



BEATING MONDAY BLUES

Swimming pool, hot pink bikini and bright blue kohl comprise the formula to beat Monday blues, says Sara Ali

LEISURE P2



SPB IS STABLE

Popular playback singer SPB is still on ventilator and ECMO support and his current condition is stated to be stable

TWO STATES P7



US ALLOWS PLASMA THERAPY

The US health watchdog has given emergency authorisation for the use of blood plasma to treat nCoV patients

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



I wanted to raise environmental concerns when he feeds me. But I also don't want to lose our national bird status!

SHORT TAKES

3 bodies in well; suicide suspected

Sambalpur: Police recovered the bodies of a woman and her two daughters from a well at Kinaloi village under Katarabaga police limits in Sambalpur district Sunday afternoon. The deceased was identified as Tikeswari Bhoi (40). All families in the village were busy celebrating Nuakhai. She finished all household chores for the festival. Surprisingly, she and her daughters were not found anywhere. Later, their bodies were found floating in a nearby well. Police and fire department were contacted.

State seeks extension of temple chief admin

New Delhi: The state government has moved the Supreme Court seeking a six months extension for the Chief Administrator of Shri Jagannath Temple in addition to his other duties. The government contended that the district administration in Puri and other districts are all tied up with the rising cases of COVID-19 and most of the officers are on COVID-19 duty. "In such a scenario, the state prays before the court to allow the present chief administrator to continue as chief administrator in addition to his other duties for a further period of six months," it said. P3

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VALUE	VARIATION
SENSEX	38799.08	↑ 364.36
NIFTY	11466.50	↑ 94.90
DOLLAR	74.16	↓ ₹0.75
EURO	87.82	↓ ₹0.48
GOLD	₹51,319	↓ ₹697
SILVER	₹65,727	↓ ₹1,340

WEATHER

	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	30.6°C	32.0°C
TEMP MIN	23.1°C	23.5°C
Humidity	98%	92%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

Forecast: Generally cloudy sky

Contempt of conscience not acceptable: Bhushan

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 24: Activist-lawyer Prashant Bhushan refused to offer an apology to the Supreme Court Monday for his two tweets against the judiciary saying what he expressed represented his bona fide belief which he continued to hold.

An insincere apology would amount to the contempt of my conscience and of an institution, Bhushan said in his supplementary statement filed in the suo motu contempt case against him by the top court, taking note of advocate Anuj Saxena's complaint. An apology for expression of beliefs, conditional or unconditional, would be insincere, he said.

The SC August 20 had granted time till August 24 to 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.

Bhushan said as an officer of court he believes as a duty to speak up when he believes there is a deviation from its sterling record. "Therefore I expressed myself in good faith, not to malign the Supreme Court or any particular Chief Justice, but to offer constructive criticism so that the court can arrest any drift away from its long-



standing role as a guardian of the Constitution and custodian of peoples' rights," he said.

He said, "My tweets represented this bona fide belief that I continue to hold. Public expression of these beliefs was I believe, in line with my higher obligations as a citizen and a loyal officer of this court. Therefore, an apology for expression of these beliefs, conditional or unconditional, would be insincere." Bhushan further said that an apology cannot be a mere incantation and any apology has to, as the court has itself put it, be sincerely made.

"This is especially so when I have made the statements bona fide and pleaded truths with full details, which have not been dealt with by the court. If I retract a statement before this court that I otherwise believe to be true or offer an insincere apology that in my eyes

would amount to the contempt of my conscience and of an institution that I hold in highest esteem," he said.

Bhushan said he believes the Supreme Court is the last bastion of hope for the protection of fundamental rights, the watchdog institutions and indeed for constitutional democracy itself.

"It has rightly been called the most powerful court in the democratic world, and often an exemplar for courts across the globe. Today in these troubling times, the hopes of the people of India vest in this court to ensure the rule of law and the Constitution and not an untrammelled rule of the executive," he said.

The activist-lawyer said that he has never stood on ceremony when it comes to offering an apology for any mistake or wrongdoing on his part and it has been a privilege for him to have served this institution and bring several important public interest causes before it.

"I live with the realization that I have received from this institution much more than I have had the opportunity to give it. I cannot but have the highest regard for the institution of the Supreme Court," he said. Bhushan in his two-page supplementary statement said that it is "with deep regret" that he read the August 20 order of this court as at the hearing the court had asked him to take 2-3 days to reconsider the statement he made in the court.

JSW to invest ₹1Lcr in state in 10 years

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: JSW Chairman Sajjan Jindal Monday said that the company plans to invest over ₹one lakh crore in Odisha in the next 10 years. He said that the integrated steel plant project of JSW with a capacity of 13.2 MTPA at Jatadhari in Jagatsinghpur district will come up soon.

Jindal held a meeting with Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik through videoconference Monday to discuss investment plans in the state.

The state has allocated land, water, and power for the steel project. The project is being speeded up, said a release from the Chief Minister's Office. The Chief Minister stressed the need for maximum value addition to the state's resources within Odisha to accelerate the pace of job creation and revenue generation.

Jindal expressed satisfaction over the state government's support in providing all necessary amenities and services for its various industrial projects. He said that the JSW is tying up with IIM-Sambalpur to create "JSW Centre for Development Studies for Odisha". JSW Steel will also set up soon a 100-bed hospital and a school at Koida in Sundergarh district. P11



VEHICLE DOCUS VALID TILL DEC 31

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: The state government has extended the validity of fitness, permits, license and registration of other documents under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 and the Central Motor Vehicle Rules, 1989 till 31 December 2020.

Considering the advisory issued by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and in view of the situation due to Covid-19 pandemic, the state transport authorities has extended the validity of vehicle documents till December end.

Fitness certificates of all motor vehicles, registration certificates of non-transport vehicles and DLs will be treated as valid till December end, Transport Commissioner said. Similarly Learner's Licenses which expired since March 18, 2020 or would expire by December 31, 2020, will be valid till December end as the DL test has been cancelled w e f. March 18 last. Goods carriage, contract carriage, private service vehicles and educational institution bus permits will be valid till this year end, the order said. All stage carriage permanent permits and permits issued by reciprocating states counter-signed by STA, Odisha on inter-state routes would expire by December 31 will now be valid till this December 31. The government has not given any extension to pollution under control certificates and temporary permit validity.

OHRC caseload up in spite of full panel

GYAN RANJAN MOHAPATRA

Bhubaneswar, August 24: Aggrieved citizens from across the state through to Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) every day following failure by government machinery in delivering justice to them. Meanwhile, the commission has started running with a full 5-member panel after a lapse of more than six years following the appointment of a former judge of High Court Justice Bimal Prasad Das as its chairperson in September 2019.

However, the number of pending cases at OHRC has witnessed a continuous rise despite the commission having a full team. The number of cases pending with OHRC rose from 13,398 at the end of August, 2019 to 14,011 in May, 2020. As many as 13,408 cases were pending for hearing in August 2019 while 273 new applications were registered in the same month. The commission with just one member in the panel had disposed of 283 cases in the month while the number of pending cases dropped to 13,398 at the end of the month.

The number further declined to 13,392 in September while the registration of new applications rose to 345. The increase in filing of pleas has indicated people's rising faith in the rights body following the con-

stitution of the three-member panel. However, the rising pendency proved that the commission failed to live up to the expectations of people. In October 2019, the commission received 388 new cases while it managed to dispose of 303. The size of pendency rose to 13,477 in October as against 13,392 at the end of the previous month.

The pendency kept going up regardless of the number of fresh cases filed till May 2020. The cases pending in November 2019 were 13,559 that rose to 13,666 in December. As many as 13,738 complaints pending in January, 2020 went up to 13,752 at the end of February. Meanwhile, the number of registrations of new cases saw a fall during December 2019, January and March 2020.

The data also revealed that many applicants have been seeking the intervention of OHRC in matters like civil disputes, sub-judiced issues or disputes related to service matters beyond the jurisdiction of the commission. The panel dismissed hundreds of such cases every month. As many as 220 cases were dismissed in September, 2019 while 243 cases were dismissed in November 2019.

Speaking to **ORISSA POST**, an OHRC staff said, "Staff crunch and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic are two prime reasons behind the increase in pending cases."

CWC asks Sonia to continue

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 24: The Congress Working Committee Monday urged Sonia Gandhi to continue as its interim chief till an AICC session can be convened and authorised her to effect necessary organisational changes to deal with the challenges facing the party.

At an over seven-hour long meeting, which took place in the backdrop of more than 20 party leaders seeking an immediate organisational overhaul and a collective leadership, Gandhi is said to have offered to quit but was requested by the party's top decision-making panel with over 50 members to stay on.



Announcing the resolution passed by the CWC, the party's General Secretary (Organisation) K C Venugopal later said at a press conference that the CWC unanimously requested Gandhi to continue to "lead the Indian National Congress

until such time as circumstances will permit an AICC session to be convened."

The CWC also authorised her to effect necessary organisational changes to take on various challenges before the party. The party further said the CWC unanimously resolved to strengthen hands of Sonia and Rahul Gandhi in every possible way, while it also made it clear no one will be permitted to undermine or weaken the party and its leadership.

The CWC also resolved that inner-party issues cannot be deliberated through media or in public fora and all such issues must be raised within the party "in the interest of propriety and discipline".

Teen kills self after denied phone

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nabarangpur, August 24: Upset with his parents for denying him a smartphone, a 14-year-old boy allegedly committed suicide in Jamdara village under Raigarh police limits in Nabarangpur district, police said Monday. The minor has been identified as Tarun Gand.

Sources said the boy was a Class IX student. He had been requesting his father for a smartphone over last couple of weeks.

Monday morning, he again asked his father to get him a smartphone



but his father turned down his request. The boy allegedly threatened to end his life and locked himself in his room. However, the parents did not take his ultimatum seriously.

When Tarun did not open the door for hours, his mother called for

him several times. However, he didn't answer from his room. Then his father broke open the door and found him hanging from the ceiling fan with the help of a bed-sheet.

The bereaved family informed police about the incident, Monday. On being informed, police reached the spot and recovered the minor's body. "The body was sent for post-mortem and later handed over to parents," police said.

The statement of the minor's father is being recorded and further investigation is underway, the police added.

Military options on table if talks with China fail: CDS



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 24: Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat said Monday that if diplomatic talks with China over the border issue fail, then military options are on the table.

"The military option to deal with the transgressions by the Chinese is still on but will be considered only if the talks at the diplomatic and military level fail," said General Bipin Rawat. He, however, refused to share what military options India is looking upon. The Chinese People's Liberation Army troops are sitting at various disputed and friction points along the Line of Actual Control. They have refused to disengage since mid-July and have started construction work on those disputed junctions. Apart from that they have been raising unacceptable points before India.

To deal with the emerging situation, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Saturday held a meeting with NSA Ajit Doval.

Very heavy rain likely 62% kids won't go to schools even if they reopen

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: India Meteorological Department (IMD) Monday said heavy to very heavy rainfall is likely to lash several parts of the state for next two days (Tuesday and Wednesday).

Forecasting this, the IMD has issued red warning (take action) for Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Cuttack, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Angul and Deogarh districts. Orange warning (be prepared) has been issued for Puri, Khurda, Sundargarh, Sambalpur, Sonepur, Boudh, Bolangir and Kandhamal while yellow warning (be updated) has been issued for Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Kalahandi, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Nuapada,

Nawarangpur, Malkangiri and Koraput districts.

Similarly, heavy to very heavy rainfall with extremely heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places in Sambalpur, Sonepur, Bargarh, Boudh, Bolangir, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Nuapada and Deogarh August 26. Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Nawarangpur, Angul, Keonjhar, Dhenkanal, Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Malkangiri, Koraput and Jajpur districts would also experience heavy rainfall Wednesday, the Met said. Water-logging and flash flood like situation may arise in some places in these districts. There might be some damage to informal road and kutcha houses in these districts as well. Landslides in hilly areas may also occur; the Met office said.

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 24: A survey has found that 62 per cent of parents will not be sending their children to school even if they are reopened on government's orders on September 1.

According to the LocalCircles survey, only 6 per cent citizens are willing to visit multiplexes and theatres to watch movies in the next 60 days, even if they open September 1.

Only 36 per cent citizens say they will take metro or local trains in the next 60 days if they are restarted September 1. All this is when India's daily caseload for COVID-19 has now reached 70,000 cases and is now the highest in the world by a margin of over 40 per cent.

With close to 400 districts with

'Vitaly important to get children back to school'

London: It is vitally important to get children back into schools after the lengthy COVID-19 lockdown as being kept away from classrooms for a longer period would be far more damaging than the deadly virus, UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in a direct appeal to parents Monday. His appeal comes as different parts of the country prepare for the end of the summer break and the start of a new school term with Scotland and Northern Ireland first in line followed by England and Wales from next week. Reiterating a joint statement issued by England's Chief Medical Officer, Johnson said the risk posed to children from the deadly virus is very small and being kept away from classrooms any longer would be far more damaging to their well-being.



1,000 total cases, Covid-19 is fast spreading into tier 3, 4 towns and rural India. In the LocalCircles survey in late July, 31 per cent citizens said that they had one or more Covid-19 positive cases in their social network.

As the Government decides on whether schools should be reopened for senior classes, LocalCircles asked parents that if the Government does go ahead and announces opening of schools from September 1 for senior classes and

others thereafter, will they be sending their children/grandchildren to school. To this, 62 per cent outright said 'no', while only 23 per cent answered 'yes'. Around 15 per cent parents were undecided.

Given the fact that the Covid situation is not improving and numbers are only rising, the number of "aye" sayers has now reduced from 33 per cent to 23 per cent within 2 weeks. This indicates that even if schools were opened in regular manner, a large majority of parents will refrain from sending children to school and continue with online education instead.

Case studies from many countries, including the US where 97,000 children came down with Covid-19 within 2 weeks of school reopening; and also in Berlin, Germany,

where 41 schools reported children or teachers getting infected last week. All of these are causing concerns amongst Indian parents.

Most parents are of the view that India shouldn't even consider reopening schools in regular mode till December 31 and instead the focus of Central and State Governments should be on equipping schools for online education, television or radio-based classes directly or in alliance with industry through the CSR programs.

LocalCircles conducted a survey to understand what citizens feel about opening of multiplex and movie theaters, metro or local trains and most importantly, schools. The survey received over 25,000 responses from citizens residing in 261 districts of India.



CARNIVAL ROW SHOOT COMPLETED IN CZECH REPUBLIC UNDER PROTOCOLS

The fantasy series *Carnival Row* has wrapped up its remaining two weeks of filming in the Czech Republic under strict protocols amid the ongoing Covid pandemic. The series is the biggest spending production ever to shoot in the country.

ELLEN DEGENERES TO TALK TO FANS ABOUT TOXIC WORKPLACE CHARGE

Popular TV host Ellen DeGeneres will soon interact with fans about the negative publicity her talk show has drawn on being probed for toxic work culture. Ellen was recently asked by a reporter about her show, following the firing of three senior producers, reports *dailymail.co.uk*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
You are going to make full use of your silver-tongued sleekness today! Your power of expression will be appreciated, especially by the opposite sex, and you will thoroughly enjoy the attention. Ganesh advises a little meditation to help balance your inner and outer worlds.

TAURUS
There is a good chance that you will be able to make changes at your workplace that you had desired since a long time. You will be generous with gifts and favours, which will go down well with your loved ones (though not with your bank balance!).

GEMINI
A day filled with love, tenderness and delight — the kind of day when babies are born, families reunite, and good news never stops pouring in. However, the afternoon may be a little rough on a day, which will be, otherwise, high on happiness. Get ready for a surprise from your sweetheart.

CANCER
You will take advantage of your ability to influence people, predicts Ganesh. At work, your power to communicate will receive widespread approval. You will enjoy social activities later in the day. Meditation will help you relieve your tension in the evening, suggests Ganesh.

LEO
There are many milestones that one covers during the course of one's life, but it is usually the moment of love that one always remembers fondly, says Ganesh. It is quite likely that today will be one such memorable day that ushers in a turning point in your love life.

VIRGO
Mission: Finding an exciting relationship. Status: Accomplished. And so Ganesh smiles. At office, outshine others with both words and actions. Bewitch people with your arsenal of sweet nothings and charm your way to win their hearts in the evening, says Ganesh.

LIBRA
Handling people was never so easy, points out Ganesh, as today, you do extremely well in the area of public relations. You have the answers to satisfy all, and keep them that way. So, do not be surprised if you happen to find yourself assigned to some sort of a probing and demanding job at work.

SCORPIO
You are likely to pay maximum attention to family, friends and relatives, predicts Ganesh. On the academic front, children will perform exceptionally well in examinations. You may invest money in land and home. In the evening, you will find time to cool your heels and enjoy the pursuit of pleasure, says Ganesh.

SAGITTARIUS
Today, your actions are definitely going to be louder than your words, predicts Ganesh. Your focus today would be on personality development and self-improvement, and you succeed to achieve what you want, to some extent. Good luck!

CAPRICORN
Where there is a will there is a way. True, but even if it's an action driven by a strong will, a dying man cannot wage a war. You will have to be extra careful about your health today, says Ganesh.

AQUARIUS
Today may give you an all-time high! The day will prove important with regard to your future. Sudden and unexpected profits are on the cards, and recognition and rewards at your workplace will make you happy.

PISCES
You will implement abstract ideas into practice with the all the finesse of a feverish modern-day artist today. The evening will find you satisfied with and unquestioning about your place in the universe; you will also acknowledge God for the small mercies he gifts you on an everyday basis, says Ganesh.

