



SPILLING BEANS

Sushant Singh Rajput and Sara Ali Khan were in intense love, claims Samuel Haokip, the late actor's friend

LEISURE P2



PRAYERS FOR SPB

TN comes together and prays for playback singer SP Balasubrahmanyam's recovery from COVID-19 triggered illness

TWO STATES P7



KAMALA SCRIPTS HISTORY

Kamala Harris has scripted history as she became the first Indian-American to accept the nomination for VP

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



One country, one test for employment is a great initiative. Does it include pakoda shops too?

SHORT TAKES

Four top militant commanders killed

Srinagar: Four top militant commanders were killed recently and 16 youths were brought back from militant ranks to rejoin their families, the J&K Police chief said Thursday. Addressing the media in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, DGP Dilbag Singh said, "Encounters during the last few days were major successes for the security forces and this will bring relief in the lives of the local people."

Bhubaneswar MLA tests COVID-19 +ve

Bhubaneswar: Bhubaneswar (Central) MLA Ananta Nayayan Jena has tested positive for COVID-19. However, his condition is stable. The former Bhubaneswar Mayor had undergone test and his reports came out positive after 11 a.m. Thursday. He is currently under home quarantine. With this, eight leaders, including a Minister of the ruling BJD, have been infected with the virus. Wednesday, swab reports of two party leaders - Odisha Tourism Development Corporation chairperson Srimayee Mishra and Odisha Small Industries Corporation chairperson Chinmoy Kumar Sahoo - came out positive.

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	38220.39	↓ 394.40
NIFTY	11312.20	↓ 96.20
DOLLAR	75.15	↑ ₹0.25
EURO	88.91	↓ ₹0.46
GOLD	₹52,061	↓ ₹561
SILVER	₹67,175	↓ ₹788

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	30.7°C	31.8°C
TEMP MIN	24.6°C	23.0°C
Humidity	95%	98%
Rainfall	Trace	1mm

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

Rivers in Balasore, Bhadrak in spate

TWO PEOPLE WASHED AWAY IN MAYURBHANJ, WHILE ROAD LINKS IN SEVERAL PLACES DISRUPTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Balasore/Bhadrak, August 20: Even as heavy rains continued to batter various parts of the state over the last few days, water levels in Budhabalanga, Jalaka and Subarnarekha rivers have started swelling in Balasore Thursday.

According to reports, the upper catchment areas of the river have recorded heavy rainfall, which has caused influx of floodwaters into the river. Many low-lying areas under the Sadar block were inundated.

Nine panchayats under the Sadar block were submerged while communication with various parts has been disrupted.

Similarly, water levels in Jalaka and Subarnarekha rivers too have risen. Even as people in riparian pockets are staring at floods, the district administration has kept a strict vigil on the situation. The water level in Jalaka river at Mathani in Balasore district is flowing at 6.6 metres above the danger mark of 5.5 metres.

Reports from Bhadrak said, low pressure-induced rains during past several days has caused Baitarani river to overflow at Akhuapada anicut Thursday morning. The river's water level reached 17.56 metres at 6 am, as against the danger mark of 17.83 metre.

Water level in Baitarani river has been rising by 0.89 metre every hour. As a result, low-lying areas under dif-



DELUGE: A marooned village in Balasore district

ferent blocks in Bhadrak district have been submerged under rainwater, following low pressure-induced rain. Rainwater will reach the danger mark soon, if rain continues in the upper catchment areas of the river.

Road link between Tinikuda and Balikera in Puri district was disrupted as a temporary bridge over Bhargabi river was swept away by floodwaters. In Kandhamal district, road communication between Phulbani and Dakapala was disrupted due to overflowing of Salunki river.

Similarly, the water level in Hati river in Kalahandi district is also rising, while road communication between Dharmagarh and Junagarh in Kalahandi has snapped as water is flowing over the highway. The waters

level in Indravati and Vaskel rivers in Nabarangpur district too have risen, but there is no flood situation there at present, Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) PK Jena said.

Water-logging was also reported from several low-lying areas in Kendrapara, Dhenkanal, Nabarangpur, Koraput and Boudh districts, he said.

Jena said the state recorded average rainfall of 59 mm since Wednesday and two persons were swept away by strong current while crossing Jambhira river at Golmuhan Ghat in Mayurbhanj district. Nabarangpur district reported the maximum rainfall of 130.6 mm, while Malkangiri district experienced road communication snapped and low lying areas inundated due to the incessant rains.

In view of heavy rainfall forecast by IMD, Chief Secretary AK Tripathy held a video conference with senior officials, including Collectors, to review the situation arising out of heavy downpour.

After the meeting, Jena said five districts received more than 100 mm rainfall, while ten others reported more than 50 mm.

Revenue and Disaster Management Minister Sudam Marndi who took stock of the situation, said the situation is under control and there is no fear of flood though the water levels in several rivers in the state is rising. The district Collectors have been asked to conduct a thorough assessment of the damage caused by the rainfall and submit detailed reports, he said.

SC to Bhushan: Take 2-3 days to reconsider your statement

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: The Supreme Court Thursday granted time till August 24 to activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan to reconsider his "defiant statement" refusing to apologise and tender "unconditional apology" for contemptuous tweets against the judiciary and rejected his submission that quantum of punishment be decided by another bench.

The top court, while reserving its verdict on the quantum of sentence to be awarded to Bhushan in the case, also rejected his submission seeking deferment of the hearing till his yet-to-be-filed review plea against its verdict, which held him guilty of contempt of the court, is decided. A bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra said it may now hear the matter August 25 for considering the "unconditional apology" if filed by Bhushan.

Reminding Bhushan of 'lakshman rekha', the top court asked as to why it has been crossed and observed that it has been asked to commit an act of "impropriety" by sending the case to some other bench for hearing the arguments on quantum of sentence in the contempt case. "Arguments have been heard in the main matter, on sentencing. Order reserved. We have given time to the contemnor (Bhushan) to sub-



Attorney General KK Venugopal urged the bench, also comprising Justices BR Gavai and Krishna Murari, not to award any punishment to Bhushan in the contempt case saying he has already been convicted

The bench said it cannot consider the request of Venugopal unless Bhushan reconsiders his earlier stand of not apologising for his tweets

mit unconditional apology, if he so desires. Let it be filed by August 24. In case, apology is submitted, the case to be posted for consideration on the same, August 25," the bench said.

The apex court, August 14, had held Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his two derogatory tweets against the judiciary saying they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in the public interest.

He faces simple imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to ₹2,000 or with both as punishment. "We can give you time and it

is better if you (Bhushan) reconsider it. Think over it. We will give you two-three days' time," the bench told Bhushan, who held his ground by refusing to apologise for the tweets.

"I did not tweet in a fit of absence mindedness. It would be insincere and contemptuous on my part to offer an apology for the tweets that expressed what was and continues to be my bona fide belief," he said.

The activist lawyer, however, said he will think over the suggestion of the bench, also comprising Justices BR Gavai and Krishna Murari, which posted the matter again August 25.

Bhushan, represented by senior advocates Rajeev Dhavan and Dushyant Dave, also addressed the bench and quoted Mahatma Gandhi.

"I do not ask for mercy. I do not appeal to magnanimity. I am here, therefore, to cheerfully submit to any penalty that can lawfully be inflicted upon me for what the Court has determined to be an offence," he said.

Acid cure for snakebites in Dhenkanal village

OHRC directs District Collector, SP to submit probe report within 15 days

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) Thursday directed the Dhenkanal District Collector and Superintendent of Police to probe the alleged use of acid by a quack to treat snakebites putting the life of patients in danger.

Taking a suo motu cognizance, the commission asked the district authorities to submit separate probe reports within 15 days of the receipt of the order.

Notably, despite the rapid progress in medical science, people in remote villages are still falling prey to quacks, leading to a cursed life for the victims. The three victims of Mrudangapalli village under Motanga police limits in Dhenkanal district are instance of this.

According to available information, something bit the toe of a 25-year-old woman August 17 and fearing that she was bitten by snake, the lady was taken to a quack in a nearby village. The practitioner treated her by pouring acid on the affected leg. The next morning, her leg turned black and there were dark blisters.

Similarly, another 45-year-old woman was stung by a scorpion

15 days ago. She was also taken to the same practitioner who treated her in the same way. During treatment, the woman complained of giddiness, and the practitioner smeared acid on her head too.

Instead of getting cured, blisters formed on her entire body. She was immediately rushed to a nearby hospital. Now she is cured but is under severe mental stress due to the black spots on her head.

The third victim of such bogus treatment is 30-year-old Niranjan Behera. A snake fell on him from the roof of his house August 15. He caught hold of the snake with his right hand and threw it away. Fearing the snake might have bitten him, he went to the same practitioner. Following the same treatment process, the quack applied acid on his right hand forcing the patient to undergo unbearable pain. Later, blisters appeared on his hand and some body parts.

On being questioned, the practitioner denied charges of using acid and said that he applies a liquid medicine for treatment using a brush.

When contacted, Forensic Medicine Department, AIIMS, Bhubaneswar, additional professor, Dr Sudepta Ransingh said, "The marks on the hand of the patient look like acid burn marks."

Russian Oppn leader Navalny poisoned, in ICU



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, August 20: Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny was placed on a ventilator in a hospital intensive care unit in Siberia after falling ill from suspected poisoning during a flight, his spokeswoman said Thursday morning.

The 44-year-old foe of Russia's President Vladimir Putin felt unwell on a flight back to Moscow from Tomsk, a city in Siberia, Kira Yarmysh said on Twitter. "The plane made an emergency landing in Omsk. Alexei has a toxic poisoning," Yarmysh tweeted.

She told the Echo Moskvy radio station that Navalny was sweating and asked her to talk to him so that he could "focus on a sound of a voice." He then went to the bathroom and lost consciousness. Yarmysh says the politician must have consumed something from the tea he drank this morning. "Doctors are saying the toxin was absorbed quicker with hot liquid," she tweeted, adding that Navalny's team called police to the hospital.

The politician is in grave condition, Russia's state news agency Tass reported, citing the chief doctor at the hospital.

Last year, Navalny was rushed to a hospital from prison where he was serving a sentence following an administrative arrest, with what his team said was suspected poisoning. Doctors then said he had a severe allergic attack and discharged him back to prison the following day.

Navalny's Foundation for Fighting Corruption has been exposing graft among government officials, including some at the highest level. Last month, the politician had to shut the foundation after a financially devastating lawsuit from Yevgeny Prigozhin, a businessman with close ties to the Kremlin. **MORE P10**

Swachh Survekshan-2020: Odisha bags 'Fastest Moving State' award

BeMC AWARDED FOR INNOVATION, WHILE ODISHA SECURED 8TH POSITION IN CLEANLINESS AMONG STATES WITH OVER 100 ULBS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: For the first time since the inception of the Swachh Survekshan - the world's largest cleanliness survey, Odisha bagged two national awards for its performance in cleanliness and innovation.

Union Urban Development minister Hardeep Singh Puri Thursday announced the results of Swachh Survekshan-2020 in New Delhi and presented the awards at a virtual ceremony where all the states and urban local bodies (ULBs) in the country were connected through the Web. The state Housing & Urban Development (H&UD) department bagged the Fastest

Moving State Award at the national level, while Berhampur Municipal Corporation was felicitated under the Innovation Award category.

Odisha H&UD Minister Pratap Jena accompanied by department secretary G Mathi Vathanan received the award on behalf of the state government, while Berhampur Municipal Corporation was represented the Ganjam Collector and other officials. "We have performed very well in solid-based management as well as liquid-based management. Therefore, our state has been bestowed with the 'Fastest Moving State' award," Jena said. Decentralised treatment and processing in micro com-



posting centres and material recovery facilities, converting bio-degradable waste to organic manure (Mo Khata) and non-bio-degradable waste to recyclable waste and decentralised septage management with the ac-

tive involvement of Mission Sakti members are some of the key features of Odisha's transformative sanitation journey to achieve 'Swachh Odisha - Sustha Odisha', an official said.

In normal cleanliness ranking,

Odisha is at the eighth position among states having more than 100 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). Chhattisgarh has emerged as the cleanest state under this category and Indore was ranked the cleanest city in the country for the fourth consecutive time. Meanwhile, the state capital continued to fare poorly in the newly released Swachh Survekshan 2020 list as it failed to feature even in the top 200 list of cities with a ranking of 233.

Odisha's largest Urban Local Body (ULB), Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), saw marginal improvement in rankings climbing 60 spots - it was ranked 288 in last year's survey. Scoring 2,257, the city followed Cuttack,

which scored 2,260, but fare better than Puri. The pilgrim city scored 2,064 and has been ranked 256.

Speaking on the rankings, BMC Commissioner, Prem Chandra Chaudhary said, "We have shown improvements but we still have a long way to go. However, a string of projects such as Micro Composting Centres (MCCs), new system of garbage collection and others will surely improve city's rankings by huge margins."

Swachh Survekshan 2020 covered 4,242 cities, 62 cantonment boards and 92 towns along the Ganga river. Feedback from 1.9 crore citizens were received during the survey which was carried out over a period of 28 days.



MARIAH CAREY TO UNVEIL NEW ALBUM OCTOBER 2

Singer Mariah Carey has good news for her fans. She will release a new album titled *The Rarities* October 2. Carey took to Instagram on Wednesday to post a black and white photo that seems to be her upcoming album's artwork.

MATHEW PERRY GETS CUTE B'DAY WISH FROM COURTNEY COX

Actor Mathew Perry has received a cute birthday wish from Courtney Cox. The actors were co-stars in the popular sitcom, *Friends*. Cox wrote on Instagram Stories: "Happy birthday to my talented, funny friend!"



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

If you're a sporty one, then today is positively your day! Make the most of it, as an unexpected turn of events may turn out to your advantage. You're wise and know perfectly well how to blend business and pleasure, says Ganesha.

TAURUS

In all probability, the fair sex will have a wonderful time in kitchen and at the dining table, foresees Ganesha. You may have family friends and close relatives coming over to your place in the evening. Romance will free-flow with your soul mate later in the day, says a beaming Ganesha.

GEMINI

There are indications that you will get into a deep thinking mode today, feels Ganesha. Your craving for a little pleasure will get satisfied. You'll perform well at work, but it wouldn't come close to what you will achieve back home.

CANCER

You will be dying to take a break today, and go on a brief pleasure trip with your sweetheart. However, it won't be possible. So in the afternoon, you will have an extended lunch break, making plans for a future trip. A vacation is all you can think of today. Your work may suffer a little, but you will more than make up for it.

LEO

Today, you will most certainly pay close attention to your personal appearance, says Ganesha. After all, no one ever said looking good was a crime. At work, you shall find the resources to dig up a successful business tactic. If you are a job aspirant, an interview in the evening shall go well. Spend some time with your partner — it takes little on your part, and will go a long way in strengthening your relationship, says Ganesha.

VIRGO

The fairer sex will find pleasure in both the kitchen and the dining table. Expect to host the closest in the evening for some food and drinks. You might just go all mushy and gaga over your beloved too, says Ganesha. Not that they would mind.

LIBRA

Ganesha says you will be able to get good news from abroad, which will prove beneficial to you after a long time. If you are a businessman do not be in any hurry to fill any tenders or sign any agreements. Ganesha says always remember — Prevention is better than Cure.

SCORPIO

The itch of love will spread like a rash today. Passion will set you ablaze, says Ganesha. At work, the course of things may shift to being better than before. However, in love relationships, cold logic will rule over intense emotions. But sweat not in the heat of love, and find the poignancy hidden within, advises Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS

Logic and reasoning will shape your day today. You remain confident of better things to come in the future. Your cubicle may offer stress and tension, but all of that will be swept away by the showers of love and affection of your dear ones. Keep that smile and your chin up, says Ganesha.

CAPRICORN

You will love to play God today, and may make use of every tactic of the power game to yield the desired results, says Ganesha. A clear thought process and non-judgemental attitude will show you a new direction to life, but you will have to be focused to meet success. Going by your instincts will not do you any harm unless, of course, you are up to something suicidal.

AQUARIUS

Today, you will blow hot and cold. Hence, no one will know what to expect from you. This will throw your rivals off balance, keeping you a step ahead of them. At work, you will finally win recognition and respect. Ganesha wants you to be satisfied for now, and wait for a better tomorrow.

PISCES

In times of adversity, it is your loved ones who will stand you in good stead, and it is your patience and persistence which will get you home. Your actions today will demonstrate your dedication and sincerity to the job at hand, says Ganesha.

'SUSHANT, SARA WERE TOTALLY IN LOVE'



MUMBAI: During promotional activity of their 2018 film *Kedarnath*, Sushant Singh Rajput and Sara Ali Khan were in love with each other, claims Samuel Haokip, a friend of the late actor. Samuel took to his verified Instagram account Thursday to open up on the love story between the *Kedarnath* co-stars, a film that marked Sara Ali Khan's debut in Hindi film industry. He also speculates whether the 'Bollywood Mafia' played a role in causing their break-up.

"I remember the time during *Kedarnath* promotions... Sushant and Sara were totally in love...they were inseparable... So pure and childlike innocence. They both had tremendous respect for each other which was so rare to see nowadays in relationships," Samuel wrote in an Instagram post. "Talking about how much respect Sara had for Sushant's friends, family and even his staff, Samuel added: "Sara along with Sushant had genuine respect for everyone in Sushant's life...be it family, friends and even staff. I wonder whether Sara's decision to break up with Sushant right after Sonchiriyaa's box office performance was due to any pressure by the Bollywood Mafia." IANS

Elli's post is about 'doing nothing'

MUMBAI: Actress Elli AvrRam has shared a stunning new post and it is all about doing nothing and staying happy amid the lockdown in 2020.

Elli took to Instagram to share a picture, where she is seen sitting on the floor in a thigh high slit dress and flaunting

her toned legs. She is seen wearing no makeup and to complete her look she has left her hair open.

"The laziness of just being, doing nothing and staying happy lockdown 2020," Elli captioned the image, which currently has over 1,12,951 likes on the photo-sharing website. Elli, who usually keeps her fans and followers entertained with her

daily dose of dance on social media, had recently tried poetry and had written a few lines on sunset.

The Swedish-Greek actress, who made her Hindi film debut in 2013 with the film *Micky Virus*, was recently seen in filmmaker Mohit Suri's multistarrer *Malang* and will reportedly next be seen in *RoohiAfza*. IANS



Ileana's mantra: Work hard, chill harder

MUMBAI: Work hard and chill harder is the mantra actress Ileana DCruz follows.

Ileana, who keeps entertaining her fans and followers with her workout pictures and videos on social media, took to Instagram, and shared a stunning picture of her toned legs. The backdrop has a view of the sky.

She captioned the picture: "Work hard, chill harder." The actress recently drew a hilarious comparison between expectation and reality in her post.

She shared a video and a picture. The video is taken from a song featuring the actress, where she is seen dancing in a thigh high slit dress. The second is a picture in which Ileana lies in the bed and yawns.

"Weekend mood: Expectations vs Reality," she wrote. Ileana was last seen on screen in the multi-starrer *Pagalpanti*, directed by Anees Bazmee. IANS



Collection of Sadruddin Aga Khan heads to auction

NEW DELHI: The remarkable private collection of Sadruddin Aga Khan and his wife, will head to auction October 1, 2020, global auction house Christie's announced. The two are the son and daughter-in-law of Aga Khan III, president of the All-India Muslim League during India's pre-Independence era.

According to the auction house, visionaries, and ahead of their time, Prince Sadruddin and Princess Catherine Aga Khan have been the discreet patrons of many major philanthropic projects, aimed at preserving cultural and natural sites, from Egyptian temples to the Alps. "Over a period spanning decades, the Aga Khan's gathered an outstanding collection from a variety of cultures across the globe, reflecting their essence with this incredibly universal, yet very per-



A file photo of Sadruddin Aga Khan and Catherine Aga Khan with their collections



sonal selection of fascinating objects and masterpieces," it said.

