



RASHMIKA'S CHALLENGES

Actor Rashmika Mandana talks about the hardest things that she has to do for a film

LEISURE

P2



IMRAN APOLOGISES

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan finally apologises in court for his remarks against a female judge

INTERNATIONAL

P10



SECOND T20I TODAY

Jasprit Bumrah likely to come in as India look to level the three-match series when they face Australia in the 2nd T20I

SPORTS

P12

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL

They sacked us for moonlighting. HR said we are software engineers and not some politicians

SHORT TAKES

Finally OCS in Odia

BHUBANESWAR: The Odisha government has taken the decision to conduct OCS examinations in Odia language. A letter to this effect has already been sent to the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) by the General Administration department of the state government. The OPSC has been asked to prepare questions both in English and Odia with the candidates having the option of giving the answers in any of the two. The aspirants can speak in Odia during the interview as well. With this new development, candidates appearing October 16 in the preliminaries of OCS can write their answers in Odia.

₹ hits 7-month low

MUMBAI: The rupee plunged by 83 paise – its biggest single-day loss in nearly seven months – to close at an all-time low of 80.79 against the US dollar Thursday after the US Federal Reserve's interest rate hike and its hawkish stance weighed on investor sentiments. Moreover, the strength of the American currency in the overseas market weighed on the rupee. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 80.27, then fell further to an all-time intraday low of 80.95 against the dollar. It finally ended at 80.79, down 83 paise over its previous close of 79.96. The rupee suffered its biggest single-day fall since February 24 when it had declined by 99 paise. **P11**

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		
SENSEX	59119.72	↓ 337.06
NIFTY	17629.80	↓ 88.50
CURRENCY		
DOLLAR	81.15	↑ ₹0.94
EURO	79.82	↑ ₹0.30
COMMODITY		
GOLD	₹50,064	↑ ₹621
SILVER	₹57,987	↑ ₹689

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP		
MAX	33.7°C	34.0°C
MIN	25.3°C	25.2°C
Humidity	89%	91%
Rainfall	4.9mm	1.2mm
Forecast		
Light rain likely		

₹2.7K crore for irrigation

Funds increased to ₹875.78 crore for development of infrastructure at two hockey World Cup venues

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: In an effort to enhance irrigation facilities in Odisha, the State Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik approved Thursday tenders of more than ₹2,700 crore for execution of several projects.

The Cabinet has approved the financial bids for construction of 40 lift irrigation projects with intake points on different rivers in the districts of Keonjhar, Kalahandi, Bolangir, Bargarh, Gajapati, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Angul and Cuttack.

These projects will be executed at an investment of ₹1,879.61 crore including maintenance and operational costs. These projects are likely to be completed in three years, Chief Secretary Suresh Chandra Mahapatra informed after the meeting.

Similarly, the panel has also approved the financial bids for execution of pressurised underground pipeline (UGPL) irrigation network system for the left command of lower Suktel irrigation project with distribution network. A tender worth ₹637.14 crore was approved for this project, which will be completed in 30 months.

Another tender of ₹201 crore has also been approved for construction of integrated barrage (in-stream storage structure) across Kochila river near Kuturia village in Bhadrak district and across the Baitarani river near Dhubil village of Jajpur district, Mahapatra informed.

This storage structure will control the flood situation in Kochila river and will rejuvenate the

₹510cr sanctioned for MLA quarters

Bhubaneswar: The State Cabinet approved Thursday a tender worth ₹510 crore for construction of 195 Type-VI and 105 Type-VII quarters at MLA Colony and GA Land in Unit-IV here on a turnkey basis. The lowest quoting bidder M/s KEC International Ltd has been awarded the work, which is targeted for completion within a period of 30 months, informed Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra after the meeting.

Baitarani river: It will also fulfil drinking and domestic requirements of the people of Dhamnagar block of Bhadrak district and Dasarathpur block of Jajpur district, Mahapatra added.

The Cabinet has also decided to enhance the funding for infrastructure development and modernisation of the Kalinga Stadium in the state capital and Birsu Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela. The estimated cost for the completion of the projects has been enhanced from ₹432.45 crore to ₹875.78 crore.

Out of the revised project cost, the Cabinet approved ₹562.58 crore from budgetary allocation of the State government spreading across three financial years starting from 2020-21. The remaining amount is to be funded through District Mineral Foundation, (DMF) Sundargarh, Odisha Sports Development Fund (OSDF) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund. The entire project is scheduled to be completed by December 2022. **P3**

Centre heat on PFI; over 100 nabbed

■ The PFI was formed in 2006 when 3 like-minded outfits from TN, Kerala and Karnataka started an organisation for the empowerment of Muslims

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 22: In near simultaneous raids Thursday across the country, a multi-agency operation spearheaded by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) led to the arrest of 106 activists of the Popular Front of India (PFI) in 11 states for

allegedly supporting terror activities in the country, officials said.

The maximum number of arrests were made in Kerala (22) followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka (20 each), Tamil Nadu (10), Assam (nine), Uttar Pradesh (eight), Andhra Pradesh (five), Madhya Pradesh (four), Pondicherry and Delhi (three each) and Rajasthan (two). Among those arrested are 14 office-bearers of the PFI.

According to officials, the arrests were made during the raids which have been termed as the 'largest-ever investigation process till date'. Details of the arrested activists were not available immediately, but officials said the arrests were done by the NIA, the ED and the police forces of 11 states so far.

swimmers, but even then in such situations people tend to lose their cool," Puri added.

As per locals, students from Bakeli, Pondi, Kodayali, Khada, Manpur and some other villages

LIVING ON A KNIFE'S EDGE: The absence of a footbridge forces people of five villages in Liligarh panchayat of Gajapati district to cross the swollen Asadihamba river while putting their lives at risk everyday as they attend to their daily chores (**Report P5**)

OP PHOTO

Panic button must for all public transport vehicles

All vehicles with OD number plates to also have location tracking device for safety of women and children

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: With an aim to enhance the security of women and children travelling in public transport vehicles, the Odisha government has made it mandatory the installation of vehicle location tracking (VLT) devices with panic button. All new public transport vehicles will have to install the system from January 1, 2023.

The State Commerce and Transport department has recently issued a notification in this regard. As per the notification, all public transport vehicles having yellow number plates to be registered on or after January 1, 2023 will have to comply with the requirement at the time of registration.

Similarly, such vehicles registered on or before December 31, 2022, will have to install the devices by March, 2023. The Transport Commissioner will issue detailed guidelines and process for fitment

Command centre for tracking public transport vehicles to come up in Bhubaneswar
Quick response police teams to act in emergency situations

of VLT device and panic button, said Joint Commissioner Road Safety department, Sanjay Kumar Biswal here Thursday.

All commercial vehicles including passenger buses, goods carriers, mini-buses, school buses, cabs/taxis and e-vehicles will compulsorily be equipped with the VLT gadgets for the safety of women travellers,

Biswal stated.

Women in distress can press the emergency buttons near their seats and expect quick response from the police. A Command and Control Centre (CCC) will receive the SOS immediately after a person in distress presses the panic button. It will immediately alert the police about the location of the vehicle and appropriate action will be taken accordingly the official informed.

The Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways earlier had mandated that VLT devices and emergency buttons be fitted in all public service vehicles with effect from April 1, 2018. Since then the Centre has empowered the states to implement this rule through notification.

The Centre has been providing financial assistance from the 'Nirbhaya' fund to states to install VLT devices and emergency buttons in the public transport vehicles. The Centre and State have shared the costs at 60:40 ratio, a source said.

UNABATED SUICIDES IN BHUBANESWAR

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Suicide cases in the Odisha capital continued unabated with another young woman ending her life Thursday at her rented flat in Pahala locality. The deceased has been identified as Sujata Rath, a resident of Nayagarh district. This is the fourth death by suicide in the last two days in the Odisha capital.

Sujata was staying with her family in a flat at Surekha Vatika apartments near Hanspal under Pahala police limits. She recently shifted to another flat in the same complex with her alleged boyfriend and business partner.

Sources said, Sujata's live-in partner had left the flat three days back. Her family members got worried when she did not respond to their calls Thursday. Sujata's kin then went to her flat which was locked from inside. They broke into the flat when she did not open the door despite repeated knocking.

One of the family members then spotted her body hanging from the ceiling fan in one of the rooms. They informed the Pahala police station. Personnel from the Pahala PS reached the spot, brought down the body and sent it for post-mortem. Police have also started an investigation into the matter after registering an unnatural death case (12/22) in this regard. However, no complaint has still been filed against the deceased's live-in partner, police informed.

Police also said that efforts are on to locate Sujata's partner. They suspect that Sujata took the tragic step after suffering lossess in her business.

NABARANGPUR AS PUNISHMENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 22: Odisha government's Health and Family Welfare department transferred Thursday the chief district medical officer (CDMO) of Keonjhar, Dr Sujata Rani Mishra to Nabarangpur. This development came after 13 crib deaths were reported from the Keonjhar district headquarters hospital (DHH) in 18 days. Senior paediatrician Dr Kishore Kumar Prusty has replaced Dr Mishra as the Keonjhar CDMO.

The transfer order came four days after a huge controversy erupted over the crib deaths with the kin of the deceased alleging that the newborns had died due to medical negligence.

Opposition parties had lambasted the state government over the issue. BJP leader Mohan Majhi has sought a judicial probe into the death of the cribs.

Majhi said Thursday that just by transferring the CDMO will not serve any purpose. He asserted the need to improve healthcare facilities at the DHH. "We demand an investigation into the alleged medical negligence due to which the newborns have died. Stern action should be taken against those responsible," Majhi had said.

Continued on P4

24 students defy death after boat capsizes

AGENCIES

Anuppur, Sept 22: Twenty four students showed a lot of heart and courage Thursday after the boat they were travelling in capsized in the Sone river in Anuppur district of Madhya Pradesh. They did not lose their cool and beat all odds to swim to the shore, district officials informed. In fact, if sources are to be believed, the 24 students attended classes at their educational institution, before returning home in another boat later in the day.

The incident took place at 10.30am in Chachai area, some eight kilo-

metres from the district headquarters, Anuppur sub-divisional magistrate Kamlesh Puri told mediapersons.

"All 24 students in the boat jumped off it and managed to swim to safety. The cause of the boat capsize is being investigated. The students were on their way to their educational institution when the accident took place," Puri said.

"I really have to praise their courage and presence of mind. They did not panic and constantly shouted words of encouragement to one another as they swam ashore. It helped that all of them are good

leisure

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

You are ever eager to socialise, and today especially, you may want to mix business with pleasure. You will be welcomed to join in group activities because you can work and play with equal enthusiasm. In fact, you may learn a lot from such a healthy exchange of ideas, says Ganesh.

TAURUS

Ganesh finds this an excellent day for managers and administrators. If you are one, the results you will achieve by the end of the day will far exceed the efforts you put in. This is mainly because your subordinates will be enthusiastic, compliant and cooperative. You will be focusing on the elements of leadership and team work and will use them resourcefully.

GEMINI

Routine work bores you, and today you will go all out to break free from the shackles of boredom. The results, however, may not be as dramatic. You will have to depend on your children, if any, to rescue you from the tyranny of routine. Monetary gains can be expected either in the form of inheritance of ancestral property or as increment in your basic salary.

CANCER

You may feel like flaunting your so-called superior social and financial status today. Chances are that all that gas about how successful you are may end up exploding in your face, and you may end up spending a lot more than you would have liked.

LEO

Your natural self-confidence and capability will help you attain a position of strength today. As a result, all your tasks will be completed easily and you will reap rewards greater than your expectations, says Ganesh.

VIRGO

You will be faced with serious financial problems today. You may even have to pay through your nose to get what you desire. Later in the evening, you might accomplish some short-term goals. Ganesh predicts that some vital business agreements will end your day in high spirits.

LIBRA

Ganesh says you will be able to improve your relations abroad. There will be good news coming from friends or relatives living abroad. Your working ability and efficiency will make you popular in the office today. In the day today you shall have a variety of good and bad experiences

SCORPIO

You might find your spirit sagging as worries cloud your thinking. Small things might probably bother you in a big way. Do not let them bog you down as life is all about mind over matter. As the day progresses, things will begin to look up. Take a break from the rigmarole if stress begins to take a toll on you, advises Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS

Ganesh foresees a day full of promises. People in the creative field, especially artists are going to benefit more. Radio jockey and television anchors can make a note of this day in their diary, as it may serve as a memorable day, says Ganesh.

CAPRICORN

You have projected yourself as a confused individual. You may have a tendency to remain in a double mind. But, today you'll come up with a very specific plan that will surprise many of the people around you. Be clear about what you want to do in life, how you want your life to be and make sincere efforts to achieve it, guides Ganesh. Rest assured, success shall be with you!

AQUARIUS

You roar with absolute bliss today! Simplicity is your new avatar, and naturally, friends and acquaintances are mystified. You may wish to commune with the higher spirit and will seek solace in a quiet temple. Ganesh approves and predicts peace in plenty.

PISCES

Staying afloat needs about as much effort as swimming. Cryptic as this may sound, what it means is you need to constantly reinvent yourself if you wish to keep going. You will shine in your profession only if it is also your passion, says Ganesh.

EMMA D'ARCY SET TO PLAY ADULT PRINCESS RHANYERA IN *HOTD*

Actress Emma D'Arcy is set to debut as the adult princess Rhanyera in the sixth episode of *House of the Dragon*. She recently spoke about how she did her own stunts and enjoyed the process in the series.



DiCAPRIO, HADID 'ARE INTO EACH OTHER'

Hollywood star Leonardo DiCaprio and Gigi Hadid are "very into each other." The actor is reported to have been dating the 27-year-old supermodel since splitting from Camila Morrone back in the summer of 2022 after five years of dating.



Janhvi names most stylish stars of showbiz

Mumbai:

Janhvi Kapoor often makes heads turn and hearts flutter with her glamorous appearance at the events.

In one such event when she was asked to name the most stylish stars of the industry Janhvi was quick to quip, "I actually think Ahan Shetty dresses really well. Of course, then there is Ranveer (Singh) who has made such an identity that everyone waits to see what he will wear today and he never disappoints."

While speaking about the actresses, Janhvi went all praise for Kareena Kapoor Khan. She said, "I think Kareena ma'am (Kareena Kapoor Khan). Because whatever she wears, however she wears, whether it is outside the gym or on the red carpet or in a movie, she wears it with so much confidence. I just can't stop looking at her."

Janhvi explained that she refrained from naming Sonam Kapoor, otherwise she would have been called out for being unfair, since Sonam is her cousin.

On the work front, Janhvi Kapoor will reunite with Rajkumar Rao for *Mr & Mrs Mahi*. Apart from this, she also has Nitesh Tiwari's *Bawaal* with Varun Dhawan.

The film has flavour of comedy, family drama, romance and colour and has been directed by actor-director-writer Anand Tiwari. The film will drop on Prime Video October 6.



Rashmika on hardest thing to do for a film

Mumbai: Southern sensation Rashmika Mandanna, who is all set to make her Hindi film debut with *Goodbye* starring megastar Amitabh Bachchan, said that for her, dubbing in Hindi was a little challenging.

Rashmika is playing the role of Tara Bhalla in the Vikas Bahl directorial. She is fierce, she is amusing and she also questions every stereotypical decision. She believes in logic but ends up understanding the importance of emotions.

The film also marks Rashmika's first time in dubbing an entire movie in Hindi.

She said: "Dubbing is a very difficult task for me, all the time and in all the languages. It is the hardest thing that I have to do for a film. For me, dubbing in Hindi was a little challenging but at the same time, I also learnt a new language. I have one more language in my kitty."

Goodbye is a story that touches every emotional chord in your heart and makes you realise the importance of your loved ones along with the downturns of life. Rashmika will also be sharing screen space with Neena Gupta, Sunil Grover, Pavai Gulati, Ashish Vidyarthi, and Elli AvrRam in the film.



Shanaya's attempt to seek attention

Mumbai:

Shanaya Kapoor took to her Instagram handle and shared series of photos from her latest indoor photoshoot Wednesday. She wore a blue cutout bodycon dress with small half-bun hairstyle.

Shanaya captioned her pictures, "There is a shade of blue for every girl." Her mother Maheep Kapoor dropped blue heart emojis on her post and best friend Suhana Khan wrote, "Stunning."

Anjini Dhawan, niece of Varun Dhawan commented, "Means why do you ask if you're going to post all." To which, Shanaya replied, "I want attention."