FIGHT AGAINST PANDEMIC

Balasore art centre comes forward to help young painters

POST NEWS NETWORK

BHUBANESWAR: With all painting activities coming to a screeching halt due to pandemic, the earnings of several artists have taken a hit.

In this difficult hour, Baleswari Kala Kendra(BKK), a prominent art centre of Balasore district which has been working for the deprived artists and artisans for over last 15 years, has extended its helping hand to the painters.

BKK has launched a new concept 'get your portrait drawn at home' to support the struggling artists.

Eminent artist and sculptor Keshu Das, the founder of the organisation while speaking to *Orissa POST*, said, "The portrait artists, under this programme, will visit people in person and draw their acrylic portraits which will be of 20" x16" in size. The project involves 40 young artists and 10 of

them are from Balasore Art and Craft College."

Das launched the month-long programme Sunday, on the day of Nuakhai festival, by making the portrait of Binay Kumar Das, director of Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur.

"Getting my portrait drawn by an artist like Keshu Das is a huge honour for me. I am happy to be part of such an initiative and I believe it will definitely inspire other art-lovers to support the painters during these difficult hours," said the ITR director.

Many eminent personalities of the district have also invited the young painters to draw their portraits. While artist Das launched the project Sunday in Balasore, a few promising painters like MuktiKanta Nandi and Sanjay Kumar Raul of Jaleswar and Kalyan Barik of Baripada joined the initiative Monday.



Painter Keshu Das presenting ITR director Binay Kumar Das his own portrait



Sara's formula to beat Monday blues

Mumbai: Swimming pool, hot pink bikini and bright blue kohl comprise the formula of Sara Ali Khan to beat Monday blues.

In her new Instagram picture, Sara hits the pool in hot pink bikini. She has no make-up but bright blue kohl.

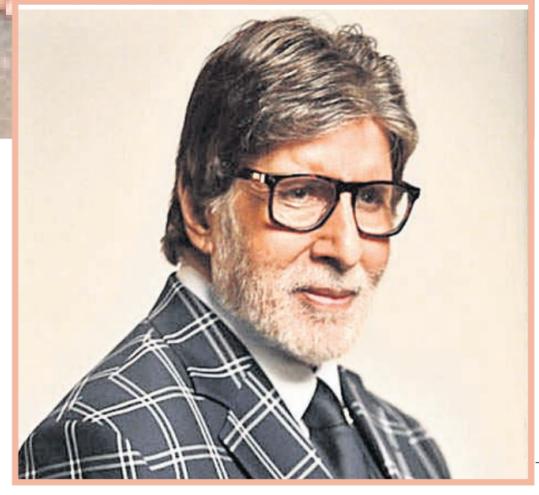
"Monday Blues, Blue Hues, Kaajal or Cactus couldn't choose, So posing with both while my coffee brews," Sara captioned the image, habitually as she does from time to time with a dash of rhyme.

Recently, Sara had posted two pictures

in a neon bikini, sitting in the pool on a unicorn float.

In the professional front, Sara will be seen opposite Varun Dhawan in the remake of the 1995 hit film *Coolie No. 1*. The new version is directed by David Dhawan, who also helmed the original film of the same name, starring Govinda and Karisma Kapoor.

The actress also stars with Akshay Kumar and Dhanush in *Atrangi Re*. Shooting for the film is set to commence in October.



Post recovery Big B starts KBC 12 shoot

Mumbai: Having fully recovered from Covid, Amitabh Bachchan is back at work. He has started shooting for the twelfth season of the popular quiz show, *Kaun Banega Crorepati*.

The veteran actor posted a picture on Instagram, of the crew dressed in blue PPE suits and masks.

He captioned the picture: "...it's back to work .. in a sea of blue PPE .. KBC 12 .. started 2000 .. today year 2020 ..20 years! Amaze .. that's a lifetime !!!"

Big B shared a few more pic-

tures from the shoot on his blog, and described shooting amid the new normal.

"... its a sea of limited BLUE on set .. quiet .. conscious .. each delegated work routine .. precautions, systems, distanced masks, sanitised and the apprehensions of not just what shall happen to the show .. but what shall the World look like after this dread Vid19 getting in front of the cameras again .. was it weird , different feel after this long furlough .. dunno .." he wrote.

Indianness is inclusiveness: Shabana Azmi

Mumbai: Veteran actress Shabana Azmi shuns the hardliner stance that music and art is prohibited in Islam. She cites the example of greats such as late shehnai legend Ustad Bismillah Khan and late sarod maestro Ustad Ali Akbar Khan to underline her point that true art is created when it is kept away from religious extremism. She notes that the very essence of Indianness is inclusiveness.

"We have to make redundant the questions that prevent the practice of art, and bring religious extremism in between. There are people who say music and art is prohibited in Islam, but look at how iconic artistes like Ustad Bismillah Khan, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan and so many other artistes have earned respect and success with their art and craft because they have made that question re-

dundant thanks to their artistic excellence. If we want to build a progressive society, we have to get rid of such questions," said Shabana.

Shabana Azmi's thought process defines the theme of the film *Mee Raqsam*, which released digitally this weekend. The actress has presented the film, which marks the directorial debut of her brother, veteran cinematographer Baba Azmi.



PEANUTS



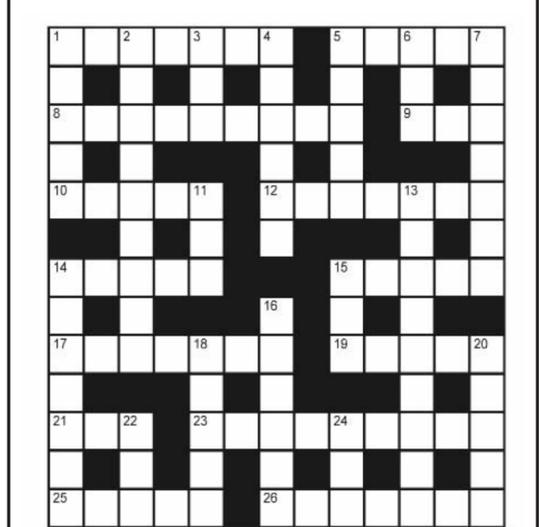
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Wounds
 - 5 Think out loud
 - 8 Cradle songs
 - 9 Negative joiner
 - 10 Yellow quartz
 - 12 Fast
 - 14 Early time
 - 15 Bubbly drinks
 - 17 Italian rice dish
 - 19 Gown fabric
 - 21 Frigid
 - 23 Like some scooters
 - 25 Hot rod
 - Propellant
 - 26 Beryl variety
- Down**
- 1 Coastal feature
 - 2 Chili peppers
 - 3 Swedish shag rug
 - 4 Type of staircase
 - 5 Desert sight
 - 6 Charged item
 - 7 To-do list junkets
 - 11 Vaporise
 - 13 Region in southern Spain
 - 14 Belgrade native
 - 15 Collector's goal
 - 16 Elbow
 - 18 Pace
 - 20 Terminated
 - 22 "Is it soup" ?"
 - 24 Lobster coral

SUDOKU

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

A				8	2	1	6		5		
8	C		2	5		A	3		9	0	
	3	9						5	B		
			0		4	A				2	6
	2	8			B			E	A		
			8	D	C		1			4	
		0	4	D		A	E			7	
		7	5	9			D	0	8		
C			A	B	2			D			
1	9		E	2		5	B			0	
		6			9	C	3		4	E	D
9	5	4						7	C	8	
		B	5	7						A	
			C	0	8			D		1	4
4					0	1					

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

H	S	R	A	P	E	S	Q	U	E	A	L
H	M	H	C	U	L	E					
A	M	I	A	M	U	S	E	M	E	N	T
B	N	N	T	E	V	H					
B	O	O	S	T	I	N	A	L	A		
Y	O	I	T	L							
C	H	E	M	I	N	D	E	F	E	R	
C	A	G	Q								
A	I	M	S	E	E	U	P	P	E	R	
E	B	I	D	I	A	Y					
S	Q	U	I	R	T	G	I	S	I	R	
A	R	E	E	O	S	O					
R	E	G	I	N	A	E	X	P	E	R	T

SUDOKU

1	7	C	A	D	E	3	9	8	4	2	5	6	8	0
4	E	S	8	6	0	1	D	2	3	B	C	A	7	9
D	A	0	7	9	4	C	E	8	6	1	8	5	3	2
2	6	8	B	1	3	5	4	0	9	A	7	E	C	D
3	B	9	C	5	2	6	A	7	D	0	E	8	1	4
7	1	3	D	0	6	E	8	4	5	C	2	9	B	A
E	0	2	9	A	1	B	6	D	8	7	3	C	4	5
9	8	4	2	B	5	7	C	A	1	E	6	0	D	3
C	D	6	3	7	8	0	5	9	B	4	A	1	2	E
8	5	A	4	E	2	1	3	0	D	6	8	7		
8	4	1	0	C	A	9	2	5	7	3	B	D	E	6
0	9	E	6	4	B	A	7	C	2	8	D	3	5	1
A	2	D	5	3	9	8	7	1	E	6	4	7	0	C
S	3	7	E	8	D	4	0	6	C	9	1	2	A	8
8	C	B	1	2	7	D	3	E	A	5	0	4	9	8

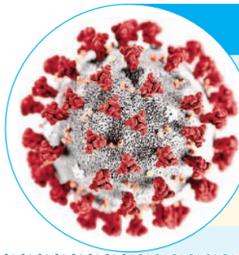
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



TRADITIONAL CRAFT

An elderly man from Nayagarh on his way to sell bamboo ware at Sachivalaya Marg in Bhubaneswar, Monday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	2,36,74,624	1,61,37,438	8,14,021
India	31,49,759	23,82,795	58,307
Odisha	81,479	56,925	419

Extend SJTA chief's tenure by six months: Govt to SC

GOVT TELLS THE APEX COURT THAT THE SRIMANDIR IS CLOSED FOR PUBLIC DARSHAN AND ONLY RITUALS ARE BEING CONDUCTED

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 24: Odisha has moved the Supreme Court pleading six months' extension for the tenure of chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration in Puri.

The state government contended that the district administration in Puri and other districts are all tied up with the rising cases of COVID-19 and most of the officers are on COVID duty.

"In such a scenario, the state of Odisha prays before the court to allow the present chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple to continue as chief administrator in addition to his other duties for a further period of six months i.e. till February 28, 2021." This apart, the state government submitted that the Srmandir is now closed for public darshan and only seva puja/rituals of Lord Jagannath is being conducted on a daily basis.

Earlier, the state government had pleaded the court to allow the present chief administrator to continue till March 2020. However, there was complete lockdown due to COVID-19 across the country, the state government contended, and most of the officers are on COVID-19 duty making it difficult to appoint a full-time chief administrator as directed by the apex court.

"It is humbly submitted that the incumbent chief administrator is also the Commissioner-cum-



The state government contended that the district administration in Puri is tied up with rising COVID-19 cases making it difficult to appoint a full-time chief administrator as directed by the apex court

KEY CONTENTIONS

Massive infrastructure development projects have been taken up by the Works dept under ABHADA scheme for security and safety of Srmandir

For early and successful implementation of these projects, synergy and coordination between SJTA and Works dept is highly essential

The incumbent chief administrator is also the Commissioner-cum-Secretary to government, Works department and also chairman of Puri Konark Development Authority

Secretary to government, Works department and also chairman of Puri Konark Development Authority. It is humbly submitted that massive infrastructure development projects have been taken up by the Works department in different phases under 'Augmentation of Basic Amenities and Development of Heritage and Architecture' (ABHADA) scheme for security and safety of Jagannath Temple," the government had submitted in the affidavit earlier.

The state had submitted that for early and successful implementation of these projects, synergy and coordination between Temple Administration and Works de-

partment is highly essential.

"For the foregoing reasons, it would be in the greater interest of public administration as well as smooth conclusion of the ongoing infrastructure works being carried out for safety and security of Shri Jagannath Temple if the present incumbent is allowed to continue as the chief administrator in addition to his other duties as stated above at least till March 31, 2020," the state had submitted in affidavit earlier.

Earlier, the Supreme Court had November 4, 2019 directed the state government to depute a full-time chief administrator, not by way of additional charge forthwith.

PMAY eluded Keonjhar's poor, says BJP

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: The state unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Monday, hit out at the state government alleging irregularities in implementation of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) in Keonjhar district.

State BJP spokesperson Satyabrata Panda alleged large-scale scam in PMAY at Khabara village of Pithagala panchayat under Harichandanpur block of Keonjhar.

He said a fact-finding team of the BJP visited Keonjhar district and unearthed irregularities in utilisation of PMAY fund. The fund meant for construction of houses for Juanga tribal community in Kharba village is being misutilised and percentage is being collected from the poor tribals, the BJP leader further alleged.



Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana

Fund meant for construction of PMAY houses for Juangas in Kharba is being misutilised and percentage is being collected, alleged the BJP

Though over 500 housing projects have been sanctioned under PMAY for the village, local BJP leaders and officials have grabbed the money, Panda alleged.

"We visited one Mamata Juanga's house in Kharba and found her residing in a kutcha house with her one-year-old son. Even though Rs 1

lakh was sanctioned for her under the scheme, she is yet to receive a single penny," Panda said.

The scenario in Ghasipura, Ghatagaon, Keonjhar Sadar and Jhumpura blocks of Keonjhar district is no different, he claimed.

The saffron party demanded stringent action against the per-

sons involved in the irregularities.

Commenting on this issue, BJD Spokesperson Sasmit Patra said, "The BJP led Union Government keeps awarding Odisha for good work in Delhi and BJP in Odisha continues to indulge in falsehood and trying to unsuccessfully misguide the people of Odisha."

The BJP-led Centre has awarded Odisha as the best performing state in the country for successfully completing pucca houses in the rural belt under the PMAY. It seems the BJP in Odisha has selective memory and forgets the good work of the BJD government which the BJP government in Delhi awards, he said.

"If the state BJP unit has any evidence about their allegations, let them place it with the collector for the appropriate action. If they do not have any evidence, they should stop misleading the people of Odisha," Patra dared BJP.

Rape charge against SI at Khallikote PS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: A woman sub-inspector (SI) of Odisha Police Monday accused an SI of sexually abusing her on the pretext of marriage.

The victim lady SI, Monday, submitted a complaint to DGP Abhay at his camp office here seeking action against the accused. The accused identified as Silu Dhal is currently posted at Khallikote police station in Ganjam.

He has allegedly been absconding after the lady filed a complaint against him with Daringibadi police a few days ago. They were introduced with each other at Biju Patnaik State Police Academy a few years ago.

The victim said Dhal had raped her when she was posted in Sambalpur.

STATE INSTITUTE OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT, BALANGIR

Titilagarh Road, Balangir - 767001 (Odisha)
(ESTABLISHED BY MINISTRY OF TOURISM, GOVT. OF INDIA & DEPT. OF TOURISM, GOVT. OF ODISHA) NCHMCT

ADMISSION OPEN FOR HOTEL MANAGEMENT COURSES

COURSES	DURATION	QUALIFICATION	AGE LIMIT
1. Diploma In Front Office Operation	1 1/2 Year	10+2 pass or equivalent	25 Years as on 1st July 2020 for General/OBC candidates & 28 Years for SC/ST candidates
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	

LAST DATE OF ADMISSION: 31.08.2020 FOR FURTHER DETAILS
Visit our website - www.sihmbalangir.org, e-mail: admissions@sihmbalangir.org
Contact No.-9348849484, 6370180040, 9437140772, 9437030720

5 held in 2019 Rinku murder case; 2 still at large

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: Nayapalli Police Sunday night arrested five accused who were absconding in connection with Rinku Swain murder case that took place at Salia Sahi here in May 2019.

The arrested were identified as Balam Barik, 24, a native of Ganjam district; Soumyaranjan Mohapatra, 23, a native of Banki in Cuttack district; Ganesh Behera, 27, a native of Ganjam; Subharaj Maharana, 22, alias Sikan a resident of Khalikote and Achyutananda Das, 23, a native of Balasore district. They were residents of Salia Sahi in Bhubaneswar.

According to police, Rinku Swain, son of Krishna Chandra Swain, had been to a marriage party at Vani Vihar May 29, 2019. At the party the



SEQUENCING THE CRIME

Rinku Swain, son of Krishna Chandra Swain, had been to a marriage party at Vani Vihar May 29, 2019

At the party, the members of Sunami Club, Salia Sahi, picked up a quarrel with Rinku

On his way back home, Sikan, Soumyaranjan and others attacked Rinku and hurled a crude bomb at him

A severely injured Rinku was rescued and rushed to a private hospital where he succumbed to his injuries

members of Sunami Club, Salia Sahi, picked up a quarrel with Rinku. On his way back home, Sikan, Soumyaranjan and others attacked Rinku and hurled a crude bomb at him.

A severely injured Rinku was rescued and rushed to a private

hospital where he succumbed to his injuries.

On the basis of a complaint lodge by the deceased's father, Nayapalli police registered a case (259/19) and launched an investigation. When it was proved beyond doubt that 10 of them were involved in the

crime, police arrested Sanatana Reddy alias Sania and Bikram Reddy alias Biki were arrested June 2, 2019. Other members of the group had been absconding.

Acting on a tip-off, a team of Nayapalli police conducted a raid at a rice mill at Barunei in Khurda and arrested the five accused. They were learnt to be working at the mill upon their return from Chennai amid the pandemic. An airgun and a motorcycle were seized from their possession.