The highly recognised French interior designer Henri Samuel had been entrusted with the dis-

play of the collection in their Geneva home, Bellerive Castle.

"Each work of art demonstrates the collector's open-cultural approach, representing a rich cul-

tural history, with century-old ob-

jects, alongside works from leading artists and commissioned pieces from artists the couple maintained close friendships with," it added.

Christie's said that the true passion for the arts that united this couple is illustrated in their curation of the collection, and the confrontations and juxtapositions the objects impose on the surrounding objects. The 17th and 18th century furniture interact with pieces by Diego Giacometti, Claude Lalanne or Philippe Hiquily, antique paintings are in dialogue with Picasso's oeuvre, while Orientalist pieces resonate with works by Isabelle de Borchgrave.

Several objects which adorned Bellerive Castle underline the importance of classical decorative arts in this collection, such as a pair of royal armchairs, dating from the period of late King George III and a Gothic tapestry from the early 16th century. Among the highlights of the collection are works by Pablo Picasso from 1929. IANS

Several objects such as a pair of royal armchairs, dating from the period of late King George III and a Gothic tapestry from the early 16th century will be on display

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

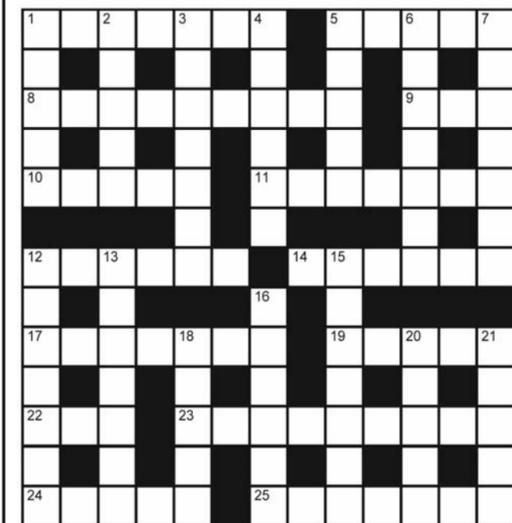


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Type of games or rings
 - 5 Where to find a king
 - 8 Recreational vehicle (5,4)
 - 9 Duffer's goal
 - 10 Chinese green tea
 - 11 Anger, for one
 - 12 Asps
 - 14 Stringed instrument
 - 17 Japanese paper folding craft
 - 19 Approaches
 - 22 Squid's squirt
 - 23 Beach find
 - 24 Tennis starter
 - 25 Equestrian gear
 - 3 Dangerous fish
 - 4 Witches
 - 5 Doctrine
 - 6 Drained
 - 7 Peculiar
 - 12 Bakery treats
 - 13 Turn indicator
 - 15 Fired up
 - 16 Toes, e.g.
 - 18 Confuse
 - 20 Reef ring
 - 21 Factions
- Down**
- 1 Get-up-and-go
 - 2 Abominable snowmen

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS



CROSSWORD

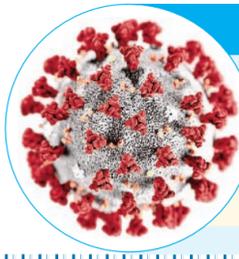
SUDOKU

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



FESTIVAL AHEAD

Women buying clay idols of Lord Ganesh from a stall at Dolamundai Square in Cuttack, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,26,95,627	1,53,96,807	7,93,258
India	28,37,749	20,97,331	54,004
Odisha	70,020	48,577	380

More tests, unlock behind nCoV spike: BMC

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: In the wake of a surge in COVID-19 cases in the Capital city, Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Thursday, clarified that the rise in cases is due to increased testing and resumption of economic activities in the city.

Bhubaneswar, Thursday, reported 319 new cases taking the city's tally to 6,396. This also marked the second day in a row where the city reported more than 300 cases with Monday witnessing as many as 370 cases. In fact, the average cases recorded in the city during last seven days was 257 which was only 153 previous week.

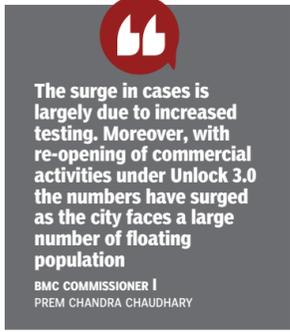
"The surge in cases has largely been due to increased testing. While a week ago we had about 1,500 tests daily it has been increased to about 2,500 to 3,000. Moreover, with re-opening of commercial activities under Unlock 3.0 the numbers have surged as the city faces a large number of floating population," said BMC Commissioner, Prem Chandra Chaudhary.

Apart from surge in positive cases, the city has witnessed rise in deaths too. While until August 7 the death toll in



Capital city remained 18, it went up to 31 Thursday - a 72 per cent increase. Moreover, the recovery rate in past 14 days remained the same at 39 per cent. While 2,151 had recovered out of 3,472 cases until August 6, 3,953 recovered out of 6,396 cases, Thursday.

Requesting people not to panic, Chaudhary said, "We are well prepared when it comes to requirement of resources fighting against the surge in cases. We have different kinds of beds as per the condition of the patient. Moreover, a large number of cases have



been from home quarantine with no serious symptoms. We are also promoting quarantine bed set up in local communities."

As per the latest information, the BMC under its jurisdiction presently has a bed capacity of 3,461. Meanwhile, it has 115 ventilators and 218 ICU beds. While the city has three dedicated COVID hospitals for serious cases it has three COVID Care Centres and three COVID Care Homes with total capacity of 920 and 600 beds respectively.

Ensure visits to COVID hosps: Med colleges told

Bhubaneswar: The Health and Family Welfare department has asked the medical college heads to schedule technical teams' visits to COVID hospitals in the state.

The Deans and Principals of all government medical colleges have been asked to make a weekly scheduled for visit to COVID hospitals by the members of the technical teams formed in different districts.

They have also been authorised to utilise the services of other faculties, not included in the technical committee, when more number of experts would be required for the purpose.

The district Collectors have been asked to facilitate the visit of technical teams of medical colleges to COVID centres.

Every team is expected to interact with the doctors attending to COVID patients and make records of the ground reality.

"The Technical Team during the visit will review and monitor the protocol, sanitisation, food, disposal of bodies and other arrangements in all the COVID treatment facilities of the district. It is advised that they will interact with patients for their feedback," the Health department said.

The department also said that it would also discuss with the treating members on patient care/management protocol with special focus on rational and timely use of newer drugs/plasma therapy as a measure for reduction of case fatality.



IN MELANCHOLIC MEMORY OF SHRI NABAJYOTI DASH

Born with the great heritage of sainthood and sacrifice, nephew of the distinguished philanthropist of Odisha, Acharya Harihar Dash, son of Shri Rama Krishna Dash and Shrimati Radhamani Devi, paternal grandson of Mahadeva Brahma, Shiramchandrapur, Sakhipopala our most dignified and beloved father (Babu), Shri Naba Kishore Dash, had his ultimate departure from the mundane world on 12.08.2020 at his residence Plot No- 785, Shahid Nagar, Bhubaneswar. Being deeply influenced by the ideology and philosophy of Acharya, he insinuated goodness among people around all through pursuits of life. He was the eldest son-in-law of eminent doctor of contemporary time, Puri Dr Chakradhara Mishra and the eldest grand son-in-law of Pandita Ananda Chandra Mishra, renowned Sanskrit scholar of the country, the then president of Mukti Mandap Sabha, Shrimandira, Puri honoured as 'DHARMASHASTRACHARYA'.

He was the epitome of courage, intrinsic purity, simplicity and benevolence for all human beings with elegance of heart. He contributed to the agricultural development of the state in various capacities in more than ten districts during his time. He retired as Joint Director in Agriculture, CADA, Directorate of Agriculture, Bhubaneswar in 1988. He is survived by four daughters and seven grand children profuse with career in and out of the country. We memorialise deeply your loving influence and look for the illuminating light you bestowed on us. With deepest of reverence and surrender

Daughters
Sujata, Sunita, Dr. Anita, Binita

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Jagannath Lenka made full-time OSSC member

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday appointed Prof. Jagannath Lenka as the full-time member of Odisha Staff Selection Commission (OSSC). He will replace Bikash Chandra Mohapatra, a retired IAS officer, who has completed his tenure.

Notably, the OSSC is headed by a chairman and comprises of one full-time member. Both of them are appointed by the Odisha government. The current chairman of OSSC is Nirmal Chandra Mishra.

Lenka was serving as Head of Department (HOD) of Economics at North Odisha University in Baripada.

Lenka has more than 30 years of experience in teaching and more than 24 years of experience in research.

Born 13 February, 1969 Lenka has completed his Post Graduation and Ph.D in Economics.

Orissa POST regrets

Orissa POST had carried a report titled 'Chief Secy Asit Tripathy may take VRS' on page 3 of its August 7 edition. Later, it was found that the report was fictitious. Orissa POST sincerely regrets the incorrect reportage.

₹45K FIXED AS B ED COURSE FEE

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The state government has rationalised the fees for two-year B Ed course being offered at 12 state-run educational institutions on self-financing mode. The course fee has been fixed at Rs 45,000 per year, which will come into effect from the academic year 2020-21.

The fee includes admission fee, institutional development fee, study tour fee, seminar fee and examination fee. No institution can charge any extra amount from the students.

BJD appoints 45 secys, 41 joint secys

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) president and Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday appointed 45 secretaries and 41 joint secretaries for smooth functioning of the party.

The new secretaries and joint secretaries have been given responsibilities of various programmes of the regional party.

Kishore Chandra Tarai and Sanghamitra Dalei have been appointed as secretaries of the party and both were given charges of empowerment of Scheduled Castes (SC).

New secretaries—Anubhav Patnaik, K Shanti and Bishnu Priya Das—have been given the charge of women empowerment while Amresh Patri and Ranjit Mohapatra will look after youth affairs and Amarjit Senapati, Mandakini Kar and Biswajit Samantray have been asked to look after student affairs.

Among other prominent leaders who have been appointed as new sec-



retaries of BJD are: Rabi Narayan Nanda, Sangram Keshari Paikaray, Puspendra Singh Deo and Amresh Jena. Similarly, the party president has appointed 41 joint secretaries including Sanjay Baboo, Sanjit Mohanty, M Dhananjay Reddy, Samir Pradhan, Jyoti Ranjan Jena, Pruthiraj Sahoo and Tanmaya Swain.

Similarly, the party appointed Susanta Kumar Rout as president of

KISHORE TARAI AND SANGHAMITRA DALEI WERE APPOINTED AS SECRETARIES AND GIVEN CHARGES OF SC EMPOWERMENT

THE PARTY APPOINTED SUSANTA KUMAR ROUT AS PRESIDENT AND BIRANCHI NARAYAN SUPAKAR AS WORKING PRESIDENT FOR BHUBANESWAR

Bhubaneswar organisational district and Biranchi Narayan Supakar as working president for the district.

Earlier, the BJD had appointed eight senior vice-presidents, nine vice-presidents, 15 senior general secretaries and 36 general secretaries. All these leaders were given specific responsibilities. As per sources, the party would announce pick youth and student wing presidents soon.

GARIB KALYAN ROJGAR ABHIYAAN

₹16,786Cr spent on jobs for migrants: Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 20: The Centre Thursday claimed that in the past seven weeks it has spent Rs 16,786 crore to provide employment opportunities to migrant workers in six states, including Odisha, under Garib Kalyan Rojgar Abhiyaan (GKRA).

According to Rural Development Ministry, a total of about 21 crore man-days have been provided to migrants by the seventh week. Also, a large number of physical assets including 77,974 water conservation structures, 2.33 lakh rural houses, 17,933 cattle sheds, 11,372 farm ponds and 3,552 community sanitary complexes have been created during the period.

The ministry also revealed that 6,300 projects have been taken up through District Mineral Foundations (DMFs). This apart, 764 gram pan-



Pic for representation

chayats have been provided internet connectivity and 2,5487 candidates have been imparted skill training through Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) under GKRA.

Significantly, the programme was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June to boost employment and livelihood opportunities for mi-

grant workers returning to their native places and affected citizens in rural areas in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.

GKRA has been implemented in four districts, including one aspirational district, in Odisha.

An amount of Rs 50,000 crore has been allocated for building durable

The GKRA is being taken up in 116 districts in six states - Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, MP, Rajasthan and Jharkhand

rural infrastructure under GKRA. The ministry has identified 25 projects like rural housing for the poor, plantations, provision of drinking water through Jal Jeevan mission, Panchayat Bhavans, community toilets, rural mandis, rural roads and other infrastructure facilities like cattle sheds, Anganwadi centres etc.

It was decided that the Abhiyaan of 125 days will work in mission mode in 116 districts in six states - Odisha, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand.

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2. Diploma In Food & Beverage Service	1 1/2 Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	
3. Diploma In Food Production	1 1/2 Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	
4. Diploma In Housekeeping Operation	1 1/2 Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	
5. Craftsmanship Certificate Course In Food & Beverage Service	06 Months	10th pass	
6. Craftsmanship Certificate Course In Food Production	1 1/2 Year	10th pass	

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Visit our website - www.sihmbalangir.org, e-mail: admissions@sihmbalangir.org
Contact No. 9348849484, 6370180040, 9437140772, 9437030720

PANCHAYAT SAMITI, ANGUL

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

IDENTIFICATION No.: AGLB-01/2020-21
Email address:- ori-bangul@nic.in

The Block Development Officer, Angul on behalf of the Governor of Orissa invites **Percentage rate composite bid** in single cover system for the works "**Construction of A.W.C. Building**", from the class C&D contractors, registered with the State Government and contractors of equivalent grade / Class registered with Central Government / MES / Railway, to be eventually drawn up in PWD P-1 form, for execution of **Building (Composite work i.e. Civil Work, P.H. Work and E.I. Works)**. The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the bid. If successful, the bidder who has not registered under State Government has to register under the State PWD in appropriate class of eligibility before signing the Agreement. Bidders may submit bids for any or all the 11 (eleven) Nos. of A.W.C. Building. The details of the Eligibility Criteria, EMD, enclosures etc. along with the list of project and date & time of sale, receipt and opening of bid document can be viewed & download from the District website i.e. www.angul.nic.in.

Sd./- Block Development Officer, Angul

Two honey-trap robbers nabbed

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: The Commissionerate Police Thursday arrested two honey-trap robbers from different regions of the city. The accused were identified as Amar Senapati of Palaspalli in Kendrapara and Manoj Gouda of Chandrasekharpur area. Senapati has been staying at Kalinga Vihar in Unit-VIII area here.



According to sources, the accused duo along with other gang members used to contact rich persons over phone and send photos of escorts through WhatsApp to lure them. The gang would later ask the victims who shows interest to reach a particular spot. Subsequently, they used to take the targets to some isolated places or rooms and rob their belongings, vehicles after beating them black and blue.

The gang came to fore after a businessman from Talcher lodged a report in this regard with the Khandagiri police August 13.

The victim businessman had allegedly come to city as per the instructions of the accused duo and met them at Bharatpur Chhak on the outskirts of this city August 12. The two then took him to a house in Chandrasekharpur locality promising to provide him with a teenage girl. However, after they reached the place, the duo physically assaulted the businessman and decamped with two mobile phones, newly-bought luxurious car and cash of the victim.

Following a complaint, Khandagiri police initiated a probe and apprehended the two accused. The vehicle was recovered from Palaspalli. Police sources claimed that hunt is on to nab three absconding members of the gang.

Prank calls stymie 104 helpline

MANISH KUMAR, OP

Bhubaneswar, August 20: The 104 helpline service, which has proven to be a lifesaver for many anxious patients during the pandemic, continues to be marred by hoax calls.

The call centre management, however, has little option in this regard. At a time when the pandemic is surging in the state, each call has to be treated like an emergency.

“We have issued instructions to our employees to take each call as an emergency call. We are receiving up to 500 hoax calls per day which comprise abusive pranks and hoax calls which divert our resources unnecessarily,” said Sabyasachi Biswal, state head, Ziqitza Healthcare, which manages 108, 102 and 104 helpline numbers in the state.

The agency has even lodged police complaints in this regard. Cops have also taken action against many such callers too. The 104 helpline is operational since July 2019. It was earlier used for grievance redres-



We have issued instructions to our employees to take each call as an emergency call. We are receiving up to 500 hoax calls per day which comprise abusive pranks and hoax calls. This diverts our resources unnecessarily

SABYASACHI BISWAL I
STATE HEAD, ZIQITZA HEALTHCARE

sal and seeking health advice to identify, classify, register, escalate and track complaints/grievances. It was however diverted to be used as a COVID Helpline from March.

The call centre has now increased its capacity and even allowed the employees to work from home for those living in containment zones and high burden areas. The service provider, however, claimed that the load on 108 ambulances in the state had gone up by 25 per cent in March 2020 but in July, the calls seeking its services have come down.

“The load on 108 and 102 Ambulance had gone up by about 25% post March 2020. This was primarily because of complete de-

pendency of the citizens on the state-run Ambulance service due to lockdown. However, calls for ambulance has come down in July 2020 due to the introduction of Tele-Medicine facilities at most District Head-quarter Hospitals,” he said.

The 108 Ambulance service has refrained from transporting COVID patients. The service provider said all suspected and COVID positive patients are taken through special ambulances positioned at all Block Headquarters. “As an ambulance needs to be sanitised and kept out of service for 24 hours after carrying a COVID patient, we are avoiding carrying such cases in 108 or 102 Ambulance,” he said.

COVID-19 surge continues in Khurda

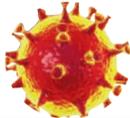
PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 20: With detection of 524 fresh cases, the highest in a day so far, Khurda which had surpassed Ganjam in terms of a daily spike August 7 continues to be on the top among the COVID-19 hotspot districts in the state, an official said Thursday.

The district has been reporting the highest number of daily cases for the past few days now. The number of daily cases, which stood between 200 and 300 till August 13, crossed the 300-mark August 14 and 15. On Wednesday, Khurda reported 466 cases of COVID-19. A day earlier—Tuesday, the district registered 419 cases, sources said.

On Thursday, Odisha's COVID-19 caseload crossed the 70,000-mark as 2,898 more persons tested positive for the infection, while

ODISHA'S COVID-19 CASELOAD CROSSED THE 70,000-MARK AS 2,898 MORE PERSONS TESTED POSITIVE FOR THE INFECTION



EIGHT FRESH FATALITIES PUSHED ODISHA'S CORONAVIRUS DEATH TOLL TO 380

WITH FRESH 1,641 RECOVERIES, THE TOTAL RECOVERED CASES OF ODISHA NOW STAND AT 48,576

eight fresh fatalities pushed its coronavirus death toll to 380, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said, adding that the fresh infections reported from all the 30 districts have taken the state's COVID-19 tally to 70,020.

Of the fresh cases, as many as 1,792 new infections were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,106 people tested positive for the coronavirus during contact tracing exercise. According to the state government, Khurda district that

encompasses the Capital city Bhubaneswar registered 524 new cases, followed by Cuttack (241), Nayagarh (232) and Ganjam (226). The remaining districts reported less than 200 fresh infections each. The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack reported 319 and 150 COVID-19 cases respectively.

Out of the fresh fatalities, Ganjam reported four while Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Khurda and Puri districts reported one death each, the official said.



Commuters face a tough time negotiating the potholes on Palasuni bridge in Bhubaneswar, Thursday

OP PHOTO

Finance co alleges fraud by fake lady IPS officer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: A finance company has brought fresh allegations of cheating by the woman fraudster who was Wednesday held in Rourkela for cheating a vehicle showroom owner. The accused, Sharmistha Behera, decamped with a Royal Enfield bullet from a showroom at Rourkela by producing fake IPS ID card and other forged documents.

She gave two blank cheques and Rs 25,000 to the owner and took away the bike worth around Rs 2 lakh. However, when the time came to encash the cheques, the showroom owner found out that the finance company mentioned in the form did not exist.