Shanaya Kapoor is the daughter of

Maheep Kapoor and Sanjay Kapoor. She started her Bollywood career as an assistant director with the film Gunjan Saxena: The Kargil Girl, which was released in 2020. Shanaya is all set to make her acting debut with *Bedhadak*. She will start filming next year. In the movie, she will be seen alongside Lakshya and Gurfateh Pirzada.

"I am extremely grateful and humbled to join the Dharma Family with #Bedhadak - directed by the brilliant Shashank Khaitan. I can't wait to kickstart this journey, I need all your blessings and love," she captioned in a previous post. *Bedhadak* will be directed by Shashank Khaitan.

AGENCIES

Ekaa's solo play fest concludes

EMINENT THEATRE PERSONALITY AND NSD ALUMNUS DOLAGOVIND RATH WAS HONOURED WITH FIFTH ASIM BASU SAMMAN

Bhubaneswar: City-based theatre troupe Ekaa's two-day solo play festival here at Bhanjakala Mandap, came to an end, Thursday.

On the final evening, Mirror theatre troupe of Bhubaneswar presented Odia play *Birangana Saredei*. Uma Saha performed the play, written by Kabitilaka Guru Artatrana Satpathy and directed by Rabi Tripathy. Rangaloka of Pipili staged the other play of the festival Bandi, written by Tushar Patnaik. It was directed and performed by Duryodhan Sahoo.

Eminent theatre practitioner and NSDian Dolgovind Rath was honoured with fifth Asim Basu Samman, instituted in the name of legendary painter, actor and theatre personality late Asim Basu. He was given a memento and cash award of Rs 10,000.



PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

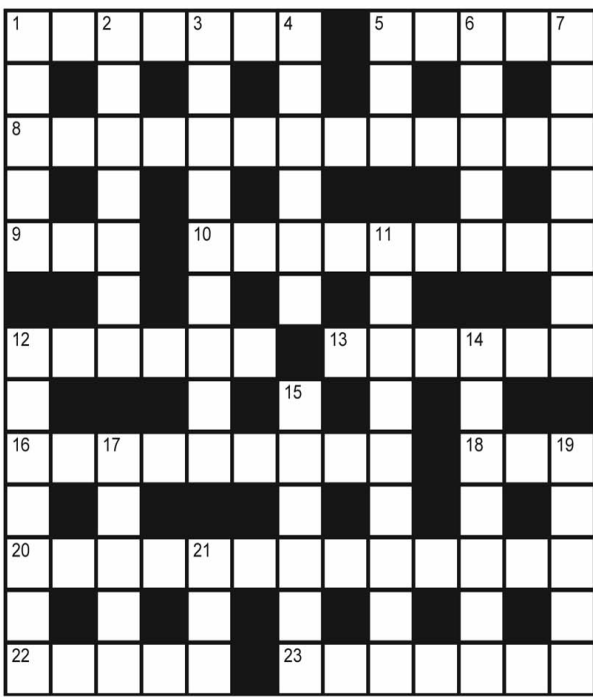


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



Across

- Tasteless
- Scale
- Disneyland, e.g. (9,4)
- Unagi, at a sushi bar
- Junket
- Dunce (Yiddish)
- People overthrown by Cortes in 1519

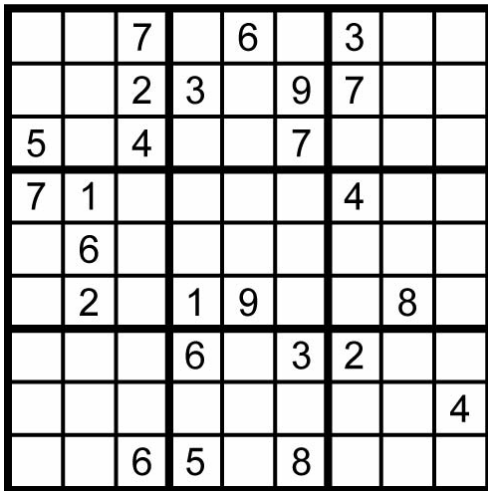
- Moving staircase
- Increases
- Full of sorrow
- Little ones
- Duchy

Down

- Choleric
- Suppress
- Step-by-step
- Soak
- Film director's cry
- Basra native
- Swimwear
- Mongrel hog
- Frozen dessert
- Made like Krakatoa
- Inscribed
- Type of watcher
- Sin city
- German resort

SUDOKU

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

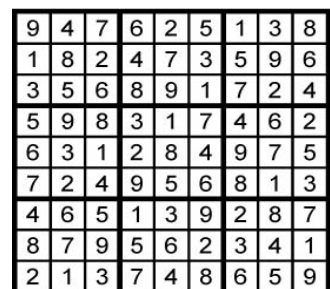


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

Security, extra costs blamed for early closure of chemist shops

ARINDAM GANGULY, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Medicine shops are one of the key emergency services that remain open 24x7 in many cities across the world and India but the scenario in Bhubaneswar is quite different. Here, people in emergency won't find a drug store open beyond midnight, except for those on the premises of hospitals.

When asked about the reasons behind early closure of the shops, some shop owners cited security as the major challenge while some others said it would entail additional expenditure as they have to hire more number of pharmacists to man the shops at night.

Speaking on the issue, Amrit Pattojoshi, a doctor and health expert, said, "24x7 service by medicine shops is very much necessary because in cases of certain medical emergencies like diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fever and blood pressure, and especially when it happens at night, one requires medicines immediately. So, 24-hour chemist shops would definitely come to the rescue of these people."

"Since Covid-19 is still with us, meeting doctors at hospitals is not that easy. Nowadays, doctors treat and see patients via phone and through online and prescribe medicines. So, in that case 24-hour medicine shops are very much needed," he added.

He said that chemist shops are available in every corner of the City and it's more important that they remain open till late night because it is far more convenient for the patients to get medicines from a shop rather than going to a hospital for small emergencies. The government can open such 24-hour facilities in different parts of the Capital city. Moreover, ordering medicines online is expensive as you have to order in bulk.



24X7 service by medicine shops is very much necessary because in cases of certain emergencies like diarrhoea, abdominal pain, fever and blood pressure, and especially when it happens at night, one requires medicines immediately

AMRIT PATTOJOSHI | HEALTH EXPERT



Opening medicine shops for 24 hours is not financially viable for shop owners as it requires hiring of more number of pharmacists and other staff

P SATYANARAYAN | PRESIDENT, UTKAL CHEMISTS AND DRUGGISTS ASSOCIATION

Utkal Chemists and Druggists Association president P Satyanarayan said that opening medicine shops for 24 hours is not financially viable for shop owners as it requires hiring of more number of pharmacists.

Shambu Nath Swarup of Apollo Pharmacy at Jaydev Vihar said, "Security is a major concern. Usually we open the shop till 11pm. It is not safe to keep money at shops during night."

Sai Krishna of SAI Medicines at Nayapalli here, said, "Every sector in the healthcare industry requires varying levels and methods of surveillance and security. A hospital

is much different from a chemist shop. Although a medicine store is much smaller than a hospital or clinic, it still faces the risks of break-ins, burglaries, vandalism and physical assault."

Unlike bigger hospitals, there are limited people in these shops to tackle such offences, he added.

Raising concern over inconveniences faced by people to find a medicine store in the city late at night, Sagar Kumar, a city resident, said that in major cities, 24x7 medical shops or chemist shops are available but here this is missing. "We hope the authorities will take steps in this direction," he stated.



NEW ACADEMIC YEAR

Plus II classes for 2022-23 academic session resumed at Kamala Nehru Women's College in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

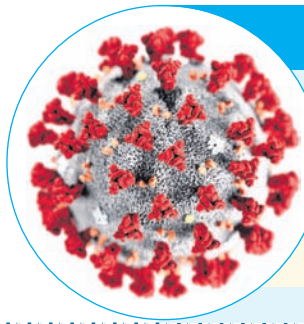
ECOR to run spl trains from Oct

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Keeping in view the demands from the passengers and to clear additional rush in regular trains, East Coast Railway (ECOR) has decided to run special trains from and through the ECoR Railway jurisdiction and extend the services of few special trains.

The services of special trains which have been extended are: 02832 Bhubaneswar-Dhanbad Special Express and 08439 Puri-Patna Special Express.

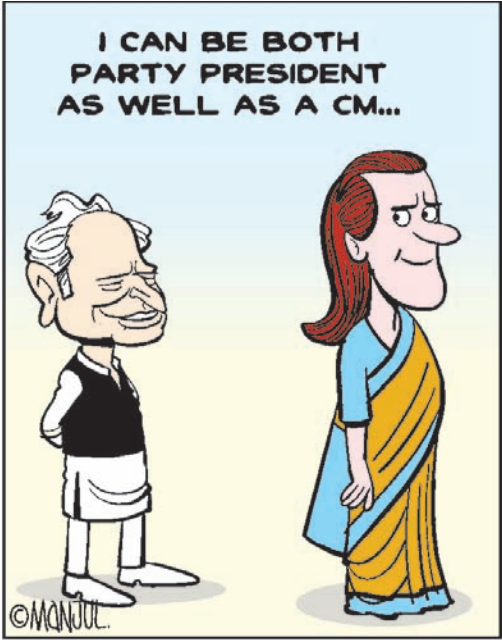
This apart, a new special train between Puri and Sealdah (Kolkata) has been started. The special train 03101 Sealdah-Puri Special Express will leave from Sealdah at 2350hrs (11:50pm) every Saturday from October 1 to 29, 2022, while from Puri, it will depart at 1550hrs (03:50pm) every Sunday from October 2 to 30, 2022.



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	61,88,07,415	59,87,12,985	65,35,210
India	4,45,50,454	4,39,78,271	5,28,429
Odisha	13,32,533	13,22,095	9,186

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Bihar's help sought to check fake drug supply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: The Odisha government has sought the help of Bihar to stop supply of fake medicines from the neighbouring state, official sources said.

The state government's action in this regard came after huge quantities of fake tablets used to treat high blood pressure, was seized during raids by officials of the state drug controller in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar recently.

Following hue and cry, the Commissionerate of Police, Bhubaneswar-Cuttack, has arrested Sanjay Jalal, owner of Puja Enterprises, and Rahul Syal, proprietor of VR Agencies, over their alleged involvement in the supply and sale of the fake medicines.

As per the allegations, counterfeit drugs in the brand names of popular anti-hypertension drugs—Telma-40 and Telma-AM—had been sent to several drugstores in Cuttack, Bhubaneswar, Balasore



Odisha's drug controller has requested his counterpart in Bihar to provide the details of supply made to the Gaya-based supplier

and several other places in the state.

These two drugs were found to be spurious as per Drugs and Cosmetics Act based on report received from original manufacturer.

"The said drug was supplied to Odisha by a firm named Balaji Drug Point, Jail Press Road, Gaya,

However, Odisha has not so far received any feedback from the Directorate of Drugs Control, Bihar till date

Bihar," Odisha's Health and Family Welfare secretary wrote in the letter to Additional Chief Secretary, Health Department, Bihar.

The letter also mentioned that Odisha's drug controller has already requested his counterpart in Bihar September 7, 2022 to provide the details of supply made to

the Gaya-based supplier.

However, Odisha has not so far received any feedback from the Directorate of Drugs Control, Bihar till date. "In this context, Bihar Drug Controller may be instructed to submit reply of Odisha for expediting the investigation," the letter said.

"You will appreciate that matters related to spurious drugs must be attended to with utmost urgency in larger public interest as the above mentioned drugs are used in blood pressure," said the letter.

Meanwhile, a team consisting of two officers accompanied by police officers has been deputed to Bihar to carry forward further investigation in this matter.

Hence, it is requested that necessary instructions may kindly be issued to the concerned authorities to extend their cooperation to the team deputed for the purpose so as to take things to a logical conclusion, the Odisha government said.

Cabinet nod to land for three institutions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: The State Cabinet Thursday decided to allocate required land for two Central institutions and Rajendra University, Bolangir.

The government has sanctioned lease of 5 acres of government land free of premium for establishment of the Central Research Institute for Homeopathy (CIRH) at Jatni in Khurda district.

Similarly, 3.125 acres of land has been allotted for establishment of a branch of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC) at Andharua on the outskirts of Bhubaneswar.

The Cabinet has decided to provide 50.437 acres of land in favour of Rajendra University in Bolangir for infrastructure development.

Moreover, the panel has decided to widen & strengthen Sonapur-Binka-Rampur -Dunguripali road

in Subarnapur district with a cost of Rs 87.07 crore. A target has been set for completion of the work in 18 months. This would ensure better connectivity and reduce traffic congestion. It will usher in industrial and economic development of Subarnapur district, said Chief Secretary SC Mahapatra.

With a view to attracting quality professionals to make tourism as an engine of economic growth, the Tourism department has proposed to restructure the Odisha Tourism Service (OTS) cadre. The government also proposed to divide the entire destinations of the state into tourism divisions.

The tourism destinations of the state have been proposed to be divided into seven divisions and one division to function at the national capital. Each tourism division will be headed by an OTS cadre officer in the rank of joint director or deputy director. The entire



tourism destinations of 30 tourism districts shall be kept under these seven tourism divisions for effective management, said Mahapatra.

The Cabinet, once again, extended the licence of the fair price shop (FPS) dealers for another six months. The public distribution system (PDS) is managed by 13,630 FPSes out of which 6,562 are institutional dealers and 7,068 are private dealers.

FPS licence granted to dealers

was valid from April 1 to September 30, 2022. Now, the licences were extended for a further period of six months - from October 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023.

This will facilitate renewal of existing FPS licences if there is no genuine public complaint or no action has been initiated under Essential Commodities Act against the existing dealer, sources said.

In an aim to ensure adequate supply of limestone to local in-

dustries, the Cabinet has decided to bring limestone into the purview of Long-Term Linkage (LTL) Policy and sell limestone to the industries through IDCOL/OMC.

This decision will ensure steady supply of limestone through LTL to state based end-user industries, he added.

A proposal for 15 per cent reservation of seats in government physical education colleges for the students staying in government sports hostels also received Cabinet nod.

The CM-led panel also approved the appointment of Sarita Supkar, former controller of examinations, Rama Devi Women's University and retired OAS officer Sanat Kumar Mohanty as members of the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC).

Besides, the Cabinet has approved amendments to recruitment rules of several government services.

47 silver bricks, ₹14L cash seized from car

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Excise officials Thursday seized 47 silver bricks, weighing over 139 kg, silver ornaments packed in 19 packets, and Rs 14 lakh cash from a car near Tanti toll gate in Cuttack district.

Excise officials said that acting on a tip-off on illegal transportation of ganja from Ganjam district, they searched West Bengal-registered four-wheelers. During the search of one vehicle, they found the silver bricks, 37 kg silver ornaments and cash kept in several secret chambers of the vehicle.

The silver bricks were packed in paper and stored inside a secret chamber in the back seat of the vehicle. Officials suspected that the car was designed to smuggle gold and silver items.



The Excise officials also detained two persons including the driver of the vehicle and interrogated them. The driver said the vehicle was on its way from Aska to Kharagpur. Earlier, the driver had transported 50 kg silver ornaments and bricks to West Bengal.

Excise officials informed the GST and Income Tax officials for further investigation in this case.

Vamsadhara hearing adjourned



POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Supreme Court Thursday adjourned the hearing on a batch petitions filed by Odisha against the order of Vamsadhara water dispute tribunal wherein the tribunal allowed Andhra Pradesh to construct Neradi barrage till next week.

A two-judge bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Hima Kohli adjourned the matter. Justice Chandrachud said that the matter will be on top of the board and taken up for hearing immediately after the end of the Constitution bench's hearing.

diately after the Constitution bench's hearing ends.

The apex court had in September last year asked both the states to prepare a common compilation, book-marked with the entire relevant documentary. It asked the counsels of both the states to submit brief skeleton notes of submissions, additional documents related to the water dispute and relevant case law if any.

In June 2021, the Vamsadhara Water

Dispute Tribunal had permitted Andhra Pradesh to construct Neradi barrage across the river with ancillary structures. The tribunal had said that the barrage can have a right head sluice of 8,000 cusecs of design capacity for meeting the requirements of AP and have a Left Head Sluice (LHS) to cater to the requirements of Odisha below the Neradi barrage. The cost of LHS is to be borne by Odisha. The tribunal had ruled that when there is shortage of water in a particular year, sharing of water should be proportionately reduced.

When there is an increase in water availability, it is to be increased proportionately. The distress sharing formula for the river basin is to be applicable for total utilisation by each state. Aggrieved by this, the state of Odisha filed a special leave petition in the apex court against the order of the tribunal.

