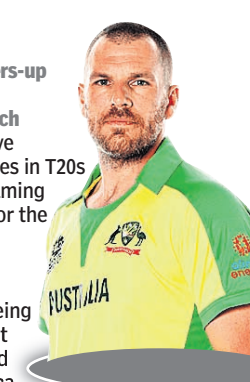
SCOTLAND
Rank: 14
Best Result: Group Stage (2007 & 2009)
Captain: Kyle Coetzer
Scotland have been one of the inspirational associate-turned-giant killers story waiting to happen for a while now. They will certainly look to make a statement after scripting an upset win over Bangladesh in the Qualifiers.

Key Players: Richie Berrington & Mark Watt



AUSTRALIA
Rank: 7
Best Result: Runners-up (2010)
Captain: Aaron Finch
The Kangaroos have endured tough times in T20s of late but after naming an all-star squad for the tournament hopes have swelled. Considering their recent form and being pitted against West Indies, England and in-form South Africa, few would make them favourites to get out of their group let alone win the tournament.

Key players: Glenn Maxwell & Marcus Stoinis



ENGLAND
Rank: 1
Best Result: Champions (2010)
Captain: Eoin Morgan
England look as good a chance as any side ever has to pull it off something historic - holding ODI and T20 World Cups. England may not be at their full strength going into the tournament, with several notable players (especially Ben Stokes & Jofra Archer) absent, but write them off at your own peril.

Key Players: Dawid Malan & Jos Buttler



SRI LANKA
Rank: 10
Best Result: Champions (2014)
Captain: Dasun Shanaka
They are struggling to make any mark on international stage for past few years. They had a roller coaster of a journey before entering the tournament. Lack of consistency in batting and pace bowling would cause problems for them.

Key Players: Dhananjaya de Silva & Wanindu Hasaranga



BANGLADESH
Rank: 6
Best Result: Super 8s (2007)
Captain: Mahmudullah
Over the years, Bangladesh have done enough to shed the tag of underdogs. They came into the tournament with nine T20I wins in the calendar year, only behind South Africa (12). They hit a wall suffering a loss to Scotland in the Qualifiers. So only time will tell, how far can they go.

Key Players: Shakib Al Hasan & Mustafizur Rahman



SOUTH AFRICA
Rank: 5
Best Result: Semifinalists (2009 & 2014)
Captain: Temba Bavuma
Few teams have endured as much heartbreak at ICC events as the Proteas. However, this time they are ready to go all the way in the midst of the best active winning streak (7 games) in T20Is with key players in serious form.

Key Players: Quinton de Kock & Anrich Nortje



WEST INDIES
Rank: 9
Best Result: Champions (2012 & 2016)
Captain: Kieron Pollard
When it comes to T20s, WI are a force to reckon with. Having lifted the trophy twice, the Caribbean side is aiming for a third title. The side is studded with match-winners and many back them to go a long way.

Key Players: Shimron Hetmyer & Andre Russell