Subharaj and Chandan have cases pending against them at Athgarh and Gurudijhatia police stations.

In a press note released by deputy commissioner of police, it is stated that further investigation in the Rinku Swain murder case is in progress.

ADITYA DEATH MYSTERY

Polygraph test on wife, friends likely

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: The Crime Branch investigating the mysterious death of social activist Aditya Dash has written to the State Forensic Science Laboratory (SFSL) to perform lie detection test on his wife and close friends.

The CB sleuths took the decision after it found discrepancies in statements given by his wife Bidyashree and friends, Bikash, Pappu and Pritam. Bidyashree has been accusing his friends of committing some financial irregularities which, according to her, is the cause behind Aditya's decision to end his life. Meanwhile, his friends allege marital discord between Bidyashree and Aditya which forced the latter to commit suicide.

The Crime Branch has sent a copy of the FIR, details regarding the issue and the developments in the case to the SFSL till now.

Notably, social activist and motivational speaker Aditya Dash aka Manabapremi's mutilated body was found by the GRP personnel from the railway tracks near Lingaraj Temple Road railway station in Bhubaneswar July 7, 2020.

State represents east in nat'l council for TGs

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, August 24: The Union government has constituted a National Council for Transgender Persons to advise the Centre on formulation of policies, programmes, legislations and projects with respect to third gender.

The Union government has nominated Odisha as a member of the council from the east and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader Meera Parida as representative of transgender community from the region.

The council will have the Union

Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment as chairperson (ex officio) and Union Minister of State for Social Justice & Empowerment as vice-chairperson (ex officio).

Other members of the council include representatives of 10 ministries, five representatives of transgender community, representatives of NHRC and NCW, representatives of state governments and UTs and experts representing NGOs. A member of National Council, other than

ex officio member, shall hold office for a term of three years from the date of his nomination.

The council will also monitor and evaluate the impact of policies and programmes designed for achieving equality and full participation of transgender persons. It will review and coordinate the activities of all the departments of government and other governmental and non-governmental organisations which are dealing with matters relating to transgender persons.



Startup entrepreneurs showcase skills, awarded

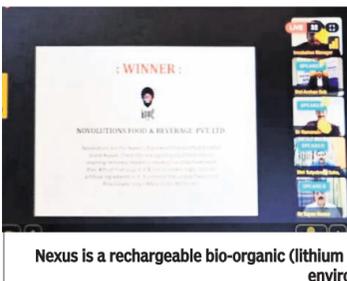
POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: Atal Incubation Centre - Nalanda Institute of Technology Foundation in association with Startup Odisha organised a 'Business Plan Competition' named 'VICHAAR 1.0' where startup entrepreneurs, innovators and students submitted their business plan through the portal.

Awards worth Rs 1 Lakh were earmarked for the most promising applicants in recognition of their innovative and out-of-the-box entrepreneurial ideas. The Grand Finale of the event was organised in virtual mode.

The competition saw 175 applications across different domains from across the country, thanks to the unwavering support from partners comprising Startup Odisha, Nalanda Institute of Technology and The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) Bhubaneswar.

Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) principal secretary Satyabrata Sahu began his address with illustrations of various innovative entrepreneurs in the state and their achievements at global level. He also mentioned various support schemes undertaken by the state government for the entrepreneurial community as part of Startup Odisha Policy.



NITI Aayog Mission Director, Ramanan Ramanathan, focused on the potentialities and latent possibilities of the state and how these

VICHAAR 1.0

- The winner of the competition, Novolutions Food and Beverage Pvt Ltd, received cash prize of ₹51,000
- Based in Odisha, Novolutions is a new age company which aims to make clean label lifestyle products a reality for the urban consumers
- The runner-up award went to Odisha-based Nexus Power started with a motive to promote sustainability in EV space

could be leveraged with collaboration between Centre and state. The winner of the competition, Novolutions Food and Beverage Pvt Ltd, received cash prize of Rs 51,000. Based in Odisha, Novolutions is a new age company which aims to make clean label lifestyle prod-

ucts a reality for the urban consumers. Its flagship brand Hippie is the first in the packaged ready to serve mocktail category and it entices consumers with the recipes of authentic mocktails.

The runner up award went to Odisha based Nexus Power which started its entrepreneurial journey with a motive to promote sustainability and green technologies across the electric vehicle (EV) market space. Building on the concept of Industrial Ecology and Bio-Mimicry, Nexus is a rechargeable bio-organic (lithium ion free) battery from crop residue which is cost effective and environmentally sustainable.

In a first, Cuttack tops in daily cases

State's COVID tally rises to 81,479, death toll mounts to 419

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 24: For the first time, Cuttack surpassed Khurda and Ganjam, Odisha's Covid-19 hotspot districts, in terms of highest number of daily novel coronavirus cases with the district reporting a record 589 cases in a day, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said Monday.

State's Covid-19 tally shot up to 81,479 Monday as 2,949 more people tested positive for the infection, while 10 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's death toll to 419, added the official.

Ganjam reported five fresh fatalities, Sundargarh two and Cuttack, Nayagarh and Rayagada districts one each, said the official, adding that Ganjam accounted for 179 of the state's 419 COVID-19 deaths, while 53 coronavirus patients have died due to other ailments so far.

The fresh infections were reported from all the 30 districts. As many as 1,826 cases were detected from quarantine centres, while 1,123 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing exercise, the official pointed out.

"Cuttack registered the highest number of fresh Covid-19 cases at 589, followed by Khurda (474), Jajpur (215), Koraput (181) and Ganjam (179). While Balasore, Bargarh, Bhadrak, Bolangir, Dhenkanal, Jagatsinghpur, Jharsuguda, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Kendrapada, Keonjhar and Malkangiri districts registered



A day after the weekend shutdown, Bapuji Nagar market in Bhubaneswar witnesses heavy rush, Monday

cases in double digits, Angul, Boudh, Deogarh and Gajapati districts reported cases in single digits," the official added. The Capital city of Bhubaneswar registered 267 cases Monday, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation said.

The state has so far tested 13,63,620 samples for Covid-19, including 60,909 Sunday, the official added.

'MICRO-CONTAINMENT ZONE'

The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) authorities Monday declared a building at Kumbhara Sahi under Ward 26 here as a micro-containment zone following detection of COVID-19 cases from its premises.

According to CMC, around 24

people from among nine families staying at the building tested positive for COVID-19 when their samples were collected for testing.

The decision to declare the building as a micro-containment zone was required to facilitate active contact tracing measures of the new positive cases, the civic body said in a statement.

"No person would be allowed to enter into or exit of the building until further orders. All the inhabitants within the micro-containment zone shall strictly remain inside their home. The supply of essential and medical requirements will be ensured through Puja Committee of Kumbhara area," said the CMC.

Puri villagers panic with river Bhargavi in spate

Puri: Following the opening of sluice gates of Hirakud Dam recently, the floodwaters have ingressed river Mahanadi thereby leaving its distributaries in spate, a report said. On the other hand, Bhargavi in Puri district has started swelling since Monday morning and villagers of lowland areas in the district are a panicked lot. Floodwater flows on 100 feet-long stretch of road between Nuagaon and Uttarakona villages and was seen flowing about three feet above the road under Sadar block. Road breaches were caused at several other places like Batagaon village under this block. Vehicular movement was completely halted in this area, mostly impacting Uttarakona village. "Houses of over 300 families at Uttarakona are waterlogged. We have informed local block development officer (BDO) in this regard", a few villagers said.

TAKING TO THE STREETS



People under the banner of Odisha Power Employees' Union demonstrate at Rupali Square in Bhubaneswar, Monday, to press for realisation of their seven-point charter of demands

Mining rule violation in Nabarangpur

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: A joint inspection of an alleged illegal stone mining area in Nabarangpur has revealed violation of the rules in carrying out the activities.

The field inspection carried out by the district administration, State Pollution Control Board and others revealed that the miners attempted to do some cleaning and top soil removing activities. It also said that the mining activities were undertaken on the west side of the leased area.

The joint inspection report also said that there were no pillars posted for demarcation of the leased area. "Overburden and waste rock were found in the north west direction of the quarry pit. No plantation



was taken up in the safety zone as per the approved mining plan," the inspection report submitted the NGT said. The NGT had earlier asked for formation of a committee to probe into the issue against the allegations made by a petitioner into this case. The petition had alleged that a private firm engaged

in stone mining at Ushigam village in Papadahandi Tehsil was operating without adequate compliance of environmental norms.

The petitioner alleged that there was no approved mining plan, absence of consent to operate and environmental clearance and termed it illegal.

The NGT, while hearing the matter, had said, "Before processing further in the matter, we deem it essential to constitute a Committee comprising the Nabarangpur Collector, the Divisional Forest Officer and the Odisha State Pollution Control Board."

It had also asked the committee to visit the site and submit a factual report besides giving an action taken report on the various aspects highlighted by the applicant in the application.

The inspection team however has rejected some claims of the petitioner after their visit but has agreed to some of the objections raised in the plea before the NGT.

The inspection report has been listed to be heard by the tribunal in September during the last week.

123 tested for COVID-19 at urban shelters



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: The civic authority, Monday, conducted 123 tests on inmates at its different Shelter for Urban Homeless (SUH) amidst rising cases of COVID-19 in the city. Continuing its fight against COVID-19 pandemic situation, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) has included the COVID-19 testing for the inmates of the Shelter for Urban Homeless (SUH).

While Monday saw 21 the COVID tests on inmates, 102 tests were done at three SUHs of Ganganagar, Bhipur and Chandrasekharpur. Currently the city has eight SUHs spread across the city. While the SUH facilities at Ganganagar, Bhipur, Chandrasekharpur, Malisahi, Ashok Nagar and Social Equity Centre are managed by social service organization Odisha Patita Uddhar Samiti, SUH at Ghatikia and Baramunda are managed by social service organization Vikas.

It can be mentioned here out of the 102 tested, Sunday, 24 were female as the SUH at Chandrasekharpur comprised of women-only inmates. Meanwhile, SUHs at Ganganagar and Chandrasekharpur included mostly of old age and mentally challenged persons and were supervised and assisted by different health officials.

Earlier, the BMC organised a special testing camp in the capital for differently-abled people as part of BMC's disability-friendly response to the COVID-19 crisis. The testing camp was organised at Gopabandhu Leprosy Colony in Buddha Nagar slum area. More than 72 differently-abled people turned up to undergo the Real Time Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) tests.

65 officers boost BMC manpower

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: Taking in cognizance the rising COVID-19 cases in the capital city, state Home Department issued a notification asking about 65 of its employees from various departments to join and report civic authority's office until September 19.

The Home Department in its notification listed 50 Assistant Section Officers (ASO) and 15 data entry operators (DEOs) officers of Odisha Secretariat Service (OSS) cadre from 26 departments. The officials were asked to report at Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation's (BMC) control room and are to remain stationed until further orders.

"The city has reached the peak stage of COVID-19 with about 300 cases being observed daily. In view of this, we had requested state government to provide with additional



manpower. The increased workforce will help us in fighting the pandemic in coming time," said a senior official at the BMC.

It can be mentioned here that the BMC is already operating with additional human resource supplemented by various government departments. While the civic body's health team is managed by 11 public health managers, 22 data assistants, 186 ASHA workers, 360 AWW, 84 Health Workers and 26 Medical Officers. Additionally, Odisha Fire

Services has deployed nine officers and 150 firemen with the BMC.

Similarly, six officers for home isolation, shifting, and management of cured and infected patients from different government department have been at the disposal of the BMC. Meanwhile, six experts of Bhubaneswar Smart City Limited (BSCL) for management of 1929 Call Centre and Laboratory technicians from Capital Hospital and RMRC are also engaged for effective COVID management.

Visually-impaired teachers to work from home now

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: The Higher Education department, Monday, in a letter to all the degree colleges under it, asked the visually-impaired teachers to work and take online classes from their residence till the normalcy is restored.

Commissioner-cum-secretary of the department Saswat Mishra said that the government has been pleased to allow visually-impaired teachers to take online classes from their residences till resumption of normalcy and that they are not required to come to college.

Earlier, online classes for undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) students had begun July 13.

Earlier, the Higher Education department in a letter to all degree colleges had asked them to

start online classes as all the universities and colleges were closed till August 31 in view of the COVID-19 pandemic, which would completely disturb the academic calendar.

This apart, the Odisha government had also decided to include 'Guided Self Study' courses in the UG and PG syllabus. This will be implemented in both universities and college level courses from the 2020-21 academic session.

Notably, the study will cover 25 per cent of the total syllabus. The remaining 75 per cent will be covered in classrooms.

The move assumes significance as many universities are mulling to revise their syllabus post lockdown. This is being done as the ensuing academic session will have a delayed start owing to COVID-19 pandemic.

Ouat celebrates 59th foundation day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: On the 59th Foundation Day of the Odisha University of Technology, Bhubaneswar Agriculture minister Arun Sahoo Monday said that the OUAT should do more research on changes and impact in agriculture before and after covid-19 which can be useful for government in policy making for agriculture farmers.

Sahoo also said that researchers and scientists should create unique and new agriculture techniques, new scientific skills for more agriculture production, doubling farmers' income and most importantly catering to the food demand of the increasing population.

On the occasion OUAT vice chancellor Pawan Kumar Agrawal said that in recent times the university has reached unprecedented levels of success in giving quality



The Taladanda Canal area in Cuttack being beautified as part of SCB Medical College and Hospital's expansion, Monday

OP PHOTO

Encouraging enterprise system among women

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: In order to help the rural women SHGs to start enterprises, the ICAR-CIWA (Central Institute For Women In Agriculture) Bhubaneswar recently launched a project titled 'Adding Value to Fish: a Potential Livelihood option for Rural Women of Odisha' funded by Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR).

Under this project, a group of rural women from Kanamana Village in Astaranga block of Puri district in Odisha was given hand holding support for starting the enterprise. They were imparted training on the preparation of value added fish products, attractive packaging and labelling, entrepreneurship development, management, branding and marketing, group dynamics and book keeping.

These products prepared by women SHGs under the brand name Fishlikes are now available at Falcon Fresh Retail outlets. S. K. Srivastava, Director of ICAR-CIWA

launched the products at the outlet Monday.

With the shift in consumers' demand for ready-to-eat hygienic products, value added products' preparation from fish holds a key potential.

In this background, the project funded by Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) viz., 'Adding Value to Fish: a Potential Livelihood option for Rural Women of Odisha' was implemented at ICAR-Central Institute for Women in Agriculture, Bhubaneswar, said Srivastava.

Facilitation for obtaining FSSAI licence which is mandatory for any food products was done earlier. They have ventured into online marketing taking into consideration the pandemic situation after obtaining the trade license under the brand name "Fishlikes".

The Project team from ICAR-CIWA trained the groups to start value added fish products based enterprise and facilitated their market linkage and procurement of licenses.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

Acharya Vihar-Dayal Agency-9437135727, A.P. Tours and Travel, Maitri Vihar, C.S. Pur- 9861301598, Aurobindo Market-Sai Audio & Electronics-9438304668, Airport Road-Sai Baba Variety Store-9090071530, Anish Infotech- Tankapani Road-9861341488, Bapuji Nagar- Dreamland Studio- 9777517314, Baramunda Rental Colony-Maa Ramchandi Communication-9658821469, Baramunda Housing Board Colony-Pappu Variety Store-9040500106, Cuttack Road-Alishan Snacks-8984236754, District Center (Chandrasekharpur)-Sai Google Mart-9776056507, Forest Park-DTDC Couriers & Services (HB Services)-7381024156, IRC Village-Bapi Xerox-9090090404, Gift Hut(Antriksh Gifts & Decors Pvt. Ltd.)-9954781084, Pruthvi Medicine-9853314816, Janpath-Krupajal Book Store-7978646669, Jaydev Vihar-AK Enterprises-7978116618, Subam Sai Books Store-8895550649, Swain Graphics- 9337121249, Jagannath Mobile Point- Janpath Road, Ram Mandir- 9938475415, Kanan Vihar-Auro Electronics-8260697560, Khandagiri- Swosti Mobile Centre- 7992914045, World Solution- 9938317559, KIIT Road-Jugad Jn-9338545031, Laxmi Sagar-Aditya Mobile-9438191836, Lewis Road-Spider Web-7809186415, Metro Satellite City-Arogya Mitra Medicine Store-9853621640, Madhusudan Nagar-Mohapatra Communication-9124446664, Maa Santoshi travels- Gajapati Nagar- 9777675867, Nayapalli- The Cake Room- 7873660137, Near Mayfair Lagoon-Cookieman-9439491273, Nigamananda-Omm Sai Travels-9668284823, Nr Cosmopolis Main Gate- Shreeram Medical Store- 8763711714, Net Square- Niladri Vihar (C.S. Pur)- 7205634821, Priyadarshini Market-Astro Point-9938134346, R.N. General Store-Nilakantha Nagar-9438642501, Sahid Nagar- Maa Communication- 9437353424, Sahini General Store- Near Patia Railway Station, Mahavir Vihar- 9937586626, Satya Nagar-Baishnavi Mixture & Sweets-7894821764, Samantapur- Download Point-7504557743, Sailashree Vihar-Harsha Book Store-8093449515, Saheed Nagar-Jagannath Graphics-7978652670, Photo World-7978468191, Sainath Photo Studio-8984436129, Shanti & Co-9937071063, Siripur-Omm Maa Sarala Communication-9777682449, Sushree fashion- Jagmara-9938714347, Shree Vision- Sailashree Vihar-9861476678, Unit-3-LIC of India Premium Point-9337787080, Unit-7- LIC Premium Point- 9338227422, VSS Nagar-Friends Cake & Bake-8658200930, Jeet Infoworld-7205195782, XIMB Square-LD Books-9658061373.