Odisha also filed two petitions in the SC in 2018 and 2019 opposing the joint survey of the Neradi barrage as directed by the tribunal.

Justice Chandrachud said that the matter will be on top of the board and taken up for hearing immediately after the end of the Constitution bench's hearing

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‘Forests need to be viewed as habitat of tribal communities’

The country is in ‘deep crisis’ when it comes to natural calamities and disasters and that green areas in the cities need to be planned, Director General of Centre for Science and Environment , Sunita Narain said



PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Forests need to be viewed as a habitat of the tribal communities and forest conservation must be considered a way to build local livelihood, Director General of Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) Sunita Narain said Thursday.

She said forest conservation should be seen along with two contexts – climate change and natural calamities.

Continued from P1

Nabarangpur as punishment

It should be stated here that a two-member team comprising Dr Rashmi Ranjan Satapathy and Dr Rabindranath Panda had visited Monday the Keonjhar DHH to probe into the newborn deaths. The decision to transfer Dr Mishra came after they presented their report.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das had sought September 18 a report from the Keonjhar district administration on the deaths of the 13 newborns. The minister's action came after a large number of people at the Keonjhar DHH staged an agitation demanding action against doctors whose alleged negligence led to the death of children.

Centre heat on PFI...

The PFI was formed in 2006 in Kerala and is headquartered in Delhi. ED has earlier filed two charge-sheets against PFI, its student-wing, the Campus Front of India (CFI) and its office-bearers before a special PMLA court in Lucknow earlier this year. The charges relate to money-laundering, inciting communal riots and spreading terror. The name of journalist Siddique Kappan features in one of the charge-sheets.

PFI Kerala president CP Mohammed Basheer, national chairman OMA Salam and national secretary Nasaruddin Elamaram were among those taken into custody.

CLASSIFIED LOST

I am Brahmananda Baral, Age-68, S/o- Brundaban Baral, At/PO/PS- Byree, Dist-Jajpur, Odisha and I am a permanent resident here. On 6th July 2022, while I was travelling from Byree to Chhatia, I lost my land ROR (Land Original Document) which has the details: Khata No.1268/22, Plot No.-2587, area 4 Dec. vide RSD No.-950 and mutated on my name obtained the ROR.

If someone get the above document please reach out to the above same address or call on 8801045035.

ernment is bringing new laws, what compensation is it giving to the tribals? Somewhere we are going wrong in the policy and that is something we have to talk about. Forest is also a natural source of livelihood,” she said.

Narain said forests should be used as a source to soak up fossil fuel emissions and build local livelihood. Earlier, Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav had said the new forest conservation rules “do not dilute or infringe on” the provisions of the Forest Rights Act, 2006, assuaging concerns that the new rules allow cutting of forests without the consent of forest-dwellers.

The environment ministry notified the Forest (Conservation) Rules, 2022 under the Forest (Conservation) Act (FCA) June 28 to replace the earlier rules, notified in 2003.

The FCA was enacted in 1980 to help conserve the country's forests. It strictly restricts and regulates the de-reservation of forests or use of forest land for non-forest purposes without the prior approval of the Centre.

Husband, brother held for abetting suicide of woman

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: The Commissionerate Police Thursday arrested a person and his younger brother for abetting the suicide of former's pregnant wife over dowry related issues in the Unit-V area under Capital police limits here Tuesday evening. The accused were identified as Ganesh and Ajit Katia who hail from Khandapada in Nayagarh district.

The deceased, Sumitra, who had married Ganesh in 2020, was staying with her in-laws in a government quarter allotted in the name of her

father-in-law near the Police Bhawan here. “Ganesh who works in a private company spotted Sumitra hanging from the ceiling late Tuesday night. He rushed her to the Capital Hospital where doctors declared her brought dead,” told a police official.

Sumitra's father, Harihara Behera, in his complaint alleged that Ganesh and his family members used to torture his daughter regularly demanding dowry since their marriage in 2020. Sumitra had informed her family about the torture.

The deceased's father also reportedly accused Ganesh and his brother of killing Sumitra over dowry



FLATTENING DOWN: An excavator deployed by BDA razing down an illegally constructed house at Shyampur under Khandagiri police station in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

Animal activist demand reassessment of JTF

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Animal Welfare Trust Ekamra (AWTE) wrote a letter to state Forest and Environment minister Pradip Kumar Amat to relook the formation of a Joint Task Force (JTF) and include experts from Odisha to investigate the different cases of unnatural deaths of the elephants, poaching of tigers, leopards and illegal trade of pangolins.



Purabi Patra, chairperson of AWTE said that the Orissa High Court, in its order, had stated the JTF would comprise officers from the forest and police departments to investigate different cases of unnatural deaths of the elephants, poaching and unnatural deaths of elephants, poaching of tigers, leopards and illegal trade of pangolins. The High Court also ordered that experts and civil society should also be the part of the task force for wider inputs to tackle wildlife crime.

Patra said the formation of the JTF was announced recently but we are concerned with ignorance of in-

cluding capable and experienced people with credible track record of exposing the wildlife crimes.

Patra said that several senior officers and staff of the forest department have been recently accused of not only failing to protect elephants but also covering up and concealing poaching of elephants. In such a scenario we wonder how the JTF will play its role in an unbiased manner and how will the elephants, tigers, leopards and pangolins ever get protection?

“I urge you to relook and include experts from Odisha who

The High Court also ordered that experts and civil society should also be the part of the task force for wider inputs to tackle wildlife crime

have a proven track record and urge you to consider including the experts who are independent and have never received any funding from the forest department and possess the required expertise and experience.

She forwarded names of Biswajit Mohanty who holds a Ph.D in "Wildlife poaching in Odisha" and has been actively studying and documenting wildlife poaching and trade in Odisha since 26 years and Subhendu Mullick an Honorary Wildlife Warden from Khurda district who has been in the post for several years. He has successfully assisted the department and the STF in unearthing many cases of wildlife crimes.

Quantela to roll out land digital registry services

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: Quantela Inc, an urban infrastructure digitization company, and the registration wing of the Odisha government have jointly announced a new partnership to provide digital land registry services in the state. The partnership aims to enhance the experience of land and property transaction process for the citizens by improving the current computerized e-Registration services offered at 191 registration offices across the state.

This end-to-end digital conversion and automation of land documents, effective land registration, and simplified land records administration will speed up the receiving, processing, and delivery of all services related to land registration. “The implementation of the digitized land registry system in Odisha improves efficiency, accuracy, and security of all documents, and reduces waiting time,” said Ravi Gulati, senior vice president- APAC- Quantela.

“At Quantela, we are committed to delivering outcomes of customer's desire, not technology alone. Deed registration will now take only 30 minutes. Encumbrance certificates and other important services will be provided on the same day,” Gulati added.



ASPIRANTS' DEMAND: Members of Odisha State Employees Rehabilitation Aspirants' Association protesting at PMG in Bhubaneswar seeking fulfillment of their 2-point charter of demands, Thursday

Women empowerment training by CIPET-NSPCL

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 22: To encourage the Skill India Mission of the government of India, NSPCL, Durgapur and CIPET-CSTS, Bhubaneswar, successfully launched a placement linked skill development programme. The training programme is purely residential exclusively for poor and needy unemployed youth and sponsored by NTPC-SAIL Power Company Ltd(NSPCL) Durgapur.

According to the information, last year 50 unemployed youths from Durgapur area of West Bengal were provided jobs giving skill development training to them at CIPET Bhubaneswar. In view of the success of the programme, CIPET, Bhubaneswar and NSPCL Durgapur decided to train 69 can-



didates in 3 different batches, under which training has been started for 50 candidates.

Thursday, NSPCL and CIPET launched an exclusive training programme only for candidates from women category of Durgapur region, where main objective was to promote women empowerment and train unemployed girls to make them stand on their own feet.

NSPCL General Manager Kameshwar Jha (GM&BUH),

Ajoyendu Das (Additional GM, Sweta Agrawal (Senior Manager), Harihar Dikit (Senior Manager) were present in the Inaugural function at CIPET. Jha thanked CIPET for doing a special batch for women and while interacting with the trainees wished them a bright future. On behalf of CIPET, administrative officer Jayant Kumar Das conducted the programme and thanked everyone.

James Webb telescope captures images of ringed Neptune

The James Webb Space Telescope has captured its first image of Neptune, revealing the clearest view of the distant planet's rings in more than 30 years, NASA said.

The most striking feature in the image is the crisp view of the planet's rings – some of which have not been detected since NASA's Voyager 2 became the first spacecraft to observe Neptune during its flyby in 1989, the US space agency said.

In addition to several bright, narrow rings, the Webb image clearly shows Neptune's fainter dust bands.

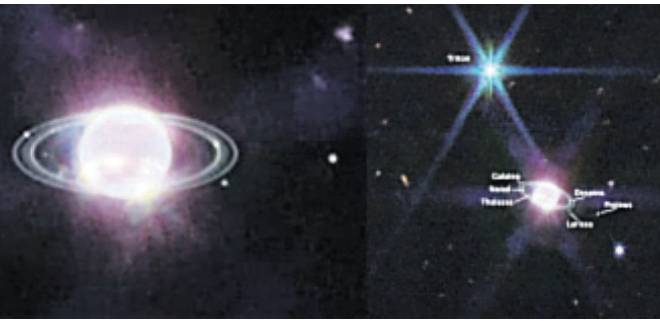
"It has been three decades since we last saw these faint, dusty rings, and this is the first

time we have seen them in the infrared," Heidi Hammel, a Neptune system expert and interdisciplinary scientist for Webb said in a statement.

Neptune is located 30 times farther from the Sun than Earth, and orbits in the remote, dark region of the outer solar system.

The planet is characterised as an ice giant due to the chemical make-up of its interior: Compared to the gas giants, Jupiter and Saturn, Neptune is much richer in elements heavier than hydrogen and helium.

This is readily apparent in Neptune's signature blue appearance in Hubble Space Telescope images at visible wavelengths, caused by small amounts of gaseous methane. Webb's Near-Infrared



Camera (NIRCam) images objects in the near-infrared range from 0.6 to 5 microns, so Neptune does not appear blue to the telescope.

The methane gas so strongly absorbs red and infrared light that the planet is quite dark at these near-

infrared wavelengths, except where high-altitude clouds are present, the researchers said.

Images from other observatories, including the Hubble Space Telescope and the WM Keck Observatory, have recorded these

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It has been three decades since we last saw these faint, dusty rings, and this is the first time we have seen them in the infrared," Heidi Hammel, a Neptune system expert and interdisciplinary scientist for Webb said in a statement

rapidly evolving cloud features over the years.

A thin line of brightness circling the planet's equator could be a visual signature of global atmospheric circulation that powers Neptune's winds and storms, according to NASA.

The atmosphere descends and warms at the equator, and thus glows at infrared wavelengths more than the surrounding, cooler gases, it said. A previously-known vortex at the southern pole is evident in Webb's view, but for the first time Webb has revealed a continuous band of high-latitude clouds surrounding it.

Webb also captured seven of Neptune's 14 known moons. A very bright point of light seen in Webb's images is Neptune's large and unusual moon, Triton. PTI

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FOREST RIGHTS ACT

Tribals all set to run depots, sell kendu leaf on their own



POST NEWS NETWORK

Nayagarh, Sept 22: Tribals in Daspalla block of this district have found a way to reap the benefits of the Forest Rights Act (FRA) or community forest resources right as they are all set to establish a kendu leaf depot and market on their own without the intervention of the government to boost their livelihoods.

The matter came to the fore after the tribals visited Nuagaon village under Amapani panchayat of Koksara block in Kalahandi district and underwent training on management of kendu leaf depot.

In coming days, they will sell a bundle of leaves at ₹4 instead of ₹1.40 as practiced earlier. Moreover, they will not sell the leaves to the state government but market on their own. The new move will help them increase their earnings involving their family members in the job.

Reports said that kendu leaf is collected mostly in the tribal and Dalit dominated regions of Daspalla block. Collection starts from the start of March and concludes by the first fortnight of June. The tribals make it a point for proper growth of trees so that it will give them maximum number of leaves. Kendu leaves are collected in abundance from trees which grow on the plains. The leaves sprout more on the trees during heat waves when hot

and dry summer winds blow. The tribal women try to make most of the opportunity.

Their day starts around 5.00am daily as they leave home for the forests to collect leaves. They return home around 11am and sit down to prepare bundles by segregating the good leaves from the bad ones.

They used to prepare bundles of 21 leaves each and sell each bundle at ₹1.40 at the kendu leaf depot. However, the earning falls far short of their need. The change came after the tribals learnt that there is more profit in sale of kendu leaf under Forest Rights Act. They decided to implement it in their district and underwent training for the purpose in Kalahandi district.

A tribal Lakshmidhar Jani of Sanakamiti village said a social outfit Nirman in assistance with Paul Hamlyn Foundation has been undertaking field visits of tribals to augment their livelihood. They explained it to them that how the tribals in Nuagaon of Kalahandi district could boost their earnings by exercising their rights as enshrined in the Forest Rights Act or community forest resources right.

They were urged to undergo a training programme to know more about the Forest Rights Act which will help them to boost their earnings. As a result, over 30 persons

comprising three from Kulurukumpha, one from Takara, eight from Bhogabari and 18 from Tumandi villages took the training.

They visited Nuagaon in Kalahandi district where they had a firsthand experience on the benefits of self establishment of kendu leaf depot. This will be implemented from 2023 making them first in the district in exercise of Forest Rights Act.

Sadhab Majhi, a woman of Putubari village said that earlier the women used to prepare bundles of 21 leaves and sell it at ₹1.40 to the state government. Henceforth, they will prepare a bundle of 25 leaves and sell it for ₹4 to various firms and outside traders. Various companies have already started contacting them to purchase their leaves and giving them orders.

Sukanti Behera of Banka Taila village said earlier the government had to open depots at Sanakamiti, Bhogabari, Narajipada, Gura, Tilabari areas for purchase of kendu leaves but now on the government will no more be required to open depots. They will do all the work from collecting the leaves and its marketing. This will help them earn more to manage the expenses of their family, she added.

Social activist Rabindra Narayan Parida said that tribals residing in Kulurukumpha, Takara, Bhogabari and Tumandi have started receiving the benefits of forest protection. Many of them have received certificates under Forest Rights Act while some others are waiting to receive the same from the district administration.

The tribals are now able to open depots and market the leaves on their own due to this certificate they have received under Forest Rights Act. This will help them boost their earnings and they will not face loss from sale of kendu leaf anymore, he added.

SPLENDID PERFORMANCE



Students staged a play at the state-level Children's Drama Festival jointly organised by the Odia Language, Literature and Culture department and cultural outfit 'Kalakar' at Town Hall in Balasore, Thursday

OP PHOTO

RDC orders probe; DM to submit report soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Betanoti, Sept 22: Betanoti tehsil in Mayurbhanj district which was in media limelight recently for large-scale mining of sand and murram is back in focus for alleged scam in the ceiling land.

Lands of some families belonging to Dalit, tribal and general categories have been recorded in the name of a person in a fraudulent manner in Betanoti tehsil area. The land has also been converted into homestead land.

Land owners raised allegations against the additional tehsildar and other officials before Collector Vineet Bhardwaj and the RDC (Central range).

The RDC has directed the Collector to look into the matter and submit a report.

Reports said, some local residents of Durgapur village under Baisinga revenue circle – Dasarathi

LAND SCAM



Majhi, Madhusudan Majhi, Laxmidhar Dalei, Benudhar Dalei, Suka Singh, Sombari Singh, Jara Singh, Pandu Singh, Dila Singh, Duma Dalei and Rabi Dalei – in their complaint stated that they had got ceiling land from the district administration through Betanoti tehsil vide OLR case no.10/1974. They have been cultivating the land over years and have records of the land at the tehsil office.

They were shocked to know recently that 19 acre of their ceiling

land has been recorded (MC no, 1629/20 and khata no 242/16) in the name of Zaid Ali, a resident of Panisandha under Bhograi block of Balasore district.

“Officials in the Betanoti tehsil are involved in such scam. We demanded a high level investigation into it so that those involved can be punished,” they pleaded in their complaint.

They had submitted a memorandum to the RDC during his recent visit to Mayurbhanj.

“After receiving such com-

plaint, the RDC was quite unhappy and directed the Collector to investigate the matter. The RDC has also hinted that if need arises, a high level investigation will be conducted into the matter,” said Manoj Kumar Panda, the counsel of the complainants.