Following her arrest, the com-

pany authorities lodged a complaint with Badagad police in Capital city alleging foul play.

As per the complaint, on 6 August, Behera reportedly applied for a two wheeler Loan from our Company and submitted Copy of her Pan Card, Aadhar Card and Bank Passbook with the State Bank of India, branch at Janapath near Ram Mandir. She applied for the loan by posing as a Clerical Staff of Odisha Secretariat.

The bank later granted the loan amounting Rs. 58,000 to buy the Honda scooter 12 August.

Earlier, Behera was also detained by Capital police during lockdown in April for ordering the subordinate police staff to supply various essential commodities and arrange vehicle passes for her.

Ambulances with ventilators in Kendrapara soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Thursday announced to provide ambulances with ventilator support to each block of Kendrapara district from Chief Minister's Relief Fund (CMRF).

Naveen said this while interacting with the MLAs, Sarpanches and local administration of Kendrapara district through video conferencing mode.

Stating he has been giving special focus to Kendrapara district always, the Chief Minister praised the district administration and the Sarpanches of various panchayats for their dedication and effort to control the spread of the virus



in the district. If Bijubabu would have been alive today, he would be happy to see the works of Sarpanches, he said.

In Kendrapara district, the recovery rate is 77 per cent, which is highest in the state. Similarly, the death rate in the district is only 0.33 per cent, which is lowest in the entire country. The district has the state's lowest infection rate of 2.25 per cent, he pointed out during the meeting. Although about 55,000

people have returned to Kendrapara district from other states during the lockdown time, the district has become a model district in Odisha on Covid management, the CM said. He directed the district administration to immediately provide ration cards to all eligible beneficiaries under State Food Security Scheme.

The CM also took stock of the flood-like situation in the district and instructed concerned officials to take necessary steps for its management. Among others, Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, Development Commissioner Suresh Mohapatra, additional chief secretary Health PK Mohapatra, ST secretary VK Pandian attended the meeting.

DRUG PEDDLING HC for stricter punishment

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 20: The Orissa High Court Thursday observed that drug peddlers and mafia must be given stricter punishment to check drug addiction in society.

Justice Sanjeev Kumar Panigrahi made the above observation while taking up the bail petition of a person arrested in connection with illegal drug trade.

The court observed that drug addiction has become a social curse. The incidents of illegal drug trade have gone up in the country in recent years.

The HC further said that the Parliament has passed the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances



The HC observed that drug addiction has become a social curse. The incidents of illegal drug trade have gone up in the country recently

(NDPS) Act to check illegal drug trade in the country. The judiciary should take violation of NDPS Act seriously and ensure stricter punishment to the violators.

As per the court proceedings, Bolangir Sadar police had arrested petitioner Bikash Duria in connection with illegal drug trade. Duria was booked under Sections

21 (C) and 29 of the NDPS Act. A case in this regard is subjudice at the court of Bolangir sessions judge. Duria, however, had approached the HC for bail.

Justice Panigrahi granted bail to Duria by considering the fact that the prime accused in the illegal drug trade case had earlier been released on bail.

FRESH LOPAR TO BRING HEAVY RAIN

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: Fresh low pressure areas, which are likely to take shape over north-west Bay of Bengal around August 23 will bring heavy rain in state.

“The low pressure area is likely to develop over northwest Bay of Bengal and neighborhood around August 23. Under its impact, heavy rainfall will take place in many parts of the state for at least 48 hours in between August 22 and 26,” said director of Bhubaneswar Met Centre, HR Biswas here Thursday.

He said that heavy rainfall activity will take place in the state for next two days.

Entrepreneurs for online sale of Mahaprasad

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: In the face of stiff opposition to the online sale of Mahaprasad in cities of the state, people are a divided lot. Whereas some sections of the society are fiercely opposed to the sale of abhada on an e-commerce platform fearing defilement of the holy offering, others are of the opinion that doorstep delivery actually helps in making the revered abhada accessible to millions of devotees, who deprived of the Mahaprasad during these difficult times of Covid.

Local entrepreneurs' associations have come out in support of the online sale of abhada, Janardhan Sahoo, president of an entrepreneurs' association, said that the e-commerce portal is actually doing great service to the people of Odisha by delivering the abhada at their doorsteps. Besides, the employment generated in logistics and operations is an added boon during a time when the whole economy has slumped and finding a job is be-



coming increasingly difficult. Sumantra Misra secretary of the association said that such an employment initiative should actually be encouraged and also added that no enterprise in Odisha would be naive enough to disrespect the abhada while delivering it to the devout people of the state.

Earlier, the social media post declaring a website selling 'Mahaprasad' of Shree Jagannath Temple online has rubbed the servi-

tors and Shree Jagannath Temple Management Committee the wrong way.

Referring to the post, Suara and Mahasuara servitors and the members of the Shree Jagannath Temple Management Committee opined that the 'Mahaprasad' will lose its 'holiness' if ever sold online.

According to information available, an advertisement has been posted on social media declaring that “people can place online order for

'Abadha' (Anna, Kanika, Mitha Dali, Besara and Mahura) of the Shree Jagannath Temple. The 'Mahaprasad' will be delivered at the doorstep.

For this one has to pay Rs 499 for 'Abadha' for two persons. This apart, 'Khaja' can be had paying Rs 199 per kilogram. This facility is available for the time being in Cuttack, Puri and Bhubaneswar. Orders for 'Chhhapanbhog' can be placed Thursday only. A website in the name of soquick has been launched and orders can be placed over phone as well.”

According to Shree Jagannath Temple Management Committee member Ananta Tiadi, the right of providing 'Mahaprasad' or other 'bhogs' of the temple rests with only Suara and Mahasuara Nijaga. “The online selling of 'Mahaprasad' by any outsider will strongly be objected. In case of online selling by outsiders, there is high chance of them not being that much careful to keep the holiness of the 'Mahaprasad,’” he said.

Koraput girl wins CM's praise

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, Thursday, appreciated the efforts of a Covid warrior of Koraput district, Salami Shashankar, who is providing banking services to people at their doorsteps in inaccessible areas of the district.

Such uninterrupted banking services helped seamless delivery of welfare schemes to vulnerable people during the pandemic-induced lockdowns.

Chief Minister in his official social media account tweeted “Appreciation for banking service provider Salami Shashankar for providing banking services at doorstep of people in the inaccessible areas of Koraput, during COVID19 lockdown. Such uninterrupted banking services helped seamless delivery of welfare schemes to vulnerable people.”

The 27-year-old Salami Shashankar, who lives with her

family in Toyaput village in the Maoist insurgency affected area of Koraput district in Odisha, always aspired to help and support her community. After graduating from college in 2019, she joined the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)-supported Mission Uday (meaning To Rise or Sunrise) as a volunteer

people of her village. After that she started working to spread awareness about government schemes for the poor. She identified community members who were qualified to avail benefits from these schemes but were completely at a loss about how to do so.

Salami assisted them in submitting their applications and documents, and also educated them about loan facilities and subsidies related to the schemes.

In March 2020, just before the COVID-19 pandemic brought the world to a halt, she got an opportunity to work with the State Bank of India as an outsourced employee at their Laxmipur Branch. Her assignment was to reach out to people across 20 remote tribal hamlets adjoining her native village. She was relentless in her mission because she realized that with the pandemic negatively affecting the economic situation, people needed banking services more than ever.

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17 yrs on: No MoEF nod to Rengali canal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, August 20: Hopes of farmers in this district of getting water from the Rengali multipurpose project are drying up fast with the proposal for construction of the left canal of the project hanging fire, a report said.

This is because the project awaits environmental clearance from Union Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) for 17 years.

The construction of the left canal on Brahmani river was undertaken to provide irrigation to farmers of Sukinda, Danagadi and Korei blocks in Jajpur district. However, the construction failed to move ahead as the project is yet to get green clearance from the Centre. The state water resources department had applied for the second phase environmental clearance from the Union government in 2003.

However, the Centre is yet to give its nod. With time running out, Rajendra Kumar Pattnaik, director (R&R), water resources department, has urged the forest department to convert 875 hectares of forest land and hand over the same for construction of the right and left canals of the project in the second phase. Pattnaik has written a letter to the special secretary, state forest and environment department in this regard. Sources said, the construction of



A file photo of the underconstruction left canal of Rengali Multipurpose Irrigation Project near Sukinda

BURIED UNDER RED-TAPE

The construction of the left canal was undertaken to provide irrigation to farmers of Sukinda, Danagadi and Korei blocks in Jajpur district

The land acquisition for the project has picked up but the conversion of the forest land and other works is moving at a snail's pace due to lack of environmental clearance. The water resources department had re-applied for a clearance in 2014 for conversion of 1295 ha of forest land

the Rengali multipurpose project was planned in 1980s to provide water to non-irrigated farmlands in the state.

The left canal of the project of 141-km in length was to pass through Jajpur district. The canal, when completed, will help in irrigating 90,500 hectares of farmlands in this district. The land acquisition for the project has picked up but the conversion of the forest land and its subsequent handover is moving at a snail's pace due to lack of environmental clearance.

The state water resources department had sought conversion of 2159 hectares of forest land in 1993 out of which it received environmental clearance for 2107 hectares in the first phase, November 21, 1996. The state water resources de-

partment again applied for the environment clearance on forest land in the second phase in 2003. The MoEF agreed to give environmental clearance on fulfillment of 21 conditions.

The state water resources department observed all the conditions and re-applied for a clearance in 2014 for conversion of 1295 hectares of forest land under Angul, Dhenkanal, Athagarh, Cuttack and Keonjhar forest divisions.

Later, the MoEF directed the state forest and environment department (letter no-20941, dated November 11, 2016) to file a fresh application for conversion of forest land comprising 434 of forest land which was left out in the first phase. It was then decided to use 434 hectares of jungle land for con-

struction of the left canal which is still stuck in red-tapism.

Notably, Sukinda block having 4760 hectares of farmland, Danagadi block with 2881 hectares and Korei block with 4855 hectares of farmland lack any canal for irrigation. The farmers use only lift irrigation, bore wells, minor irrigation and dug well which fail to irrigate even 25 per cent of farmlands in these areas.

When contacted, Purma Chandra Chowdhury, assistant chief engineer of Rengali project, said the project work has failed to move ahead due to lack of environment clearance. Sudarsan Patra, divisional forest officer of Cuttack division, said this is an old case and steps are being taken to expedite the issue.

'Fertilizer crunch' hits farming in Nuapada; farmers in lurch

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, August 20: Even as farming activities are peaking up, farmers in various parts of Nuapada district faced a severe shortage of fertilizers. Amid reports of black marketing of fertilizers, the administration is said to be conducting raids on hoarders, a report said.

They pointed out that the government had made a provision to supply fertilizers at subsidized rates through agriculture department and the cooperative societies, but this has become a farce.

They also alleged that fertilizer traders, companies and officials of the agriculture department formed a racket that has been creating an artificial shortage of fertilizers so that farmers will be bound to buy fertilizers at high prices from open market.

Such a mess in fertilizer supply has come at a time when the post of district agriculture officer is lying vacant. An agriculture officer from Kharial is looking after the duties of the DAO. Reports said, the artificial shortage of fertilizer has affected farmers in Belatukuri, Sarabanga, Dharambandha, Parkoda, Sahipallia, Udyanbandh, Pendarabandh, Budhikomana, Boden, Sinapalli and Sanamaheswar. Farmers alleged that black mar-



ketters are taking advantage of the situation and selling fertilizers at high prices. Farmers demanded immediate supply of fertilizer as paddy crops badly required urea at the present stage for growth of its plants.

"If the fertilizer is not applied in the right time, it will affect the growth of paddy plants and the yield," they said.

On the other hand, the administration has sealed some fertilizer godowns, but this action of the administration is a gimmick, farmers alleged. In the current year, the

district requires 9000 metric tonnes of urea, but the quantity of fertilizers supplied is much less.

Only 2500 quintals of fertilizers were received in the first phase and 1250 quintals in the second phase. As per guidelines, half of fertilizers should be supplied to cooperative societies for farmers.

Only 4350 quintals were given to cooperative societies while 8,150 quintals were provided to authorized dealers. "As farmers fail to get fertilizers at cooperative societies, they have to buy from traders at Rs 280/290 per packet while a packet of fertilizer should be sold at Rs 266.50," farmers said.

Following allegations, the administration has started raids at different places. DAO-in-charge, Narottam Behera said the allegations will be probed.

Jawan killed in mob attack in Ganjam

POST NEWS NETWORK

Ganjam, August 20: In a mob violence at Badula village under Gangapur police limits in Ganjam district, one person was killed while another was severely injured Thursday. The deceased has been identified as Ranjan Nahaka (27) of Nandighor village.



The deceased, an Army jawan, was brutally attacked with sharp weapons near Nadula Chhak here. Though he was rescued and taken to a hospital, he succumbed. Doctors at the hospital declared him brought dead.

Reports said, his two friends severely injured in the attack hospitalised. Police started a probe into the case and detained five persons. Gangapur police seized the body and sent it for postmortem. Though the exact reason of the attack is not known, police are waiting for the injured people to recover and record their statements, local police sources informed.

Literary webinar in Koraput

POST NEWS NETWORK

Koraput, August 20: Marking the 74th I-Day celebrations, InkDew Publications held a 3-day webinar and literary seminars involving Indian and overseas authors from 10 countries. The Lit Fest was attended by Jharigaon MLA Prakash Chandra Majhi, Damayanti Beshra, Jitendra Haripal, ex-MLA Dambaru Sisa and Prof Iswar Chandra Nayak. Authors included Phani Mohanty, Swapna Behera, Rohini Behera, Padmaja Iyengar Reddy, Urmila Acharya and Ramesh Patnaik.

Angul: Bulk of Puja funds to be spent on social causes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Angul, August 20: With Ganesh Puja having been called off at all places across the nation including in Mumbai due to the pandemic, puja committees here are clueless on the eventual use of Puja funds. Puja committees in Angul have pledged to use the money running into lakhs of rupees on social causes.

There are 30 major pandals in Angul town where Ganesh puja is observed. For this, the commit-

More local cases reported in Bhadrak

BHADRAK: Bhadrak district Thursday reported 107 positive cases out of which 104 were local infections. This spike in local contact cases has become a cause of concern for the district administration and local people here. Dhannagar block reported maximum 34 cases, followed by Bont and Basudevpur blocks (21 each), Chandbali block and Basudevpur Municipality (eight each), Tihidi block (six), Bhadrak block (five) and Bhadrak Municipality (two).

PANDEMIC FORCES ARTISTE TO SELL 'PAAN'

Bhandaripokhari: A dramatic change has come in the life of 52-year-old Pravakar Sahu – a renowned stage comedian who sells paan these days to eke out a living amid the COVID-19 outbreak in Bhadrak.

Pravakar no longer needs facial makeup and does not make others laugh. He depends on his betel shop newly opened at Palada along national highway (NH-16).

The stage comedian belongs to Dakhinabada village under handaripokhari block in the district. Pravakar had joined a theatre group in 1975 as the fiscal standing

tees start preparation months in advance. During the week-long puja, market places are decorated with running lights bedazzled by attractive gates.

Every evening, these committees compete with each other in attracting crowds by organising cultural programmes. Most committees rope in orchestras, while some organise 'Ollywood movies'. Similarly, they celebrate the immersion festival lavishly. These

committees spend more than Rs 5lakhs each on their pandals.

Due to the pandemic, the administration has barred committees from observing puja.

Collector Manoj Kumar Mohanty said no committee is allowed to celebrate Ganesh Puja. The decision has been taken for the larger interest of society.

The puja can be held with members not exceeding four to five members.



of his family was not stable then. Initially, he acted as a child artiste and later played musical instruments and subsequently opted for comedy. "I earn Rs 100 to Rs 150 a day and it is very difficult to manage household expenses with this. After things subside in future, I will go back to the theatre once again," the comedian expressed.

Youth loses toe after pharmacist pours petrol on wound

POST NEWS NETWORK

Deogarh, August 20: A youth named Sandip Pradhan (18) of Utunia village under Kundheigola police limits in Deogarh district lost his toe after a pharmacist wrongly put petrol on his wound acting on a local doctor's advice, a source said.

Sandip, the son of Tripurari Pradhan, had to face this precarious situation due to the doctor's ill-advice and hence Sandip's family filed a complaint with Kundheigola police Wednesday.

Police registered a case while his family apprised Deogarh SP of the matter.

Sandip had visited Dr Chittaranjan Sahoo of Palasama sub-divisional hospital for treatment of his wounded toe June 17.

On the advice of Sahoo, pharmacist named Padmanav Sahoo poured petrol on Sandip's wound. Gradually, his wound aggravated.

He was taken to Chhendipada and Angul hospitals for further treatment but in vain. Ultimately, Sandip was brought to a private hospital in Bhubaneswar, where doctors amputated his toes, his kin alleged. CDMO Manoj Kumar Upadhyaya said, "We will investigate matter and take necessary steps, if we get any complaint."

Daringbadi grad cashes in on cauliflower

POST NEWS NETWORK

Daringbadi, August 20: A man in this town of Kandhamal district has found a fortune by taking up cauliflower cultivation. This has given him a way out to beat the Covid-19 induced lockdowns and shutdowns, a report said.

For Moses Pradhan, working in his farmland is a better option than running after jobs. Moses, a native of Dularisahi, chose to take up agriculture after completing graduation in 1995 to earn a living instead of running after government or private jobs.

He is now known as a successful farmer in Daringbadi area and has become an example for others especially when thousands have lost their earnings due to Covid-19 induced lockdowns and subsequent shutdowns.

He continues to earn from his produce when it has become impossible for farmers to send their harvested produce to Berhampur and Bhubaneswar markets due to sealing of borders following lockdown.

The efforts of Moses are finally yielding results as he continues to earn big despite all the hardships. Moses with little expenditure has



managed to earn more when hundreds of farmers in the area are facing loss due to closure of markets. Recalling his foray into cultivation, Moses said no one came forward to help him when he decided to take up

cultivation for a living.

He took it up as a challenge and started his farm work by spending around Rs 15,000 he had at that time. His efforts finally yielded results as he reaped a bumper harvest from which he earned Rs 50,000.

His leftover crop will earn him an additional Rs 15,000. He said even as he failed to dispatch his produce outside for sale, locals are visiting his farmland and purchasing cauliflowers from him.

Moses said youths instead of becoming job seekers should become job providers by taking up vegetable cultivation.

Man-elephant conflict proves costly for Odisha farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Athgarh/Keonjhar/Sundargarh, August 20: Over the years, humans have taken over vast tracts of wildlife habitats in Odisha leading to a rising number of man-animal conflicts that often prove fatal for both animals and humans. Crop loss is also a collateral loss from these conflicts.

With kharif season here, wild elephants frequently move towards human settlements and destroy standing crops. Elephant herds often damage agricultural lands, houses and eat up stocked paddy. These incidents are common in Cuttack, Keonjhar and Sundargarh districts.

Cuttack: In Cuttack district's Tangi area, two elephants from Kaliamba forest in Dlaijoda reportedly damaged the house of Rukmini Sardar in Badapokhari village. The Jumbos destroyed rice sacks after breaking

the wall of Sardar's house. "The elephants damaged my house and ate away my rice and paddy which I had stocked for the year. Now I have no clue how to survive the rest of the year," lamented Sardar.

When asked, Safa Range forester Chandra Sekhar Das said, "The department is aware of the matter. After assessing Sardar's loss caused by elephants we will provide compensations to her".

Keonjhar: Elephant menace returned to haunt villagers in the beat area of Patna forest range in Keonjhar district after a herd of 22 elephants from Karanjia forest range went on a rampage and destroyed crops, locals said. The paddy crop damaged by elephants comes after Cyclone Amphan ravaged the farmland last year. The forest department, meanwhile, has been accused of failing to keep the animals at bay. This has



led to discontent among locals.

The farmers said that Cyclone Amphan extensively damaged their crops, and on top of that elephants damaged whatever was left.