This block harvests stream water for irrigation

Huge cache of firearms seized from Maoist hideout

Anti-Maoist posters surfaced in Kandhamal

Phulbani: Anti-Maoist posters surfaced in various parts of Raipanga village under Baliguda police limits in Kandhamal district, Monday. The posters were released by the Indian National People's Peace Force. The posters were found pasted on the walls of the local government high school and the local temple. The poster read: "We condemn the violence in Kanchalaghu which was sparked by protests against the killing of some Maoists. The things did not belong to you, which you burned. How far it is right to set fire to the machineries used for developmental work?" "At the instigation of neighboring countries, some are doing these things which is creating obstacles for the development of tribals," added the poster. The residents of the area have welcomed the move against ultras.



CHANGING LIVES

This became possible after the block administration constructed a diversion wall, concrete drain and a canal to channelise the flowing water of the stream into the tank which is now being used to irrigate over 50 hectares of farmlands

The project set up at Kuturlatia stream at Kayakuda village under Jujumura block in 2020-21 fiscal has also helped the block administration in providing livelihood to the jobless migrant returnees

The water in the tank can be used by farmers to cultivate paddy during kharif and rabi seasons as well as vegetables during the rabi season

which focuses on ensuring higher incomes to farmers by improving both the area under cultivation and yield of crops.

The project has also helped the block administration in providing livelihood to the jobless migrant returnees in the area.

The project has been set up at Kuturlatia stream at Kayakuda village under Jujumura block in 2020-21 financial year.

When contacted, Biswaranjan Pradhan, programme officer, NREGS in Jujumura block, said that the project was taken up after

the block administration decided to conserve stream water for irrigation.

The project work was taken up in three phases. In the first phase, a diversion wall was constructed at an expenditure of Rs 7 crore to stop the stream water from flowing out. Subsequently, a 350-metre long drain was constructed from the diversion wall at an expenditure of Rs 9 lakh to channelise the stream water into a canal.

Later, a soil canal was constructed to take the stream water into the tank which was about 2-km away from the place. The stream water is first stored in the diversion wall which could be called a mini dam. The water stored is later channelised through the drain and canal to the tank from which the farmers draw water to irrigate their farmlands. The water in the tank can be used by farmers to cultivate paddy during kharif and rabi seasons as well as vegetables during the rabi season.

When contacted, BDO Suraj Biswal said the project was taken up to provide work to the migrant returnees during the Covid-induced restrictions. "The project first appeared impossible but work became smooth as we moved ahead. More such projects will be taken up in the block," he added.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, August 24: Security forces have seized a huge cache of sophisticated firearms, ammunition and explosives from a Maoist hideout in Malkangiri district, said Superintendent of Police Rishikesh Khilari, Monday.

During a recent joint operation by Malkangiri District Voluntary Force (DVF) and Border Security Force (BSF) 76th battalion in the Kalimela forests, the security forces have seized 12 bore empty cartridge cases with caps, two 12 bore live ammunition, 93 detonators, two gas cylinders, one lathe machine, one carbide gas welding cylinder, lathe machine accessories, iron scrap materials and Maoists literature from the dump, Khilari said.

"This was one of the biggest arms haul in the state which was made in the Swabhiman Anchal (region) of Malkangiri district," Khilari added.

It is suspected that the cache of weapons was dumped in the forest area by Maoists for future use. They were unearthed during the area domination exercise by the security forces.

Khilari also said that from the preliminary investigation the police came to know that the Left Wing extremists were also planning to construct an illegal arms manufacturing factory in the jungle to manufacture guns and repair the weapons in order to launch a future attack on the police personnel.

Two minor siblings die as cars collide

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkanal, August 24: In a tragic road accident Sunday afternoon, two siblings died after the car in which they were travelling collided with another car near Bhejia Chhak on Dadaraghati-Pitiri road under Parjang block in Dhenkanal district.

Reports said, the mishap occurred on national highway (NH-149) in Mahabirod outpost area under Parjang police limits. A car (OD-02 R-2944) carrying the siblings and their family members was going towards Pallahara from Pitiri when an oncoming car (OR-07 R-3030) had a head-on collision with it.

The siblings Mitali, 8, and Nikhil, 6, died on spot. Father Sibashankar Nahaka, 38, mother Etarani, 26, relative Laxman Sahoo, 33, and the driver, all of whom belonged to Ganjam district, were critically injured.

Similarly, travelers of the other car were also critically injured.

Cornea transplantation procedure affected at MKCG in Berhampur

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, August 24: The cornea transplantation procedure at the MKCG Medical College and Hospital here has stopped since March this year following the outbreak of COVID-19, a senior doctor said.

Even though family members have shown interest to donate the eyes of their relatives who died recently, the doctors are not undertaking the procedure due to the pandemic, he said.

Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Eye department of MKCG Medical College and Hospital used to conduct an average of seven cornea transplantation every month. However, the transplantation has stopped since March following the outbreak of Covid-19, said Suchitra Dash, Head of Department of Eye.

While around 150 patients were in queue for the transplantation till the end of March, the number has gone up to over 250 by now, said an ophthalmologist.



The eye bank in the medical college which harvests on an average of 10 corneas every month has dropped to zero for the last few months, sources said.

"We don't want to take the risk of collecting cornea of the deceased without knowing his/her COVID status. Moreover, it could not be transplanted to the patient immediately due to the shutdown of the operation theatre," said Dash.

The eye donation activities in and around the Silk City have also stopped since the outbreak of the pandemic.

Sons of an 85-year-old man in

Berhampur could not fulfil their father's eye donation pledge made about five years ago, as the doctors did not show interest, even though he died of heart attack, family members said.

"Family members of at least a dozen deceased persons had also wished to donate the eyes of the dead persons, but it could not be harvested, as the eye surgeons, worried about the Covid-19 status of the deceased persons, discouraged it," said J Suresh, an eye donation campaign activist.

BNR Subudhi, an ophthalmologist, said since people are eager to donate eyes and the waitlist for the transplantation of cornea is going up, the Eye Bank Association of India (EBAI) must evolve a mechanism and guidelines to carry out the eye banking activities amid the pandemic. "Thousands of people suffering from curable blindness will further suffer, if such activities are stopped for a prolonged period," he said.

RESCUED JUMBO CALF DIES IN MAYURBHANJ

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, August 24: An elephant calf that was rescued by the forest department from a farmland near Bhaladiha village under Morada block in Mayurbhanj district died Sunday night.

The cause of its death is stated to be severe cold and other complications.

According to sources, a herd of elephants was moving around in the localities for the last few days. The herd had left behind the ailing calf Sunday. On spotting the calf, the villagers alerted the forest department.

A team of officials led by DFO Shyam Mallick reached the spot and rescued the calf. After being treated by a wildlife doctor, the animal was shifted to a safer place.

However the calf failed to survive the excess cold and fever and succumbed.

Ganjam admin eases Covid restrictions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, August 24: The number of coronavirus cases in Ganjam district is slowly decreasing. This has prompted the administration to bring in some relaxations Monday to the restrictions imposed to control the virus.

Ganjam Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange informed about the relaxations in a tweet. He said shops across the district will from now remain open from 5am to 8pm, instead of the earlier timings of 5am to 4pm.

The new timing is already in effect in Berhampur town. It will be implemented in the rest of the district Monday onwards. The weekend shutdown however, will still be in force.

This apart, the restrictions on entering and leaving Berhampur town has also been lifted.

Kulange has urged the shopkeepers to follow the five-point strategies is-



People and vehicles move on a road leading to the Silk City after lifting of Covid restrictions, Monday

sued earlier.

In another development, district COVID-19 cell Monday informed in a tweet that 61 serious patients have been administered with plasma therapy. These patients are showing good signs of recovery at the Sitalapali COVID-19 hospital.

For the purpose of plasma collection, 112 recovered patients were screened at the district's only plasma bank at MKCG Medical College and Hospital in Berhampur. Of them, 77 donated plasma units.

Over 14, 000 patients have so far recovered from Covid-19 in Ganjam.



JUMBO MENACE

Forest officials trying to drive away a tusker roaming on National Highway-18 after it lost its way and strayed into Murgabadi area in Baripada town, Monday. The straying of the pachyderm has sparked panic among the residents and commuters on the national highway

OP PHOTO

GOVT. OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
MAYURBHANJ IRRIGATION DIVISION, BARIPADA
'e' PROCUREMENT NOTICE NO. 02MBJ/2020-21

NO. A-201:-

- Name of the work : Bank protection work on left bank of river Deo near village Panasgadi.
- Tender Cost : Rs. 80.62 lakh
- Bid Document Cost (online) : Rs. 10,000.00
- Bid Security (online) : Rs. 81,000.00
- Class of Contractor : 'B' Class & 'A' Class
- Period of Completion : 08 (eight) calendar months
- Other details are as follows.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender On-line for bidding		Date of Opening of Technical Bid (Cover-I)
		From	To	
Executive Engineer, Mayurbhanj Irrigation Division, Baripada	02MBJ/2020-21	26.08.2020 at 11.00 A.M.	09.09.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.	11.09.2020 at 11.00 A.M.

8. e-mail id : exen.mid@gmail.com
Further detail conditions can be seen from the Govt. website www.tendersorissa.gov.in
Sd/- Executive Engineer, Mayurbhanj Irrigation Division, Baripada.
OIPR-32041/11/0005/2021

GOVT. OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
MAHANADI NORTH DIVISION-I, JAGATPUR, CUTTACK
E-mail ID :- exenr.mnd@gmail.com
'e' Procurement Notice No-MND-03/2020-21

No. A-205:- The bid documents consisting of work, estimated cost, cost of tender paper, EMD, time of completion, class of contractor, the set of term & conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal www.tendersorissa.gov.in. The tender submission process will be completely online.

- Nature of Work : Bridge works
- Total No. of Works : 3(Three) works
- Bid Identification No : MND-03/2020-21
- Tender Cost : SI.No-1- Rs.26.64 Lakhs
SI.No-2- Rs.22.95 Lakhs
SI.No-3- Rs.11.19 Lakhs
- Period of completion : 6 (Six) Calendar months
- Other Details : As noted below
 - Procurement Officer : Executive Engineer, Mahanadi North Division-I, Jagatpur, email: exenr.mnd@gmail.com, Ph:- 0671-2491546
 - Availability of Tender : 10.00 Hours of 26.08.2020 to On-line for bidding : 17.00 Hours of 09.09.2020
 - Last date & time of submission of bid document : 17.00 Hours of 09.09.2020
 - Date, time & place of opening of online tender : 10.09.2020 at 11.30 Hours in the O/o the Executive Engineer, Mahanadi North Division-I, Jagatpur
 - Date of Lottery (if required) : 16.09.2020 at 11.30 Hours
Further details can be seen from the Govt. website "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>"
Executive Engineer, Mahanadi North Division-I, Jagatpur
OIPR-32003/11/0003/2021

Sd/- Executive Officer, Jajpur Municipality

- ଯାମାଜିକ ଦୂରତ୍ୱ ଅବଲମ୍ବନ କରିବେ।
- ମୁହଁରେ ମାଝ ସବୁବେଳେ ପିନ୍ଧିବେ।
- ହାତ ପରିଷ୍କାର କରି ଧୋଇବେ।
- ବାହାରେ ମଳତ୍ୟାଗ କରିବେ ନାହିଁ।
- ନିଜକୁ ଏବଂ ନିଜ ପରିବେଶକୁ ପରିଷ୍କାର ପରିଚ୍ଛନ୍ନ ରଖିବେ।
- ଯଦି କିଛି ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟର ଅବନତି ଘଟେ ନିଜସ୍ଥ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟକର୍ମୀଙ୍କୁ ଖବର ଦେବେ।
- ସାନିଟାଇଜର କିମ୍ବା ସାବୁନରେ ହାତ ଧୁଆନ୍ତୁ।
- ଥଣ୍ଡା, କାଶ, ଜ୍ୱର ଭଳି କିଛି ଲକ୍ଷଣ ଦେଖାଗଲେ ତୁରନ୍ତ ନିଜସ୍ଥ ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟକର୍ମୀଙ୍କୁ ଖବର ଦିଅନ୍ତୁ।

ଜିଲ୍ଲା ମୁଖ୍ୟ ଚିକିତ୍ସା ଓ ଜନସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଅଧିକାରୀ, ବଲାଙ୍ଗୀର

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
GANJAM [R&B] DIVISION NO.II, BERHAMPUR
Phone/Fax: 0680-2233996, e-mail: ernb2_bam@yahoo.co.in
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement]
TENDER CALL NOTICE
Bid Identification No. SC (R&B)-GM-II-08/2020-21, No.7079, Dated 18.08.2020
No. B-204:-

- The Executive Engineer, Ganjam [R&B] Division No.II, Berhampur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in Double cover system to be received in ONLINE MODE only for the work as detailed below:
- Nature of Work : Building work
- No. of work : 01 No.
- Tender Cost : ₹10,000/-
- Class of Contractor : 'B' class, & 'A' class
- Availability of bid : From 28.08.2020 10.00 AM to documents in the website 14.09.2020 4.00 P.M.
- Date of opening of Bid : 15.09.2020 at 11.30 A.M.
- The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website <https://tendersorissa.gov.in> (Sd./-T.K.Panigrahy)
Executive Engineer, Ganjam (R&B) Division No.II
OIPR-34080/11/0005/2021

GOVT. OF ODISHA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER,
MAHANADI NORTH DIVISION-I, JAGATPUR, CUTTACK
E-mail ID :- exenr.mnd@gmail.com
'e' Procurement Notice No-MND-03/2020-21

No. A-205:- The bid documents consisting of work, estimated cost, cost of tender paper, EMD, time of completion, class of contractor, the set of term & conditions of contract and other necessary documents can be seen in e-procurement portal www.tendersorissa.gov.in. The tender submission process will be completely online.

- Nature of Work : Bridge works
- Total No. of Works : 3(Three) works
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SI.No-2- Rs.22.95 Lakhs
SI.No-3- Rs.11.19 Lakhs
- Period of completion : 6 (Six) Calendar months
- Other Details : As noted below
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 - Availability of Tender : 10.00 Hours of 26.08.2020 to On-line for bidding : 17.00 Hours of 09.09.2020
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Further details can be seen from the Govt. website "<https://tendersodisha.gov.in>"
Executive Engineer, Mahanadi North Division-I, Jagatpur
OIPR-32003/11/0003/2021

FOCUS NATION

A 'SMELL OF MALICE'



Why should we cede the ground we proudly hold and why should India not welcome and offer space to people of all faiths from across the world to see and live the idea of tolerance? Except that tolerance is now history in our land and an Indian version of the Taliban is sought to be drafted by those in power

that goes well beyond the immediate case to set out red flags on the way in which malicious propaganda is spread, scapegoats are found and the law applied selectively on religious grounds. The judgment is unrelated to but comes coincidentally at a time there is a rising tide of support for lawyer Prashant Bhushan as he stands up to a case of contempt in the Supreme Court for questioning the integrity of judges.

In fact, the Bombay High Court comes out shining as it grants cover in this case not to Indians but to the minority community visitors coming in from other countries, who do not normally enjoy the protections accorded to citizens under Article 19 of the Constitution, and brings alive the very Indian spirit, atitihni devo bhava.

How have we really treated visitors who were in India on valid visas doing what many have done years before them as they participated in the activities of the Tablighi Jamaat? To quote Justices TV Nalawade and MG Sewlikar,

who delivered the 58-page order dismissing the police case against nine foreign nationals and two Indians for all kinds of allegations, including staying in a Masjid (when was this a crime?) and preaching (which they were not) their faith: "In our culture, there is a saying...that our guest is our God. The circumstances of the present matter create a question as to whether we are really acting as per our great tradition and culture. During the situation created by COVID-19 pandemic, we need to show more tolerance and we need to be more sensitive towards our guests particularly like the present petitioners. The allegations made show that instead of helping them we lodged them in jails by making allegations that they are responsible for violation of travel documents, they are responsible for spreading of virus etc."

The Justices have demolished every single case sought to be made out against the members of the Jamaat and, in fact, made three important points: a) There was no intention of the police to go

against the foreigners, but Maharashtra filed the FIR after getting directions from the Central government to do so; b) The exercise was done by the Central government with the presumption that the visitors were already infected when that contention cannot be substantiated; c) The propaganda against the so-called religious activity was unwarranted and it is now high time for the concerned to repent and take some positive steps to repair the damage done by such action.

The Justices don't stop there. They see the "smell of malice" against foreigners and Muslims and point out that action was taken mainly against Muslims who had come to Markaz Delhi for the Tablighi Jamaat. The high court then sends out a message that needs to be told and heard again and again: "Social and religious tolerance is a practical necessity for unity and integrity in India and that is also made compulsory by our Constitution. By hard work over the past years after Independence, we have reconciled religion and modernity to a great extent. This approach helps participation of most in the development process. We have been respecting both religious and secular sensibilities since Independence and by this approach we have kept India as united."