Contacted, Betanoti tehsildar-in-charge Namita Dhal said that she had directed the Baisinga revenue inspector Ahalya Behera and revenue supervisor Jagannath Singh to make a field visit to look into the status of the land in question.

“The RI has been issued a show-cause notice in connection with the allegation pertaining to the ceiling land being recorded in the name of another person. If any faults had been committed during the record checking, the errors can be rectified and steps will be taken to ensure justice to the poor people,” the Dhal said.

Villagers decamp with goats as truck carrying those turns turtle

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, Sept 22: A truck carrying over 200 goats overturned on NH-16 under Bhandaripokhari police limits of Bhadrak district Thursday. Surprisingly, some local people instead of rescuing the driver and the helper decamped with some of the goats.

According to reports, a goat trader had collected goats from various parts of Balasore and was carrying them in a truck with registration no WB53C1627 to Bhubaneswar. As the vehicle reached Assam Oil petrol pump at Jaminibandh in the afternoon, one of its tyres got punctured and it overturned.

Three people in the vehicle were injured and first admitted to the Bhandaripokhari community health centre (CHC). As condition of two of them turned critical, they were shifted to the district



headquarters hospital (DHH) and then to SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack.

The critically injured were identified as driver of the truck Seikh Raju (18) and Seikh Saddam (18) of Kharagpur in West Bengal.

It was alleged that taking advantage of the accident, some goats have been taken away by people while 205 goats have been rescued by police. The animals were sent to Bhubaneswar in another vehicle. Bhandaripokhari police have been trying to rescue the stolen goats in the nearby localities. However, no complaint was filed at the police station in this regard.

Former MLA Adikanda Sethi passes away

Berhampur: Former Chhatrapur MLA Adikanda Sethi Thursday died on way to hospital in Ganjam district, hospital sources said. Sethi (70) is survived by a wife, two sons and three daughters. Due to his illness, family members rushed him to Community Health Centre, Khallikote from his residence at Rambha. However, on the way to the hospital, he succumbed to illness, family sources said. Sethi was elected to the state Assembly from the Chhatrapur Assembly constituency in 2009 on a CPI ticket. In 2014, he joined the ruling Biju Janata Dal and continued in the regional party till his death.

People risk lives to cross swollen river

POST NEWS NETWORK

R Udayagiri, Sept 22: A river in Liligarh panchayat of Gajapati district has become the sorrow of five riparian villages of the panchayat due to lack of a bridge.

Residents of Dengaamba, Titimeri, Kuihuru, Kutunikua, and Raipada villages have been forced to put their lives at stake for years as the Asadhiamba river flowing in the area divides these villages from the mainland. The villagers and school-going children have to cross the river daily just by holding a wire tied to trees on both sides of the river.

Guardians were seen carrying small children on their shoulders and wading through shoulder-deep water to drop the kids at the Anganwadi centre on the



other side of the river. People wishing to attend urgent work at Mohana or other villages also cross the overflowing river by risking their lives owing to absence of a bridge on the river.

The villages get cut-off from the mainland when the river gets

flooded in rainy season. They have to remain confined to their homes for months during the monsoon season and manage their lives with whatever little goods they have with them.

The students and people in the villages again take the risk

MYSTERY DISEASE



Another youth died of the mystery disease late Wednesday night

ceased was identified as Lakhma Madkani, 22. Lakhma was admitted to the Malkangiri district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 22: Days after an unknown disease played havoc at Haladikunda village of Temurupalli panchayat in Malkangiri district, Collector Vishal Singh along with Mathili BDO visited the village Thursday and reviewed the situation. He interacted with local residents about their condition.

He quizzed people about the reason of the disease that claimed eight lives. But unofficial sources had claimed the number of lives lost was 11.

Meanwhile, yet another youth died of the mystery disease here late Wednesday night. The de-

Red camp busted, explosives seized

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput/ Malkangiri, Sept 22: Security forces busted a Maoist camp and had a huge cache of explosives during a combing operation in Sindhiput jungle under Macchikund police limits in Koraput district, Thursday.

Police said a team of SOG and DVF Koraput were carrying out a combing operation in Sindhiput forest when they stumbled upon the explosives kept in the hideout. Cash worth ₹70,000, cordex wire

of 70 metre in length, 31 gelatin sticks, one electric detonator wire, two tiffin bombs, one pressure cooker bombs and testing pins were seized from the place.

This was stated here by Koraput SP Varun Guntupalli at a press meet, Thursday. The explosives were perhaps kept to carry out major offensives following the recent surrender of militias and Maoist supporters from bordering areas of both the states before Odisha Police and BSF in presence of DIG, SWR.

headquarters hospital in a critical condition, September 13. He was administered treatment for five days and discharged for home along with 13 other patients in the village, September 17. He experienced severe stomachache and succumbed to the disease, late Wednesday night.

However, the Collector during his visit inspected sources of drinking water and also checked the water of a tube well. Singh also visited a school and taught students. He advised students to sustain their daily studies and homework. He urged people not to panic and to maintain good sanitation and hygienic practice, apart from assuring them of providing good healthcare facility.

Youth gets 10-year jail for rape

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, Sept 22: A special fast track and POCSCO court sentenced a youth to 10 years of imprisonment after convicting him for the rape of a minor in 2015, Thursday.

Judge Ganeswar Pati also slapped a penalty of ₹30,000 on Simanchal Swain, 28, after convicting him for the offence. In default, Swain has to undergo additional three months of rigorous imprisonment. The judge also directed the district legal services authority (DLSA) to

pay ₹5 lakh financial assistance to the survivor. This was stated here by special public prosecutor for POCSCO Mohan Singari, Thursday. The judge passed the order after examining the statements of the witnesses and the police charge-sheets. The incident occurred May 23, 2015 when Simanchal abducted a minor girl under Khallikote police limits and raped her at an isolated place.

Later, he promised to marry the girl but soon went back on his promise. Police had arrested him and produced him in court.

Man beats father-in-law to death; arrested

Patrapur: In a shocking incident, a man was beaten to death by his son-in-law at Mundakeri village under Jarada police limits in Ganjam district, Wednesday. The deceased was identified as Apna Behera. Family members rushed him to Patrapur community health centre where doctors pronounced him dead on arrival. Jarada police registered a case and arrested the accused Ganapati Behera in this connection. The lathi used in the killing was also seized.

Driver shot dead in forest

Nayagarh: A tractor driver was shot dead in Rasang jungle under Gania police limits of Nayagarh district, Thursday. The deceased was identified as Rajat Kumar Rout (26) of Rasang village. However, the person who shot him and the motive behind the murder are yet to be known. The murder has sparked tension in the village. Police have started an investigation into the murder and seized a gun from the site. Police are looking into why Rajat was in forest.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA No.A-517: DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES “e” Procurement Notice-BAID 02 OF 2022-23 BID IDENTIFICATION NO. BAID 02 OF 2022-23	
1 Name of the Work	River Embankment & Canal Embankment for the year 2022-23.
2 Total No. of Package	54 Nos.
3 Tender Cost	Rs. 5.94 Lakhs to 29.54 Lakhs as per DTN
4 Bid Security	Only the Bid security Declaration as per the tender schedule to be furnished instead of EMD/ Bid Security
5 Cost of Tender Paper (Online)	Rs. 4000/- to 6000/- as per DTN
6 Period of Completion	4 Calendar Months
7 Availability of Tender online for bidding	From 20.09.2022 at 12.00 Noon to 29.09.2022 upto 5.30 P.M.
8 Date and place of opening	Dt. 30.09.2022 at 11.00 AM in the office of the Superintending Engineer, Baitarani Irrigation Division, Salapada
9 Tender Inviting Authority	Superintending Engineer, Baitarani Irrigation Division, Salapada
Further details can be seen from the website http://www.tendersorissa.gov.in/www.dowrodisha.gov.in. Any addendum/ Corrigendum/ Cancellation to the above notice will be published in this website only. Sd./Superintending Engineer OIPR-32439/11/0004/2223 Baitarani Irrigation Division, Salapada	



Education & Poverty

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the most significant global disruption in education in modern history. With nine out of ten children around the world affected, two decades of progress on educational access and attainment are at risk.

In response to this crisis, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres convened the Transforming Education Summit in New York this month. But the summit is about more than regaining lost ground. The goal is to mobilise a global movement that can bring education to the forefront of the political agenda and push policymakers to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goal for education (SDG4): "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all."

It is not hard to see why education needs to be transformed. Even before the pandemic, the state of education worldwide was far from ideal. With 300 million children out of school, an estimated 57% of ten-year-olds in low- and middle-income countries cannot even comprehend a simple text.

To give every child the best chance to succeed, we must aim higher. Making education more inclusive and equitable means addressing glaring inequalities in opportunities and investment. It also means eradicating the self-reinforcing mechanisms, also known as poverty traps, that perpetuate existing disparities.

For starters, education must allow all students to develop their capacity for learning by starting with the building blocks of knowledge and critical thinking: literacy, numeracy, and scientific reasoning. Doing so would help students distinguish fact-based arguments from fake or unsubstantiated claims. Education should also enhance the capacity for lifelong learning and re-learning – a crucial skill in today's rapidly changing job market.

But at a time of growing political polarisation, education should go beyond academic skills and develop students' capacity to live together. This would require education systems that emphasise civic responsibility, democratic governance, respect for human diversity, and an active commitment to sustainable development.

For education to be transformed for the better, schools themselves need to change. For example, in developing countries, an estimated 90% of children with disabilities still don't attend school. All schools need to become safe and healthy learning spaces where every child or young person feels accepted and protected. Educators are the most critical factor for education, and we need more of them – 69 million, to be exact – in order to achieve the UN goal of ensuring universal basic education by 2030. But to transform education, teachers must also transform themselves, shifting from merely transmitting content to developing their students' problem-solving skills, and from reciting preconceived answers to posing challenging questions. The problem is that teachers are under-trained, undervalued, and underpaid. The only way to have more and better teachers is by strengthening their training, showing them more trust and respect, and ensuring that they receive higher pay.

The pandemic has demonstrated the promise and the peril of digital learning. In the midst of lockdowns, digital technology allowed many schools and teachers to reach otherwise-isolated students. Yet, in low- and middle-income countries, many children still lack access to necessary equipment and reliable connectivity. Worldwide, two-thirds of children and young people below the age of 25 still have no home internet connection.

The digital revolution has the power to expand access and enrich learning. But if left to the market alone, it may exacerbate existing inequalities. Educational teaching and learning resources should be considered public goods, free and open to all.

But it would take more than access to digital resources to reduce disparities in investment and educational opportunities. According to recent data from the Global Education Monitoring Report, rich countries invest an average of \$8,500 per year on each school-age person. Upper-middle-income countries invest about \$1,000 per student, lower-middle-income just \$275, and the poorest countries less than \$50.

It is not just inequality between countries that is a source of concern. Within-country gaps between children from higher-income households with better-educated parents and children born to lower-income and less-educated families are no less disturbing – particularly in the developing world, where less than half of children have access to pre-primary education, compared with 91% in high-income countries.

Closing these gaps requires treating the financing of public education as an efficient and socially responsible investment: we need to invest more in education, and to invest more equitably and efficiently. A growing body of research has shown that education has the highest rate of return – particularly early-childhood education, which yields \$17 in value for every \$1 invested. The problem is that investment in education is context-dependent. A country that suffers from high inequality and an abundance of cheap labor attracts unsophisticated investments that create low-productivity jobs. Without the need for a skilled labour force, governments have little incentive to invest in education. As Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson, and James A. Robinson have shown, institutional frameworks tend to be weaker in such countries. Economic and political power is typically concentrated in the hands of the wealthy, who oppose the progressive tax increases necessary to finance universal quality education. The result is a poverty trap.

It is often said that education plays an essential role in promoting sustainable economic growth. But environmentally destructive and economically inefficient poverty traps are the opposite of sustainable. Achieving the UN's SDGs would necessarily require eradicating them. Only with a more equitable model can we successfully enshrine education as a human right.

The writer is Special Adviser to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the Transforming Education Summit.

WISDOM CORNER

- Mastering others is strength. Mastering yourself is true power. LAO TZU
- We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak. EPICTETUS
- Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting. RALPH WALDO EMERSON

WORDSWORTH

Brouhaha

It's a negative word for some unpleasant confusion; a more neutral alternative might be the equally odd-looking hubbub. We know the word came from the French word spelled the same way; it's found in French from sixteenth century on, but it only arrived in English at the end of the nineteenth century. It seems to have been used in French drama as a noise made by the devil, who cried bro, ha, ha!. Many etymologists will say that the word was just a noisy nonsense exclamation that imitated the thing it referred to. But there is a theory, put forward by Walther von Wartburg, that it actually comes from the Hebrew barukh habba, meaning "welcome" – literally "blessed be the one who comes" – a phrase that appears several times in the Book of Psalms and which is used in Synagogue prayers and as a greeting at Jewish weddings and other occasions.

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

GOVERNANCE OF WATER

The floods, droughts, heat-waves, and fires that are devastating many parts of the world underscore two fundamental facts. First, damage to freshwater supplies is increasingly straining human societies, especially the poor, with far-reaching implications for economic, social, and political stability. Second, the combined impact of today's extreme conditions is unprecedented in human history, and is overwhelming policymakers' ability to respond.

In East Africa, a devastating four-year drought has destroyed millions of livelihoods and left more than 20 million people at risk of starvation. In Pakistan, recent flooding has submerged one-third of the country, killing at least 1,500 people so far and wiping out 45% of this year's crops. In China, an unprecedented heatwave has caused acute water shortages in regions that account for one-third of the country's rice production.

Moreover, droughts and fires in the United States and Europe, and severe floods and droughts across India, have reduced global grain yields and food exports, highlighting the extent to which our food production depends on large, stable volumes of water. Add to this the impact of the war in Ukraine on grain and fertilizer supplies, and there is a substantial risk that today's global food crisis will persist. For the first time in our history, human activities are jeopardising water at its very source.

Climate change and deforestation are reshaping the monsoon season, causing ice on the Tibetan plateau to melt, and affecting freshwater supplies to more than one billion people. Rising global temperatures are changing evaporation patterns and reducing moisture feedback from forests, disrupting downwind rainfall. And a destabilised global water cycle is itself aggravating climate change. For example, the depletion of water in the soil and forests is reducing their ability to sequester carbon.

Water-use restrictions, power cuts, and other stopgap measures can no longer paper over the fact that our water governance and management systems are not



For the first time in our history, human activities are jeopardising water at its very source. Climate change and deforestation are reshaping the monsoon season, causing ice on the Tibetan plateau to melt, and affecting freshwater supplies to more than one billion people

suited for a world of radical environmental change. All our current arrangements rest on the assumption, now invalidated, that the water supply is relatively stable (within the bounds of natural variability), predictable, and manageable in localised ways. But the water crisis is global, and it can be solved only with transformational thinking and new governance.

We must recognise that all our key environmental challenges are connected to water – whether there is too much or too little, or whether it is too polluted for human use. The task now is to understand the links between water, climate change, and biodiversity loss, and to properly define, value, and govern water as a global common good. Thinking about water in this way will allow us to mobilise collective action and design new rules that put equity and justice at the center of our response.

For too long, most governments have either ignored market failures or responded to them with quick fixes, rather than mobilising the public and private sectors around common ambitions. The public sector must see itself as a market shaper that works with all stakeholders in the water economy to create pathways for innovation and investment, ensure universal access to clean water and sanitation,

and provide enough water for food, energy, and natural systems.

A key lesson from past challenges that demanded systemic innovation is that a clearly defined mission is needed to organise our efforts. Mission-oriented policies allow governments to steer innovation and knowhow directly toward meeting critical goals. When guided by an inclusive "common-good" approach, they are uniquely capable of delivering solutions to challenges that require tremendous levels of co-ordination and financing across many years. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and water crises are precisely such challenges.

Mission-based strategies can help governments innovate with purpose, direction, and urgency. But to be effective, policymakers must heed the experience and wisdom of the ordinary citizens, communities, and innovators who know how to prosper in a world of water scarcity, higher temperatures, and altered coastline and river systems.

We must now recognise threats to the global freshwater system and translate our awareness into collective action. Because water scarcity will jeopardise all the other Sustainable Development Goals, it should solidify our collective determination to limit temperature

increases to 1.5° Celsius above pre-industrial levels (as specified in the Paris climate agreement), and to preserve the natural systems that ensure stable rainfall and runoff patterns. In tackling these global challenges, we must hardwire the principles of equity and justice into whatever new arrangements we devise. No community can thrive without a reliable supply of clean water. But safeguarding this global common good requires new policies and systems.