For the last two days, animals have been damaging crops at villages like Binida, Balipasi and Mangalpur, and farmers are spending sleepless nights trying to drive

them away. The farmers fear that if the elephant menace is not checked they will have to give up farming.

According to forest officials, the elephants had made their way from Karanjia forest range to Patna forest range in search of food. The forest officials are taking steps to drive elephants away from the local settlements.

The forest officials assured the villagers for compensation for the damage. Frequent intrusions by the elephants to the farmlands have robbed farmers of their sleep. Crops in large tracts of farmlands were destroyed in these three villages. This situation has led to widespread panic among the villagers.

Sundargarh: Like the above two districts, the pachyderms have caused severe damage in villages such as Koida, Jarada and Barsuan areas of Sundargarh. Elephants reportedly ate up rice after damaging two houses in Dengula panchayat and also destroyed acres of agricultural land in Kindro village under Jarada panchayat.

On the other hand, the forest department said they are trying to drive out elephants. Barsuan forester Nabin Pradhan assured the farmers to compensate for their loss.

राजीव गांधी राष्ट्रीय विमानन विश्वविद्यालय
RAJIV GANDHI NATIONAL AVIATION UNIVERSITY
राज्य विमानन विभाग, भारत सरकार के मंत्रालय के अधीन (A Central University under Ministry of Civil Aviation, Govt. of India)
2013 में संसद के अधिनियम द्वारा स्थापित
Established by an Act of Parliament in 2013

CORRIGENDUM Date: 18 August 2020

ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT FOR 2020

This refers to our earlier advertisement published in leading newspapers on 29th June, 2020 inviting applications for admission towards PGDAP & BMS in Aviation Services & Air Cargo.

2. Due to COVID-19 situation, the last date for online applications is extended upto 1700 hrs on 10 September 2020 and no written examination will be held.

3. For further details please visit RGNAU website i.e. <https://www.rgnau.ac.in>. Any corrigendum, in this regard, will be published only in the official website of RGNAU.

Sd./- Registrar,
davn 03110/11/0005/2021 Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University

idco **ODISHA** No. CAD-379
NEW OPPORTUNITIES

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (P&C), IDCO, IDCO TOWER, JANPATH, BHUBANESWAR - 751022

TENDER CALL NOTICE
No. IDCO/H.O./P&C/EST/E-1493/03/2020/11426 Dt.14.08.2020

NOTICE INVITING TENDER UNDER NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-Procurement

1. Name of the Work : Construction of Road at Bami Industrial Estate, Nabarangpur, Odisha

2. Estimated Cost : Rs.334.25 lakhs (Approx.)

3. Period of Completion : 04 (Four) Calendar Months

4. Other details :

Procurement Officer	Bid/Tender reference No.	Availability of Tender Online for bidding	
		From	To
1	2	3	4
Chief General Manager (P&C), IDCO, IDCO Towers, Bhubaneswar	Tender/Bid reference No. PC/EST/E-25/2020-21	25.08.2020 at 16.00 hrs.	09.09.2020 upto 17.00 hrs.

Further details can be seen from the e-Procurement Portal, www.tendersodisha.gov.in, and Corrigendum if any will not be published in Newspapers and can only be seen in the e-procurement portal www.tendersodisha.gov.in and www.idco.in.

Sd./- Chief General Manager (P&C)
IDCO, Bhubaneswar
OIPR-14003/11/0047/2021

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, SAMBALPUR (R&B) DIVISION No.1, SAMBALPUR

No. B-196- e-procurement Notice
BID IDENTIFICATION No: EE/R&B/SBP/ 10 / 2020-21
E-mail - xeengsbp@rediffmail.com, Phone/Fax-0663-2548013
No. 8687 Dated. 18.08.2020

1. The Executive Engineer, Sambalpur (R&B) Division No-1, Sambalpur on behalf of Governor of Odisha, invites Percentage Rate bids in Single Cover System in ONLINE MODE for construction of Civil Work as detailed in the DTCN from the eligible Class of Contractors.

2. No. of works : 01(One)

3. Tender Cost : Rs.4,000/- (On Line)

4. Class of Contractor : "D" & "C" Class Contractor.

5. Date and time available in Website & receipt of Bids: 16.00 Hrs 28.08.2020 to 17:00 Hrs of 04.09.2020.

6. Date of Opening of Tender : 05.09.2020 at 11:30 Hrs.

7. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website.

8. Any Corrigendum / Addendum will be displayed in the website www.tendersodisha.gov.in only.

Sd./- Executive Engineer, Sambalpur (R&B) Division No.1
OIPR-34042/11/0005/2021

Government of Odisha
Department of Social Security & Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

No. 5922/SSEPD Dt. 20.08.2020
PT1- SSEPD-DA-6-MISC-0005-2020

RFP FOR SUPPLY OF AIDS/APPLIANCES (READYMADE ITEMS) UNDER DIFFERENT SCHEMES OF SSEPD DEPTT.

No. gg-03:- E-Tenders are invited from the Original Equipment manufacturer (OEM) / OEM authorized vendors for empannelment for supply of readymade items of Aids/ Appliances under different schemes to Districts/DDRCs/SIDR/SIEP under two bid systems (Technical & Financial) as per the following schedule. The detailed scope of work is annexed at Exhibit-A.

S#	Items	Date & Time
(a)	Last date for receiving pre bid queries through email	01.09.2020 (ssepdad6@gmail.com)
(b)	Pre-Bid meeting / conference	08.09.2020
(c)	Bid Submission Start Date	11.09.2020
(d)	Last date of receipt of Bids	29.09.2020 up to 5:00 PM (Through e-procurement portal: https://tendersodisha.gov.in)
(e)	Opening of Technical Bid	30.09.2020
(f)	Technical Presentation	Will be communicated through Email / Website Notice
(g)	Opening of Financial Bid	Will be communicated through Email / Website Notice

The interested vendor can participate in the bid as per the scope of work mentioned in the tender. The bidder has to give the earnest money deposit of Rs. 50,000/- (online) as per the instruction available in the e-Procurement portal (www.tendersodisha.gov.in) at the time of bidding. The registered MSME bidder agency is exempted from EMD as per FD OM No. 21926 dated 12.08.2015.

Sd./- Director, SSEPD Deptt., Govt. of Odisha
OIPR-46001/11/0003/2021

FOCUS WORLD

LIFE, HEALTH AND GDP



How can we commit trillions of dollars to ensure that GDP is supported while doing so little to avoid declining life expectancy? Certainly, the response to Covid-19, where GDP has plummeted as a result of life-saving measures, suggests that substantial policy measures to boost HLE are worthwhile

have produced numerous policy suggestions and unprecedented spending aimed at reversing trend slowdowns in GDP growth.

To operationalise HLE targeting, governments should follow Japan in establishing "longevity councils." Once policymakers start focusing on the issue, they will realize three things. First, preventive health care is the key. Around the world, health systems tend to be geared primarily toward medical intervention and disease response, rather than toward general health promotion. Second, and relatedly, many of the determinants of long, healthy lives fall outside the health system, and are connected to work, education, and community, as economists Anne Case and Angus Deaton have shown in their work documenting "deaths of despair." A policy focus on HLE therefore requires a cross-departmental government approach.

The fact that today's deaths of despair disproportionately affect middle-aged individuals points to the third realization: longevity is about all-of-life and not just end-of-life outcomes. With the British government estimating that a newborn girl now has a one-in-five chance of living to 100, it is critical that we expand our view of longevity to the entire life course. Measures targeting HLE must be inclusive across all age cohorts and focus on longevity, not just on the old. After all, today's young people are tomorrow's elderly, and all of one's time on this planet matters.

There are many metrics that governments could use to judge the success of their policies and the health of society. But whatever other measures they use, HLE deserves a central position in the policy mix. Few other variables are both as important for us individually and as effective in capturing broader macroeconomic benefits.

The writer is Professor of Economics at the London Business School and co-founder of The Longevity Forum.
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Dissatisfaction about GDP is growing. Many economists, policymakers, and other critics question the ability of this central measure of government and social success to recognise the welfare gains from technology, account for environmental degradation, or capture rising inequality. With developments in artificial intelligence and robotics poised to produce considerable labor-market churn while also boosting GDP – a process likely to be accelerated by the ongoing pandemic – these complaints will soon grow louder.

Numerous alternative indicators have long been on offer, but one especially promising option is healthy life expectancy (HLE), a metric that is easily understood and that has obvious importance to each of us individually. Moreover, HLE is already being measured, and happens to address many of the factors that GDP might omit.

Poor environmental conditions, for example, are not conducive to long, healthy lives. And there is plenty of evidence to suggest that individuals who are happy and fulfilled also tend to live longer and remain healthy for longer. Even more to the point, longer healthier lives connect back to GDP itself. Just as rising GDP helps to provide the resources needed to support health, healthy populations support stronger GDP.

Moreover, by targeting HLE specifically, governments could shine a brighter light on the issue of economic inequality. Because the incomes of the very richest households may be several thousand times greater than those of the poorest households, average GDP is invariably larger than typical (median) income. But when it comes to life expectancy in the richest countries, the opposite is true. The outliers tend to be those who die young, so that typical (median) life expectancy is higher than average life expectancy.

This means that raising the average HLE can be achieved by raising the HLE of those at the bottom of the health distribution

to that of the typical (median) person. This not only makes targeting inequality more attractive, but does not require path-breaking medical innovations to achieve longer lifespans – just the achievement of typical outcomes for more people. With this in mind, it is urgent to close the sizeable rich-poor life-expectancy gap – around 15 years – in the United States.

As a metric for economic and social progress, targeting HLE implicitly acknowledges that aging is malleable (if it wasn't, it wouldn't be a viable target). It turns out that a range of behaviors and policies, as well as the environment we inhabit, influence how we age and how long we live. It is estimated that our genetics account for only one-quarter of the factors contributing to how we age. Given this malleability, it is crucial that governments focus on HLE for the maximum number of people.

Such a focus would also help governments confront one of the biggest challenges of the future: societal aging. Given that every country in the world is expected

to experience societal aging, focusing on how well we age becomes paramount. This age malleability requires drawing a distinction between chronological and biological measures of age and focusing on the latter.

Yet, because so much government policy currently focuses on the non-malleable chronological metric, too many governments are unprepared for future demographic challenges such as overburdened health and pension systems. Rather than exploring ways to influence how we age, policymakers are focused almost entirely on the number of "old" people. But by targeting healthy longevity, they could help more people lead longer, more productive lives, thereby minimizing the economic costs of societal aging.

After the 2008 financial crisis, policymakers committed to doing "whatever it takes" to stabilise the financial system and restore GDP growth. A subsequent slowdown in trend of productivity growth and the devastating global economic fallout from the current pandemic



Andrew Scott

AS THE INCOMES OF THE VERY RICHEST HOUSEHOLDS MAY BE SEVERAL THOUSAND TIMES GREATER THAN THOSE OF THE POOREST HOUSEHOLDS, AVERAGE GDP IS INVARIABLY LARGER THAN TYPICAL (MEDIAN) INCOME. BUT WHEN IT COMES TO LIFE EXPECTANCY IN THE RICHEST COUNTRIES, THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE

Plug GST loopholes

The goods and services tax (GST) regime, especially its architecture and implementation, continues to bug the authorities. Fraudsters keep exploiting the loopholes in the system. In our state alone, GST frauds worth thousands of crores of rupees have come to light. In the latest of such frauds, the state enforcement squad Monday busted a racket and held its kingpin for defrauding the exchequer by ₹712 crore by way of fake invoicing and passing bogus input tax credit (ITC) of ₹129 crore through multiple chains. Fake invoicing, registration of bogus firms and fraudulent ITC seem to be the biggest problems besetting the indirect tax system. Various enforcement authorities in the country have initiated more than 6,000 cases of tax evasion relating to fake invoicing and bogus firms. Many arrests have been made. In the latest case here, the mastermind, Kashmiri Kumar Agrawal, Director of M/s Madhusmita Steels Industries, availed bogus ITC of ₹114 crore and passed on bogus input tax credit of ₹129.09 crore in the names of 14 fictitious firms operated by him on the strength of fake invoices. There are thousands of such cases. It would not be possible for the government to recover the entire money lost fraudulently. So what went wrong with the ambitious indirect tax regime rolled out in the country in July 2017? In fact, technology which was supposed to be the bedrock of its success has turned to be its biggest reason for its failure. The new law had set out to provide a 100 per cent IT-based solution. For this, the GST Portal was developed. The portal was meant to record all transactions and receipts from an entity from A to Z. After cross-verification, the portal allowed input tax credit. However, the portal has failed miserably to perform this assigned task. While it was meant to cross-verify the ITC on a monthly basis, such cross-verification happened after six months allowing sufficient time to fraudsters to make a complete ass of the system. With no tracking or cross-verification mechanisms available to pin down the fraud, the authorities were completely clueless about the irregularities that were taking place.

The Modi government, in its rush to earn political plaudits, had road-tested the GST in 2017 without ensuring that there has to be a robust IT infrastructure to support the system. There was absolutely no reason to be in such a hurry to roll out the system. It was introduced at a time when the IT infrastructure for the system had not been fully developed, or tested. For an economy the size of India, the single tax system was completely out of sync with the realities. Added to that was the lax enforcement structure and approach. The inadequacies of the system and in its implementation encouraged people to shortchange it. Various modus-operandi were developed. Bogus firms were registered, fake invoices generated without actual movement of goods. Fake invoices were later used to claim ITC. Also, there was under-invoicing of transactions to reduce the tax outgo. In a way the system was full of faults encouraging fraudsters to milk it the way they wanted. Added to it were wrong interpretations of definitions of products to pay lower taxes as tax slabs depended on the types of products. For example, branded products fell under a higher slab while non-branded products attracted much lower rates. Branded products were often passed off as non-branded products to claim lower rates. The system was full of loopholes that need to be plugged. This is high time the government appointed a committee to overhaul the GST system hook, line and sinker.

WISDOM CORNER

- The price good men pay for indifference to public affairs is to be ruled by evil men. **PLATO**
- There is no physical gulf between the philosopher's class room and the bull ring; but the bull fighters do not come to the class room for all that. **GEORGE BERNARD SHAW**
- Get out of your head and get into your heart. Think less, feel more. **OSHO**

WORDSWORTH

Termagant

It's a long way from the Crusades to the modern sense of the word, but that's the path we must follow to explain where we got termagant from. In the Middle Ages, Crusaders knew almost nothing about Islam and lumped everyone non-Christian together as Saracens or pagans; they thought that Mahmoud (or Mahound) and Termagant were among Islam's gods. The word appears about 1100 as *tervagaunt*; that was in French, in the *Chanson de Roland*. The Italian equivalent was *Trivagante*, which may in turn have come from Latin words that meant a threefold wanderer; this referred to the moon, which was considered to travel between heaven, earth, and hell under the three names *Selene*, *Artemis*, and *Persephone*. The word was borrowed into English and became the usual name in the medieval morality plays for an overbearing, violent and turbulent character, the supposed god of the Saracens, who was always dressed in Eastern robes. He was borrowed by Shakespeare and put into the mouth of that early theatre critic, Hamlet: "I could have such a Fellow whipt for o'erdoing Termagant: it out-herods Herod." The name had by then been generalised to mean a quarrelsome person or bully. Around the middle of the 17th Century, the word changed sex to become our modern term for a quarrelsome woman. It's likely that people were confused by the Saracen's robes in the morality plays and assumed that the supposed god Termagant was really female.

Terms using Dutch

Dutch readers should perhaps look away... In the seventeenth century, the Dutch and British were enemies. Both wanted maritime superiority for economic reasons, especially control of the sea routes from the rich spice islands of the East Indies. The two countries fought three wars at sea between the years 1652 and 1674. At the lowest point of the struggle, in May 1667, the Dutch sailed up the Medway, sank a lot of ships, and blockaded the Thames. The Dutch were powerful, they were the enemy, they were the bad guys, and their name was taken in vain at every opportunity. The stereotype of the Dutchman among the English at this period was somebody stolid, miserly, and bad-tempered, and these associations, especially the stinginess, were linked to several phrases. Only a small number of them are actually recorded in print from the time of the Dutch wars, most being of eighteenth century provenance or later. But there's nothing as long-lasting as traditional enmity; later phrases borrowed the ideas from earlier ones, and in any case many are certainly older than their date of first recording. Examples from the time of the Dutch wars include Dutch reckoning, a bill that is presented without any details, and which only gets bigger if you question it, and a Dutch widow, a prostitute. In the same spirit, but recorded later, are Dutch courage, temporary bravery induced by alcohol and Dutch metal, an alloy of copper and zinc used as a substitute for gold foil.

LOL

A WISH

A blonde, a redhead, and a brunette were all lost in the desert. They found a lamp and rubbed it. A genie popped out and granted them each one wish. The redhead wished to be back home. Poof! She was back home. The blonde wished to be at home with her family. Poof! She was back home with her family. The blonde said, "Awwwww, I wish my friends were here."



SPECTRUM URBANISATION

Unplanned cities, haphazard growth



Bibhu Dutta Basantia

THE LOW LEVEL OF URBANISATION IN ODISHA PROVIDES A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK FOR PLANNED FUTURE GROWTH OF OUR CITIES IN MORE SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE WAYS

Annemasse is a small town in eastern France. It's just 4km off Geneva border and many expats who can't afford exorbitant Geneva rents and hotel rates come and stay in Annemasse. Residents of Geneva prefer to come and shop in Annemasse as shopping there is more affordable compared to Geneva. As part of a UN team, I stayed in Annemasse for a month in 2015. We thoroughly enjoyed our stay in this small town of 35,000 people.

What struck me while staying there was how liveable the place was. In five square kilometres, you have shops, markets, a city centre buzzing with activity, churches, kids' play areas, walking tracks, educational institutions etc, apart from abundant greenery. The city has a near-perfect transport system merging seamlessly with those of Geneva. The trams, railways and buses make the public transport system very efficient.

While moving around the length and breadth of the country, what struck me forcefully was how unliveable our cities have become. We are in the midst of a large urban ghetto and still complain that we have low urbanisation at 33 per cent. This signifies low economic development. Cities are where wealth is created, innovation is cradled, creativity is nurtured, risk-taking is taught and employ-

ment generated.

City-watchers mostly recognise five main features of a liveable city – lively neighbourhood, accessibility and sustainable mobility, a diverse and strong local economy, vibrant public spaces, and affordability. We also recognise social and environmental sustainability as factors contributing to liveability of the cities.

Real estate prices in cities have made accommodation unaffordable. The rich have created gated communities for themselves, oblivious of the fact that beyond a fur-long from the gated community one could smell the stench of the open sewer or the sight of an ungainly slum. No man is an island; therefore, urban planning for the last man living within the precincts of a city is most imperative.

If a third of India lives in cities and towns, only a sixth of Odisha does so. Unfortunately, most cities and towns in Odisha are turning into urban ghettos. The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack do not have modern drainage and sewerage systems. A CAG report in 2017 brought out these issues, and it was stressed that the sewerage projects would be completed by end 2019. The work is still ongoing.

The BCRSB (Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Rourkela, Sambalpur and

Berhampur – all municipal corporations) lacks modern drainage and sewerage, modern city transport facilities, good arterial-road connectivity within the city, and lack of basic neighbourhood public amenities like parks and playgrounds. The cities are growing in a haphazard manner. Could there be practical, yet cost-effective models of growing the cities that could be the pie of the sky for even a poor resident, de-clog the city centre and make the cities more sustainable?

The low level of urbanisation in Odisha provides a unique opportunity to work for planned future growth of our cities in more socially and environmentally sustainable ways. A socially sustainable city provides for housing for its citizens of all walks and all income groups. The basis for housing is to bring higher FAR for group housing, making it mandatory for builders to have minimum amenities within its boundaries, and freeing land under the government's possession for housing. The Odisha government has announced such a plan, but the government needs to ensure road, water, sewerage, transport and other amenities. State must be a facilitator for planned growth through infrastructure development.