Away from the judgment, common sense would dictate that India should act differently. Would India have the Tablighi Jamaat, an Indian movement with over 90 years of standing, meet in India or would it rather have it meet in Afghanistan or Pakistan? Why should we cede the ground we proudly hold and why should India not welcome and offer space to people of all faiths from across the world to see and live the idea of tolerance? Except that tolerance is now history in our land and an Indian version of the Taliban is sought to be drafted by those in power.

The writer is a journalist and a faculty member at SPJIMR.
THE BILLION PRESS



Jagdish Rattanani

WOULD INDIA HAVE THE TABLIGHI JAMAAT, AN INDIAN MOVEMENT WITH OVER 90 YEARS OF STANDING, MEET IN INDIA OR WOULD IT RATHER HAVE IT MEET IN AFGHANISTAN OR PAKISTAN?

In a course on journalism that I taught years ago, one exercise I often asked was for the class to roam around Mumbai's famous Mohammed Ali Road during the holy month of Ramadan and pick up sights, sounds, stories as the fast is broken and the feasting begins at sunset. One of my students that year was a local area police officer who had in the past been asked to investigate how and why lodges and rooms for rent filled up with Muslims from across the country exactly at the time the police wanted to ensure that the festival passed off peacefully.

That was a massive investigation one particular year with entries from lodges, background checks, local intelligence etc amid suspicion that something was amiss. Wearing the hat of a student-journalist, this policeman came back; surprised at what he found when he roamed free with an eye not for the criminal but for the story.

Thousands of people, he discovered, came to throng that road for small and tiny businesses – selling henna to trinkets to some other local designs and delights of Lucknow and from the farther interiors of India. This was the month they made enough to last and lived on it back in their towns for the rest of the year. This was a religious festival but it brought booming business and attracted thousands, most of them Muslims, year after year, to Mumbai during the month. As the roles changed, the stories changed and new facts came to light for this police officer. Call it prejudice, worry or abundant caution at a time of stress for the police – what is clear is that who you are determines what you see, and what you see will be the colour of the lens you wear.

This is precisely what the Bombay High Court has found in the case of the Tablighi Jamaat – loud and naked abuse of power to target a minority community and paint its members as a set of people who were on a mission not of faith but allegedly to spread COVID-19 in India.

Here is a landmark judgment

SPECTRUM CBI

Sushant Singh and the caged parrot

What is it about the Central Bureau of Investigation that has it always in the eye of the storm? A talented Hindi film actor Sushant Singh Rajput is found hanging at his residence June 14 in Mumbai. A shocked nation eulogies him, followed by angry accusations of murder. Murmurs surface of Shiv Sena minister and Thackeray scion Aditya attending a party at Rajput's house on the night of June 13.

Sushant's father files an FIR in Patna against his son's girlfriend Rhea Chakravarty and five others for abetment of suicide. Mumbai quarantines the Patna police. The Enforcement Directorate registers a money laundering case against Rhea and her family. Bihar recommends CBI inquiry which the Centre accepts. Maharashtra vetoes this as its concurrence for such a probe was mandatory. The Supreme Court orders CBI to go ahead.

The BJP sees this as an opportunity to embarrass the Shiv Sena government, especially against the backdrop of Aditya being present at Rajput's house. Any wonder why our politicians always hoot for a CBI investigation. Certainly, those in gov-

ernment use it as its handmaiden to dance to its tune.

Allegations abound how the agency has and is being used to intimidate and cow down political opponents. Be it during the Congress era or the Modi Sarkar. From political partisanship, raids on susceptible opponents, often with a little help of 'partners' Enforcement Directorate and Income Tax Department, filing of FIRs to hours of questioning. It's inconsequential that in the end the CBI might not find any malfeasance. If you fall in line, the pressure is eased. If you don't, the pressure is gassed up.

There are examples galore. Two classic cases are Samajwadi's Mulayam Singh and BSP's Mayawati. Whenever the government wanted to put pressure on them, the CBI was used to pursue the cases of disproportionate assets against them. When they came around, the cases were but in a thanda baksa..

Take the cases of ex-Union Finance Minister Chidambaram and RJD chief Lalu Yadav. Both accuse the BJP of political vendetta. Take Karnataka Chief Minister Yeddyurappa chargesheeted by

CBI for donations made to his trust by miners who obtained contracts. The court let him off, but the CBI under Modi Raj didn't appeal against the order. There are as many as 1,300 cases pending against MPs and MLAs in various courts. These include cases being on-off investigated by CBI. Consequently, the system has become self-perpetuating whereby threatened political elite give more and more powers to the CBI to get their way and have their say.

Is the CBI more sinned against than sinning? Is the pot calling the kettle black? Both work in tandem in furthering their own interests. The recent open war between ex-CBI Director Alok Verma and his Special Director Rakesh Asthana with shadowy political mai-baaps in the background underscores an open secret: the protectors and upholders of law have become so compromised and the system so rotten that nobody believes in it anymore. Worse, nobody cares a damn.

Unsurprisingly, investigation suffers as a report of 2016 shows. The conviction rate is as low as 12 per cent in 264 corruption cases CBI analysed over five years. Of the 698 accused, 486 were Central

and state officials, while 212 were private persons. While it took more than 13 months to conclude investigations, only eight out of 698 persons who were initially called for questioning in corruption cases were convicted! It reflects the larger dishonesty plaguing the institution wherein over 26 officers are facing corruption charges.

Over the years, various governments talk tall on giving the CBI autonomy and improving its functioning from LP Singh Committee in 1978, Parliament Estimates Committee of 1991-92 and even the Supreme Court has made attempts to provide the CBI the insulation it requires, but unfortunately all failed.

Bringing things to such a pass that instead of becoming more accountable, the CBI has been purposely protected from scrutiny. See how it was expressly taken out of the RTI Act's ambit on grounds of national security.

Prime Minister Modi has oft spoken about ushering in transparency in governance. It's time he walked his talk and made the CBI independent.

INFA

Court holidays

Sir, This has reference to the article by Bharat Jhunjhunwala titled "Balance Costs, Benefits" (Orissa POST, August 22). A passing reference to the working days of courts has been made; of Supreme Court working 190 days a year, high courts 232 days and lower courts 244 days. Huge backlog of cases in all the courts invariably warrants an increase in the number of working days. As per a report, the pendency of cases as on June 1, 2020 was 58,669 and 62,791 in November, 2019, in Supreme Court; and 41.53 lakh in the 25 high courts as in November 2019. Pendency of cases in lower courts was 2.62 crore in November 2019. India has, on an average, 19 judges for a population of 10 lakh. Many cases may have to be closed due to the death of one or other among the litigant parties. Delayed delivery of justice has been the inevitable consequence of the judges' strength not being commensurate with the case-loads. Besides increasing the total strength of judges and increasing the number of working days, judges not showing seriousness in the speedy disposal of cases must be taken to task or asked to exit. Litigant public are the victims of inordinately delayed delivery of justice. Every petitioner should have the opportunity to get justice in his/her lifetime.
KV Seetharamaiah, HASSAN

Engage senior citizens

Sir, There is a need to set up Senior Citizen Centres to enable them to assemble at one place for social interaction and share their views in this hour of crisis. The government can make use of their experience and services for the benefit of the society. Many senior citizens were retired professionals and retired and are willing to extend a helping hand in the field of education and health. Engaging them in welfare programmes will definitely be a plus point for the government. As a first step, the elected representatives like MLA or MP can open one or two Senior Citizen Centres in their respective jurisdictions with their grant and help of local donors. Let them start a centre in the capital city on an experimental basis and, if successful, others will emulate. Senior citizens occupy a sizable population in India and during the COVID-19 pandemic this group had to undergo tension and stress due to their age-related problems. Most of them, even today, are unable to go for a walk or take a short trip to their friends and neighbours to share their feelings. Engaging them in welfare activities will not only make them feel better, but also be beneficial for the society.
K Ravi, BHUBANESWAR

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

Very usually, altruism is only the sublimest form of selfishness.
SRI AUROBINDO



PLAYING WITH OIL

Life in India is into hard times. The COVID-19 is adding a lethal punch to the already difficult economic difficulties to people across the board. What comes as an added shock is the wayward manner in which fuel prices are hiked – an indulgence of a kind which saw the price going up eight times in the past nine days. Oil marketing companies (OMCs) have been given a free hand, with tacit government support and the intent is very clear.

Fuel price hike came both during and after a season when world oil prices have been falling. The reserves in production centers have been swelling due to massive halt in public activities across the globe, resulting in production being controlled and decreased. The present hike, however, may or may not be linked to a marginal rise in crude prices in world market. One may wonder as to why the nation must have a hand-to-mouth existence in oil stocks and why it has failed to take steps to facilitate more purchases. It has also not been able to ensure sufficient reserve stock as several other countries are doing. A sudden fluctuation in international market should not be justification enough for multiple hikes in retail prices over a span of less than ten days. Worse, even when global oil prices were falling, India kept raising prices in the domestic retail market.

India has less of oil production and it depends mostly on imports. The steady and frequent increase in fuel prices is having both direct and indirect impact on human life. On one side, vehicle users will have to keep shelling out more even as they limit their use of vehicles in COVID times. Every fuel price hike means an increase in the transportation cost for all items of daily use, including medicines. In totality, every such hike turns out to be a double whammy for the ordinary citizen in a nation where a two-wheeler is the minimum that most possess – both urban and rural dwellers. These vehicles are the essential tools required by them to go to work and earn a living for the family.

A report from Buenos Aires is educative. The government of Argentina allowed the country's main refiner to hike diesel and gas pump prices by 4.5 per cent this past week, it being the first increase in retail prices in a matter of nine months. Nations like the UK and South Africa have one-time correction in prices every month. Price hike of six times a week, as has been happening in India, is unheard of globally and is proof of the lack of effective leadership at governmental level, where any ham-handed measure seems fine.

In other words, the government is taking advantage of a scenario caused by the COVID spread which made forms of mass protests unlawful. Reason also why fuel prices were increased 22 times in three weeks' time in the month of June, in what has by now become a norm rather than an exception. June also saw fuel prices having been hiked on a daily basis for 11 days at a stretch.

March was also the time when the government raised excise duty on petrol and diesel to raise funds for the exchequer. This too ultimately hurt the people. Global oil prices fell sharply in April due to a major glut in supply and lack of storage space. India too has serious problems in terms of poor storage facilities and this is among the factors forcing the nation to not do bulk purchases and storage on a long-term basis when the prices remain low. In terms of cash component for purchases, India, by not being able to store oil, is losing precious foreign exchange.

Nothing, however, justifies a daily dose of price hike. It shows the wantonness with which those at the helm handle matters. The 'trick' is also to fool the people. A one-time rise in prices even on a monthly basis might be acceptable, but the daily dose is a way to make a big cut in installments so that the people would not feel the pain in one go. But, this is a ridiculous way forward. The silence of the citizens may unnerve some. Reality, however, is that Indians bear too much but never forget when their stomach is hit.

WISDOM CORNER

- “If your strength is small, don't carry heavy burdens. If your words are worthless, don't give advice.” **PROVERB**
- “Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.” **PROVERB**
- “One generation plants the trees, and another gets the shade.” **PROVERB**

WORDSWORTH

The cat's mother

How it came into being is not very clear. All one can say is that it's first recorded about the end of the 19th Century (at least, the Oxford English Dictionary has citations from that period; Jonathon Green says in his Cassell Dictionary of Slang that it dates only from the 1950s in the form of a direct reply to somebody asking rudely or intrusively "who are you?"). In its older form, as you say, it was usually said to a child who used she to refer to some grown-up when this was thought to be insufficiently polite.

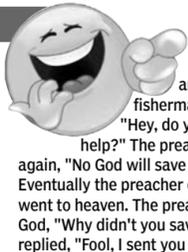
The E-prefix

It seems that e- is the new cyber-: a convenient combining form, tackable at will on to almost any other word to imply the white heat of the technological revolution. During the holiday break, one discovered that a current buzzword for online business is e-tail. It's a less than elegant coinage, even though in Britain it lacks the special resonance of the American slang meaning of tail. More evidence came from Liz Lavallee in the COPYEDITING list; she reported that her local newspaper, the Potomac News in Woodbridge, Virginia, had the headline "1998: A year of truly e-mazing events". Another punning headline of a similar kind was one I found in a British computer magazine, which referred to the e-economy. And a look through my files reveals 63 other examples of new words formed by tacking e- on the front of an existing word, including e-trade, e-asset, e-envoy, e-postmarked, e-junkmail, and e-scoop. Most of these are nonce formations, invented to satisfy a momentary need and not likely to be seen again, but some, such as e-cash, e-democracy, and e-text, have established what looks like a firm foothold in current usage. The daddy of these compounds is the comparatively venerable e-mail, first recorded as a noun in 1982 and as a verb in 1987. The e- was at first just a convenient abbreviation for electronic. As the word gained wider currency from the early nineties onwards, many newer users were uncertain whether the initial letter was an abbreviation or a prefix, and whether the word should be written with a hyphen or not. Hence the alternative forms E-mail, Email, and email. It's an understandable confusion, and especially so as writing the word without a hyphen leads to something that looks foreign (specifically, the French word for enamel). The debate, or possibly the confusion, has not yet wholly worked itself through. But the growth in other words with the same prefix has gone a long way towards settling matters, as the form has become more common and it is more obvious that it can be stuck on the front of a whole range of words. It is also settling down to include the hyphen, perhaps because most of the words that would be formed without it look very odd.

LOL

PREACHER

Story goes that there was a preacher who fell in the ocean and he couldn't swim. When a boat came by, the captain yelled, "Do you need help, sir?" The preacher calmly said "No, God will save me." A little later, another boat came by



and a fisherman asked, "Hey, do you need help?" The preacher replied again, "No God will save me." Eventually the preacher drowned & went to heaven. The preacher asked God, "Why didn't you save me?" God replied, "Fool, I sent you two boats!"



In Karna, there is 'clamour' for Cabinet berths

THE MONSOON SESSION OF THE KARNATAKA LEGISLATURE WILL BE HELD FROM SEPTEMBER 21 TO 30 IN THE VIDHANA SOUDHA



AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 24: The Karnataka government will be convening an eight-day monsoon session of the state Legislature from September 21. Sources said the government aims at passing Bills and discussing major issues like the Covid pandemic and development works, meanwhile there is a renewed clamour for cabinet posts as six vacancies remain to be filled.

"There is clamour in the ruling BJP for the six cabinet posts that are vacant even a year after the party came to power July 26, 2019 and two cabinet expansions in August 2019 and February 2020," party's state unit spokesman G. Madhusudhana said.

As the state Legislative Session has to be convened within six months of the previous session, which was in March, Assembly and Council will meet from September 21 to pass Bills and transact other government business, as it (session) got delayed due to Covid-induced lockdown and its extension.

"Cabinet formation, expansion and reshuffle of ministry are an ongoing process in any government or state. In the 34-member Ministry, though six posts have to be filled, over a dozen native and defected but re-elected legislators are vying to occupy them at the earliest," admitted Madhusudhana.

Karna BJP MP, MLA son test Covid positive

AGENCIES

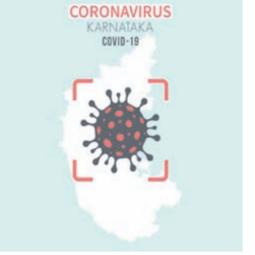
Bangalore, August 24: Umesh Jadhav, the Bharatiya Janata Party's Lok Sabha member from Gulbarga, his son Avinash, an MLA from Chincholi, and both their wives have tested positive for Covid-19 and are under treatment, an official said Monday.

"Umesh and his wife Gaythri, Avinash and his wife Meghana tested positive for the virus and are in the state-run Bowring hospital in the city. They all are asymptomatic and responding to the treatment," the official told IANS.

Gulbarga is 625 km north of Bangalore. "Personal assistants of father and son and their (Jadhavs) drivers, who also tested positive for the infection, have been admitted for treatment at a state-run designated hospital in Gulbarga," said the official.

Nearly a dozen people who came in contact with Jadhav's family in Gulbarga have been asked to take the Covid test and remain in home quarantine.

Umesh Jadhav defeated veteran Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge in the May 2019 general elections from the reserved (SC) parliamentary seat Gulbarga, after he resigned from the Chincholi assembly segment in March 2018 as a Congress MLA and joined the BJP.



Avinash won the Chincholi assembly seat in a by-election held with the parliamentary polls in May 2019.

The Jadhavs are the latest among the party's lawmakers to get infected by the virus in the state after Chamarajanagar Lok Sabha member V. Srinivas Prasad tested positive August 18 and was under treatment at a private hospital in the city.



MTB Nagaraj R Shankar AH Vishwanath Umesh Katti CP Yogeshwar

SOME FRONTRUNNERS

Congress defectors MTB Nagaraj and R Shankar, who got elected to the Council June 22 biennial polls

JD-S defector AH Vishwanath, who got nominated to the Council July 22

Eight-time BJP Legislator Umesh Katti and CP Yogeshwar, who was also nominated to the Council

Congress and JD-S were made ministers in the February cabinet expansion after they got elected in the December 5 by-elections in 15 Assembly segments, Nagaraj, Shankar and Vishwanath are waiting to join them, as they resigned from their Assembly seats in July 2019. As Nagaraj and Vishwanath lost in the by-election from Hoskote in Bengaluru Rural district and Hunsur in Mysuru district, they were made members of the Council

to reward them with a cabinet post as the other defectors have been by the ruling party and Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa.

Shankar, who too defected from the Congress and joined the BJP in November, was not given a ticket to contest in the by-election from Ranebennur in Haveri district but was assured by the ruling party of being made a Council member.