Law and economics must both be reoriented to ensure universal access to clean drinking water; sanitation, and hygiene, and to build more resilient and sustainable food systems. Incentives must change so that the private sector can do its part to provide access to technology and innovation to poor and rich countries alike. This will require long-term finance and novel mechanisms to regulate how the public and private sectors work together.

The UN 2023 Water Conference – the first in almost 50 years – will be a pivotal moment for the international community to start mapping out a future that works for everyone. In preparing for it, we can take inspiration from Nicholas Stern, who rewrote the economics of climate change, and Partha Dasgupta, who rewrote the economics of biodiversity. As the co-chairs of the Global Commission on the Economics of Water, our goal is to transform the world's understanding of the economics and governance of water, placing a much stronger emphasis on equity, justice, effectiveness, and democracy.

We can still redefine our relationship with water and redesign our economies to value water as a global common good. But the window of opportunity is closing. To have a chance of avoiding climate catastrophe and adapting to unavoidable change, we must ensure a resilient water future for poor and rich societies alike.

Mariana Mazzucato is Chair of the WHO's Council on the Economics of Health for All. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala is Director-General of the WTO.

SPECTRUM EDUCATION

Understanding students through mentoring

After passing higher secondary examination, a student walks into college with lots of dreams and hopes. The sudden change in subjects, teachers, friends, location and environment creates confusion and it takes time for her/him to adjust. Some tough ones with hostel background adapt themselves to the new situation but many fail and lag behind. Teachers simply deliver lectures one by one without paying attention to individual understanding which creates inferiority thinking among them that they are unable to cope up. The result is that some fast grasping ones are branded as smart students and others as slow learners.

Though it is done unknowingly, it creates lot of pressure on the minds of students. Each student is a separate individual with different level of understanding and we have to get them the most learning in the sessions. Providing a better learning experience to students should be the sole aim of teachers and the institution as a whole which is missing now days in the campus life.

The idea of individualised learning may not work in a classroom where more than 100 students are sitting. At the same time, all students not alike. Some like group learning,

some like to remain isolated, some don't show any interest and some don't understand at all. Many of them remain worried always as they think that they selected a wrong stream. Statistics say that students in our country are aware of six to seven careers when there are more than 2000 careers available. Forty-five per cent of students make a wrong career choice as more than 95 per cent schools and colleges do not offer counselling or mentoring facilities to students. The problem is more acute in semi-urban and rural areas of the country.

Against this backdrop, academic institutions all over the world are implementing the mentor-mentee strategy to judge the mentality of students at the earliest. The mentor can identify each and every student in his group and offer proper counselling, whether it is academic or career, thus making the student aware of his interests, potentiality and goals.

Students are confused about the course, syllabus, examinations and employment opportunities and if these are addressed by the mentor, they can go in the right direction. Conducting classes regularly, examinations and evaluation in time are not sufficient to produce good students. The much needed clar-

ity for students about their future is to be injected into their minds.

Recently, UGC released guidelines on assistance to disabled students which state that higher education institutions should have a provision of support for all activities, which include registration, academic support, facilitating comfortable stay and conveyance, fee payment at the counter, sponsorship facilities, class timetable, schedules and academic almanac, grievance redressal procedures, release or issue of mark sheet, certification, diploma, transcript, migration, counselling, fellowship and scholarships which could help the students. But the same is application to all students.

Innovative changes are necessary to streamline the higher education system to create skilled manpower ready to be employable by the industry. The UGC identified mentorship as a major factor for the overall development of the student and issued guidelines for its proper implementation by the higher educational institutions. The state governments too, have been laying emphasis on the task of mentorship.

Realising the importance of mentorship in higher educational institutions, the Human Resource

Development Centre, Guru Nanak Dev University organised a six-day offline faculty development programme on 'Mentoring Skills and Facilitation Skills for Rural Higher Education Institutions'. More universities are likely to follow this trend and the much needed attention for understanding the student mindset from the beginning of their admissions is felt now among the academia.

The recent reforms in higher education after the implementation of NEP-2022 have created confusion not only in the minds of students, but also of teachers and other staff members of academic institutions, particularly in rural areas.

Time has come to introspect on the working pattern of teachers and other staff members of academic institutions. The mechanical way of teaching and learning is to be evaluated and mentoring activities to understand the student mindset are to be implemented in higher educational institutions which can produce productive workforce for society.

Bhaskar Nath Biswal is Principal, Nourangpur College. Vivek Biswal is Lecturer in Psychology, Semilguda College.



Bhaskar Nath Biswal & Vivek Biswal

45% OF STUDENTS MAKE WRONG CAREER CHOICES AS MORE THAN 95% OF INSTITUTIONS DO NOT OFFER COUNSELLING OR MENTORING FACILITIES TO STUDENTS

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Rhino conservation

Sir, In India and Nepal combined, there are about 3,500 rhinoceroses. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has placed the one horned rhinos under 'vulnerable' category in its red list. Many of India's rhinos, nearly seventy per cent, are housed in Assam's Kaziranga National Park. Last year, China revoked the ban on the use of 'medicinal parts' of rhinoceros and tigers. Lifting of ban on use of certain parts of wild animals almost means legalising poaching because the body parts of dead animals – bones of tigers and horns of rhinos – can be used for medicinal purposes though the same has not been authenticated. The problem lies with India's close proximity to China. Rhino horns are used for water purifying purpose and as an aphrodisiac in some parts. Countries like Yemen prepare daggers from rhino horns. In India, the whole northeast and northern part of West Bengal are on high alert because of their international borders. Rhinoceros poaching is quite common in India. Assam borders Bhutan, so the rhinoceros of Manas National Park are particularly in danger. Barring a brief period, rhinoceros population in Manas has always been steady. Preserving the rhino habitat and taking protective measures conducive for the rhino population to flourish have paid dividends. As per the latest numbers, there are 54 Rhinos in Manas National Park, which is now a UNESCO world heritage site. The efforts put in by the experts can be gauged by the fact that rhinos are intensely territorial animals who resist shifting their base. The "Indian Rhino Vision 2020 (IRV2020)" programme met with considerable success – it almost achieved its aim of attaining 3000 greater one-horned rhinos in seven protected areas of Assam by 2020 though it fell short of achieving its target in three of the seven areas. The programme owes its success to a collaborative effort from all stakeholders.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA

Hijab row

Sir, There is an element of truth in the Karnataka government's contention that PU College girls weren't wearing hijab (headscarves) before 2021. The Karnataka government told the Supreme Court that the controversy broke out after a social media movement started by the Popular Front of India (PFI). The state government also claimed that the PFI's campaign was designed to create religious discord. We should keep religious beliefs out of the ambit of educational institutions.

NJ Ravi Chander, BANGALORE

of the day quote

I have long maintained that the MUDRA loan scheme is practically worthless to promote businesses



P. CHIDAMBARAM | SENIOR CONGRESS LEADER

For the challenges to our civilisation, we need to make them (Left and seculars) understand that India is not a geographical entity born in 1947. I say this always that India is not a constitutional democracy. It is a civilisation democracy



HIMANTA BISWA SARMA | ASSAM CM

BJP is trying to crush the country's Constitution and the institutions based on the beliefs of BR Ambedkar



HARPAL SINGH CHEEMA | MINISTER OF FINANCE OF PUNJAB

SHORT TAKES

ED attaches property of ABG Shipyard

New Delhi: The ED Thursday said it has attached dockyards, agricultural lands, commercial properties and bank deposits worth more than ₹2,747 crore as part of an alleged bank loan fraud linked money laundering investigation against ABG Shipyard Ltd, its group companies and linked entities. The seized properties include shipyards located at Surat and Dahej in Gujarat, agricultural lands and plots, various commercial and residential premises in Gujarat and Maharashtra and bank accounts owned by ABG Shipyard Ltd., its group companies and other related entities, the federal agency said.

U'khand: 341 cattle die of lumpy virus

Dehradun: More than 300 cattle have died of lumpy skin disease in Uttarakhand, the government said Thursday. A total of 20,505 cases of lumpy skin disease were registered in the state, out of which 8,028 were fully cured and 341 animals died, Animal Husbandry Minister Saurabh Bahuguna told reporters.

Suicide of alumnus: Protest on campus

Kozhikode (Kerala): The suicide of a former student of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) here recently has prompted supporters of the Students Federation of India (SFI) to stage a protest demonstration on the campus Wednesday. The student of the Lovely Professional University (LPU) in Mohali in Punjab Agin S Dileep, a native of Cherthala in Kerala, had died by suicide in his hostel room September 20.

Man killed by lover's family

Noida: A 21-year-old man was killed allegedly by the uncle and the father of a woman who were opposed to their relationship and marriage plan, police officials here said Thursday. An FIR has been lodged at the Ecotech 3 police station in Central Noida in connection with the incident and the 25-year-old uncle of the college-going woman has been arrested while her father is at large, the officials said.

Rains pound Delhi

New Delhi: A portion of a road caved in as incessant spell of light to moderate rain drenched Delhi for the second consecutive day Thursday leading to waterlogging and uprooting of trees that caused massive traffic snarls in many parts of the capital. The weather department has issued a 'yellow' alert for Friday, cautioning people about moderate rain at most places in the city.



Puja committees must ensure that vehicular and pedestrian movements do not face too many obstructions or hassles

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

NEW RECRUITMENTS

The Assam government will distribute appointment letters to 11,202 people Friday for various posts across 21 state government departments, officials said Thursday



FACE THE FEAR



Participants during National Rafting Championship at Pirdi in Kullu district, Himachal Pradesh

PTI PHOTO

Prez poll: Congress issues notification



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Congress Thursday set the ball rolling for electing its chief by issuing a notification and a contest for the top party post appeared imminent after a gap of over two decades with senior leaders Ashok Gehlot and Shashi Tharoor looking set for an electoral face-off.

In comments seen as yet another indication that he may not contest, Rahul Gandhi told those willing to run for the party presidency that the post was not just organisational but also "ideological" and that the person occupying it must remember that it represents a belief system.

Gandhi also battled for the "one-man, one-post" concept in line with the Chintan Shivir reforms

earlier this year. His assertion came a day after Gehlot hinted that he would like to continue as the chief minister even while assuming the post of party president.

Gandhi's definitive remark indicated that Gehlot may have to quit as Chief Minister if he takes on the mantle of party president but suspense persisted over whether he would get a person of his choice to helm the Rajasthan government, or the post would go to his bete noire Sachin Pilot.

In a first indicator of leaders taking sides in the upcoming contest for the top post, Congress leader Gourav Vallabh backed Gehlot and hit out at Tharoor over his probable AICC president poll bid, saying his "only major contribution" to the party was to send letters to Sonia Gandhi when she was hospitalised.

Over 9,000 Pradesh Congress Committee delegates will vote in the poll. The party had also assured leaders that those wanting to file nomination will be able see the list of all 9,000 delegates from the office of central election authority at the AICC office from September 20.

How PFI spread its wing across country

Multi-agency teams spearheaded by the NIA arrested 106 functionaries of the radical Islamic outfit Popular Front of India (PFI) Thursday in near simultaneous raids at 93 locations in 15 states for allegedly supporting terror activities in the country, officials said

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 22: In a major crackdown on the Popular Front of India (PFI), the National Investigation Agency (NIA) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday raided premises linked to PFI in 10 states across the country and arrested more than 100 top PFI leaders and functionaries.

An official said that the agency



Police personnel during a raid of National Investigation Agency (NIA) at the residence of a functionary of Popular Front of India (PFI), in Madurai PTI PHOTO

had learnt that the PFI was indulging in terror funding besides imparting training to the youth in order to radicalise them.

"We have seized incriminating documents, digital devices, cash to the tune of ₹10 lakh along with weapons. We have learnt that camps were organised where conspiracies were hatched to carry out terror-related activities in the country," said a source.

What is PFI?

The Popular Front of India was established in 2006 in Kerala. E. Abubacker, the chairman of PFI, is also a resident of Kerala. The organisation established its headquarters in Kozhikode, which was later changed to Delhi. PFI national general secretary Nasaruddin Elamaram is also a founding member of the outfit.

Now, Punjab summons Assembly session Sept 27



AGENCIES

Chandigarh, Sept 22: Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Thursday said the state government has now decided to summon a session of the Assembly on September 27 to discuss various issues pertaining to the state.

In a statement, the Chief Minister said the government will approach the Supreme Court against the arbitrary and anti-democratic decision of the Governor to cancel the permission of holding a special session of the Vidhan Sabha after giving permission for it.

He said it is an unfortunate move and they will move to the apex court against this irrational decision.

Mann asserted that this decision will be challenged in the Supreme Court for safeguarding the democratic rights of the people and federal rights of the states.

Training his guns against the Punjab Congress for supporting 'Operation Lotus' of the BJP, the Chief Minister said it is ironic that the Congress, which is the

biggest victim of this undemocratic operation, is standing by the side of the saffron party.

He said the Congress, the Shiromani Akali Dal and the BJP were hand in glove for this sinister move aimed at toppling the democratically elected government of Punjab.

Mann unequivocally said that the Congress and the BJP have marginalized regional parties, adding that now they want that power should remain confined between them only.

However, the Chief Minister said that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has taken birth from an anti-corruption crusade and the party under the leadership of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is gaining momentum with every passing day.

He categorically said they will oppose every anti-democratic move and will not be threatened by pressure tactics.

Mann envisioned that Punjab will send a message to the entire country that in democracy people and not any individual is supreme.

₹1,700cr BrahMos deal signed by DefMin

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Defence Ministry Thursday signed a ₹1,700 crore deal for acquisition of additional dual-role capable surface to surface BrahMos missiles.

"Providing further impetus to Aatmanirbharta in defence production, the Ministry of Defence signed a contract today with BrahMos

Aerospace Pvt Ltd (BAPL) for acquisition of additional dual-role capable surface to surface BrahMos missiles at an overall approximate cost of ₹1,700 crore under Buy-Indian Category," the ministry said.

The induction of these dual-role capable missiles is supposed to significantly enhance the operational capability of Navy. The BAPL is a joint venture between India and Russia

making crucial contribution to augment the new generation surface-to-surface Missiles (SSMs) with enhanced range and dual role capability for land as well as anti-ship attacks.

This contract is going to give further boost to indigenous production of critical weapon system and ammunition with active participation of indigenous industry, said the ministry.

AP to stop confining pigs to crates following PETA appeal

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, Sept 22: In a victory for animal rights activists, the Andhra Pradesh government has stepped in to stop the use of gestation and farrowing crates in pig farming.

Following an appeal from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) India to prohibit the manufacture, sale, and use of gestation and farrowing crates in pig farming, the Directorate of Animal Husbandry of Andhra Pradesh has issued a circular instructing the district animal husbandry officers to ensure compliance with the group's request within their jurisdictions.

The circular cites Section 11(1)(e) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, which prohibits the confinement of any animal in a receptacle that fails to offer a reasonable opportunity for movement, such as gestation and farrowing crates. Gestation crates or "sow stalls" are metal cages, es-



Confining animals in this way is illegal, a position confirmed by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research's National Research Centre on pig

entially the size of a pig, with concrete or slatted floors. In them, animals are unable to turn around or even stand up without difficulty. These devices are used to confine pregnant pigs, who are typically transferred to farrowing crates to give birth and are kept in them until their piglets are taken away. Farrowing crates are fundamentally the same as gestation crates, except that they contain small side com-

partments for piglets.

Gestation and farrowing crates deny mother pigs everything that's natural and important to them, such as opportunities to forage, build a nest for their young, socialise with other pigs, and regulate their body temperature (such as by wallowing in mud).

The crates also force pigs to live amid their own faeces and urine. The extreme stress and frustra-

BJP spent over ₹340cr on poll campaigns in five states; max in UP

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Bharatiya Janata Party spent over ₹340 crore in the assembly polls in five states held earlier this year, while the Congress shelled out more than ₹194 crore for its campaigning in these states, according to the election expenditure reports of the two parties.

According to the report filed by the BJP and put in public domain by the Election Commission, the party spent more than ₹340 crore on its campaigns for the Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Manipur,



Goa and Punjab assembly elections held early this year.