A socially sustainable city needs

proximate healthcare and primary educational facilities. The government may provide land, if not create the facilities by itself. The private sector would bring in facilities to cater to the population. A socially sustainable city provides for every income group, and therefore, giving them the security of a house and a means to reach their workplaces (transport). This would encourage people to move away from the city centre. That is how best cities in Europe have developed – by creating satellite townships that are as good as or better than the centre of the city in terms of liveability index.

An environmentally sustainable city would have quality water treatment plants, sewage disposal system, and clean water. Regrettably, in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, the rivers of Kuakhai and Kathjodi (and Mahanadi) have become dump yards of untreated water, sewage and filth.

Cities need to grow to nurture economic growth. Also, the government needs to spend money to give back to the cities from where it derives bulk of its revenue. A smart-city programme for the state will be appreciated.

The writer is Accountant General, Odisha. Views are personal.

Debottar property up for grabs

Sir, The benevolent Maharajas of erstwhile Mayurbhanj state had left assets and properties with several shrines-mutts, temples, for smooth conduct of poojas etc without hassles. Shri Hari Baldevjee, the famous Sri Jagannath temple at Baripada, had been vested with estates of around 46,448 acres in several mauzas as also valuable ornaments for deities. Sadly, these vast lands and ornaments are now nothing more than folktales of the past. The properties were sold secretly or unlawfully possessed by many in connivance with endowment officials. This amounts to an abrogation of the merger agreement signed by the Maharaja and the Union government during 1948. The agreement had clearly stated that any violation of the provisions could nullify the treaty. The Debottar office board of Betnoti rests on a dilapidated house where hundreds of acres of debottar estates of Sri Raghunath Jew Math were giving lakhs of rupees as revenue to the exchequer every year, but are now mostly found encroached with. A few illegal occupants even managed to get compensation on these lands from NHAI in clear nexus with tehsil officials. If the department does not streamline its activities, the entire property will be lost. The callous style of functioning of those in responsible positions may lead to plethora of litigations.



Janaki Ballav Dash, MAYURBHANJ

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, Ransubbarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010



TN BJP isn't okay with Ganesh Chaturthi at home

CITING THE PANDEMIC AND CENTRE'S BAN ON RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS, THE TAMIL NADU GOVT ADVISES PEOPLE TO CELEBRATE GANESH CHATURTHI WITHIN THEIR HOMES

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 20: The BJP Thursday attacked the AIADMK government for disallowing celebration of 'Vinayaka Chaturthi' in public places and asked when liquor shops can be opened why Ganesha idols should not be put up.

Citing the Covid-19 pandemic and the Central government ban on religious congregations, the Tamil Nadu government Thursday advised people to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi within their homes.

In a statement issued here, the government said orders prohibiting the installation of Ganesh idols in public places and taking them in processions, are to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The Madras High Court has also ordered that the government order should be followed while hearing a batch of petitions on the matter, the statement added.

Backing Hindu Munnani, which, about four decades ago, set in motion the now prevalent practice of public celebration of 'Vinayaka Chaturthi', Saffron party's Tamil Nadu president L Murugan asked: "In Tamil Nadu, the government which gave permission for opening TASMAC shops, did not allow putting up Vinayaka statues. Why?"

In Tamil Nadu, the government, which gave permission for opening TASMAC shops, did not allow putting up Vinayaka statues. Why?

L MURUGAN | PRESIDENT, TN BJP



Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation, a government entity, runs retail liquor outlets in the state.

'Vinayaka Chaturthi' will be celebrated August 22 in the state.

The BJP's stand aligns with that of Hindu Munnani on this issue, BJP Tamil Nadu unit said on its official twitter handle and attributed the posts to Murugan.



On the stand of Munnani, state president Kadeswara C Subramaniam said, "We have a right to worship by following guidelines like social distancing to prevent the spread of coronavirus...we are holding talks with authorities."

A prominent Sangh Parivar outfit in Tamil Nadu, Munnani's chief told PTI: "We are seeking permission to put up Ganesha idols only

in such public places that would be completely suitable to follow COVID norms and offer worship."

"We don't insist on any location which authorities considered as not acceptable taking into account the pandemic."

Already, the organisation has decided against public processions of Ganesha idols and made up its mind to confine the public cele-

bration for only one day and stick to norms to reduce the threat of infection, he said.

Also, "the Munnani is for comparatively smaller idols like say five or three feet this year. The authorities should also ponder about the idols that have been made and the plight of artisans who made it."

Asked on his outfit reportedly saying that "government ban on public Ganesha worship will be defied," he denied about he or anyone else making such a statement.

"We did not say that we will violate or defy government orders. We are following the norms to prevent the spread of the virus."

The state government, meanwhile, citing Centre's guidelines against public worship in view of the pandemic said the Madras High Court too had directed compliance with its directives.

The government has already issued an order banning putting up Ganesha idols in public places, public worship and taking idols in a procession for immersion in water bodies.

The move is considering public good and to help prevent the spread of the virus, the government said and appealed to all to cooperate with it.

BANGALORE VIOLENCE

Karna is yet to decide on banning any organisation



AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 20: The Karnataka government Thursday desisted from taking any decision on banning certain organisations in the absence of concrete reports from police and other departments about their involvement in the violence in parts of Bangalore August 11 night.

"We had a detailed discussion but we did not make any concrete decision because as of now we don't have any report from police and other government departments) and we closed the matter after discussing it," Law Minister JC Madhuswamy told reporters after a meeting of the state cabinet.

Madhuswamy said the ministers discussed at length the matter pertaining to a ban on the organi-

sations but there was no decision as such on it. "After getting the reports, the government will certainly initiate action. If needed, we don't mind even amending the existing law," the Minister said.

Three people were killed in police firing and the fourth one succumbed to injuries during violence in DJ Halli and adjoining areas August 11 night over a purportedly inflammatory social media post put out by a relative of a local Congress legislator.

Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai said August 13 that as per the information gathered and video footage, the role of Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI), the political outfit of Popular Front of India, behind the mob violence had come to light and investigation will go deep into it.

Sivan sees opportunity as govt bats for indigenisation in space

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 20: The government's decision to ban import of communication satellites throws up huge opportunity for private players, said K. Sivan, Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary, Department of Space.

Speaking at the webinar on 'Unlocking India's Potential in Space Sector' Thursday, Sivan said

small satellites also offers immense potential for the private sector and some private sector companies will soon realise their rockets.

According to him, the private sector participation in the space sector is healthy as it increases diversity.

Stressing that ISRO is not being privatised Sivan said the space agency will look at research and development (R&D), capacity building and facilitate private sector par-

model is the way to go while unlocking potential in the space sector.

He said cost efficiency, high end engineering skill and frugal engineering will propel Indian space sector. Mahindra urged the government to think and create structures and systems that were not there earlier.

According to R. Umamaheswaran, Scientific Secretary, ISRO, the Space Activities

Covid survivors are 'real warriors'

THEY DEVELOP CRUCIAL ANTIBODIES REQUIRED TO FIGHT THE DISEASE, SAYS KARNA HEALTH COMMISSIONER

AGENCIES

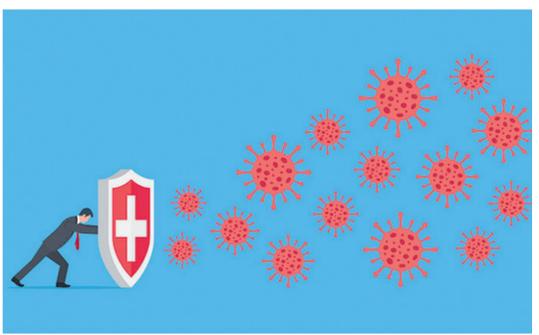
Bangalore, August 20: The Covid-19 survivors are the real warriors as they develop crucial antibodies required to fight the disease, and so they need our sympathy and support, a Karnataka official said in a statement Thursday.

"Sympathy and support to Covid positive persons from all walks of life. They are the real warriors against coronavirus. We must support them morally. They not only develop antibodies and can be potential donors for plasma therapy," said Health Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Pandey.

He said Covid-19 survivors will also enable the masses to develop herd immunity.

Pandey was addressing these issues in the light of growing instances of stigma, prejudice and discrimination against coronavirus patients in the society.

Teaming up with the World



Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), he organised an orientation programme for the state healthcare staff Wednesday.

"In the light of a growing number of incidents of stigma and discrimination against Covid patients, their families, frontline health staff and healthcare providers, the de-

partment of health and family welfare on August 19 conducted an orientation programme to create awareness on stigma in collaboration with UNDP," said a health official.

As part of this training, Pandey said the government has put in all efforts to do away with the practice of hand stamping, including

using software tools to monitor the health of patients remotely.

"This orientation will strengthen the effort to build confidence in patients and all those involved in fighting the disease," he said.

State level Covid programme officers, representatives from the departments of police, education, women and child development, rural development and panchayat raj attended the orientation programme, along with other senior officials.

Moving forward, the district level departments will orient all the health staff on stigma, discrimination and appropriate coronavirus behaviour.

Nodal officers for anti-stigma and discrimination have been identified and set in motion with the prejudice fighting mission.

Wednesday, Karnataka registered the highest single day rise of 8,642 coronavirus cases, raising the state's tally to 2.49 lakh.



Centre has banned import of 101 defence items

The list of import embargoed items include satellites like GSAT 7R, GSAT-6 Satellite Terminals and Communication Satellite GSAT-7C

The private sector will have to do its own R&D, funding, market studies and others while ISRO will provide the technical knowhow and the proposed IN-SPACE will be the regulatory body for the private players in the space sector

K SIVAN | CHAIRMAN, ISRO

the decision throws up a huge opportunity for private players, ISRO and NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL).

Recently, the government had banned import of 101 defence items to make the Indian defence industry self-reliant and boost indigenisation. The list of import embargoed items include satellites like GSAT 7R, GSAT-6 Satellite Terminals and Communication Satellite GSAT-7C.

Sivan also said the launch of

participation.

He said the private sector will have to do its own R&D, funding, market studies and others while ISRO will provide the technical knowhow while the proposed Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) will be the regulatory body for the private players in the space sector.

According to Anand Mahindra, Chairman, Mahindra Group, the public-private-partnership (PPP)

Bill has been submitted to the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) and inter-ministerial consultation will happen and the Cabinet will take a decision.

He added the Satcom Policy, Remote Sensing Policy is being reviewed and a new Navigation Policy is being formulated.

Mahima Datla, Managing Director, Biological E Ltd spoke about the PPP in development of vaccines.

TN Covid recoveries cross 3 L mark

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 20: COVID-19 recoveries crossed the three lakh mark in Tamil Nadu Thursday

with 5,742 people getting discharged from various hospitals in the state, the health department said.

With 5,986 more testing positive for the virus, the aggregate rose to 3.61 lakh so far while 116 more deaths pushed the toll to 6,239.

Tamil Nadu has been consis-

tently recording a robust recovery rate and with Thursday's discharges of 5,742, the cumulative number of those cured rose to 3,01,913.

The active cases, including those in isolation, stood at 53,283, the department said in a bulletin.

Among the deceased, 108 people had co-morbidities while eight had no chronic diseases. Thirteen of those who died were below the age of 50 years.

Of the total 6,239 deaths till date, Chennai accounted for 2,537.

The active cases, including those in isolation, stand at 53,283

TN comes together, prays for SPB's recovery

Young men and children, holding candles line up on the outer periphery of MGM Healthcare where the 74-year-old is being treated

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 20: From celebrities to general public, Tamil Nadu came together and prayed Thursday for veteran playback singer SP Balasubrahmanyam's early recovery from COVID-19 triggered illness.

Ace Tamil film director, Bharathirajaa, music composers Ilayaraja, AR Rahman, lyricist Vairamuthu and actors, including Rajinikanth, joined the mass prayer at 6 pm as the singer remained in a critical condition.

Young men and children, holding candles lined up on the outer periphery of MGM Healthcare here at Aminjikarai where 74-year-old Balasubrahmanyam, popularly known as SPB, is being treated for coronavirus infection since August 5 and offered prayers.

Similarly, fans lined up in front of the ancient Big Temple in Thanjavur and in towns and cities

BESTIES FOREVER



SPB continues to be critical and remains on ventilator and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation support



SPB continues to be critical and remains on ventilator and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation support

TEARS ROLLED DOWN BHARATHIRAJAA'S CHEEKS DURING THE PRAYER

THE VETERAN DIRECTOR, A LONG TIME FRIEND OF SPB, AUGUST 19 GAVE THE CALL FOR THE ONE-MINUTE SILENT MASS PRAYER AT 6 PM

HE HAD ALSO APPEALED TO THE PEOPLE PLAY A SONG SUNG BY BALASUBRAHMANYAM, PRAYING FOR HIS SPEEDY RECOVERY

Tears rolled down Bharathirajaa's cheeks during the prayer. The veteran director, a long time friend of SPB, Wednesday gave the call for the one-minute silent mass prayer at 6 pm. He had also appealed to the people play a song sung by Balasubrahmanyam, praying for his speedy recovery.

Tamil television channels, including news channels, broadcast his songs and 'Padum Nila Balu Va' (Come singing moon Balu) was among the slogans seen on placards held during prayers.

Lyricist Piraisudan praised him in a poem for his talent and prayed saying 'Padum Nilavey meendum nee pada va'. (Singing moon, come again to sing.)

According to the bulletin issued by the hospital Wednesday, SPB continued to be critical and was on ventilator and extracorporeal membrane oxygenation support (ECMO), a heart-lung assistance machine.

including Madurai, Salem, Erode and Coimbatore while scores prayed from their homes and recited prayer songs from their religions.

Members of fan clubs of various leading actors, including Rajinikanth, Kamal Haasan and

Vijay, also held prayers.

Other prominent people who joined the mass prayer session were chairman of Apollo Hospitals group Dr Pathap C Reddy and yesteryear actress Saroja Devi, film director Thankarbachan and actors

Sivakumar and Prabhu.

Many fans sung SPB's popular renditions 'Nalam Vazha Ennalum Vaazhthukkal' (Our wishes for your well-being) and 'Unnal Mudiyum Thambi', (You can do it brother) in a number of places.

Virtual info desks now installed at Bangalore airport



AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 20: Kempegowda International Airport Bangalore (KIAB) has set up trilingual virtual information desks for flyers at the terminal to get information on various services at a time when the coronavirus pandemic is raging in the southern state.

"The virtual information desk enables passengers to have real-time conversations with airport staff located remotely, over touch-free video," an airport official said in a statement Thursday.

Offering information on flights, food and beverages, transport and facilities, a passenger just has to stand in front of the virtual desk to activate the sensors to connect with an airport executive.

"A passenger simply has to stand in front of the virtual desk, thereby activating the sensors to begin the interaction. Passengers can avail

this facility round the clock on information related to Bangalore airport, facilities, flights, F&B and transport," said the official.

Positioned at four locations in the terminal, the virtual desks will add a new contactless dimension to passenger processing. Enabling a touch-free and a safe way to seek assistance without face to face human interaction, the virtual desks offer the facility in Kannada, English and Hindi.

"Terminal personnel at Bangalore airport have been trained to manage passenger queries in all three languages through the virtual platform," said the official.

In addition to the virtual desk, the city airport had rolled out a contactless journey from parking to boarding in May 2020, including self-bag drop, biometric-based self-boarding, contactless check-in, retail and F & B and touch-free hand sanitisers.

The virtual information desk enables passengers to have real-time conversations with airport staff located remotely, over touch-free video

AIRPORT OFFICIAL



It is a matter of great happiness and pride that four Gujarat cities have made it to the top 10 list of Swachh Survekshan 2020. I congratulate people, elected representatives and mayors of these four cities for achieving this feat

VIJAY RUPANI | GUJARAT CM

WAR AGAINST VIRUS

Amid rising coronavirus cases, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Thursday ordered a series of emergency measures, including extension of weekend lockdown, with daily night curfew from 7 pm to 5 am in all 167 cities and towns in the state from August 21



of the day quote

My government's focus is on infrastructure development, and so far 7,300 roads of total 33,622 km length have been constructed in rural areas along with 264 long span bridges and nine steel bridges

BHUPESH BAGHEL | CHHATTISGARH CM

Remembering former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi on his 76th birth anniversary. His dream of a modern India propelled the rising aspirations of all Indians. Let us remember him today with the promise of translating his vision into a shared reality

AMARINDER SINGH | PUNJAB CM

The management of the pandemic situation requires expertise of the Centre. I appeal to the Central government to urgently depute an inspection team to review the management, including comprehensive and optimum use of existing resources, as people are suffering

KIRAN BEDI | LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF PONDICHERRY

11 ordinances on govt agenda

The ordinances are aimed at boosting the economy, empowering rural India through the welfare of farmers engaged in agriculture and allied activities and protection of frontline warriors against physical attacks

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 20: With indications of the beginning of the Monsoon Session of Parliament in the second week of September, the government is learnt to have planned to clear 11 ordinances on priority amid the Opposition's attempt to keep it on backfoot over the Galwan Valley incident in which 20 Indian soldiers were killed.

Most of these 11 ordinances will lapse if not passed in the upcoming session of Parliament as the Winter Session is held in December. These include -- the Salaries and Allowances of Ministers (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 promulgated by the President Ram Nath Kovind



And Farm Services Ordinance, 2020 promulgated on June 5.

The Homeopathy Central Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 promulgated on April 24; the Indian Medicine Central Council (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 promulgated on April 24; the Taxation And Other Laws (Relaxation Of Certain Provisions) Ordinance, 2020 promulgated March 31; the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 promulgated on June 6; and the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Ordinance promulgated on June 26 are the other ordinances passed by the Union Cabinet so far this year.

These ordinances are aimed at boosting the economy, empowering rural India through the welfare of farmers engaged in agriculture and allied activities and protection of frontline warriors against physical attacks when the pandemic crippled almost all sectors amid lockdown. Almost five to six of these ordinances will expire if not passed in the Monsoon Session.

Ordinances are temporary laws that are promulgated by the President of India on the recommendation of the Union Cabinet, which will have the same effect as an Act of Parliament.

An ordinance has a life of six months. But from the day a session begins, it has to be replaced by a bill which should be passed by Parliament within six weeks, else it lapses.

The government is at liberty to promulgate the ordinance if the bill fails to get through Parliament. They can only be issued when Parliament is not in session.

On April 9; the Salaries, Allowances and Pensions of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 promulgated on April 7; the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Ordinance 2020 promulgated on April 22; the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020, promulgated on June 5; the Farmers Produce Trade And Commerce (Promotion And Facilitation) Ordinance, 2020, promulgated on June 5; and the Farmers (Empowerment And Protection) Agreement On Price Assurance

SHORT TAKES

Two electrocuted

Kolkata: Two employees of a private firm, engaged to install a hoarding inside Alipore Zoo, died Thursday after coming in contact with a live wire, an official said. The two were rushed to hospital where they were declared dead, Alipore Zoo Director Asis Samanta said. Another employee of the firm, who was also electrocuted, is in hospital and his condition is stated to be serious, Samanta said.

Prisoner ends life

Mumbai: A 43-year-old jail inmate, arrested in a narcotics case, allegedly committed suicide Thursday in Talaja prison's quarantine centre in neighbouring Navi Mumbai, an official said. The inmate was identified as Mohammed Suleman, a resident of Dariyaganj in New Delhi. Suleman was arrested by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI), Delhi Unit, in a narcotics case and lodged at Navi Mumbai's Talaja Central Jail under magisterial custody, the official said. He was booked under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

Two booked

Aurangabad: An offence was registered against two men for allegedly attacking a woman doctor following the death of their father at a hospital in Aurangabad city of Maharashtra, police said Thursday. The incident took place Wednesday night when brothers Vijendra and Jitendra Jaiswal, residents of Waluj, admitted their father to a private hospital here, inspector Ashok Giri of CIDCO police station said. Following the patient's death within a few hours of treatment, the brothers got agitated and entered into a scuffle with the woman doctor and destroyed hospital property, the official said.