Nagaraj and Shankar were cabinet ministers in the 14-month JD-

S-Congress coalition government from May 23, 2018 to July 23, 2019. Though the Supreme Court in November upheld the disqualification of the 17 defectors by the Congress and JD-S by the former Assembly speaker (K. R. Ramesh Kumar) under the anti-defection law, it allowed them to re-contest in the Assembly by-elections.

"Resignation of the 17 defectors, including 14 from the Congress and three from the JD-S from their Assembly seats led to the fall of the coalition government after its Chief Minister H.D.Kumaraswamy lost the confidence vote in the Lower House for want of majority on July 23, 2019," the party official recalled.

With three defectors and two native Legislators lobbying hard for the six cabinet berths, only one of the party MLAs will be able to get the remaining one post.

Karnataka to be the first state to 'implement NEP'

AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 24: Karnataka would become the first state in the country to implement the new National Education Policy, Deputy Chief Minister Ashwath Narayan said Monday.

The state government is making necessary preparations to make administrative reforms and amend laws to implement to the new National Education Policy (NEP), he added.

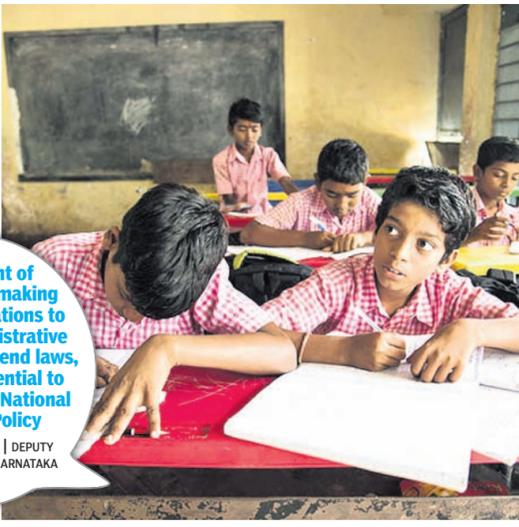
"The government of Karnataka is making all the preparations to bring in administrative reforms and amend laws, which are essential to implement the National Education Policy," Narayan said.

He said the government is waiting for the final recommendations of the high-level taskforce constituted immediately after receiving the draft of the NEP.

"The administrative and legal steps would be taken as soon as the final recommendations are made," said Narayan.

He said the taskforce has already come out with suggestions to implement the new education policy in a phased manner.

Narayan, who is also the Minister for Higher Education, said that Karnataka would become the first state in the country to implement



The government of Karnataka is making all the preparations to bring in administrative reforms and amend laws, which are essential to implement the National Education Policy

The Bangalore University is organising a five-day workshop from August 24 titled 'Highlights and Implementation of National Education Policy, 2020'

educational institutions in the next three years aimed at attaining the goals set by the NEP by 2030.

The state government has set a target of 10 years to achieve the goals mentioned in the NEP, calling it 'Target-2030'.

Meanwhile, the Bangalore University is organising a five-day workshop from Monday to Friday titled 'Highlights and Implementation of National Education Policy, 2020'.

The varsity will offer an electronic certificate to the participants attending all the sessions stretched over five days.

Put JEE, NEET on hold, DMK chief tells Centre

Besides Covid-19, which has wreaked havoc on the nation, many parts of the country were yet to recover from the recent floods, Stalin says

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 24: The Joint Entrance Examination and National Eligibility cum Entrance Test should be postponed until the spread of Covid-19 was brought under control, DMK President MK Stalin Monday urged Union Education Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal.

Besides Covid-19, which has wreaked havoc on the nation, many parts of the country were yet to recover from the recent floods that have ravaged people's livelihoods, he said in a letter to Pokhriyal.

Students and parents are under enormous mental stress, he said, adding that considering the current restrictions on public transportation, the allotted exam centres are not uniformly accessible to all aspirants.

"It will not be possible for students belonging to rural areas and less-privileged sections to reach the exam centres. They will be put under a great disadvantage against their affluent counterparts."

While around 25 lakh students are



expected to sit for this year's NEET and JEE, the National Testing Agency has made it mandatory for the students to give an undertaking that they "are neither Covid-19 positive nor have any symptoms for the same."

However, in light of the fact that most of the infected population in India remains asymptomatic, demanding self declaration from the students does not seem to be effective in any possible way, the Dravidian party chief argued.

If those appearing for the exams contracted the virus, there is "high possibility of another wave of infections" across the country.

"No decision shall be made in haste putting the lives of students at stake. The government shall act, keeping the well-being and future of students in mind."

"In the light of the severe difficulties, I sincerely request you to postpone the JEE, NEET exams until Covid-19 is brought under control," he urged.

SPB is stable, says hospital

AGENCIES

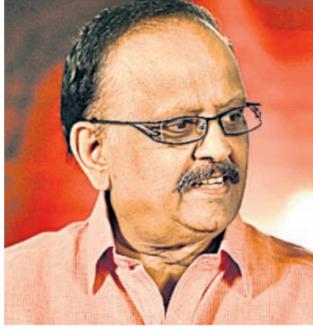
Chennai, August 24: Popular playback singer SP Balasubrahmanyam's fight against Covid continues. He is still on ventilator and Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation support and his current condition is stable, a hospital treating him said here Monday.

The veteran singer "continues to be on ventilator and ECMO support in the Intensive Care Unit," MGM Healthcare's Assistant Director of Medical Services, Dr Anuradha Baskaran said.

Balasubrahmanyam's "current clinical condition is stable and he continues to be closely monitored by our multidisciplinary clinical team," she said in a bulletin.

After issuing a statement that his father has tested negative for the virus and he is stable, the singer's son Charan, later in a video message, came up with an explainer.

Charan, also a filmmaker, said he usually provided updates on his father's health after he had a dis-



cussion with the medical team from the hospital.

"But, unfortunately I am forced to put up a post in the morning," he said, adding regardless of whether his father was "COVID negative or positive" he continued to be on ventilator and ECMO (a heart-lung assistance machine) support.

"He is stable fortunately," he said and hoped that the stability factor would help his early recovery.

The 74-year-old Balasubrahmanyam, hugely popular for his singing skills in several languages, was admitted to MGM Healthcare August 5 after he tested positive for Covid-19.

SP Charan, SPB's son, rubbishes rumours claiming that his father has tested Covid-19 negative

He says that the playback icon is still on life support

Charan issued a video message Monday morning requesting everyone to refrain from rumour-mongering

COIMBATORE PVT HOSPS SHUT DOORS 'ON PREGNANT WOMEN'



AGENCIES

Coimbatore, August 24: Many private hospitals here are refusing to admit pregnant women for delivery, saying they had not taken prior treatment in healthcare facilities, CPI(M) MP, P R Natarajan said Monday.

In a letter to the district Collector K Rajamani, the MP said he has been receiving lots of complaints about some hospitals refusing to admit the women whose deliveries were due soon.

The reason they were giving was that these women had not taken

treatment from the beginning, and, therefore, without knowing the condition, the hospitals may not be in a position to take a risk, he said.

Stating that if pressured to treat such women, the hospitals would say there was non-availability of beds, he said the real reason was that there was no facility to treat coronavirus-infected people in those hospitals.

Considering the issue, the district administration should immediately intervene and solve it besides taking steps to set up COVID-19 wards in private hospitals, too, Natarajan added.

With 5K cases daily, TN's COVID tally inches towards 4 lakh mark

IT WAS JULY 25, TAMIL NADU CROSSED THE TWO LAKH MARK (2,06,737 CASES INCLUDING 6,988 REPORTED ON THAT DAY) AFTER AGGREGATING ONE LAKH CASES JULY 3

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 24: Tamil Nadu Monday reported 5,967 fresh COVID infections as the tally inched towards four lakh cases while death toll touched 6,614 with 97 fatalities.

Of the new cases, Chennai accounted for 1,278 and nearby districts of Chengelpet (306), Kancheepuram (226) and Tiruvallur (320) together logged 852 cases while the remainder was scattered across the state.

Those dead include 92 with co-

morbidities and five had no chronic illnesses. Three women, aged 90, 27 and 23 besides a 35-year-old man were among the latest victims.

With the fresh infections, the state's infection count touched 3,85,352 and might cross the four lakh mark in a few days from now considering over 5,000 new infections daily in recent times.

It was July 25, Tamil Nadu crossed the two lakh mark (2,06,737 cases in-

cluding 6,988 reported on that day) after aggregating one lakh cases July 3.

Monday, as many as 70,023 samples were tested and in total 42,76,640 specimens have been examined.

On the brighter side, the active cases are only 53,282 and 3,25,456 people have so far recovered including 6,129 patients who were discharged from various hospitals Monday.

Has Karna reached its COVID infections peak

AGENCIES

Bangalore, August 24: Karnataka registered 5,938 Covid-19 cases Sunday, a slightly lesser number of infections than other days, raising the state's tally to 2.77 lakh, a health official said.

"As many as 2,77,814 cases have been reported in Karnataka. This includes 1,89,564 discharges. Sunday, 5,938 new positive cases are reported and 4,996 people have been discharged," said Health Commissioner Pankaj Kumar Pandey.

Reflecting the drop in the infections, Karnataka's epicentre for Coronavirus, Bengaluru Urban, has also logged lesser number of cases, 2,126.

However, the total number of cases in the city rose to 1.07 lakh, out of which 34,877 are active.

Among other places, Ballari accounted for 406 infections, followed by Davangere (265), Koppal (256), Shivamogga (246), Kalaburagi (203) Hassan (196), Dharwad (194) and Dakshina Kannada (193).





We want the Metro services to be resumed in Delhi. We don't want the services to be rolled out in the National Capital Region, but they should be restarted in Delhi in a phased manner
ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CM

STUDY INFO

Medication for high blood pressure may improve COVID-19 survival rates, and reduce the severity of novel coronavirus infection, particularly in patients with hypertension, according to a study



of the day quote

The new National Education Policy is among the most important measures the BJP government has implemented during its tenure



RAMESH POKHRIYAL | UNION EDUCATION MINISTER

1 job, 1,000 unemployed. What has been done to the country



RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

The oxygen saturation levels of Shripad Naik, Union Minister of State for Defence and AYUSH, has dropped since Monday morning, and his health parameters will be reviewed in the presence of a team of doctors from the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi



PRAMOD SAWANT | GOA CM

Now, Covid rages in south India

TAMIL NADU AND ANDHRA PRADESH, HOWEVER, HAVE RECORDED MORE THAN THREE LAKH CASES, THOUGH THE RATE OF INCREASE IN CASES IS MUCH HIGHER IN THE LATTER

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 24: After unleashing its fury across the country, the coronavirus pandemic has now waned over northern India and instead cast its shadow on the southern states, with health experts claiming that Kerala could be starting on its second wave while Tamil Nadu successfully passed its peak. Five southern states - Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, and Kerala have cumulatively logged 37.8 per cent of the total confirmed cases, up from 33 per cent last month. Of late, there has been a spurt in cases across all five states.

Of the total 3,106,348 cases in the country, more than 1,174,663 cases are from the five southern states. Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, however, have recorded more than three lakh cases, though the rate of increase in cases is much higher in the latter.

Chennai-based infectious dis-



eases expert Dr Subramanian Swaminathan, however, claimed that it is just a matter of months and the states will be on the other side as their caseload will start dropping very quickly.

Substantiating his claims, he said, "Southern India is already close to its peak but is still not past the peak. Chennai is past its peak, while Bangalore and Hyderabad, Andhra, Tamil Nadu and Telangana are close to the peak."

Dr Swaminathan further said

that the numbers in northern India will start peaking in the near future and the country will probably see a reversal of the trend. Eight states in northern India only account for 18.3 per cent of the total confirmed cases. In the north, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi have logged the maximum cases. While the national capital recorded 1,61,466 cases, neighbouring Uttar Pradesh has 1,87,781 confirmed cases.

According to Dr P. Venkata Krishnan, an Internal Medicines

Specialist, "If we see the graph today, we can safely say that the cases of COVID-19 in northern India are definitely on the decreasing trend. So, states in the north are seeing less than 10,000 active cases per week. But if we see the same data from the south, we can see the number of cases rising in most southern states with more than 30,000 cases per week."

Kerala, which was once widely lauded for flattening the curve, is now witnessing a surge in coronavirus cases. On Monday, it recorded more than 1,000 fresh cases and five deaths, though it has the least number of confirmed cases in southern India. Some experts have alluded this surge to the 'Unlock' phase, ease of travelling and violation of quarantine protocols. According to Dr Shuchin Bajaj, Founder and Director of Ujala Cygnus Healthcare Services, Kerala is starting on its second wave of infections since it was the first state in India to get a case.

COMPENSATION POLICY FOR CORONA VICTIMS' KIN

Top court rejects plea

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: The Supreme Court Monday refused to entertain a plea seeking formulation of a national policy for uniform compensation for families of those who have died due to the coronavirus disease.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan and R S Reddy dismissed the plea saying that every state has a different policy and gives compensation as per its financial power. Advocate Deepak Prakash, appearing for petitioner Hashik Thayikandy, said that all he is asking for is a national policy to be formulated that would provide for uniform compensation throughout the country.

"So many people have died in India due to COVID-19 and the victims are not getting equal compensation," he said. Prakash said that in some cases, the Delhi government has given Rs 1 crore as compensation, while some states are giving Rs 1 lakh. "There is no uniform policy on compensation," he said.

The bench said it is dismissing the plea, after which the counsel sought to withdraw it.

The petitioner, has also sought a direction to the Centre as well as state governments to formulate an appropriate "compensation policy" to provide ex-gratia monetary compensation to the kin of essential workers and healthcare workers who have succumbed to COVID-19.

It has urged the court to seek a status report from state governments on the total number of COVID-19-related casualties and measures taken by authorities for compensating for loss of life due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The petition claimed that a majority of the country's population belong to financially weaker sections, wherein only one person is an earning member and others in the family are solely depend on that income for sustenance.

"The said citizens are also the tax payers of our country. In such a structure, whereby the death rate is only increasing at an alarming rate per day, it is im-



Advocate Deepak Prakash, appearing for petitioner Hashik Thayikandy, said that all he is asking for is a national policy to be formulated that would provide for uniform compensation throughout the country

perative for the state to formulate appropriate guidelines, on compassionate grounds, for ex-gratia compensation to families of the COVID-19 casualties, especially for frontline workers such as doctors, nurses, paramedical staff etc., solely with the purpose of aiding the families for their basic survival and sustenance during this pandemic," the plea said. Pertinently, "the death of an Indian citizen not only impacts his/her own personal life", but it affects the lives of all the members of the family who were dependent "on the sole source of income", it said.

"In the event of a death of such a family member and while regarding the huge unemployment which COVID-19 has encompassed globally, the dependents are with no finances for survival, the plea," filed by Prakash said.

It claimed that the death rate due to COVID-19 is exponentially increasing with each passing hour, especially in cases of frontline workers such as police officials, doctors, paramedical staff, government employees, journalists, thereby rendering the family of the deceased in an extremely vulnerable position.

SHORT TAKES

Khattar tests Covid positive

Chandigarh: Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Monday tested positive for COVID-19, six days after he had attended a meeting with Union Jal Shakti Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, who was later found infected with the virus. "I was tested for novel coronavirus today. My test report has returned positive," Khattar tweeted. He appealed to his colleagues and associates who came in his contact over the last week to get themselves tested. "I request my close contacts to move into strict quarantine immediately". Haryana Assembly Speaker Gian Chand Gupta and two BJP MLAs also tested positive for COVID-19 Monday, two days before the Monsoon Session is set to begin here.

Man arrested

New Delhi: A 21-year-old man was arrested from west Delhi's Jharoda Kalan area for allegedly killing his employer, who had slapped him during an argument over salary reduction as his business was severely hit due to the COVID-19 pandemic, police said Monday. Tasleem, who worked as servant at a dairy owned by 45-year-old Om Prakash, hit his employer on the head with a wooden stick, slit his neck with a knife, put it in a gunny bag and threw it in a well nearby, police said. Tasleem, a native of Shamli in Uttar Pradesh, was earlier working at a hotel in Bahadurgarh and was introduced to Prakash in June by a relative.

Driver held

Kolkata: The driver of an app-based cab has been arrested for allegedly molesting a woman passenger in the southern part of the city, police said Monday. According to the complaint filed by the woman, the driver had misbehaved with her late Sunday night following a quarrel over switching on the car AC, the police said. The woman, who is in her mid-30s, had booked the cab from Behala to Garfa at around 11.30 pm. As per the woman's complaint, the driver after the quarrel tried to take her photographs and then allegedly molested her.

Cop saves woman

Thane: A police sub-inspector from Thane district in Maharashtra saved the life of a 27-year-old woman who had jumped into a lake to commit suicide, an official said Monday. The incident occurred Sunday night in Bhiwandi when immersion of idols of Lord Ganesh was in progress.

COOL JUMP



Youngsters jump into the Ganga to take bath in Kolkata, Monday

PTI PHOTO

Cops suspended for helping gangster

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, August 24: Five Uttar Pradesh Police personnel have been dismissed for allegedly helping gangster Badan Singh Baddo escape from police custody during transit.