The BJP's spending report showed that it spent over ₹221 crore in Uttar Pradesh, over ₹23 crore in Manipur, ₹43.67 crore in Uttarakhand, more than ₹36 crore in Punjab and ₹19 crore in Goa. According to the report filed by the Congress, it spent over ₹194 crore for campaigning and related expenditure in the five states. The BJP and Congress are recognised national parties. Parties contesting Lok Sabha and assembly polls are mandated to file their election expenditure reports before the EC in a stipulated time frame.

tion caused by this severe confinement results in abnormal behaviour, such as continually biting at the enclosure bars or "chewing" the air.

Andhra Pradesh is the second state this week after Chhattisgarh to join the ranks of Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh in addressing the use of both gestation and farrowing crates in pig rearing.

"PETA India commends Andhra Pradesh for standing up for countless pigs and sparing them the severe cruelty of such crates," said PETA India Advocacy Associate Farhat Ul Ain.

All forms of communalism, all forms of violence, regardless of where they come from, are the same and should be combated. There should be zero tolerance towards communalism regardless of where it is coming from

RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

Who were the people who stopped the bullet train project in Maharashtra; who were the people who stopped a ₹65,000 crore Wadhwan project in Palghar district; who stopped the Nanar refinery project and who created hurdles for the Metro car shed project in Mumbai's Aarey Colony. Were these projects not beneficial for Maharashtra

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN | FINANCE MINISTER

When the people of Gujarat started contemplating pressing the button on 'broom' (AAP election symbol), they (a reference to BJP) came to me and asked me to leave Kejriwal (Delhi CM and party convener Arvind Kejriwal) and become the Chief Minister

MANISH SISODIA | DELHI DEPUTY CM

SHORT TAKES

Mob attacks Muslim family

Bhopal: The members of a Muslim family have been brutally beaten up by a mob in Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district allegedly in what is being considered as "an act of revenge". Wajid Ali and his family members were attacked as he had eloped with a 23-year-old Hindu woman almost a month ago.

Stampede breaks out at Gymkhana ground

Hyderabad: Four people suffered minor injuries when a stampede-like situation prevailed Thursday at the Gymkhana Grounds in the city, where thousands of cricket-lovers gathered to buy tickets for the India-Australia T20 match scheduled here for September 25. The injured persons, including two women, were taken to a hospital and were fine, police said.

DDMA may revoke mask fine

New Delhi: The DDMA may lift the Rs 500 fine on not wearing masks in public places along with scaling down deployment of staff and equipment in hospitals in a phased manner as the city witnesses a steady decline in Covid-19 cases, sources said. The Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) met here Thursday to review the Covid situation in the national capital and conduct an assessment of dedicated resources deployed at hospitals to tackle coronavirus.

Woman dies in house collapse

Dehradun: An elderly woman was killed after her house collapsed early Thursday as heavy rains lashed Uttarakhand triggering landslides in the hills and disrupting power and water supply in several towns. Bhattu Devi, 60, was buried alive as her single-storey house made of stones was reduced to a mound of rubble by heavy rains in Kumrada village in the Chinyalisaur area of Uttarkashi, District Disaster Management officer Devendra Patwal said.

Raj Assembly passes GST amendment Bill

Jaipur: The Rajasthan Assembly Thursday passed the Rajasthan Goods and Services Tax (Amendment) Bill, 2022, which proposes that the registration of companies would not be cancelled even if they fail to file the return for six months. Also, the system of issuing credit notes will also start.



Those who keep trying and never give up get victory one day

SMRITI IRANI | UNION WOMEN & CHILD DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

ICMR, IISC INK PACT

The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) have signed an MoU to collaborate on a national initiative towards the creation of high-quality medical datasets representing India's diversity



Mohan Bhagwat visits mosque

AFTER MEETING RSS CHIEF MOHAN BHAGWAT THURSDAY, IMAM UMER AHMED ILYASI, THE CHIEF OF ALL INDIA IMAM ORGANISATION SAID THAT MOHAN BHAGWAT IS 'RASHTRA PITA' AND A 'RASHTRA RISHI'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 22: Taking forward his outreach to the Muslim community, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat Thursday visited a mosque and a madrasa here and held discussions with the chief of the All India Imam Organisation who termed him 'rashtra pita'.

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh 'sarsangchalak' went to a mosque in central Delhi's Kasturba Gandhi Marg and followed it up with a visit to the Madarsa Tajweedul Quran in Azadpur in north Delhi.

This is the first time he has visited a madrasa, an RSS official accompanying him said.

All India Imam Organisation chief Umer Ahmed Ilyasi used the 'rashtra pita' descriptive for Bhagwat while talking to children at the madrasa. However, Bhagwat intervened to say there is only one father of the nation and said everyone is 'Bharat ki santan' (child of the nation), according to the RSS official.

He said the RSS chief also spoke to the children about the need to know more about the nation and stressed that while the modes of worship could be different, all religions must be respected. Ilyasi and Bhagwat held talks for about an hour at the mosque, which also



houses the office of the All India Imam Organisation and the cleric's residence.

"He is a 'rashtra pita'. We discussed several issues for for strengthening the country," Ilyasi told PTI, adding that Bhagwat had visited the mosque as well as madrasa on his invitation. "With this visit of Bhagwat, a message should go that we all want to work towards strengthening India. For all of us, the nation comes first. Our DNA is the same, it is just that our religion and methods of worshipping god are different," Ilyasi said, echoing the RSS chief's words.

Bhagwat was accompanied by senior Sangh functionaries, including joint general secretary Krishna Gopal and Muslim Rashtriya Manch patron Indresh Kumar. In a statement after the visits, RSS Prachar Pramukh Sunil Ambekar said, "Sarsanghachalak meets people from all walks of life. It is a part of the continuous general 'Samvad' process."

The significant visits by the head of the BJP's ideological mentor came on a day multiple probe agencies conducted raids across the country and arrested more than 100 activists of the Popular Front of

India for allegedly supporting terror activities in the country.

The RSS chief has been holding discussions with Muslim intellectuals for strengthening communal harmony over the last few weeks.

He recently met Delhi's former lieutenant governor Najeeb Jung, former chief election commissioner S Y Quraishi, former Aligarh Muslim University vice chancellor Zameer Uddin Shah, former MP Shahid Siddiqui as well as businessman Saeed Shervani.

During the meeting, Bhagwat reportedly raised the issue of the usage of the word "kafir" for Hindus, which he said does not send out a good message. The group of Muslim intellectuals, on their part, objected to some right-wing activists calling Muslims "jihadi" and "Pakistanis".

They also reportedly told Bhagwat that the real intent behind the word 'kafir' was something different but it is now being used as an 'abuse' in some quarters.

The RSS chief, it is learnt, acknowledged the views of the intellectuals and underscored that the "DNA of all Hindus and Muslims are same". The All India Imam Organisation is the representative voice of the community of Indian imams and claims to be the largest imam organisation in the world.

K'taka hijab row: SC reserves verdict



AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 22: The meandering 10-day arguments on Karnataka's hijab row concluded Thursday, with the counsel for Muslim petitioners making a last gasp effort to have the ban on the Islamic headscarf in classrooms lifted, insisting the state should be concerned more about education than an apparel.

They also flagged the pet 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' slogan of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to buttress their point of women empowerment while remonstrating alleged attempts at stopping Muslim girls from attaining education by banning the hijab.

A number of counsel for the Muslim girls insisted during the often abrasive arguments that preventing them from wearing the hijab to the classroom will put their education in jeopardy as they

might stop attending classes. After the arguments put forth by the counsel for the Muslim girls, the apex court reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas challenging the Karnataka High Court judgement refusing to lift the ban on hijab in educational institutions.

An exasperated bench of Justices Hemant Gupta and Sudhanshu Dhulia had on Wednesday asked the counsel appearing for the petitioners to wrap up their rebuttal arguments within an hour on Thursday, saying "we are losing our patience" and that there was an "overdose of hearing".

"We will give one hour time to all of you. You finish that. Now, it is an overdose of hearing," the judges had told senior advocate Huzefa Ahmadi. The counsel appearing for the petitioners argued on various aspects, including on the state government's February 5, 2022 order which banned wearing clothes that disturb equality, integrity, and public order in schools and colleges.

Ahmadi, appearing for some of the petitioners, told the bench the state has not been able to point out as to which fundamental right of other students was infringed on account of Muslim girl students wearing the hijab. The counsel for Karnataka, however, insisted the state government's circular was "religion neutral" with no reference to the hijab.

SC to live-stream constitution bench hearings from Sept 27



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: In a bid to enhance transparency and accessibility in its functioning, the Supreme Court has decided to live-stream its proceedings of all constitution bench hearings from September 27, exactly four years after a path-breaking verdict in this regard was delivered in 2018.

A unanimous decision was taken by the 30 judges of the apex court in the full court meeting headed by Chief Justice of India U U Lalit held Tuesday evening to implement an apex court verdict of 2018 in the Swapnil Tripathi case.

On August 26, for the first time since its inception, the Supreme Court had live streamed its proceedings of a bench headed by then Chief Justice NV Ramana through

a webcast portal. Exactly four years back September 26, 2018, the Supreme Court had taken a major leap in imparting transparency in the functioning of the judiciary by allowing live-streaming of court proceedings of cases of "constitutional and national importance", saying this openness was like "sunlight" which is the "best disinfectant".

It had said as a pilot project, only a specified category of cases that are of constitutional or national importance and are being argued before a constitution bench should be live streamed.

Several important cases are to be heard by the five-judge constitution benches of the apex court next week including the validity of the 103rd constitution amendment granting a 10 per cent quota to the Economically Weaker Section (EWS), pleas challenging the constitutional validity of the Citizenship Amendment Act and others. Recently, activist-lawyer Indira Jaising, who had also filed a separate petition in 2018, seeking live streaming of the court proceedings has written a letter to CJI UU Lalit seeking implementation of the 2018 verdict and live broadcast of proceedings of constitution bench cases heard by the apex court.

PROTEST TURNS UGLY



Water cannons are used to disperse BJP activists during a protest against the Punjab government, near party office in Chandigarh

PTI PHOTO

UP: 10 KILLED IN RAIN-RELATED INCIDENTS

AGENCIES

Lucknow, Sept 22: At least 10 people were killed, seven of them in Etawah, and 11 injured in incidents of lightning, and wall and house collapses as heavy rains in parts of Uttar Pradesh affected normal life in Firozabad and forced the closure of schools in Aligarh.

Apart from Etawah - where the seven deceased included four children of a family - deaths have also been reported from Firozabad (2) and Balrampur (1) districts since Wednesday, officials said.

It said Etawah observatory recorded 140 mm rainfall in 24 hours till 8.30 am Thursday. Rainfall was reported from Agra also.

Etawah district witnessed three fatal incidents of wall or house collapses late Wednesday night, killing seven people in total. Four children - Sinku (10), Abhi (8), Sonu (7) and Aarti (5) - died in their sleep after a wall of their house collapsed in Chandra Pura village under Civil Lines police station area, Etawah District Magistrate Avnish Kumar Rai said. Their sibling (5) and grand-

mother, Chandni Debi (70), were injured in the incident. Etawah Superintendent of Police (City) Kapil Dev Singh said an elderly couple - Ram Sanehi (65) and Reshma Debi (62) - died when a boundary wall of a petrol pump collapsed onto their hut in Kripalpur village under Ekdil police station.

In yet another incident in the district, Jabar Singh (35) was buried alive after his house in Andava ke Banglan village under Chakarnagar police station collapsed following heavy rains, SHO Deepak Kumar said.

'GHOST' TEACHERS SCAM

LG Saxena orders inquiry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena has ordered an internal inquiry into the alleged irregularities in engagement of guest teachers in Delhi government schools and embezzle-



ment of funds through payment of salaries to "ghost" teachers, sources said Thursday.

The LG Secretariat has asked the chief secretary to advise director (education) to immediately verify the engagement, physical attendance, and withdrawal of salaries of all guest teachers engaged by the city government in its schools, the sources in the LG of office said, adding a status report has to be submitted within a month.

Reacting to the development, the Arvind Kejriwal-led AAP government, in a statement, said, "We welcome any inquiry. If there is any wrongdoing, the guilty should be punished."

The LG's move comes days after his nod for Anti-Corruption Branch probe against two serving and two retired vice principals for allegedly withdrawing salaries in the name of "ghost" teachers at a Delhi government school. The latest move is likely to intensify the tussle between the LG office and AAP dispensation.

DSVs 'Nistar', 'Nipun' launched in Vizag: Navy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Visakhapatnam, Sept 22: Two indigenously designed and built Diving Support Vessels (DSVs) of the Indian Navy - christened 'Nistar' and 'Nipun' - were launched in Visakhapatnam on Thursday in the presence of Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar.

In his address on the occasion, Admiral Kumar described the launching of the DSVs as a "coming of age of the expertise and experience resident in India's shipbuilding industry".

The DSVs are first-of-their-kind ships, indigenously designed and built at Hindustan Shipyard Ltd, Vishakhapatnam for the Navy, the Navy said.

Navy chief's wife Kala Hari Kumar, president of Navy Wellness and Welfare Association (NWWA), performed the traditional honour and named these ships. These ships received a thunderous cheer from



jubilant gathering as they embraced the welcoming waters of the Bay of Bengal.

"It is a matter of great pride and privilege to be here on this historic occasion of the launch of two sophisticated and key platforms of the Indian Navy. Once commissioned, these indigenous Diving Support Vessels or DSVs will serve as INS Nipun and INS Nistar," the Navy chief said in his address.

"Nistar and Nipun, once com-

missioned, would not only herald a new era in our deep ocean diving operations, but also enhance the Indian Navy's stature as a credible force and first responder to undertake critical operations such as submarine rescue operations in the IOR (Indian Ocean Region)," he said.

"Just a few days back we had commissioned the first Indigenous Aircraft Carrier INS Vikrant at Kochi. Combined together, these

ships reaffirm our growing stature as a 'Builders Navy', and a formidable maritime force capable of undertaking multidimensional and multispectral operations," the Navy chief added.

The DSVs, equipped with an array of complex diving support systems and Deep Submergence Rescue Vessel (DSRV) will be deployed for deep sea diving and submarine rescue operations. Furthermore, the ships will be ca-

'NISTAR' AND 'NIPUN' WERE LAUNCHED BY ACHIEVING APPROXIMATELY 80 PER CENT INDIGENOUS CONTENT, A MAJOR STEP TOWARDS "SELF-RELIANCE"

THE DSV PROJECT HAS GENERATED LOCAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND PROMOTED INDIGENISATION WHICH WILL BOOST INDIA'S ECONOMY

We all know we're already living in a climate crisis. No one seems to doubt it after this past year. We meet - we meet - as we meet, much of Pakistan is still underwater; it needs help

JOE BIDEN | US PRESIDENT

We must not give in to his (Putin's) blackmail and must support Ukraine as much as we can. Russia today is as dangerous to Europe and world peace as Nazi Germany was in the last century

EDGARS RINKEVICS | LATVIA FOREIGN MINISTER

India not sitting as a permanent member of the UN Security Council is not good for us only but also not good for the global body and its transformation is overdue

S JAISHANKAR | INDIA'S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Man rescued after 17 days

Beijing: A 28-year-old Chinese hydropower station worker, who went missing for 17 days after a powerful earthquake jolted China's Sichuan Province, has been rescued, the state media reported Thursday. The 6.8-magnitude quake hit Sichuan province on September 5, killing 93 people and injuring more than 400. Gan Yu, who worked at a hydropower station in Sichuan's Luding County, was rescued by a local villager Wednesday.

South Korea, Japan agree to boost ties

Seoul: The leaders of South Korea and Japan agreed to accelerate efforts to mend ties frayed over Japan's past colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula as they held their countries' first summit talks in nearly three years on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, both governments announced Thursday. The meeting occurred after Tokyo denied Seoul's earlier announcement they had agreed on the summit, in a sign of the delicate nature of their current relations.

200 whales die

Hobart (Australia): A day after 230 whales were found stranded on the wild and remote west coast of Australia's island state of Tasmania, only 35 were still alive despite rescue efforts that were to continue Thursday. Half the pod of pilot whales stranded in Macquarie Harbour were presumed to still be alive on Wednesday, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania said.



We are deepening our links with fellow democracies like India, Israel, Indonesia and South Africa

LIZ TRUSS | BRITISH PRIME MINISTER

MODI TO VISIT JAPAN

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Japan September 27 to attend the state funeral of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the Indian government said Thursday



TENSION ESCALATES

RUSSIANS FLEE AFTER MILITARY CALL-UP

REUTERS

Kyiv/New York, Sept 22: Some draft-age Russians headed abroad Thursday to escape their country's biggest conscription drive since World War Two, while explosions shook southeastern Ukraine on the eve of referendums planned there by pro-Moscow separatists.