Blast accused held

Ahmedabad: An accused in the 2006 Kalupur railway station blast in Ahmedabad, who was on the run for 14 years, was arrested by the Gujarat ATS from a village in West Bengal close to Bangladesh Border, officials said Thursday. Based on specific inputs, a team of the ATS nabbed the accused-Abdul Razaq Gazi- from a village in Basirhat tehsil of West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district, the officials said.

MONSOON MAYHEM



A woman sits on a cot outside her shop in Kolkata, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

Covid recovery rate nears 74%

Of the active cases of coronavirus infection, 1.92% are in ICU and 2.62% on oxygen support. The country's case fatality rate has further declined to 1.90%

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: Recoveries among COVID-19 patients in the country surged to 20,96,664 Thursday, pushing India's recovery rate to 73.91 per cent, while only 0.28 per cent people of 6,86,395 active cases are on ventilator support, the Union health ministry said.

Of the active cases of coronavirus infection, 1.92 per cent are in ICU and 2.62 per cent on oxygen support. The country's case fatality rate has further declined to 1.90 per cent, it said.

Recovery of 20,96,664 patients has been made possible because of effective implementation of the policy of testing aggressively, tracking comprehensively and treating efficiently,



the ministry said in a statement. "Focus on standard of care protocol including use of non-invasive oxygen, better skilled doctors in the ICUs and hospitals, and improved ambulance services have culminated in yielding the desired results," it said. With 58,794 recoveries in a span of 24 hours, India's recovery rate amongst COVID-19 patients has reached nearly 74 per cent (73.91 per cent) reflecting that the number of patients recovering is on a

steady rise over the past several months, it added.

India has posted 14,10,269 more recoveries than active cases. There are 6,86,395 active cases of coronavirus infection which are under active medical care. The record high recoveries have ensured that the active cases, the "actual caseload" of the country, currently comprise only 24.19 per cent of the total cases.

Early identification through testing, surveillance and contact tracing along with focus on timely and appropriate clinical treatment of COVID-19 patients have ensured that not only is the case fatality rate lower than the global average and progressively declining but also a small proportion of the active cases are on ventilator support, the ministry said.

GOVT HIKES AVIATION SECURITY FEE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: The Civil Aviation Ministry has decided to charge higher aviation security fee (ASF) from domestic as well as international passengers from September 1, senior government officials said Thursday.

Making the air travel slightly costlier, the officials said the ASF for domestic flyers will be increased to Rs 160 from Rs 150 starting next month, and international passengers will pay 5.2 USD instead of 4.85 USD as the ASF from September 1.

Airlines collect the ASF from passengers when they book their tickets and then give it to the government. The ASF is used to fund the security arrangement at airports across the country. The ministry had increased the ASF last year too.

On June 7, 2019, the ministry said domestic passengers would be charged Rs 150 instead of Rs 130 as the ASF and international passengers would be charged 4.85 USD instead of USD 3.25 as the ASF from July 1, 2019. The aviation sector has been significantly impacted due to the travel restrictions imposed in India and other countries in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

All airlines in India have taken cost-cutting measures such as pay cuts, leave-without-pay and firings of employees in order to conserve cash. After a gap of two months due to the coronavirus-triggered lockdown, India resumed domestic passenger flights on May 25. However, the average occupancy rate in Indian domestic flights has been around just 50-60 per cent since May 25.

FAROOQ MEETS NC LEADERS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, August 20: National Conference President Farooq Abdullah held a meeting with senior party colleagues at his home in Srinagar Thursday.

The meeting was convened days after the government told the court that the leaders are free and not under detention.

Among those present in the meeting included National Conference General Secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar, provincial president Kashmir Nasir Aslam Wani, former minister Abdul Rahim Rather, senior leader Mohd Shafi Uri and National Conference MPs Hasnain Masoodi and Akbar Lone.

"Today our meeting was merely to see whether our colleagues can come out of their homes as claimed by the government," Farooq said.

He did not talk about the political strategy of his party after the abrogation of Article 370 and said that it would be decided after due deliberations with the party leadership.

"The future political strategy can be revealed only after all the detained leaders are released," he said.

India, China agree to resolve differences

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: India and China Thursday agreed to resolve outstanding issues in an "expeditious manner" and in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said after the two sides held a fresh round of diplomatic talks to resolve the border standoff in eastern Ladakh.

MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said the two sides had a "candid and in-depth" exchange of views on the existing situation on the Line of Actual Control (LAC), and reaffirmed to sincerely work towards complete disengagement of the troops in the western sector.

The virtual talks were held under the framework of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination (WMCC) on border affairs. "The two sides had a candid and in-depth exchange of views on the existing situation in the India-China border areas,"

Srivastava said at an online media briefing.

"They reaffirmed that in accordance with the agreements reached between the two foreign ministers and the two Special Representatives, the two sides will continue to sincerely work towards complete disengagement of the troops along the Line of Actual Control in the western sector."

Srivastava further said: "In this context, they agreed to resolve the outstanding issues in an expeditious manner and in accordance with the existing agreements and protocols." External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had held a telephonic conversation with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on June 17 during which both sides agreed that the overall situation would be handled in a responsible manner.

On July 5, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Wang held a nearly two-hour-long telephonic conversation on ways to resolve the border row.

'Malaysia Covid strain no cause for concern'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: The mutant form of the novel coronavirus reported from Malaysia as being "10 times more infectious" is not a concern for India as it is widely prevalent here and isn't any more virulent than the strain originating in Wuhan, say scientists.

The D614G strain of the virus was discovered in Malaysia from a cluster, including a restaurant owner returning from India, the country's Director General of Health said in a Facebook post this week. His assertion that it was "found to be 10 times more infectious and is easily spread by an individual super spreader" created a flutter but scientists here dispelled fears and said there is nothing to worry about.

According to virologist Upasana Ray, the mutation may have just been reported in Malaysia but is not new for the world. "We saw it happening in April and it eventually dominated many countries. It is new for Malaysia but is not a new mutation," the senior scientist at Kolkata's CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology said.

While some reports claim the mutation is capable of enhancing the infectivity of the virus, this is not well established and also does not necessarily indicate more virulence or harmfulness of the disease.

Ray said even a highly infectious and transmissible variant of the virus might actually have a lesser ability to cause disease in humans.

In July, a study in the journal Cell by scientists, including Bette Korber from the Los Alamos National Laboratory in the US, noted that a variant of the novel coronavirus, dubbed 'D614G', can infect more lab-grown cells than



other strains. The study said this mutant -- in which a molecule 'aspartic acid' (denoted as D) is replaced by another building block 'glycine' (G) -- had quickly taken over as the dominant strain across the world soon after it first appeared, and grew more rapidly in lab-grown cells.

This mutation is part of the spike protein that the novel coronavirus uses to enter host cells. The strain with the D614G mutation, dubbed the 'G clade', became widely prevalent in India even as far back as April, agreed Kumar Somasundaram, professor of Microbiology and Cell Biology at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bangalore.

Swachh Survekshan: Indore retains cleanest city tag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: Indore was adjudged India's cleanest city for a fourth straight year while Surat and Navi Mumbai grabbed the second and third positions respectively, as the Centre announced the results of its latest annual cleanliness survey Thursday.

Varanasi, represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Lok Sabha, was adjudged the 'Best Ganga Town' in the country, followed by Kanpur, Mungger, Prayagraj and Haridwar. Chhattisgarh was given the 'Cleanest State' award in the category of states having more than 100 urban local bodies, followed by Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

The Swachh Survekshan awards 2020 -- the fifth annual cleanliness survey of the country -- were announced by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep



Singh Puri at a ceremony where 129 awards were given in different categories.

The survey brochure describes the New Delhi Municipal Council as "India's Cleanest National Capital (National or State Capitals/UT)". The NDMC comprises large part of

Rajpath and the VIP zone of Lutyens' Delhi. A total of 4,242 cities, 62 Cantonment Boards and 97 Ganga towns were surveyed, and 1.87 crore citizens participated in the exercise, according to the government.

Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh has been ranked the cleanest city in

the category of 1-10 lakh population, followed by Mysore in Karnataka and New Delhi Municipal area. The Jalandhar Cantonment Board had been ranked first while Delhi Cantonment Board and Meerut Cantonment Board have grabbed second and third positions respectively.

According to the survey results, Jharkhand was adjudged the 'Cleanest State' in the category of having less than 100 ULBs, followed by Haryana, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Assam and Himachal Pradesh. Indore has topped the ranking in the cleanest city category (having more than one lakh population), and is followed by Surat, Navi Mumbai, Vijaywada and Ahmedabad in that order.

Nasik has been ranked 25th, while Bihar's Patna 47th, North Delhi and East Delhi 43rd and 46th positions in the cleanest city category.

In the category of population of less than 1 lakh, Maharashtra's Karad bagged the first position, followed by Saswad and Lonavala.

After announcing the results, Puri said, "Swachh Survekshan (cleanliness survey) will continue to help us in sustaining the gains made under Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban, while providing a comprehensive roadmap to institutionalise the concept of total swachhata among all our cities." Greater Hyderabad has been given the 'Best Mega City' award in the category of 'Citizen Feedback'.

"Ancient holy town of Varanasi is rightfully the cleanest town on the banks of river Ganga. Heartiest congratulations to PM Shri @narendramodi Ji, who represents the city in Lok Sabha, for his visionary leadership which has inspired the people of the town for this achievement," Puri tweeted.



We will make all possible efforts so that no one succumbs to coronavirus in the state, for which our focus is on conducting more and more tests
ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CM

SHEKHAWAT CONTRACTS COVID

Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat has tested positive for Covid-19. According to sources, he will undergo treatment at Medanta hospital in Gurugram



of the day quote

Celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi in a grand way, but wear masks, maintain social distancing and use sanitisers as much as you can. Ganesh will give us strength and intellect to overcome Covid
PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

This is abject failure and must be answered by the two governments of Delhi and Haryana. You are giving juma on civic amenities about millennium city, smart city and other words
ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI | CONGRESS SPOKESPERSON

Current estimates put the cumulative loss in the range of USD 5.8-8.8 trillion or approximately 6.5-9.7 per cent of the global GDP. The contraction of the world economy being predicted will surely be the largest since the Great Depression
S JAISHANKAR | EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

LeT may attack J&K army posts: Intel

The security forces stated Pakistan is pushing terrorists in Kashmir after it has failed in its attempt to instigate the people of Kashmir ever since India's decision to scrap the special status of Jammu & Kashmir on August 5

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 20: As winter draws near, terrorists based in Pakistan are making desperate attempts to cross the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir to enter Indian territory, intelligence agencies have alerted security establishments in the valley.

Sources said 12 Pakistan trained Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) jihadis, in two groups, are making attempts to cross the Line of Control (LoC). To help these terrorists cross the LoC, Pakistan's Border Action Team (BAT) has planned to carry out attacks on Indian Army posts.

The agencies have flagged that in "Bhimber Gali (BG) sector in Rajouri district six LeT jihadis accompanied with a guide to infiltrate" in Indian territory. Intelligence agency sleuths have also alerted the security establishments. "In Poonch Sector, six LeT accompanied by a commander Abdul Fazal are making attempts to infiltrate and



also planned BAT like action". The security forces stated Pakistan is pushing terrorists in Kashmir after it has failed in its attempt to instigate the people of Kashmir ever since India's decision to scrap the special status of Jammu & Kashmir on August 5. "The summer season is coming to an end so they shall try their best to push in the terrorists to sus-

tain terror activities in the valley" said a senior IPS officer adding that the counter-infiltration grid is robust and effective in preventing infiltration. In the valley, the officer said, local youth's participation in military activities has reduced and security forces have been able to check the violence levels and killing of their personnel. The security forces

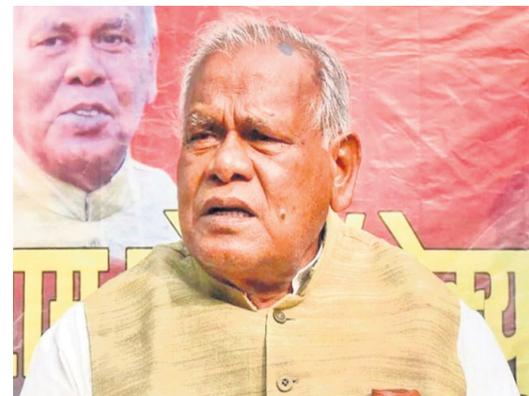
are also keeping a close watch on terror launch pads across the Line of Control in Pakistan occupied Kashmir.

Further, to push terrorists in India, Pakistan has resorted to ceasefire violations across the Line of Control. Till July this year, a total of 2,662 ceasefire violation cases were reported in the valley. Last year, 3,168 ceasefire violations were reported. In 2018, the figure of ceasefire violations was 1,629.

However, security forces have been successful in minimising infiltration attempts. Also the figures state there has been a significant decline in terror activities in the valley. This year till July, a total 120 terror-related cases have been reported and last year during the same period - between January and July - a total 188 cases were reported.

Similarly, this year till July, 35 security personnel lost their lives in line of duty and last year during the same period 75 security personnel had lost their lives fighting terrorists.

Manjhi's HAM pulls out of Grand Alliance



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Patna, August 20: Former Bihar Chief Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi-led Hindustani Awam Morcha (Secular) Thursday quit the Grand Alliance (Mahagathbandhan) but preferred to remain mum on future tie-up with any party or grouping.

"HAM will no longer be a constituent of the Grand Alliance. The party has decided to leave Mahagathbandhan," party spokesman Danish Rizwan said here. The decision to walk out of the five parties opposition coalition in Bihar was taken at the party's "core committee" meeting convened at Manjhi's residence here, Rizwan said.

The development comes months before the state is expected to see polls in October-November. The party, however, did not announce whether it would merge with any other party or become part of some other alliance.

The party has authorised its president to decide the future course of action that included decision to join any alliance or formation, Rizwan said, adding whatever decision he takes will be acceptable to all.

Apart from HAM, the Mahagathbandhan in Bihar comprises of RJD, Congress, Upendra Kushwaha Rashtriya Lok Samata

Party (RLSP) and Bollywood set designer Mukesh Sahni headed Vikassheel Insaan Party (VIP).

Asked if HAM would merge with Nitish Kumars Janata Dal (United), Rizwan rejected the idea outrightly asserting that "there is no question of merging with any other party." Holding RJD responsible for failure to form a coordination committee within the grand alliance for its better functioning, the HAM leader said, "leaders who do not listen to the constituent

partners, will they listen to the people after coming to power?" His barb was apparently directed at Lalu Prasad's headed RJD, which has declared Tejashwi Prasad Yadav as its chief ministerial candidate. "Our leader Jitan Ram Manjhi has categorically stated that there is no point in continuing with the alliance

which does not follow democratic norms and listen to its partners, Rizwan said. Even Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had said during a virtual meeting of his party in the state recently that a coordination committee would be formed within a week, but nothing happened, he added. Even though the idea of a coordination committee was supported by Kushwaha and the VIP party president, but the RJD leadership did not bother to take any action in this regard, he said.

FACEBOOK ROW

Rathore writes to Speaker against Tharoor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: After BJP MP Nishikant Dubey, party member Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore has shot off a letter to the Lok Sabha Speaker against Shashi Tharoor for speaking in public about his intention to summon Facebook officials without discussing the matter first in the parliamentary committee the Congress leader heads.

"Issuing statements as to who would be summoned and what would be the agenda of the meeting is absolutely uncalled for and is violative of the procedures of the Lok Sabha. The proclivity of the IT committee chairman to speak to media first undermines the functioning of the committee members and the committee itself," Rathore said Thursday.



He is also a member of the committee which Tharoor heads. He said he has written a letter to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in this regard. Rathore, a former Union minister, said the IT committee members have no issue on "summoning whosoever the committee feels needs to be summoned for the protection of the rights of citizens of our country" but added that the matter should be discussed in the panel first.

Following a report in the Wall Street Journal which claimed that Facebook refused to apply hate speech rules to certain ruling party politicians, Tharoor had spoken about summing the company's officials before the committee due to the "serious nature" of allegations.

FEST AMID PANDEMIC



A motorist rides past a roadside shop selling idols of Lord Ganesha, ahead of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival at Dadar in Mumbai, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

SHORT TAKES

UP man dies

Firozabad (Uttar Pradesh): A 40-year-old man, Rakesh Varma, has succumbed to injuries after being set on fire by his cousin over an alleged family dispute in Firozabad. Varma died Wednesday. His cousin Robin, has been arrested. Robin had on Tuesday allegedly doused Varma with an industrial thinner (methyl) and set him on fire after a brief argument. Firozabad Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sachindra Patel said, "The accused was arrested from Cinema crossing in Firozabad. We have CCTV footage of the entire incident. Initial investigation revealed that Puja Varma, the wife of Robin had died by suicide on August 12. There seems to be some dispute over it in the family, which led to the attack."

Youth arrested

Ranaghat (WB): A youth has been arrested for allegedly tearing the national flag in an inebriated state in West Bengal's Nadia district, police said Thursday. The incident occurred in School Para locality in Dhantala police station area on Wednesday, they said. The youth, Chanchal Biswas, was arrested after locals made a video of the act and forwarded it to the police, an officer said.

30 injured

Etawah (Uttar Pradesh): A bus carrying 45 passengers overturned on the Agra-Lucknow expressway in Uttar Pradesh in the early hours of Thursday, officials said. Thirty people were injured in the accident. However, no casualty has been reported so far.

Drugs seized

Agartala: The Tripura police has seized a huge cache of Yaba tablets and brown sugar, valued at Rs 1 crore, cash and mobile phones, in two separate operations in the city, a senior officer said Thursday. Three people were detained during the raids, he said.

Five held

Chhatrapur (MP): Five men were arrested Thursday for allegedly kidnapping a 6-year-old boy from Madhya Pradesh's Chhatrapur city and demanding a ransom of Rs 1 crore from his father, police said. The boy was abducted from Choubey Colony under Civil Lines police station area on Wednesday, said Anil Sharma, inspector general of police (Sagar zone).

NCERT SURVEY

27% students don't have phones for online classes

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: At least 27 per cent students do not have access to smartphones or laptops to attend online classes, while 28 per cent students and parents believe intermittent or lack of electricity is one of the major concerns hindering teaching-learning, according to a survey by the NCERT.

The survey with over 34,000 participants, including students, parents, teachers and school principals from Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalayas and CBSE affiliated schools, has pointed out that lack of knowledge of using devices for effective educational purposes and teachers not being well-versed with online teaching methodologies, caused hindrance in

the learning process.

"Approximately 27 per cent of the students mentioned the non-availability of smartphones and laptops. The maximum number of stakeholders have opted for mobile phones as a medium for teaching-learning during the COVID-19 period," the survey by the NCERT said.

"About 36 per cent of the students used the textbooks and other books available with them. Laptops were the second most favoured option amongst teachers and principals. Television and radio were the least utilized devices for the teaching-learning in the pandemic situation. The absence of enriched interaction between the teacher and the students was one of the reasons as identified by the stakeholders," it added.

29% of Delhi exposed to Covid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 20: Antibodies against COVID-19 infection have been found in 29.1 per cent of people in the latest sero-prevalence survey in the national capital, Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain said Thursday.

Interacting with reporters, he said, 15,000 representative samples were taken in the August 1-7 survey from 11 districts, and the next exercise will begin from September 1. "In the previous survey, it was found that over 22 per cent people had developed antibodies. Now, the August survey shows it is 29.1 per cent, meaning they had got infected and recovered," Jain said.

The minister also said that prevalence of antibodies found in males was 28.3 per cent, and in females 32.2 per cent in the latest survey. The previous sero-prevalence survey done from June 27 to July 10 by the Delhi government in association with the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), had used 21,387



samples and found that around 23 per cent of the people surveyed had an exposure to the novel coronavirus.