The dismissed policemen are head constable Santosh Kumar, constable Sunil Singh, Rajkumar, Omvir Singh and driver Bhupinder Singh. July 31, sub-Inspector Deshraj Tyagi was dismissed from the police service in the same case. March 27, the team of six police personnel was given the task to escort don Baddo to Ghaziabad court for a case hearing. SP Fatehgarh, Anil Kumar Mishra, said, "The route for taking the undertrial to court was pre-decided, but on their return journey to the Fatehgarh jail on March 28, the policemen took Baddo to Meerut-based Mukut Mahal hotel from where the notorious gangster managed to escape."

TRYING TIMES

PANDEMIC HITS WEST BENGAL WEAVERS HARD

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Phulia (WB), August 24: The handlooms in West Bengal's Nadia district have fallen silent at a time when their activity should have been at the peak owing to the upcoming Durga puja.

A handloom machine, locally called 'tant', could be found in every household in Shantipur, Phulia and Samudragarh areas where weaving is the traditional occupation. The weavers of the region once employed around 20,000 workers from north Bengal.

However, the COVID-19 outbreak has hit them so hard that many are now migrating to other parts of the country for jobs. "During this season, weavers used to be very busy and worked for long hours. But the situation is so grim this year due to the COVID-19 outbreak that many are migrating to other states for jobs.



"Only last week, three busloads of young men from the region went to south India to look for jobs," Dilip Basak of Phulia Byabshayee Samity, one of oldest cooperatives in the region with 665 weavers as its members, said Monday.

"Majority of our annual income is generated during the Durga puja season. But because of the pandemic, there is no work due to lack of orders. Our peak business period has been lost," Ashwini Basak of Phulia Tangail Weavers' Cooperative Society said.

This sector employed around 20,000 workers from north Bengal even a few years back but the weavers themselves are now looking for odd jobs to survive, he said.

CBI team visits Mumbai resort

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 24: CBI officials probing Sushant Singh Rajput's death case Monday visited a Mumbai-based resort where the actor is said to have spent a couple of months, and also continued the questioning of the actor's friend and cook at the DRDO guest house here.

Rajput's accountant Rajat Mewati was also called Monday for questioning at the DRDO guest house at Kalina in Santacruz, where the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) sleuths probing the case are staying, an official said.

A CBI team Monday reached the Waterstone Resort in suburban Andheri, where Rajput had apparently spent about two months, for questioning its staff in connection with the probe into his death, according to the official. The probing team went to the resort Sunday also, but left as its staff members were not there.

Meanwhile, Rajput's accountant Mewati, flat-mate Siddharth Pithani and cook Neeraj Singh reached the DRDO guest house for questioning by the CBI, the official said.



The CBI questioned Pithani, Neeraj and Rajput's domestic help Deepesh Sawant Saturday and Sunday also. These three were present in Rajput's house at Mont Blanc Apartments in suburban Bandra when the 34-year-old actor was found hanging in his room June 14. Sunday, the CBI team questioned Pithani, Neeraj and Sawant at the DRDO guest house and later took them to the late actor's residence.

After spending three hours there, the central agency team left the place along with Pithani, Neeraj and Sawant, who were then again taken to the DRDO guest house in the evening for questioning, the official said. Forensic science experts were also part of the CBI team which visited Rajput's residence, the official said.

Sushant's accountant was called Monday for questioning at the DRDO guest house in Santacruz, where the CBI sleuths probing the case are staying

Saturday also, the CBI team accompanied by Pithani, Neeraj and Sawant visited the late actor's house to reconstruct the sequence of events before he was found dead. Friday, the CBI officials had recorded the statements of Pithani and Neeraj. The Supreme Court last week upheld the transfer of an FIR, lodged by Rajput's father in Patna against actor Rhea Chakraborty and others for allegedly abetting his suicide, to the CBI. After Rajput was found hanging in his apartment in June, the Mumbai police registered a case of accidental death.

Later, Rajput's father filed a police complaint in Patna, accusing Chakraborty and her family of abetting the actor's suicide and misappropriating his money.

Bismillah's house demolition stopped

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Varanasi, August 24: Shehnaiz maestra Ustad Bismillah Khan's house, which was being demolished to give way to a commercial complex, has been stopped, the Varanasi Development Authority (VDA) said.

A team of VDA comprising zonal officer and junior engineer had visited the maestro's house in the Hadaha Sarai locality last week after it came to light that a family member has started the demolition for commercial gain.

The demolition activity was stopped amid calls for conservation of the house as a 'national cultural heritage'. According to the VDA inspection report, the room on the second floor was demolished by Mohammad Shiftain, the grandson of the legendary musician and son of late Mehtab Hussain. Presently, Shiftain resides in the house.

It also came to light that there was a property dispute among the family members. Bismillah Khan had five sons.

12 yrs after 26/11, youngest survivor seeks promised aid

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, August 24: A 9-year old girl, who was shot in her leg during the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks in 2008 and dreamt of becoming an IPS officer to crush terrorism, is now running from pillar to post for sheer survival.

On the verge of being thrown out on the streets due to financial constraints, the survivor -- Devika Natwarlal Rotawan, now 21 -- has filed a petition in Bombay High Court against the alleged apathy of the Maharashtra government for not extending the aid that was promised to her family.

The prime prosecution eyewitness in the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, it was the plucky girl's telling testimony against Ajmal Amir Kasab that finally led to his hanging on November 21, 2012 in Pune's Yerawada Central Jail.

It is now 12 years since that harrowing night -- when she was at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus with her father Natwarlal and brother Jayesh -- when Pakistani terrorists struck. She was in the main hall of the train terminus waiting to catch a train to visit her brother Bharat living in Pune when all hell broke loose at around 9.50 pm as the terrorists fired indiscriminately and



hurled grenades at passengers.

As the terrified Rotawans attempted to escape, a bullet from the terrorist's Ak-47 rifle pierced her right leg and she collapsed unconscious and bleeding. Much later,

Devika woke up in hospital and over the next six months, she underwent six surgeries and required months of post-operative care to help her walk normally.

In her plea, filed through promi-

nent New Delhi-based lawyer Utsav Bains, she said that subsequently, many central and state government officials visited her tiny tenement in south Mumbai, learnt that her father did not have a permanent source of income and the family's financial condition was very poor.

"At that time, I was promised a home under the EWS quota and financial help for education, etc, but the monetary compensation of Rs. 3.5 lakh was spent on my medical and post-operative care," Devika said.

Devika said in the petition that she and her family got nothing as promised, besides the medical ex-

penses and the small compensation that was spent on her medical care. She said her father is aged and bedridden, lost his job recently due to the corona pandemic lockdown, her brother Jayesh is also facing many serious medical issues and unemployed, while the Pune-based Bharat has severed links with the family.

"The worst is that the landlord of the tenement in Bandra east is now losing patience as we have not paid the rent for over one year. I studied in the IES New English School, Bandra east, and did my HSC from Siddharth College this year," Devika said.



On this day, last year, we lost Shri Arun Jaitley ji. I miss my friend a lot. Arun ji diligently served India. His wit, intellect, legal acumen and warm personality were legendary

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

HIMACHAL REARING ENDANGERED HORSES

With constant efforts, the Himachal Pradesh government says that it has managed to conserve the endangered Chamurthi horse species known as the 'ship of the cold desert'



of the day quote

The government of Karnataka is making all the preparations to bring in administrative reforms and amend laws, which are essential to implement the National Education Policy

C N ASHWATH NARAYAN | DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER OF KARNATAKA

There is a spurt of crime in the state like rape of a Dalit minor in Sitapur, murder of a young man and breaking his son's hand for refusing to do bonded labour in Chitrakoot, and double murder in Gorakhpur. Is this the Ram rajya of the government? Strict action should be taken against culprits, this is the demand of BSP

MAYAWATI | BSP PRESIDENT

In Tamil Nadu, the DMK has been a sheltering ground for people not working in the interest of the nation. You should see to it that we give a befitting reply to the people who are working against the interest of the nation

J P NADDA | BJP NATIONAL PRESIDENT

SHORT TAKES

Bihar flood situation stable

Patna: The flood situation remained stable in Bihar for the second consecutive day and the number of people hit by the deluge is 83.62 lakh across 16 districts, the Disaster Management Department said Monday. The number of flood victims and affected areas remained the same since Saturday, the department's bulletin said adding that 83,62,451 people in 1,333 panchayats of 130 blocks are reeling under the impact of the calamity.

Central team to visit Assam

Guwahati: A six-member central team would arrive in Assam Wednesday to assess the damage caused by the monsoon floods that affected 57 lakh people and killed at least 113 people between May 22 and August 20, officials said Monday.

Bengal Assembly session in Sept

Kolkata: A session of the West Bengal Assembly will be held next month with all COVID-19 safety norms in place, official as well as assembly sources said Monday. The state government has sent a proposal for resuming the assembly either from the first or the second week of September, a senior government official said, adding due precautionary measures will be ensured for conduct of the session keeping in mind spread of coronavirus in the state.

No hard copies in Parl session

New Delhi: Hard copies of ordinances will not be circulated among MPs in the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament to check the spread of COVID-19 and they will be given digitised version of the documents, the Lok Sabha Secretariat said Monday. A number of ordinances promulgated by the government are expected to be taken up by Parliament in the upcoming session. The Lok Sabha Secretariat has been making necessary arrangements for holding the session while ensuring social distancing norms. Sources said the schedule of the session has not been finalised yet, but it is unlikely to start before the second week of September.

'Metro trains may resume from Sept 1'

METRO TRAIN SERVICES WERE SUSPENDED IN LATE MARCH TO COMBAT THE SPREAD OF CORONAVIRUS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: The government is likely to allow resumption of Metro train services in the 'Unlock 4' phase beginning September 1, but schools and colleges may not reopen anytime soon, officials said Monday.

Bars, which are so far not allowed to reopen, may be permitted to sell liquor over the counter for takeaway.

Metro rail services may be allowed from September 1 when the 'Unlock 4' phase in the graded reopening from the coronavirus-induced lockdown will begin, an official said. States will, however, take the final call on reopening the rapid transport networks depending on the coronavirus situation there. Metro services were suspended in late March to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus, which has infected more than 31 lakh people in the country so far. The official said there will be no re-

opening of schools and colleges immediately, but deliberations are underway on whether to allow reopening of higher educational institutions such as universities, IITs and IIMs. No decision has been taken on the matter yet, the official added. There is almost no possibility of allowing cinema halls to reopen from September 1 as it will not be commercially viable for filmmakers or cinema hall owners to operate following social distancing norm, another official said.

In the 'Unlock 4' guidelines, the central government will only mention about prohibited activities and the rest can resume. The state governments will take a final call on additional activities that should continue to remain prohibited during the 'Unlock 4', the official said. The Unlock 4 guidelines is expected to be issued later this week. The strict enforcement of lockdown in containment zones will continue across India. As of now, among the prohibited activities are Metro rail



services, cinema halls, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, auditoriums, assembly halls and similar places. Social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious functions and other large congregations are also likely to remain prohibited next month. The Ministry of Home Affairs Saturday issued Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) for international travel on non-scheduled commercial flights under the Vande Bharat Mission and bilateral 'Air Transport Bubble' arrangements.

Accordingly, persons desirous to travel to India on Vande Bharat flights, will register themselves with the Indian missions in the country where they are stranded or residing, along with necessary details as prescribed by Ministry of External Affairs.

On Saturday, the Centre has asked all states to ensure that there should be no restrictions on inter-state and intra-state movement of persons and goods during the ongoing Unlock-3 phase.

In a communication to chief secretaries of all states and Union Territories, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla said there were reports that local level restrictions on movement are being imposed by various districts and states. Drawing attention to the Unlock 3 guidelines, Bhalla said such restrictions are creating problems in inter-state movement of goods and services and are impacting supply chains resulting in disruption in economic activity and employment.

SC declines plea for exam centres abroad

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 24: The Supreme Court Monday declined a plea for directions to the Centre and the National Testing Agency (NTA) for setting up NEET exam centres abroad for the benefit of students in foreign countries in the backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic.

A bench comprising Justices L Nageswara Rao, Hemant Gupta, and S Ravindra Bhat asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to discuss with ministries concerned whether students who wish to visit India to sit in the NEET exam could be accommodated on the Vande Bharat Mission flights.

The court also asked Mehta to explore the possibility that aspirants based out of the Middle East countries were permitted to board such flights.

The bench also noted that the incoming students are permitted to approach the state governments



concerned for relaxations in quarantine periods. According to the rules, people arriving in India from abroad are required to undergo 14-day quarantine in the interest of public health.

The Supreme Court orally directed Mehta to inform the ministries concerned that these students may be allowed to come back to take the exam. Mehta contended before the bench that the issue could be taken care of, subject to quarantine requirements and that they establish that they were coming for the exam. The top court told the petitioners' counsel that he could ask his clients to plan their return in the backdrop of quarantine requirements.

Building collapses in Maha, 70 feared trapped



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 24: Seventeen persons were injured after a five-storeyed residential building collapsed in Maharashtra's Raigad district Monday, police said. Around 70 people are feared trapped in the debris after the building, which

was around 10 years old, collapsed at Kajalpura in Mahad tehsil around 7 pm, an official said.

There were around 45 flats in the building, the official said, adding 25 persons have been rescued and shifted to a local hospital at Mahad, which is around 170 km from Mumbai. Teams of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been moved to the spot for rescue operations.

Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray spoke to the district officials and asked them to expedite the rescue and relief work, another official said.

A viral video of the collapse showed a plume of dust rising from where the building had stood. Another videos showed police trying to control several onlookers gathered at the collapse site.

JOY OF TOGETHERNESS



Pigeons flying at revered Hazratbal Shrine housing the holy Relic of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on the banks of Nigeen Lake in Srinagar Monday

'SOPs for resuming shooting applicable to all media production'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: The standard operating procedures (SOPs) for resuming shooting of films and TV programmes are applicable to all media production, including web series, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry said Monday.

The ministry's clarification comes a day after it announced the SOPs for resuming shooting of films and TV programmes.

It said the guiding principles and SOPs on preventive measures for media production to contain the spread of COVID-19 are applicable to "all media production including the shooting of films, television production, web series and all forms of content creation in the electronic and film medium".

The guiding principles and

Uproar in Rajasthan Assembly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, August 24: Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore was Monday briefly barred from taking part in the proceedings of the Rajasthan Assembly after he got into a heated argument with Speaker C P Joshi.

At the Speaker's request, the House approved by voice vote a proposal for Rathore's removal for the remainder of the session. However, the House withdrew the motion later in the day after the BJP legislator expressed regret over his behaviour. The House was adjourned sine die in the evening after passing 13 Bills.

Rathore had argued with the Speaker complaining that Opposition members were not allowed enough time to speak on the Bills. BJP members had also trooped into the Well of the House, shouting slogans. Amid the din, the House was briefly adjourned four times.

During the discussion on the Rajasthan Rehabilitation of Beggars or Indigents (Amendment) Bill,



2020, the Speaker asked BJP MLA Madan Dilawar to confine himself to the Bill, saying it was not a general debate. When BJP MLA Kiran Maheshwari was also asked to stick to the Bill, Rathore intervened, asking the Speaker to let the members speak. The Speaker then asked Opposition members to return to their seats. When Rathore challenged the Chair, the Speaker asked Parliamentary Affairs Minister Shanti Dhariwal to move a proposal for his removal from the

House. Opposition members continued their protest and squatted in the Well of the House even after the Congress-dominated House passed the motion. The Speaker then suggested that Rathore should leave the House for two minutes and he will ask the ruling party to move another proposal to bring him back. But the BJP MLAs continued with the protest. Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria said the MLAs had no intention of violating the Speaker's ruling, but they had not been given any time to examine the five Bills introduced by the government Monday. "No member has studied them, how can they be discussed?" he said. The Opposition then staged a walk out.

While the opposition members were not present in the House, Speaker C P Joshi said the Question Hour had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. He said other state assemblies too had followed the same practice during the pandemic. Joshi said another session can be called when the situation improves.

GUWAHATI GETS INDIA'S LONGEST RIVER ROPEWAY

It will help in not only promoting tourism but also make commuting easier

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, August 24: Guwahati Monday got the country's longest river ropeway that will connect two banks of the Brahmaputra.

Built at a cost of ₹56 crore, the ropeway will cover a distance of 1.8 km, and bring down the travelling time between north Guwahati and the central part of the city to eight minutes.

It will help in not only promoting tourism but also make commuting easier, state Finance and Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said after inaugurating the ropeway.

Thirty passengers can travel in a cabin of the ropeway, the work for which began in 2003. "The inauguration of the ropeway is a golden day in the modern history of Guwahati, in particular,



and Assam as a whole. There are many long ropeways on mountains but the one over the Brahmaputra is the longest river ropeway in the country," said Sarma, the local MLA.

"I am proud and happy to inaugurate the Guwahati Ropeway, the seeds of which were sown when I was the minister of the Guwahati Development Department (GDD)," he said.



SOPs for resuming shooting of films and TV programmes included measures such as social distancing and mandatory use of face covers or masks for cast and crew, except for actors in front of the camera.

The I&B ministry SOPs stated that physical distancing of at least six feet must be followed as far as feasible at all locations at all times, while sitting, standing in queues, among others.

Aspects such as scenes, sequences, set-ups, camera locations, positions of various crew members, seating arrangements, food and catering arrangements, staggered meal timings should be planned while giving due consideration to physical distancing norms, according to the I&B ministry document.

Govt mulls 'Mission COVID Suraksha' with ₹3K cr corpus

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: To accelerate the process of developing and manufacturing safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines in the country that can be easily accessible and affordable for the public, a 'Mission COVID Suraksha' has been proposed to be set up with a corpus of nearly ₹3,000 crore, sources said.