President Vladimir Putin's new mobilisation campaign escalates a war that has already killed thousands, displaced millions, pulverised cities, damaged the global economy and revived Cold War confrontation.

Though polls have suggested widespread domestic backing for Russia's intervention in Ukraine, mass conscription may be a domestically risky move after past Kremlin promises it would not happen and a string of battlefield failures in Ukraine.

"Every normal person is (concerned)," said one man, identifying himself only as Sergey, disembarking in Belgrade after a flight from Moscow. "It is OK to be afraid of the war."

Anti-war protests in 38 Russian cities saw more than 1,300 people arrested on Wednesday, a monitoring group said, with more planned for the weekend. Some of the detainees had been ordered to report to enlistment offices on Thursday, the first full day of conscription, independent news outlets said.

Ex-Chinese security officials get death rap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Sept 22: Two senior Chinese security officials, including a powerful former justice minister, were sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve for corruption and abuse of power as the anti-graft campaign of President Xi Jinping gathered new momentum ahead of the next month's Communist Party Congress which is expected to endorse a record third term for him.

Fu Zhenghua, former Justice Minister and one of China's most powerful police chiefs, was on Thursday sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve by the Intermediate People's Court of Changchun in northeast China's Jilin Province for corruption amounting to USD 17.3 million and abuse of power.

Hours later, the same court gave a similar sentence to former Jiangsu official Wang Like.

He was also sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve for bribery, conniving with criminal gangs and faking identity cards, official media here reported.

Wang is a former member of the Jiangsu Provincial Committee Communist Party of China (CPC) and former secretary of the CPC Jiangsu Provincial Committee politics and law committee, state-run People's Daily online reported.

Chinese media reported that Fu received a suspended death sentence to be commuted to a life sentence in two years.



Cars queue to enter Finland from Russia at Finland's most southern crossing point Vaalimaa, around three hour drive from Saint Petersburg, in Vaalimaa, Finland

REUTERS

Putin's defence minister has said the call-up is intended to enlist about 300,000 men. Prices for air tickets out of Moscow soared above \$5,000 for one-way flights to the nearest foreign locations, with most sold out for coming days. Traffic also surged at border crossings with Finland and Georgia.

One Russian man arriving at Istanbul Airport said he left partly over the Kremlin's decision. "It can lead to lots of problems for lots of Russians," said Alex, grabbing his suitcase at a baggage carousel. Russia scoffed at reports of a mass exodus as exaggerated. National airline Aeroflot said it would refund people unable to fly as planned be-

cause they had received a call-up.

'JUST PUNISHMENT'

Addressing world leaders at the annual U.N. General Assembly in New York, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged the United Nations to create a special tribunal and strip Moscow of its Security Council veto power. "A crime has been committed against Ukraine, and we demand just punishment," Zelenskyy, dressed in his trademark green military T-shirt, said by video on Wednesday.

The 15-member Security Council meets again over Ukraine later on Thursday. It has been unable to take significant action on Ukraine



A satellite image shows a flooded bridge in the aftermath of Hurricane Fiona, in Arecibo, Puerto Rico

REUTERS

Imran apologises in contempt of court case

REUTERS

Islamabad, Sept 22: Former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan Thursday tendered an apology in a contempt of court case, his defence lawyer said, a step back that could help him avoid disqualification from politics.

The court has deferred a decision on whether to indict Khan, said the lawyer, Faisal Chaudhry, adding the court had directed the politician to submit an unconditional apology in writing by October 3. The charges are related to a speech by Khan in which he allegedly threatened police and judicial officers last month, after one of his close aides was denied bail in a sedition case.



- Indictment on contempt of court charges deferred
- Khan to give an unconditional apology in writing
- Court to decide whether to accept the apology
- Khan calls on supporters to ready for a protest movement

The court has appreciated the gesture, Chaudhry said, adding he expected charges would mostly be dropped after the apology. The court was expected to release a written copy of its ruling in due course. Local media present inside the courtroom quoted Khan, saying, I apologise if I crossed any red lines.

Three local journalists who were inside the courtroom also told Reuters that Khan had proffered the verbal apology. We will prepare and submit in writing an unconditional apology as sought by the court, Chaudhry said.

The high court was due to indict Khan, a move that could lead to his exclusion from politics if con-

9 killed as Iran protests spread



REUTERS

Widespread outages of Instagram and WhatsApp, which protesters use to share information about the government's rolling crackdown on dissent, continued Thursday

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dubai, Sept 22: Clashes between Iranian security forces and protesters angry over the death of a 22-year-old woman in police custody have killed at least nine people since the violence erupted over the weekend, according to a tally Thursday by The Associated Press.

Widespread outages of Instagram and WhatsApp, which protesters use to share information about the government's rolling crackdown on dissent, continued Thursday. Authorities also appeared to disrupt internet access to the outside world, a tactic that rights activists say the government often employs in times of unrest.

The demonstrations in Iran began as an emotional outpouring over the death of Mahsa Amini, a young woman held by the country's morality police for allegedly violating its strictly enforced dress code. Her death has sparked sharp condemnation from the United States, the European Union and the United Nations. The police say she died of a heart attack and was not mistreated, but her family has cast doubt on that account.

The protests have grown in the last four days into an open challenge to the government, with women

removing their state-mandated headscarves in the streets and Iranians setting trash bins ablaze and calling for the downfall of the Islamic Republic itself. "Death to the dictator!" has been a common cry in the protests.

Demonstrations have also rocked university campuses in Tehran and far flung western cities such as Kermanshah. Although widespread, the unrest appears distinct from earlier rounds of nationwide protests triggered by pocketbook issues as Iran's economy staggers under heavy US sanctions.

The unrest that erupted in 2019 over the government's abrupt gasoline price hike mobilised working class masses in small towns. Hundreds were killed as security forces cracked down, according to human rights groups, the deadliest violence since the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

Iran's state-run media this week reported demonstrations in at least 13 cities, including the capital, Tehran, as protesters vent anger over social repression. Videos online show security forces firing tear gas and water cannons to disperse the protests. London-based Amnesty International reported that officers fired birdshot and beat protesters with batons.

At least nine people have died in the confrontations, according to an AP count based on statements from Iran's state-run and semiofficial media. Officials have blamed unnamed foreign countries, which they claim are trying to foment unrest. In Amini's home province in the northwest, Kurdistan, the provincial police chief said four protesters were killed by live fire.

Quake shakes Mexico, 2 dead

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mexico City, Sept 22: A powerful earthquake of magnitude 6.8 struck Mexico early Thursday, causing at least two deaths, damaging buildings and setting off landslides.

The earthquake struck at 1.19 am near the epicentre of a magnitude 7.6 quake that hit three days earlier in the western state of Michoacan. It was also blamed for two deaths. The US Geological Survey said that Thursday's earthquake was centred 31 miles (50 kilometres) south-southwest of Aguillilla, Michoacan, at a depth of 15 miles (24.1 kilometres).

Michoacan's state government said the quake was felt throughout the state. It reported damage to a building in the city of Uruapan and some landslides on highways. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said via Twitter that it was an aftershock from Monday's quake and was also felt in the states of Colima, Jalisco and Guerrero.

Mexico City Mayor Claudia Sheinbaum said via Twitter that two people died — a woman who fell down the stairs of her home and a man who had a heart attack. Residents huddled in streets as seismic alarms blared.

The earthquake rattled an already jittery country. Monday's more powerful quake was the third major earthquake to strike on September 19 — in 1985, 2017, and now 2022.

The 2017 and 2022 September 19 quakes came very shortly after the annual earthquake drill conducted every September 19 to commemorate the devastating 1985 temblor that killed some 9,500 people.

Secret vaccinations help Zimbabwe mothers protect children

More than 700 children have died from measles in Zimbabwe in an outbreak first reported in April

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harare (Zimbabwe), Sept 22: Dozens of women holding babies rushed to take their places on wooden benches at a clinic in Zimbabwe while a nurse took a separate group of anxious mothers and their children through a back door and into another room. The nurse quickly closed the door behind them. The women were all at the Mbare Polyclinic in Zimbabwe's capital, Harare, to get their children vaccinated against measles amid a deadly outbreak in the southern African country.

But those who were taken to the back room were getting their children vaccinated in secret, and in defiance of religious doctrine that forbids them from using modern medicines. "The advent of the measles outbreak saw children dying so they are now coming secretly and we are helping them," said Lewis Foya, a nurse at the clinic.

More than 700 children have died from measles in Zimbabwe in an outbreak first reported in April. Many were unvaccinated because of religious reasons, Information Minister Monica Mutsvangwa said. The government has announced a vaccination drive but, as with COVID-19, some religious groups are stubbornly opposed to vaccines and have hindered the campaign.



AP PHOTO

Apostolic groups that infuse traditional beliefs into a Pentecostal doctrine are among the most skeptical of modern medicine in Zimbabwe. Followers instead put

their faith in prayer, holy water and other measures to ward off disease or cure illnesses.

"They have a belief that if they get vaccinated, they become un-

holy so that's the doctrine that they pass down to the women," said Foya. He said the patriarchy in the church means women have "no power to openly say no" to instructions. Children are then in danger.

There has been little detailed research on Apostolic churches in Zimbabwe but studies by the United Nations children's agency, UNICEF, estimate it is the largest denomination with around 2.5 million followers in a country of 15 million.

Some allow members to seek health care. Many are still resistant. So to save their children, some mothers visit clinics in secret, sometimes under the cover of night and without their husbands knowing. A group of Apostolic church members who are open to modern medicine have been trying to change

church attitudes, but also advise women to go against church rules if it means helping their children.

"We encourage women to get their children vaccinated, maybe at night," said Debra Mpofu, a member of the Apostolic Women Empowerment Trust. "It's really necessary for the women to protect their children so it's important for them to just sneak out." The secrecy is necessary because members found to have visited health care centers are shamed and forbidden from taking part in church activities.

The World Health Organisation warned in April of an increase in measles in vulnerable countries due to COVID-19 disruptions, with more than 40 countries postponing or suspending their regular immunization campaigns.

of the day **quote**

All banks are in need of funds as second half is expected to see a pick-up in credit off take, and currently investor appetite is favourable



VENKATAKRISHNAN SRINIVASAN | FOUNDER AND MANAGING PARTNER, ROCKFORD FINCAP

Although the total VC funding amount still remains below \$1 billion akin to July, August managed to reverse the decline in fundraising, despite a 2.3 per cent fall in deal volume



AUROJYOTI BOSE | LEAD ANALYST, GLOBALDATA

In the last two years, the market has been very volatile but the expectation is that in the next two to three years, the washing machines segment will grow in double digits



VISHAL BHOLA | MD, WHIRLPOOL INDIA

SHORT TAKES

Fortis plunges 20%

Bangalore: Shares of Fortis Healthcare sank nearly 20% Thursday and eyed their biggest slide in nearly 15 years, after reports said India's top court ordered the continuation of a stay on IHH Healthcare's open offer for the company. The Supreme Court also remanded the issue of the Fortis-IHH deal to the Delhi High Court and directed it to consider a forensic auditor's appointment, CNBC TV-18 reported. IHH had won a bid for a 31% stake in Fortis in 2018, which triggered an open offer for another 26% as per Indian regulations.

WhatsApp Pay India head quits

Mumbai: The head of WhatsApp's India payment business, Manesh Mahatme, has quit after more than a year with the Meta Platforms-owned company to join Amazon India, a source told Reuters Thursday. Mahatme's exit comes at a critical time for WhatsApp, which is seeking to ramp up its payments service in a highly competitive market and lock horns with more established players such as Alphabet Inc's Google Pay, Ant Group-backed Paytm and Walmart's PhonePe.

India-UK trade pact to boost JVs

New Delhi: The proposed comprehensive free trade pact between India and the United Kingdom, likely to be signed by next month's end, could accelerate joint ventures (JVs) and boost bilateral investments, the head of the body promoting bilateral trade said Thursday. Richard Heald, executive chair of the UK India Business Council (UKIBC) said negotiation teams were working overnight to meet the deadline of Diwali, the Indian festival of lights falling October 24, as political leaders had already given a go-ahead.

SoftBank to slash valuation of Oyo

Bangalore: SoftBank Group Corp is looking to trim IPO-bound Indian hotelier Oyo's valuation by about 20% to \$2.7 billion, according to Bloomberg News. SoftBank declined to comment, while Oyo said the news on the valuation cut was speculative and incorrect. "We are confident that the above speculations about valuation markdown is patently incorrect ... we have not decided the exact timing for the IPO and the IPO valuation is also highly speculative," an OYO spokesperson said in a statement.



There is no sure-fire way to regulate the fintechs in a manner that maximises their positive impact while simultaneously protecting the financial system and customers against the risks

AJAY CHOUDHARY | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESERVE BANK

GLOBAL DOOM

₹ SINKS TO ALL-TIME LOW OF 80.79

Strength of the American currency in the overseas market, a muted trend in domestic equities, risk-off mood and firm crude oil prices weighed on the rupee

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 22: The rupee plunged by 83 paise -- its biggest single-day loss in nearly seven months -- to close at an all-time low of 80.79 against the US dollar on Thursday after the US Federal Reserve's interest rate hike and its hawkish stance weighed on investor sentiments.

Forex traders said the US Fed's rate hike and escalation of geopolitical risk in Ukraine sapped risk appetite. Moreover, the strength of the American currency in the overseas market, a muted trend in domestic equities, risk-off mood and firm crude oil prices weighed on the rupee.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened at 80.27, then fell further to an all-time intra-day low of 80.95



RUPEE FELL 83 PAISE OVER ITS PREVIOUS CLOSE OF 79.96
BIGGEST SINGLE-DAY LOSS IN NEARLY SEVEN MONTHS
FED'S RATE HIKE SENT THE DOLLAR TO A NEW 20-YEAR HIGH

against the American currency. It finally ended at 80.79, down 83 paise over its previous close of 79.96. The rupee suffered its

We believe the current downtrend in the rupee may continue for a while even after strong domestic fundamentals. The local currency will react to a stronger greenback but there could be outperformance among the regional currencies

DILIP PARMAR | RESEARCH ANALYST, HDFC SECURITIES

biggest single-day fall since February 24 when it had declined by 99 paise.

The US Fed hiked interest rates by 75 basis points to 3-3.25 per cent. It was the third straight 75 basis points hike. Fed Chair Jerome Powell reiterated the central bank's commitment to taming inflation.

The Fed's decision sent the dollar to a new 20-year high and the rupee to a record low of 80.61. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, advanced 0.38 per cent to 110.06.

"An aggressive Fed Chair Jerome Powell and Russian President Vladimir Putin's escalation of geopolitical risk in Ukraine turned

Rupee to fall further, RBI key: Analysts

Mumbai: The Indian rupee is likely to fall further after hitting a record low to the dollar Thursday as the US Federal Reserve hinted at more aggressive rate hikes to tame inflation. "After the hawkish Fed Reserve commentary, the rupee is (set to fall)," said Anil Bhansali, head of treasury at Finrex Treasury Advisors. "The intervention from the central bank will remain crucial and they are expected to be present through the day." Samir Lodha, managing director at QuantArt Market Solutions, reckoned that more losses were in store for the rupee if the RBI decides to step back. "Once RBI allows INR to trade beyond 80 on a consistent basis, I expect rupee to head towards 82.0 in a couple of months on account of the trade deficit and due to global recession and money supply tightening," Lodha said. It is possible that "rupee will depreciate further with RBI intervention to control it whenever required," said Venkatakrishnan Srinivasan, founder and managing partner at Rockfor Fincap.

ILLICIT TRADE

₹58,521 crore in taxes lost in 5 key industries

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The exchequer is estimated to have lost ₹58,521 crore in taxes in 2019-20 due to illicit trade in goods in 5 key industries, including FMCG, mobile phone, tobacco products and alcohol, a Ficci report said Thursday.

The report estimates the size of illicit markets in these industries at a little over ₹2.60 lakh crore for the year 2019-20, with the FMCG industry accounting for 75 per cent of the total illicit value of goods in five key industries.

"The estimated tax loss to the government due to illicit goods in these five key industries is ₹58,521 crore," said the report titled 'Illicit Markets: A Threat to Our National Interests' by FICCI's Committee Against Smuggling and Counterfeiting Activities Destroying the Economy (CASCADE).

The two highly regulated and taxed industries, tobacco products and alcoholic beverages, account for nearly 49 per cent of the overall tax loss to the government due to illicit markets in these five key industries.