"The rise, rather than the exponential rise is not there. So, people are taking safety precautions it seems. But, we cannot afford to be complacent and lower our guard, even though positivity rate at present is 7 per cent," Jain said.

The exercise was undertaken in the first week of August for a comprehensive assessment of the COVID-19 situation in Delhi and to formulate strategies based on

its findings. About 15,000 samples were collected as part of this exercise, spanning different areas and age groups, gender and economic class, he said.

Representative samples were taken from all the eleven districts. Out of total number of samples, 25 per cent were taken from the age group of less than 18 years, another 50 per cent from 18-49 years age bracket and remaining 25 per cent from those in the age group of 50 years or more, the Delhi health minister said.

The sero-prevalence found in North East district was 29 per cent, South district 27 per cent, South East 33 per cent and New Delhi 24 per cent, Jain said. There has been an increase of 6 per cent to 50 per cent in prevalence of antibodies among people in various districts compared to the prevalence found in different districts in the previous survey, he said.

Also, the average rise in prevalence was of 25 per cent compared to the last survey.

Only 27% anti-human trafficking units functional: Study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 20: A study on operational competence of Anti-Human Trafficking Units (AHTUs) across India reveals that only 27 per cent of these units are functional and only 51 per cent have all the power and resources. The sector had received Centre-allocated 'Nirbhaya Fund' to strengthen its role in the states to curb human trafficking.

The revelation has come just a month after the Ministry of Home Affairs directed the state governments to utilise funds released from 'Nirbhaya Fund' in March this year Wednesday, said Anil Sharma, inspector general of police (Sagar zone).

The number of notified AHTUs

in many states and UTs were much less than the number of AHTUs that states and Union Territories (UTs) claimed were operational, reveals the study conducted by Sanjog, a technical resource organization, and Taftesh, a coalition of lawyers, activists, social workers and survivor leaders. The study was spearheaded by a group of five lawyers who filed RTIs in 33 states and Union Territories (UTs) out of which only 22 states and Union Territories responded.

Responses to the RTIs from 16 states and UTs highlight that only 27 per cent of AHTUs are functional and 51 per cent being notified with all the power and resources. The study collated data between 2010 and 2019 with the objective of eval-



uating the effectiveness of the AHTUs to find out the number of AHTUs actually notified by state and UT governments. Responses from 16 states and UTs showed that

225 AHTUs are set up only on paper with no centralised process to notify them, mentions the study.

Further, it says, the number of notified AHTUs in many states and UTs

were much less than the number of AHTUs that states and UTs claimed were operational. Most of the AHTU postings were only seen as 'notional' offices occupied by near-retirees or police officials taking on 'punishment postings', it said. Pompi Banerjee, a psychologist and researcher at Sanjog and a member of Taftesh said: "As a result of the pandemic, many people are facing job loss and financial hardship. This makes them more vulnerable to trafficking. Therefore, it is important to understand the effectiveness of the AHTUs, especially when the Ministry of Home Affairs issued an advisory asking the states and UTs to set up new AHTUs and upgrade the existing ones and saying that Rs 100 crore have been al-

located from the Nirbhaya fund in this regard."

As specialised police units, AHTUs are extremely important in the anti-trafficking system. They are the main grassroots-level unit investigating trafficking cases, rescuing survivors, and aiding prosecution of offenders across the country.

The study also found that only seven states - Bihar, Kerala, Nagaland, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Uttarakhand -- have AHTUs covering all their districts. All the other states either have AHTUs in half or less of their districts, with Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh having the lowest coverage of AHTUs with 30 per cent and 25 per cent, respectively.



I cannot govern this country if the lower house keeps the decision to overturn the veto. It would be impossible to govern Brazil
JAIR BOLSONARO | BRAZIL'S FAR-RIGHT PRESIDENT

ROBOT COOKS

Chinese military plans to introduce robot cooks and high-efficiency energy-saving stoves to reduce labour intensity even as it launched campaign to stop food waste and cultivate thrifty habits in the military under the 'clean plate' campaign launched by President Xi Jinping



of the day quote

The bottom line is that Kim Jong Un still holds absolute power, but has turned over a bit more of his authority compared to the past
HA TAE-KEUNG | MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SOUTH KOREA



Washington would invoke the snapback mechanism against Iran, seeking to restore all the pre-2015 UN sanctions against the Islamic Republic
DONALD TRUMP | US PRESIDENT



There is no crisis in Zimbabwe. There are challenges, which are found in any other nation
SIBUSISO MOYO | ZIMBABWE'S FOREIGN MINISTER



SHORT TAKES

New Sri Lanka Parl convenes

Colombo: The new Sri Lankan Parliament convened for its inaugural session Thursday following the August 5 general elections, which saw the ruling SLPP party secure a landslide victory. In the crucial polls, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party won 145 seats off the 225-member Parliament. It became the single largest party to gain a nearly two-thirds majority in Parliament.

Heavy rains kill 24 in Pak

Islamabad: At least 24 people were killed as heavy rains lashed Pakistan's Punjab province Thursday, officials said. Rescue officials told local media that several houses have been completely destroyed and the majority of the victims were killed due to roof collapse incidents, reports Xinhua news agency.

Bomber's brother jailed for 55 yrs

London: The younger brother of the Libyan-origin suicide bomber who killed 22 people in a terrorist attack on an Ariana Grande concert in the English city of Manchester three years ago, was jailed for at least 55 years Thursday. Earlier this year, a jury took less than five hours to find 23-year-old Hashem Abedi "just as guilty" as his older brother Salman Abedi of 22 counts of murder, one of attempted murder in relation to those who survived, and one of conspiracy to cause an explosion.

Kamala accepts 'historic' VP nod

HARRIS PLEDGED THAT SHE AND BIDEN WOULD REVIVE THE COUNTRY FRACTURED BY THE PANDEMIC & RACIAL TENSION

HILLARY CLINTON CALLED TO AMERICANS TO VOTE TO ENSURE THAT TRUMP "CAN'T SNEAK OR STEAL HIS WAY TO VICTORY"



Kamala Harris summarised her life story as emblematic of the American dream on the third day of the Democratic National Convention

AGENCIES

Washington, August 20: US Senator Kamala Harris accepted the Democratic nomination for vice president Wednesday, imploring Americans to elect Joe Biden in November and accusing President Donald Trump of failed leadership that had cost lives and livelihoods during a pandemic.

Making history as the first Black woman and Asian-American on a major US presidential ticket, Harris said Trump's divisive leadership had brought the country to an "inflection point" and made a direct appeal to the party's diverse electorate whose vote is crucial to defeat Trump November 3.

"The constant chaos leaves us adrift, the incompetence makes us feel afraid, the callousness makes us feel alone. It's a lot," the California senator and former prosecutor said, speaking from an events center in Biden's hometown of Wilmington, Delaware, that was largely empty because of the coronavirus outbreak. "We must elect a president... who will bring all of us together —

Biden to accept Democratic Prez nomination

In his third campaign for president, former Vice President Joe Biden -- who found his "comeback kid" moment in South Carolina on this year's primary trail -- will formally accept the Democratic Party's nomination for president in a speech Thursday -- 33 years after he made his first bid for the White House. Under day four's theme of an "America's Promise," Biden will finally assume center stage at the Chase Center in Delaware -- more than 800 miles away from Milwaukee, where the speech was slated to take place in person before the coronavirus pandemic upended the committee's plans and forced a shift to a mostly virtual format.

Black, White, Latino, Asian, Indigenous -- to achieve the future we collectively want. We must elect Joe Biden," she said.

Belarus launches criminal case against new opposition body

REUTERS

Minsk, August 20: Belarus launched a criminal case on Thursday against a new opposition body, accusing it of an illegal attempt to seize power, a day after President Alexander Lukashenko threatened to sweep the streets of protesters who reject his re-election.

Belarus is facing its biggest political crisis since the breakup of the Soviet Union, with tens of thousands of demonstrators rejecting Lukashenko's victory in an Aug. 9 vote his opponents say was rigged. Opponents of Lukashenko, who has been in power for 26 years, unveiled the Coordination Council on Tuesday with the stated aim of negotiating a transfer of power.

Its dozens of members include a Nobel Prize-winning author and the ousted head of Minsk's main drama theatre, as well as exiled presidential candidate Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya, whose followers say she won the election.

The general prosecutor's office described the body as designed to seize power, and the act of setting it up a threat to national security, Russia's RIA news agency reported. No individuals were named as suspects in the case. The council said one of its members, Maksim Znak, had been summoned to appear at the Investigative Committee on Friday over the criminal case. It issued a statement saying its efforts were lawful. "The accusation is completely baseless and without foundation. Our goal is to resolve the crisis without conflict. We are not calling for the seizure of power," council member Syarhei Dyleuski, leader of a committee of striking workers at the Minsk Tractor Factory said.

Russia vaccine: Trials on 40K people next week

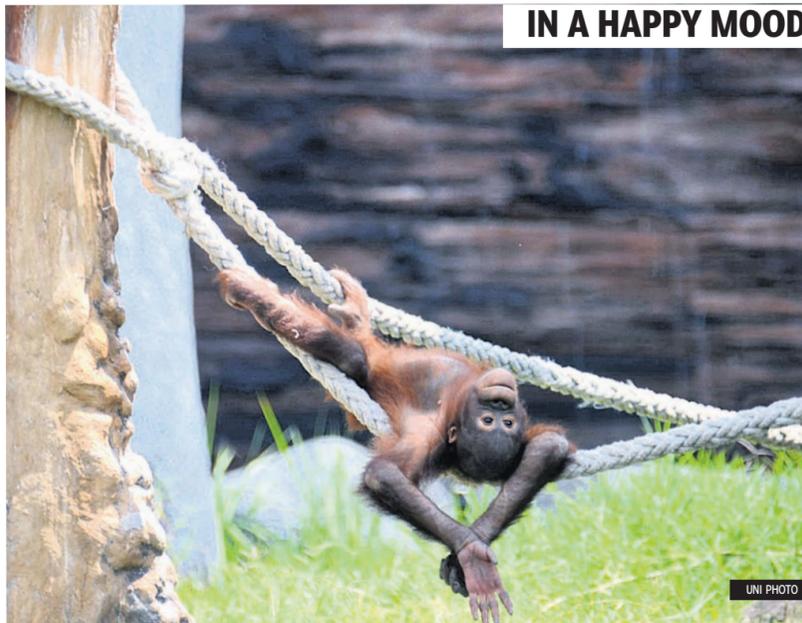
REUTERS

Moscow, August 20: Mass testing of Russia's first potential COVID-19 vaccine to get domestic regulatory approval will involve more than 40,000 people and will be overseen by a foreign research body when it starts next week, backers of the project said Thursday.

These were the first details on the shape and size of the upcoming late-stage trial of the vaccine given by its developers, who are aiming to allay concerns among some scientists about the lack of data provided by Russia so far. The vaccine, called "Sputnik V"



in homage to the world's first satellite launched by the Soviet Union, has been hailed as safe and effective by Russian authorities and scientists following two months of small-scale human trials, the results of which have not been made public yet. But Western experts have been



An orangutan plays at Batu Secret Zoo Park on the occasion of the International Orangutan Day in Malang, Indonesia

HIDDEN THREAT

Children are silent spreaders of Covid-19: Study

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New York, August 20: While most studies have stressed that children are not the harbingers of Covid-19, a comprehensive study now claims that children play a larger role in the community spread of the novel coronavirus than previously thought.

In a study of 192 children aged 0-22, published in the Journal of Pediatrics, 49 children tested positive for SARS-CoV-2, and an additional 18 children had late onset, Covid-19-related illness.

The infected children were shown to have a significantly higher level of virus in their airways than adults hospitalised in ICUs for Covid-19 treatment. "I was surprised by the high levels of virus we found in children of all ages, especially in the first two days of infection. I was



not expecting the viral load to be so high," said study author Lael Yonker from the Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) in the US.

"You think of a hospital, and of all of the precautions taken to treat severely ill adults, but the viral loads of these hospitalised patients are significantly lower than a 'healthy child' who is walking around

with a high SARS-CoV-2 viral load," Yonker added. According to the researchers, transmissibility or risk of contagion is greater with a high viral load. And even when children exhibit symptoms typical of Covid-19, like fever, runny nose and cough, they often overlap with common childhood illnesses, including influenza and the common cold. Along

This is a particular concern for families in certain socio-economic groups, which have been harder hit in the pandemic, and multi-generational families with vulnerable older adults in the same household.

In the Mass General Hospital for Children (MGHfC) study, 51 per

cent of children with acute SARS-CoV-2 infection came from low-income communities compared to two per cent from high-income communities.

In another breakthrough finding from the study, the researchers challenge the current hypothesis that because children have lower numbers of immune receptors for SARS-CoV-2, this makes them less likely to become infected or seriously ill.

Data from the group show that although younger children have lower numbers of the virus receptor than older children and adults, this does not correlate with a decreased viral load. According to the authors, this finding suggests that children can carry a high viral load, meaning they are more contagious, regardless of their susceptibility to developing Covid-19 infection.

deliberately poisoned to prevent her from covering the 2004 seizure of a school in southern Russia by Islamic separatists. Two years later, Politkovskaya was shot to death outside her Moscow apartment building, a slaying that drew widespread condemnation in the West.

VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA Opposition activist Vladimir Kara-Murza Jr was hospitalised with poisoning symptoms twice, in 2015 and 2017. A journalist and associate of Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was shot and killed in 2015 while crossing a bridge near the Kremlin, and oligarch-turned-dissident Mikhail Khodorkovsky, Kara-Murza nearly died from kidney failure in the first incident. He suspects poisoning but no cause has been determined.

SERGEI AND YULIA SKRIPAL A Russian spy who became a double agent for Britain, Sergei Skripal fell ill in the British city of Salisbury in 2018. Authorities said Skripal and his adult daughter, Yulia, were poisoned with the military grade nerve agent Novichok. The two spent weeks in critical condition. Britain put the blame squarely on Russian intelligence, but Moscow denied any role. Britain charged two Russian men with the poisoning. They claimed they had visited Salisbury as tourists and denied any involvement in the attack, which came amid revelations about Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential campaign.

Toxic tea: Multiple Russians hit by suspected poisonings

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moscow, August 20: When Russian opposition politician Alexei Navalny collapsed in an airplane bathroom Thursday, his supporters immediately suspected poisoning.

If true, he wouldn't be the first prominent, outspoken Russian to be the target of toxic attack. Here are some other people who've criticised the Kremlin and then fallen victim to suspected poisonings: **ALEXANDER LITVINENKO**

A former agent for the KGB and post-Soviet successor agency FSB, Col. Alexander Litvinenko defected from Russia in 2000 and fled to London, where he fell violently ill six years later after drinking tea laced with radioactive polonium-210.

He died after three weeks. A British inquiry found that Russian agents had killed Litvinenko, probably with President Vladimir Putin's approval. Russia denied any involvement. At the time of Litvinenko's poisoning, he had been investigating the killing of Russian journalist Anna Politkovskaya three weeks earlier. **ANNA POLITKOVSKAYA**

An investigative journalist, Politkovskaya had written critically about abuses by Russian and pro-Moscow Chechen forces fighting separatists in Chechnya -- work that earned her repeated death threats. In 2004, she fell severely ill and lost consciousness after drinking a cup of tea. She said she was



Navalny rushed to an ambulance on the runway



We are dedicated towards building the economic strength of our country by improving the capacities of our ports. We are also committed towards resolving the diverse issues faced by the maritime transport sector

MANSUKH MANDAVIYA | MOS FOR SHIPPING

VEDANTA MOBILISES \$1.4 BN FROM BONDS

Vedanta Resources Limited moved a step forward in its plan to delist its Indian subsidiary Vedanta Ltd by successfully mobilising \$ 1.4 billion from bonds that would go into funding the buy out of equity shares held by public shareholders



of the day quote

For the components sector, ACMA continues to recommend a uniform 18% GST rate across the auto component sector. Currently 60% of the auto components attract 18% GST rate, while the rest 40%, majority of which are 2-wheelers and tractor components, attract 28%

DEEPAK JAIN | PRESIDENT, ACMA

Deployment of innovative and contact-free processes across vehicles in the post-COVID-19 era, thrust on fixed broadband, fibre-to-home and in-building solutions, proliferation of Wi-Fi hotspots, and massive investments into digital infrastructure will enable India to reap full benefits of digital technologies

RS SHARMA | CHAIRMAN, TRAI

A lot of people, who don't have a long-term vision of being in this industry and serving these (MFI) customers, will most likely find their way out. I would think that it also opens up some kind of path to consolidation in the industry

NITIN CHUGH | MD AND CEO, UJIVAN SMALL FINANCE BANK

SHORT TAKES

ETFs see \$1.5 bn outflow in Jun qtr

New Delhi: India-focused offshore funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) witnessed a net outflow of \$1.5 billion in three months ended June 2020, making it the ninth consecutive quarter of withdrawal, according to a Morningstar report. This is much lower number than \$5 billion outflow witnessed during the quarter ended March. The total outflow from the category has reached to \$6.5 billion so far in this calendar year (until June 2020), which is noticeably higher than the \$5.9 billion outflow in the full 2019 calendar year.

BMW drives in Turismo

New Delhi: BMW Group India Wednesday said it has launched a new variant of its 3 Series Gran Turismo, priced at ₹42.5 lakh. Locally produced at the company's Chennai-based plant, the BMW 3 Series Gran Turismo 'Shadow Edition' is available in petrol trim at all company dealerships, the German luxury carmaker said in a statement.

e-pharmacies are illegal: AIOCD

New Delhi: The top body of chemists and druggists has shot off a letter to Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos on the world's largest online retailer entering the online pharmacy space in India, saying e-pharmacies are "illegal" and not allowed under the country's laws. The AIOCD, which claims to represent 8.5 lakh chemists, August 14 wrote to Bezos and his India CEO Amit Agarwal saying the online pharmacy space "has been marred by extreme controversies, court cases, and legal issues."

Govt plans further stake sale in IRCTC

New Delhi: The government is planning to sell part of its stake in Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corp (IRCTC) in the current fiscal, and has invited bids from merchant bankers for managing the sale process. "The GoI intends to divest a part of the paid up equity capital of IRCTC out of its shareholding through 'Offer for Sale method of shares by promoters through the stock exchanges' as per Sebi Rules and Regulations," DIPAM said.

FINANCIAL EDUCATION

RBI UNVEILS 5-YEAR NATIONAL STRATEGY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 20: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Thursday came out with a '5-Core Actions' approach for promoting financial education, which among other things include development of relevant content for school children and adults, community participation and collaboration among various stakeholders.

The 'National Strategy for Financial Education 2020-2025' (NSFE), released by the RBI, has suggested a multi-stakeholder-led approach for creating a financially aware and empowered India.

The five Cs, outlined by the strategy paper, are: Content, Capacity, Community, Communication and Collaboration.

Strengthening financial inclusion in the country has been one of the important developmental agendas of both the Government of India and the four financial sector regulators (RBI, SEBI, IRDAI and PFRDA).

"Financial literacy supports the pursuit of financial inclusion by empowering the customers to make informed choices leading to their financial well-being," according to NSFE.

To achieve the vision of creating a financially aware and empowered India, NSFE has laid down strategic objectives, like inculcate financial literacy concepts among the various sections of the population through financial education to make it an important life skill, and encourage active savings behaviour.



The 'National Strategy for Financial Education 2020-2025' (NSFE), released by the RBI, has suggested a multi-stakeholder-led approach for creating a financially aware and empowered India

Among the other strategic objectives are encouraging participation in financial markets to meet financial goals and objectives, developing credit discipline and encourage availing credit from formal financial institutions as per requirement, and improving usage of digital financial services in a safe and secure manner.

Managing risk at various life stages through relevant and suitable insurance cover and plan for old age and retirement through coverage of suitable pension products are the other key objectives laid down in the document.

The document stresses on development of financial literacy

content for school children (including curriculum and co-scholastic), teachers, young adults, women, new entrants at workplace/entrepreneurs (MSMEs), senior citizens, persons with disabilities, illiterate people.

"Update content of financial education in school curriculum for students of classes VI to X", said action plan for NSFE (2020-25).

It also makes a case for integrating financial education in courses like B.Ed./M.Ed. besides other teachers' training courses to create a cadre of financially educated teaching professionals.

It also calls for development of a financial literacy mobile app, and leverage social media.

NSFE further said the Technical Group on Financial Inclusion and Financial Literacy (TGFIFL) would be responsible for periodic monitoring and implementation of National Strategy for Financial Education.

There would also be periodic monitoring of the activities undertaken by various stakeholders for dissemination of basic, sector-specific, and process literacy.

Since the launch of the first NSFE in 2013, various stakeholders have undertaken several measures to improve the financial literacy of the cross-section of the population in the country, it noted.

Financial literacy is defined as a combination of financial awareness, knowledge, skills, attitude, and behaviour necessary to make sound financial decisions and ultimately achieve individual financial well-being.

Retail inflation for rural workers falls

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 20: Retail inflation for farm and rural workers eased to 6.58% and 6.53%, respectively in July this year on account of lower prices of certain food items, the labour ministry said Thursday.



Inflation based on CPI-AL (Consumer Price Index-Agricultural Labourers) and CPI-RL (Consumer Price Index-Rural Labourers) stood at 7.16% and 7%, respectively in June.

Inflation based on food index of CPI-AL and CPI-RL recorded at 7.83% and 7.89%, respectively in July 2020, according to a labour ministry statement.

Amongst states, the maximum increase in the consumer price index numbers for agricultural labourers was experienced by Meghalaya (15 points) and for rural labourers, it was experienced by Jammu & Kashmir and Meghalaya (14 points) mainly due to rise in the prices of milk, meat goat, fish dry, bidi, vegetables and fruits and bus fare etc, the statement said.

On the contrary, the maximum decrease in the CPI numbers for agricultural labourers and rural labourers was experienced by Tripura (-8 points) and (-5 points), respectively mainly due to fall in

the prices of rice, meat goat, fish fresh/dry etc.

The all-India consumer price index numbers for agricultural labourers and rural labourers (base:1986-87=100) for the month of July 2020 increased by 3 and 4 points to stand at 1,021 and 1,028 points, respectively, the

Inflation based on CPI-Agricultural Labourers (AL) and CPI-Rural Labourers (RL) stood at 7.16% and 7%, respectively in June

Inflation based on food index of CPI-AL and CPI-RL recorded at 7.83% and 7.89%, respectively in July 2020

statement said.

The major contribution towards the rise in general index of agricultural labourers and rural labourers came from food, with 2.49 points and 2.64 points, respectively mainly due to rise in prices of arhar dal, masur dal, ground nut oil, meat goat, poultry, vegetables and fruits etc. The rise/fall in index varied from state to state.

In case of agricultural labourers, it recorded an increase of 1 to 15 points in 17 states and a decrease of 3 to 8 points in 3 states.

Tamil Nadu with 1,216 points topped the index table whereas Himachal Pradesh with 786 points stood at the bottom.

In case of rural labourers, it recorded an increase of 1 to 14 points in 15 states and a decrease of 1 to 5 points in 4 states while it remained stationary in Rajasthan. Tamil Nadu with 1,202 points topped the index table whereas Himachal Pradesh with 838 points stood at the bottom.

Apple captures 51% of global smartwatch market revenues



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 20: Apple's share in the global smartwatch shipment revenue increased to 51.4% in the first half of this year from 43.2% during the same period last year, Counterpoint Research said Thursday.

Overall, the global smartwatch market posted a healthy 20% revenue growth despite the Covid-19 pandemic due to healthy growth in shipments in India, Europe and the US.

In the first half of 2020, close to 42 million smartwatches were shipped, said the report. The top three brands - Apple, Garmin and Huawei -- contributed more than 69% of the total market revenue in H1 2020.

While Garmin's share in the global smartwatch shipment revenue increased to 9.4 per cent, Huawei's share grew to 8.3%.

"Apple captured a record half of the market in terms of revenue due to strong demand for the Apple Watch S5 models," Senior Analyst Sujeong Lim said in a statement.

"In terms of shipment volumes, Apple Watch grew 22% globally with Europe and North America being the fastest growing markets in the first half of 2020." In terms of shipment of smartwatches, Huawei jumped to the second spot globally with 57% year-over-year growth, Counterpoint said.

'Talks on implementing trade pact soon'

AGENCIES

Beijing, August 20: Chinese and US trade envoys will hold a meeting by phone "in the near future" to discuss an agreement aimed at resolving a tariff war, a Commerce Ministry spokesman said Thursday. The spokesman, Gao Feng, gave no details of the timing at a ministry news briefing.

White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow said Thursday that

US-CHINA RELATIONS



the talks are part of the process of implementing the US-China trade

deal, though he did not say when they would actually happen.

He attributed any delay to "scheduling issues". "It is part of the process, part of the governance process of this large trade deal," Kudlow said on Fox News Channel's "Fox & Friends."

"It was on again, off again, that's all that was, was scheduling issues. It's a normal review."

Under the "Phase 1" trade agreement signed in January, both gov-

ernments agreed to suspend potential additional penalties on each other's goods in a fight that erupted in 2018 over Beijing's technology ambitions and trade surplus.

The truce called for talks to be held after six months, but those were delayed due to the coronavirus pandemic. A meeting scheduled for last week was to be held online but was postponed.

"Both parties have agreed to hold a call in the near future," Gao said.

BIZ BUZZ

CV makers to incur ₹6,000 cr net loss

Mumbai: Commercial vehicle (CV) manufacturers are expected to incur a massive net loss to the tune of ₹6,000 crore in the current



financial year, with the volume likely to touch its lowest point in a decade after two consecutive years of high de-growth. Ratings agency Crisil said Thursday. In the April-June period of financial year 2021, as per data, the total CV sale in the country stood at 31,636, a decline of 85% y-o-y as the country remained in covid-induced lockdown for most part of the June quarter and, most of the trade and business activities coming to a temporary halt.

UK inflation rises to 1% as lockdown eases

London: The UK's inflation rate increased to 1% in July as lockdown measures, imposed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, eased, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said. The reading in July was higher from 0.6% in June, with both far below the Bank of England (BoE)'s 2% target for inflation, as social distancing still affected people's activities. Xinhua news agency quoted the ONS as saying Wednesday. The central bank predicted earlier this month that Consumer Prices Index (CPI) inflation is expected to be around 2% in two years' time when conditioned on prevailing market yields. Meanwhile, the CPI including owner occupiers' housing costs (CPIH) 12-month inflation rate jumped to 1.1% in July, up from 0.8% in June, said the ONS.



Gas sales returning to pre-COVID-19 levels: GAIL

New Delhi: State-owned gas utility GAIL India Ltd sees its gas demand returning to pre-COVID-19 levels by the end of the current quarter as the expansion of the city gas network will offset shrinking consumption, its Director (Marketing) ES Ranganathan said Thursday. GAIL, the country's largest natural gas marketing and transporting company, sold about 113 million standard cubic metres per day of the fuel before the outbreak of the pandemic. "We (GAIL) have come back to more or less 95% level," he said at FIP's Young Professionals Forum. "It is going to come back to 100% level by the end of this quarter." GAIL saw gas demand almost halving when a nationwide lockdown was imposed beginning March 25 to contain the spread of coronavirus.

TOP LOSERS 20		
38,220.39		
AUG		
1785.15	HDFC	-2.35%
434.95	Axis Bank	-2.06%
525.50	Bharti Airtel	-1.98%
611.95	M&M	-1.90%
1126.45	Titan	-1.89%
2096.35	Reliance	-1.73%
367.90	ICICI Bank	-1.72%
513.65	IndusInd Bank	-1.63%
4136.35	UltraTech Cem	-1.41%
1338.35	Kotak Mahi	-1.34%
POINTS		
BSE SENSEX		
-394.40		

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 20: Under the 100% Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) backed by a Government of India guarantee, banks from public and private sectors have sanctioned loans worth ₹2,151.80 crore in Odisha as of August 18, 2020 of which more than ₹1,617.60 crore has already been disbursed. The date was revealed by the Ministry of Finance.

There are 1,51,180 accounts which were cumulatively sanctioned the loans under the scheme out of which 77,083 accounts have already been disbursed with the loans.

Under ECLGS, banks from public and private sectors have sanctioned loans worth over ₹1.5 lakh crore across the country as of the same period of time. Out of total

over ₹1 lakh crore has already been disbursed to the eligible accounts. The ECLGS was announced by the government as a part of Aatma Nirbhar Bharat mission, to mitigate the distress caused by lockdown due to COVID-19 by providing credit to different sectors, especially MSMEs.

Across the country, Public Sector Banks have sanctioned loans of ₹76,044.44 crore, out of which ₹56,483.41 crore has already been disbursed. Whereas, Private Sector Banks have sanctioned loans of ₹74,715.02 crore out of which ₹45,762.36 crore has already been disbursed.

The top lenders under ECLGS are State Bank of India, Canara Bank, Punjab National Bank, Bank of India, Union Bank of India and HDFC Bank Ltd.

COVID IMPACT

'80% APAC FIRMS CHANGING MARKETING STRATEGY'

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 20: With habits of consumers changing significantly due to Covid-19 disruptions, nearly 80% of organisations in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region are transforming their long-term marketing strategy, according to a survey by Adobe Thursday.

The results showed that around 80 per cent of organisations in countries like India and China are likely to have a Covid-19 taskforce to manage messaging and campaigns.

Organisations in these two countries are also expected to be significantly quicker in returning to pre-Covid level of investment in marketing than those in other countries.

This year has brought about a broad shift in consumer behaviour and attitudes. In line with this, marketers are modifying their customer experience strategies to address different groups with relevant messages, more so than ever before

SUNDER MADAKSHIRA | HEAD OF MARKETING, ADOBE INDIA

vestment in marketing than those in other countries.

"This year has brought about a broad shift in consumer behaviour and attitudes. In line with this, marketers are modifying their customer experience strategies to address different groups with relevant messages, more so than ever before," Sunder Madakshira, Head of Marketing, Adobe India, said in a statement.

"It is clear from the results of this study that brands that are agile in pivoting to a digital modus operandi and have responsive campaigns that deliver authentic, mean-



ingful and responsible communication stand to succeed in the long run."

In response to the social distancing mindset, more than half

of the respondents have shifted imagery or language in their recent marketing campaigns.

Those in Australia were less likely to have shifted messaging, with those in China and India being more likely.

The most commonly shifted elements are visuals of people touching and language that describes close interactions, said the study.

Given the situation, there seems to be a general sense that brands have a duty to proactively offer help or provide special offers to customers at this time.

This sense of duty among mar-

eters is strongest in China and India, and weakest in Australia, said the study.

Almost seven in 10 marketers are currently working from home across India, Australia, China and Singapore as compared to nearly half of them working from home on a weekly basis or more often prior to Covid-19.

The study surveyed 1,200 marketers across China, India, Singapore and Australia who are directly involved in their brand's marketing activities, and have an analyst role or higher within their organisation between June 1-17.

Bavarians set up Champions League grand finale with PSG as the German powerhouse end Lyon's fairytale run with 3-0 win

BAYERN JUGGERNAUT CONTINUES

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, August 20: The Champions League final will finally be a meeting of champions again. Bayern Munich made sure the title match will live up to the competition's name by beating Lyon 3-0 Wednesday, setting up a final against Paris Saint-Germain.

It's the first time in 22 years that the final will feature two teams who qualified as domestic league champions. Lyon wasted a couple of early chances and was then overwhelmed by the clinical Bavarian powerhouse, the competition's highest-scoring team which was coming off a 2-8 win over Barcelona in the quarterfinals.

Serge Gnabry netted twice before Robert Lewandowski added a later header, giving the duo a combined 24 Champions League goals this season, part of Bayern's total haul of 42. PSG as a team only has 25 goals in the competition this season.

In 35 games since Flick was promoted to manager in November after Niko Kovac's firing, he won 32 of them to steer Bayern from fourth place in the Bundesliga, to German Cup glory and into a first continental final since lifting the European Cup in 2013.

Sunday's game at Benfica's stadium will be the first time since Real Madrid faced Juventus in 1998 that two domestic champions met in the final.

The loss for Lyon, in its first Champions League semifinal in a

decade, cuts out the last route back into European competitions next season.

After only finishing seventh in the curtailed Ligue 1 season and

being beaten in the French League Cup final by PSG, Lyon will be out of Europe for the first time since the 1996-97 season.

Back on the field where it knocked out Manchester City Saturday, Lyon was made to pay for the squandering its opportunities to take the lead after finding more space in the Bayern defense than Barcelona.

Memphis Depay hit the side netting in the fifth minute with only goalkeeper Manuel Neuer to beat from a tight angle and Karl Toko Ekambi hit the right post. Just a minute after the post denied Lyon the opener, Gnabry brushed aside several challenges as he cut in from the right and powered in a shot into the top corner in the 18th minute.

His threat was



Robert Lewandowski wheels away in celebration after scoring Bayern Munich's third goal against Lyon, Wednesday

hour mark, Moussa Dembele fed Houssein Aouar who passed to Ekambi, but the forward shot straight at Neuer's legs.

So many chance to score and none taken for the team that also ousted Juventus to qualify for unique last-eight tournament, which is being played without fans in the Portuguese capital, with single games replacing the usual home and away fixtures.

Lewandowski never has much trouble scoring, although it took until the 88th minute this time when he rose to meet Joshua Kimmich's free-kick with a header. Lewandowski has now scored in nine consecutive Champions League games, and has 55 goals overall for the season. And it wrapped up a 20th successive victory in all competitions for Bayern.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dusseldorf (Germany), August 20: What is the point of the Europa League? Sevilla and Inter Milan have very different answers to that question.

If Inter win Friday's final in Germany, it would be a milestone in their bid to dethrone Juventus in Italy and re-establish themselves as a Champions League heavyweight. But Sevilla have a special affection for a competition they have won five times, more than anyone else.

Sevilla are the ideal club for a vision of the Europa League as a competition offering meaningful European games for clubs that don't have the financial clout to fight for national titles or the Champions League. It won three in a row from 2014 to 2016.

Sevilla's ambitions have been limited by the overwhelming strength of Real Madrid and Barcelona in Spain. Excluding the Europa League, Sevilla haven't won a trophy since the 2010 Copa del

KXIP, KKR, RR land in UAE for bio-secure IPL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, August 20: Rajasthan Royals (RR), Kings XI Punjab (KXIP) and Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) Thursday arrived in the UAE for the IPL beginning September 19, setting the ball rolling for an event that many thought would not take place amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Royals and KXIP landed in Dubai via a charter flight, which will be the norm this IPL due to the ongoing health crisis. A little later in the evening, KKR arrived in Abu Dhabi, their base for the tournament.

The players, who were already tested multiple times before departure, will now undergo a six-day isolation period with testing on day 1, 3 and 6. If they clear all the tests, they will be eligible to enter the tournament's bio-bubble and start training.

Subsequently, the players and support staff will be tested every fifth day of the tournament. All three teams posted pictures of their players and support staff before departure. The Royals squad was fully covered in protective gear.

Defending champions Mumbai Indians, Chennai Super Kings and Royal Challengers Bangalore will arrive Friday while the other two teams, Sunrisers Hyderabad and Delhi Capitals, will land over the weekend.

Rey and they haven't finished in the top two in La Liga since 1957.

Before their run to the final, Sevilla gave their players six days' rest after the league season ended July 19. That looks to have paid off.

The team played with more intensity than their opponents in the second halves against Roma in the last 16, Wolverhampton in the quarterfinals and in the 2-1 comeback win over Manchester United in the semifinals. The Italian and English leagues both finished later than La Liga.

Inter had no such break after their last Serie A game August 1 but powered past supposedly fresher opponents like Getafe and Bayer

Leverkusen at the Europa League tournament. Alexis Sanchez is an injury doubt for the final after the Chilean forward was an unused substitute for the semifinal win over Shakhtar Donetsk because of a hamstring strain.

Inter played four finals in eight years in the 1990s in what was then called the UEFA Cup. Inter won three of those, most recently in 1998, with Brazil legend Ronaldo scoring in a 3-0 final win over Lazio.

Inter's push to the final has been spearheaded by the 'LuLa' partnership of Romelu Lukaku and Lautaro Martinez, who scored twice each in Inter's 5-0 hammering of Shakhtar Donetsk in the semifinals, taking Inter to a club-

record 111 goals for the season.

Finishing one point behind champion Juventus in Serie A underlined the ambition in Antonio Conte's team to rejoin Europe's elite group of clubs and the focus will firmly be on the Champions League next season, not the Europa League. Winning Friday would continue a decade-long push to recover lost ground.

Since Jose Mourinho's Inter team beat Bayern Munich to win the Champions League in 2010, Inter has endured difficult seasons, missing out on European qualification entirely in three of those years. The combination of funding from Chinese owner the Suning Group, goals from "LuLa" and Conte's coaching has turned that around this season.

The defeat of Shakhtar made Inter the first Italian club to reach the final since Parma won in 1999. Ever since Porto beat Braga in an all-Portuguese final in 2011, every Europa League winner has come from either La Liga or the English Premier League.



Reds begin title defence against promoted Leeds

ASSOCIATED PRESS

London, August 20: Leeds' first game in the Premier League in 16 years couldn't be tougher: a trip to champion Liverpool.

The schedule for the new season was released Thursday, with Manchester City and Manchester United not playing on the opening weekend to give them more rest after their involvement in European competition this month.

Liverpool can, therefore, get a head-start on two of its biggest rivals and will open its first title defence since 1990 with a match against promoted Leeds September 12, followed by games at Chelsea and against Arsenal at home.

The trip to Anfield for Leeds will be Argentine coaching great Marcelo Bielsa's first game in the Premier League after guiding what is regarded as a sleeping giant of English soccer back to the top division by winning the second-tier Championship.

Leeds — a three-time English champion — were one of the country's top teams in the 1960s and 70s, won the English league title in 1992, and reached the Champions League semifinals in 2001.

Man City's home match against Aston Villa and Man United's trip to Burnley on the opening weekend have been postponed as a result of the agreement among all Premier League clubs for every squad to get a minimum of 30 days between

Japanese firms oppose Olympic Games in 2021

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, August 20: A majority of Japanese companies among almost 13,000 surveyed oppose holding the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics next year, according to an online study published Thursday.

The survey by a Japanese research company, published by the Kyodo news agency, showed 27.8 per cent want the games to be canceled, and 25.8 per cent said they should be postponed again.

The Olympics were originally planned for this year but were postponed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Japanese organizers and the International Olympic Committee have said if the Olympics can't be held next year, they will be canceled. In the survey, 46.2 per cent said they wanted the Games to go ahead in some form and open July 23, 2021. The survey was conducted by Tokyo Shoko Research and covered 12,857 companies, Kyodo said.

Japan is heavily invested in the Olympics and is spending officially USD 12.6 billion, though a government audit says the number is twice that large.

The Japanese economy has also been hit hard by the pandemic. The government reported this week that exports plunged 19.2% in July from a year earlier. The online survey was conducted between July 28 and August 11.



their final game of the 2019-20 season and their first of the new campaign.

City lost to Lyon in the Champions League quarterfinals Saturday, while United lost Sevilla in the Europa League semifinals Sunday.

So, City's first game in the Premier League will be on the weekend of September 19-20 at Wolverhampton Wanderers, with United starting at home against Crystal Palace the same weekend.

The first meeting between last season's top two teams, Liverpool and City, has been scheduled for November 7 at Etihad Stadium, with the return game at Anfield coming on the first weekend of February.

The Manchester derbies will take place on the weekends of December 12-13 and March 6-7.

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