The maximum number of jobs (7.94 lakh) were lost due to illicit trade in the FMCG packaged foods industry, followed by tobacco industry (3.7 lakh), FMCG household and personal goods industry (2.989 lakh), alcoholic beverages industry (97,000), and mobile phone industry (35,000).

The tax loss to the government due to illicit trade in these five sectors stood at ₹17,074 crore (FMCG packaged foods), ₹15,262 crore (al-



coholic beverages), ₹13,331 crore (tobacco products), ₹9,995 crore (FMCG household and personal goods), and ₹2,859 crore (mobile phones).

"The impact of the illicit market of these key industries on the economy is pervasive and significant because of the backward linkages of these industries with other sectors of the economy resulting in a multiplier effect. Higher the multiplier, higher is its overall effect on the economy," the report said.

Of the total illicit market size of ₹2.60 lakh crore, FMCG industry (household and personal goods, packaged foods) constitute over ₹1.97 lakh crore. This is followed by alcoholic beverages at ₹23,466 crore, tobacco products (₹22,930 crore) and mobile phones (₹15,884 crore).

The report highlights that to deal with the menace of illicit markets in India, addressing the demand and supply gap of legitimate goods, strengthening the domestic manufacturing sector, increasing awareness among consumers, rationalisation of tariffs to reduce tax arbitrage, creation of a conducive environment for innovation and better international coordination and cooperation are some of the way forwards.

Since Falcon Group is one of the leading exporters in seafood, what challenges have you faced from other international competitors such as China, Vietnam or Thailand?

China is largely an importer but Vietnam, Thailand and mainly Ecuador are our strong competitors. Vietnam provides value addition to the shrimp and Ecuador has a stronghold with the US markets due to its proximity. However, we have decided to set up two factories in Andhra Pradesh that will not only help in improving our procurements but also will add value to our products.

What technological changes have you seen?

When I joined in 2006, an urgent need was felt in terms of mindset shift. We decided to upgrade our systems and introduce various technological changes. This was faced by a lot of resistance and since most of our business deals in fish trade which involves dealing with the farmers in the rural areas, the changes were not easy. However, things have started to turnaround in last few years, but we have been cautious as it is important to develop trust and friendship with our suppliers as well as buyers.

What are the challenges you

dealt with during pandemic?

During the first year of the pandemic, we subdued our business in order to reduce losses to both our suppliers and us. Since we largely deal in highly perishable items, we cannot hold stocks for a longer period. Post pandemic period has come with a different set of challenges. The biggest has been the increase in freight charges. The rates have surged from \$4,000 to \$14,000. While demand has increased, the phenomenal change in freights is eating up into our profits. Moreover, since we largely cater to the US market, inflation has led to fall in consumption in current situation.

What are your future expansion plans?

We are primarily aiming to be the biggest exporter in seafood in Asia. We are setting up new factories in Andhra Pradesh in this regard. Moreover, we have explored a sector, which has huge potential and scalability and we are looking at ₹800-1000 crore investment in two years. Apart from this, we are also planning to expand into real estate business in Odisha and have aimed to launch 5-6 million square ft projects in next 3-4 years. However, we are not really focused in making profits but ensuring quality and want to bring a mindset shift in real estate by delivering high-

quality houses to users at very affordable prices as quality is more important than quantity

There have been a lot of startups that have come up lately in Odisha and are dealing in seafood business. Do you see them as competitors? What would be your message to a young entrepreneur?

No, I do not see them as competitors at all. They deal largely with private equities while we have large-scale consumer base across the world. Our mindsets are completely different. We have a huge farmer base that is largely dependent on us and it is necessary for us to maintain a physical touch with them. For budding entrepreneurs I would suggest them to build their businesses slowly and take



one-step at a time. It takes a lot of time and effort to build trust and develop a brand. In today's dynamic market, profit and loss will always be a part and parcel of the business but it's important to remain consistent and deliver to your consumers at all cost.

OLA ELECTRIC VENTURES ABROAD

Ola Electric Thursday said it plans to foray into the international markets starting with Nepal. The company said it has signed a memorandum of understanding with CG Motors in Nepal partnering them as local distributors for its Ola S1 scooters. In the second phase, the company also aims to enter Latin America, ASEAN and European Union



FREIGHT COSTS JUMP

India turns away from Russian crude

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 22: Indian refiners are set to skip purchases of Russia ESPO crude oil this month due to higher freight rates, turning to Africa and the Middle East instead, industry sources said.

India, which rarely used to buy Russian oil, has emerged as Moscow's second biggest oil customer after China since Moscow's invasion of Ukraine in late February.

Refiners in India have been snapping up nearly all grades of Russian crude, taking advantage of discounts after some entities in the West halted purchases.

However, higher prices are set to cool off Indian demand, channeling supplies to China.

"On net back basis after factoring in the freight, the landed cost of ESPO is turning out to be \$5-\$7 a barrel costlier in comparison to similar grades from other countries such as UAE's Murban," said an Indian industry source familiar with the matter, adding that Russian oil has previously been cheaper. Instead of ESPO, Indian companies are buying other grades such as those from West Africa that give better yields, he said.

The price gap between Brent and Dubai benchmarks has also narrowed, opening the arbitrage window for Atlantic Basin grades to Asia. India's monthly Russian oil buying has fallen since hitting a record high in June. About 2 million tonne (14.35 million barrels) of Russian crude have been loaded for India so far this month versus 3.55 million tonne of August, including 585,090 tonne of ESPO crude, Refinitiv data showed Thursday.

Internet calling, messaging apps may need telecom licence

THE GOVERNMENT IN THE BILL HAS PROPOSED A PROVISION TO WAIVE FEES AND PENALTY OF TELECOM AND INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Over-the-top players like Whatsapp, Zoom and Google Duo which provide calling and messaging services may require licences to operate in the country, according to the draft telecommunication bill 2022.

The draft bill has included OTT as part of the telecommunication service. "For provision of Telecommunication Services and

Telecommunication Networks, an entity shall have to obtain a license," the draft bill released Wednesday evening said.

The government in the bill has proposed a provision to waive fees and penalty of telecom and internet service providers.

The ministry has also proposed a provision for the refund of fees in case a telecom or internet provider surrenders his license. "Seeking your views on the



draft Indian Telecom Bill 2022," Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said in a post on a so-

cial media platform in which he also shared the link of the draft bill.



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Nagpur, Sept 22: Jasprit Bumrah's fitness status will be a matter of attention when an out of sorts Indian team will look at course correction options against Australia in the second T20 International and strive to keep the three-match series alive, here Friday.

Bumrah, who has been out of action since the end of England tour, skipped the Asia Cup due to back injury. However, to everyone's surprise, the team management didn't play him during the high-scoring first T20I in Mohali, raising

doubts whether he has still attained peak fitness or not.

To compound the team's worries, the 'three-and-a-half' pronged pace attack, including Hardik Pandya, conceded 150 runs in 14 overs.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar, the seasoned pro, has already been taken to cleaners. He has leaked 49 runs in the three penultimate overs (19th) that he bowled against Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Australia.

In this backdrop, a fit and fiery Bumrah is a pre-requisite for India as the home bowlers are increas-

IPL TO RETURN TO ITS OLD FORMAT IN 2023

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: The Indian Premier League (IPL) will return to its original, pre-COVID-19, home-and-away format from the 2023 season, BCCI President Sourav Ganguly has conveyed to the Board's affiliated state units.

The IPL has been held at only a few venues since the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020 as the lucrative league unfolded behind closed doors across three venues in UAE – Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi. In 2021 too, the tournament was held across four venues – Delhi, Ahmedabad, Mumbai and Chennai.

However, with the pandemic under control, the cash-rich league will return to its old format in which each team plays one home and one away match.

"The next season of men's IPL will also go back to the home and away format with all ten teams playing their home matches at their designated venues," read a Ganguly's note to state units. The note gave them a "snapshot" of the ongoing domestic season.

The BCCI is conducting a full-fledged domestic season for the first time since 2020 and all multi-day tournaments will also return to the traditional home and away for-

mat.

Women's IPL likely

The BCCI is also working to host the inaugural edition of the much-anticipated Women's IPL early next year. PTI had last month reported that the tournament is likely to take place in March after the Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa.

"The BCCI is currently working on the much-awaited Women's IPL. We are expecting to start the first season early next year," Ganguly wrote in the letter dated September 20.

The Women's IPL is expected to raise the standard of women's cricket in India.

Besides the Women's IPL, the BCCI is also launching a girls U-15 ODI tournament. "We are glad to introduce a girls U15 One Day tournament from this season. Women's cricket has seen phenomenal growth across the world and our national team has been performing well. This new tournament will create a pathway for our young girls to play at the national and international level," Ganguly wrote.

The inaugural women's U-15 event will be played from December 26 to January 12 across Bangalore, Ranchi, Rajkot, Indore, Raipur and Pune.

Bajrang blames doctors for poor Worlds show

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 22: Star wrestler Bajrang Punia remains baffled by the on-spot doctors' decision to use 'rigid tape' on his bleeding head, which severely hampered his focus ahead of the quarterfinal clash against USA's John Michael Diakomihalis during the World Championship.

Bajrang, gunning for his maiden world title, suffered a head injury in his opening bout against Cuba's Alejandro Enrique Vlandes Tobier in the very first minute of the clash in Belgrade.

The on-spot doctors rushed to the mat and applied 'rigid tape', which is actually used to stabilise knee and ankle. Mostly tennis players and basketball players use that tape.

"God knows why they did that? It caused irritation because my hairs were getting pulled as it had stuck on my head. They did not even put cotton on the wound and



directly applied the tape. I had to cut my hair from a certain spots to get rid of that. It took me almost 20 minutes to remove that," Bajrang told this agency.

"Instead of devising a strategy against the American, me and my team was jostling to get that tape removed from my head. All I had about 20-25 minutes before I clashed with the American and all of that time was lost," the 28-year-old rued.

Dr Anand Dubey, who is attached with Bajrang as his personal physio, said ideally the doctors should have used a cohesive tape.

"The rigid tape can actually cause skull swelling because even a gentle touch would cause irritation and pull the hair. You know how wrestlers keep putting their hands on rival's head. So we decided to remove that and applied a cohesive tape," explained Dubey.

Milan, Sept 22: The imminent prospect of relegation from the Nations League's elite is unlikely to worry Gareth Southgate. What might be troubling the England coach far more is the fitness issues, poor form or fragile club status of some of his key players two months out from the World Cup.

From the team that started the European Championship final against Italy last year, defenders Harry Maguire and Luke Shaw have been dropped by Manchester United and central midfielder Kalvin Phillips requires shoulder surgery and could miss the World Cup.

Goalkeeper Jordan Pickford is out injured, center back John Stones has been playing as a right back for Manchester City, and midfielders Declan Rice and Mason Mount have been in underwhelming form for West Ham and Chelsea, respectively, in the first six weeks of the Premier League.

There's plenty for Southgate to ponder; then, heading into matches against Italy – in Milan on Friday – and Germany – at London's Wembley Stadium on Monday – in a Nations League group where England is in last place after two draws and two losses.

Another loss in Italy will see England drop into the second tier

NATIONS LEAGUE RELEGATION LOOMS FOR ENGLAND Southgate wary of mounting concerns

ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Another loss in Italy will see England drop into the second tier



England players go through their training drills ahead of their crucial Nations League match against Italy, Friday night



of the UEFA tournament, which will damage the pride of Southgate's squad, if nothing else.

It's the bigger picture – essentially, the World Cup – that is key

chine, despite the absence of key players such as David Warner, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis and Mitchell Marsh.

All-rounder Cameron Green nicely slipped into the shoes of Warner with a sizzling fifty at the top in only his second T20I, while Steven Smith and debutant Tim David also gave the team the required impetus with crucial cameos.

The experienced Matthew Wade too lived up to the finisher's role with a stellar 45 not out off 21 and India will have to pull up their socks to stop Australia from going on a rampage.

Australia, however, would hope for a more disciplined show from their bowling unit after the pace trio of Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Green bled runs in Mohali.

The wicket at VCA stadium, however, will be different than the Mohali track. It is expected to be on the slower side, which will make bowlers' role more prominent in this game. With dew setting in the evening, teams will prefer to chase than defend totals.



Groundsmen dry the playing field after rains at VCA Stadium, ahead of the second T20I in Nagpur, Thursday

1ST SERIES WIN IN ENGLAND SINCE 1999

Harmanpreet powers eves to dominating win



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Canterbury, Sept 22: Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur smashed a scintillating unbeaten ton (143 n o, 111b, 18x4, 4x6) to power India to a comprehensive 88-run win in the second ODI, that sealed country's first series win against England since 1999.

A vintage Harmanpreet rekindled the memories of 2017 World Cup with a magnificent knock as India put on board a mammoth 333/5. India bundled out England for 245 in 44.5 overs with medium pacer Renuka Singh (4/57) leading charge Wednesday night. Danni Wyatt's 58-ball 65 (6x4) was the lone bright spot, in an otherwise, dismal show by England batters.

The last time Indian women won an ODI series in England was in 1999 when they triumphed 2-1.

Chasing the imposing total, what England needed was a brisk start, but Renuka denied them by dismissing two top-order batter in Emma Lamb (15) and Sophia Dunkley (1). Tammy Beaumont (6) was run out as the hosts were reduced to 47/3 by the end of the

eighth over.

Alice Capsey (39) and Wyatt stitched 55 runs for the fourth wicket and then Wyatt shared another 65 runs with skipper Amy Jones (39) before the England's chase fell apart with Renuka cleaning up Wyatt in the 30th over.

Towards the end, Charlie Dean (37) and Kate Cross (14) tried their best but the asking was too tall as India recorded a magnificent win.

Sent into bat, Harmanpreet enjoyed a fine 112-run stand for the fourth wicket with Harleen Deol (58, 72b, 5x4, 2x6). She also added 50 with Pooja Vastrakar (18) and another 71 runs in four overs with Deepti Sharma (15 n o) for the unbroken sixth wicket stand.

However, it was in the last three overs in which Harmanpreet literally took the game away from England's grasp. In the last three overs, the Indian team scored 62 runs, courtesy its skipper.

BRIEF SCORES: India Women 333/5 (Harmanpreet Kaur 143 n o, Harleen Deol 58; Freya Kemp 1/39) beat England Women 245 (Danni Wyatt 65; Renuka Singh 4/57, Dayalan Hemalatha 2/6) by 88 runs.

Neymar aims for Pele's Brazil feat as record scorer



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rio de Janeiro, Sept 22: Here's some great news for Brazil – Neymar is winning everyone over this season with his goals and attitude for Paris Saint-Germain. He's also been injury-free after years of being plagued by ankle, hamstring and foot injuries.

Even though Neymar suffered a small cut in his right knee and needed minor treatment during Wednesday's training session, Brazil coach Tite said he was expected to start against Ghana Friday.

Fans were high-fiving Neymar and having their photos taken with him when he arrived Wednesday in Le Havre for the game against Ghana, the penultimate friendly for both sides before the World Cup.

Neymar's work-rate for PSG has been exemplary. He's fitter than for many years and scoring prolifically, with 11 in 11 games overall. The 30-year-old forward has been creating, too. His pass for Lionel Messi in Sunday's 1-0 win at Lyon was his seventh in the French league – level with Messi.

Will this form continue all the way to the World Cup in Qatar, where Brazil aim for a record-extending sixth title but a first in 20 years? Brazil fans hope so.

Even more so if Neymar enters the tournament in Qatar with the additional psychological boost of being Brazil's all-time leading scorer. He's on 74, behind only three-time World Cup winner Pele's record of 77.

He has another chance to overtake Pele in a friendly against Tunisia next Tuesday at Parc des Princes, also the home of PSG. The last time Brazil played at the stadium was in 1992, when Neymar was six months old.

Roger, Rafa to team up in doubles at Laver Cup



ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, Sept 22: Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal will team up in doubles at the Laver Cup on Friday in what Federer has announced will the final match of his long and illustrious career.

Federer, owner of 20 Grand Slam titles, and his longtime rival Nadal, owner of a men's-record 22 major championships, will pair up for

Team Europe against the Team World duo of US Open semifinalist Frances Tiafoe and Jack Sock.

The singles matches will be two-time Grand Slam runner-up Casper Ruud against Sock, and 2021 French Open finalist Stefanos Tsitsipas against Diego Schwartzman during the day session, and three-time major champion Andy Murray against Alex de Minaur at night, before the Federer-Nadal doubles match.