Piloted by the Department of Biotechnology, the proposed mission will focus on end-to-end vaccine development from clinical trial stage to regulatory facilitation to manufacturing, sources added.

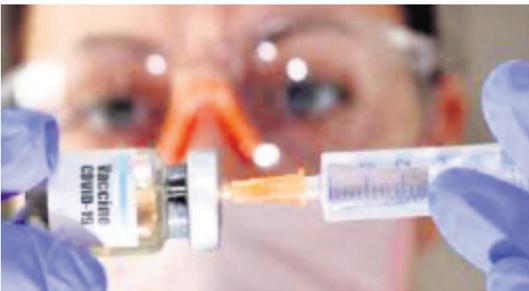
The aim of the mission is to accelerate the development of at least six vaccine candidates and ensure that they are licensed and introduced in market for emergency use at the earliest, they said. While there is no official word on the pro-

posed mission as yet, multiple officials confirmed that a proposal has been made. A senior official said this is still in 'a proposal stage'.

According to the draft proposal, the mission has been proposed to have a timeline of 12-18 months and a budget of approximately ₹3,000 crore.

The proposed mission will also look to ensure that sufficient volumes are manufactured to meet India's COVID-19 vaccine requirement and to introduce it in public health systems of the Ministry of Health post the approval by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI), to combat further spread of COVID-19 infection.

While several efforts already underway have helped in quickly putting together best groups and for encouraging them to accelerate the



COVID-19 vaccine development, it is now imperative that the vaccine development and manufacturing is taken up "in a mission mode and not in a project mode", the draft proposal said. "Efforts till now for a vaccine development have been fragmented," it noted. "Therefore, to ensure a

steady supply of vaccines in the next 12-15 months, there is a need to establish a mission with an end-to-end focus from pre-clinical development through clinical trials, manufacturing and scale-up development of the prioritised vaccine candidates that would consolidate

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

According to the draft proposal, the mission has been proposed to have a timeline of 12-18 months and a budget of approximately ₹3,000 crore

The aim of the mission is to accelerate the development of at least six vaccine candidates and ensure that they are licensed and introduced in market for emergency use at the earliest

all available and funded resources towards a warpath for accelerated product development," it said.

Accordingly, it is proposed to launch the Indian COVID-19 vaccine development programme -- 'Mission COVID Suraksha', it said. According to the draft, the national

mission will work towards bringing to the citizens of the country a safe, efficacious, affordable and accessible COVID vaccine at the earliest with a focus on 'AtmaNirbhar Bharat' and also fulfil the commitment of serving not just the country but the entire globe. The proposed mission will work on an "aggressive integrated plan of action" for timely availability of resources, facilities and capabilities to avoid delays in development pathway, availability of expertise and technologies required for market entry and meeting the demand, the draft proposal said. It will also support multiple vaccine candidates in the pipeline to increase the probability of a successful vaccine entering the market, pre-planning to avoid bottlenecks and delays and ensuring safety and efficacy is not compromised during acceleration.



Over the coming weeks, the President will be sharing additional details about his plans through policy-focused speeches
NIKKI HALEY | FORMER US ENVOY TO THE UN

ASTEROID HEADING TOWARDS EARTH

NASA has said that an asteroid identified as 2018VP1 is heading towards planet Earth and is expected to pass near Earth on the eve of November 2, the day of the US presidential election



of the day quote

Ziaur Rahman was involved in the killings of the Father of the Nation, four national leaders...he killed army personnel through coups one after another. Khaleda Zia just did the same thing after coming to power
SHEIKH HASINA | BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER

The right to freedom of religion or belief is firmly entrenched in international human rights law and is a cornerstone for inclusive, prosperous and peaceful societies
ANTONIO GUTERRES | UN SECRETARY GENERAL

The distance we have covered in the defence industry has recently contributed to the achievement of many strategic successes both within and outside our borders
RECEP TAYYIP ERDOGAN | TURKISH PRESIDENT

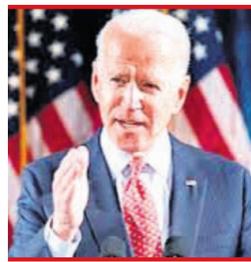
Will shut down economy if scientists advice: Biden

Atlanta, August 24: Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden said he would follow public health advisers' advice if they called for a national shutdown should he take office and the coronavirus had not abated.

"I would be prepared to do whatever it takes to save lives. We cannot get the country moving until we control the virus," Biden said in an interview broadcast Sunday night on ABC News.

Asked specifically whether he would push a national shutdown if scientists said it was necessary, Biden replied: "I would shut it down." The former Vice President has previously called for the nation's Governors to impose mask mandates in their states, effectively a national mask mandate. But when he made that call, Biden avoided saying he'd attempt to use a nationally applicable executive order himself.

The former Vice President's remarks came as part of his first joint interview with vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris. The pair accepted their party's nominations during a virtual convention last week. On Monday,



DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE JOE BIDEN SAID HE WOULD FOLLOW PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISERS' ADVICE IF THEY CALLED FOR A NATIONAL SHUTDOWN

THE FORMER VICE PRESIDENT HAS PREVIOUSLY CALLED FOR THE NATION'S GOVERNORS TO IMPOSE MASK MANDATES IN THEIR STATES, EFFECTIVELY A NATIONAL MASK MANDATE

Republicans begin their convention to nominate Trump and Vice President Mike Pence for a second term. Biden laughed when asked about Trump's recent assertion that the only way he'd lose was if the election were rigged, and the Democratic challenger dismissed any notions that Trump wouldn't leave the White House voluntarily if he loses.

"The American people will not let that happen," he said. "No one's going to allow that to happen." Both Biden and Harris downplayed their bitter debate encounter last summer during the Democratic primary. Harris, a California senator, leveled deeply personal criticism against Biden for his opposition in

the 1970s to federally mandated busing to desegregate public schools and remarks he'd made about having worked amicably alongside racist senators when he first came to Washington.

The first Black woman on a major party national ticket, Harris said she and Biden are on the same page on race amid the nation's ongoing reckoning with systemic racism.

"There are real racial disparities that are rooted in systemic racism," Harris said, noting wealth gaps and the disproportionate effects of COVID-19 on Black and Hispanic communities. Biden, she said, "is addressing these truths, he speaks these truths."

Biden said, looking back, he un-

derstands how Harris, who was among the minority students bused in the 1970s, would criticize him so harshly. But he also said she and others may not have known his full record on civil rights. He said he, as a 77-year-old white man, cannot understand her lived experiences and that she, a 55-year-old daughter of Indian and Jamaican immigrants, can't understand his.

But, he said, they "have the same value set" and are "on same exact page about what the possibilities are right now." Likewise, they downplayed policy differences that emerged when they were primary rivals, especially on health care. Biden has consistently backed adding a "public option" to existing private insurance markets. Harris signed on to Sen. Bernie Sanders' bill that would create a single-payer government insurance system to replace private insurance.

"I signed on to bills that were about great ideas to fix the problem," Harris told ABC, arguing that she and Biden "are completely aligned on ... making sure everyone has health care." Biden called any differences "tactical" but said, "We both believe that health care is a right, not a privilege."

14 killed, 75 hurt in twin bomb attacks



Manila, August 24: Muslim militants allied with the Islamic State group set off a powerful motorcycle explosive followed by a suicide bombing that together killed 14 people Monday, many of them soldiers, in the worst extremist attack in the Philippines this year, military officials said.

At least 75 soldiers, police and civilians were wounded in the midday bombings in Jolo town in southern Sulu province, regional military commander Lt. Gen. Corleto Vinluan said. The bombings were staged as the government grapples with the highest number of coronavirus infections in Southeast Asia.

Vinluan said most of the victims, including children, were killed and wounded in the first attack, when a bomb attached to a motorcycle exploded near two parked army trucks in front of a grocery store and computer shop in Jolo.

"It was a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device which exploded while our soldiers were on a marketing run," Vinluan told reporters.

A second blast, apparently from a female suicide attacker, occurred about an hour later and killed the bomber, a soldier, a police commander and wounded several others, a military report said. It said the suspected bomber walked out of a snack shop, approached soldiers who were securing a Roman Catholic cathedral and "suddenly blew herself up."

Snipers were deployed in the area to guard against more bombers as the victims were carried to an

PHILIPPINES VIOLENCE

Muslim militants allied with the Islamic State group set off a powerful motorcycle explosive followed by a suicide bombing that together killed 14 people Monday

At least 75 soldiers, police and civilians were wounded in the midday bombings in Jolo town in southern Sulu province

ambulance. A third unexploded bomb was reportedly found in a public market. Jolo was immediately placed in a security lockdown by troops and police. Presidential spokesman Harry Roque condemned the bombings "in the strongest possible terms." Initial pictures seen by The Associated Press showed soldiers carrying a man from the scene of the explosion near an army truck while another victim lay on the road. The wreckage of a motorcycle and body parts were seen on the road.

The first bombing was carried out near a town plaza and the cathedral in the predominantly Muslim and poverty-stricken province.

The country's southern region is home to minority Muslims in the largely Roman Catholic nation and has been the scene of decades of Muslim separatist unrest, particularly in remote island provinces such as Jolo.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks, but the military blamed an Abu Sayyaf militant commander, Mundi Sawadjaan, who has been linked to suicide bombings in recent years in Sulu.

Big California wildfires burn on, claims 7 lives

Scotts Valley (US), August 24: Three massive wildfires chewed through parched Northern California landscape as firefighters raced to dig breaks and make other preparations ahead of a frightening weather system packing high winds and more of the lightning that sparked the huge blazes.

There were hundreds of other wildfires burning Sunday across the state and nearly 250,000 people were under evacuation orders and warnings. The death toll from the fires reached 7 after authorities battling a big fire in the Santa Cruz Mountains south of San Francisco announced the discovery of the body of a 70-year-old man in a remote area called Last Chance.

He had been reported missing and police had to use a helicopter to reach the area of about 40 off-the-

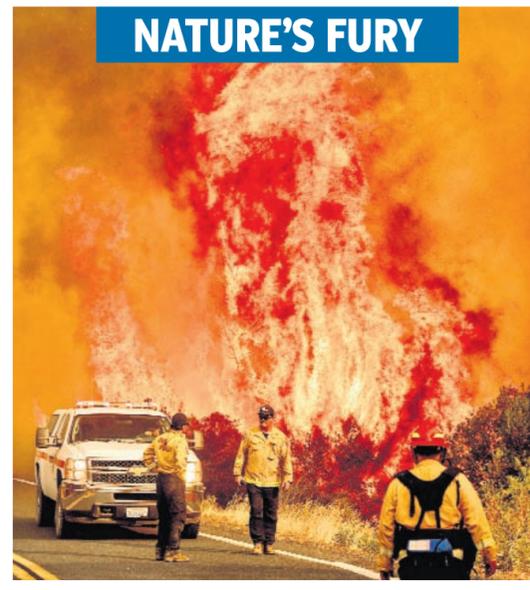
grid homes at the end of a windy, steep dirt road north of the city of Santa Cruz.

The area was under an evacuation order and Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department Chief Deputy Chris Clark said the discovery of the man's body served as a reminder of how important it was for residents to evacuate from fire danger zones.

"This is one of the darkest periods we've been in with this fire," he said. California over the last week has been hit by 650 wildfires across the state, many sparked by more than 12,000 lightning strikes recorded since August 15.

There are 14,000 firefighters, 2,400 engines and 95 aircraft battling the fires.

The Santa Cruz fire is one of three "complexes", or groups of fires, burning on all sides of the San Francisco Bay Area. All were started by lightning.



Flames from the LNU Lightning Complex fires leap above Butts Canyon Road Sunday, as firefighters work to contain the blaze in unincorporated Lake County, Calif.

SHORT TAKES

13 dead in Peru nightclub raid

Lima: At least 13 people were killed and six others injured following a botched police raid at a nightclub in Peru's capital Lima, authorities said. In a statement Sunday, the Interior Ministry said that about 120 people had gathered for a party inside the Thomas Restobar in the Los Olivos district Saturday, despite the current ban on social gatherings due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, reports Xinhua news agency. Around 9 p.m., "personnel from the National Police's Green Squad were alerted by the neighbours" to the illegal gathering.

10 killed in Pak road accident

Islamabad: A head-on collision between a passenger van and a mini truck claimed the lives of 10 people and injured 20 others in Pakistan's Balochistan province. The accident took place Sunday at the Karachi-Quetta Highway when the van carrying over 20 passengers was hit by the truck with two people aboard coming from the opposite direction, reports Xinhua news agency.

Austria expels Russian diplomat

Berlin: Austria said Monday it is expelling a Russian diplomat, a decision that Russia said was "unfounded" and would draw a response from Moscow. The Austrian Foreign Ministry confirmed that a diplomat at the Russian Embassy is being ordered to leave, saying only that his behavior was not compatible with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the Austria Press Agency reported. Austrian daily newspaper Kronen Zeitung reported that the Russian diplomat has until September 1 to leave.

Auckland extends nCoV restrictions

Auckland: The COVID-19 restrictions in New Zealand's largest city of Auckland will continue at the current Alert Level 3 until Sunday night, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announced Monday. The rest of the country other than Auckland will remain at Alert Level 2, Ardern said while announcing the government decision after a Cabinet meeting. Previous decisions required Auckland to remain in Alert Level 3 until Wednesday with the rest of the country staying in Alert Level 2.

CHINA LAUNCHES ADVANCED WARSHIP FOR PAK NAVY

Beijing/Islamabad, August 24: China has launched first of the four advanced naval warships it is building for Pakistan, amid deepening defence ties between the two all-weather allies.

The launching ceremony for the first warship was held at the Hudong Zhonghua Shipyard in Shanghai Sunday. Pakistan-China defence ties turn a new chapter with the launch of the first ship of Type-054 class frigate, Pakistan's state-run APP news agency reported.

The Type-054 class, equipped with the latest surface, subsurface, anti-air weapons, combat management system, and sensors will be one of the technologically advanced surface platforms of the Pakistan Navy fleet.

NORTH'S KIM JONG-UN IN COMA, CLAIMS SOUTH KOREAN DIPLOMAT

Seoul, August 24: Fuelling rumours about the failing health condition of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, a former aide to South Korea's late President Kim Dae-jung, Chang Song-min has claimed that Kim is in a coma and that's why his sister Kim Yo-jong has been given powers.

"I assess him to be in a coma, but his life has not ended. A complete succession structure has not been formed, so Kim Yo-jong is being brought to the fore as the vacuum cannot be maintained for a prolonged period," Chang said in an interview according to a report by South Korean media.

Reiterating his earlier claims, where he has said that Kim Jon Un is bedridden and unable to rule.



Chang has claimed to have gotten the information from a source in China. He even went on to say that photos of Kim released by the North Korean media in recent months were fake. Earlier, South Korea's intelligence agency had claimed that Kim Yo-jong, the sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, is serving as his "de facto second-in-command" but has not necessarily been designated his successor, a South Korean lawmaker said Thursday.

US allows emergency blood plasma treatment for COVID-19 patients

Washington, August 24: The US health watchdog has given emergency authorisation for the use of blood plasma to treat coronavirus patients in the country, saying the benefits of the treatment outweighed any potential risks.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) said Sunday that over 70,000 patients in the country had been treated with convalescent plasma, which is made using the blood of people who have recovered from coronavirus infections.

President Donald Trump welcomed the move by the FDA on the eve of the four-day Republican National Convention which will renominate him to be the party's candidate in the November 3 presi-



dential election. "Today I am pleased to make a truly historic announcement in our battle against the China virus that will save countless lives," Trump said at a White House briefing, referring to the coronavirus that causes COVID-19. "Today's action will dramatically increase access to this treatment," he said, a day after he accused the FDA of impeding the rollout of vaccines and therapeutics for political reasons. In a tweet Saturday, Trump said "the deep state, or whoever, at the

FDA is making it very difficult for drug companies to get people in order to test the vaccines and therapeutics."

"Obviously, they are hoping to delay the answer until after [the US presidential election]," he said.

The FDA said in a news release said it has issued an emergency use authorisation (EUA) for investigational convalescent plasma for the treatment of COVID-19 in hospitalised patients as part of the agency's ongoing efforts to fight COVID-19. Based on scientific evidence available, the FDA concluded, that this product may be effective in treating COVID-19 and that the "known and potential benefits of the product outweigh the known and potential risks of the product."

Taliban delegation due in Pak ahead of intra-Afghan talks

A TALIBAN DELEGATION WILL BE LANDING IN PAKISTAN TO DISCUSS THE WAY FORWARD TOWARDS THE AFGHAN PEACE PROCESS

Islamabad, August 24: Amid the extending wait in the initiation of the all-important intra-Afghan dialogue, a Taliban delegation will be landing in Pakistan to discuss the way forward towards the Afghan peace process.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, head of the Afghan Taliban's political office in Doha, will lead the high-level delegation.

It will meet senior leaders of the Imran Khan-led government. A high-level delegation from the Political Office of the Islamic Emirates of Afghanistan, led by its Deputy Political Director and Head of the Political Office, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, left

for Pakistan Monday on the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"The delegation of the Islamic Emirates will meet with senior Pakistani officials to discuss the Afghan peace process," maintained Suhail Shaheen, spokesperson for the Taliban. Shaheen added that the delegation will discuss "Afghan refugees in Pakistan and the two neighbouring countries to facilitate public movement and trade and other related issues", will be part of the discussion.

The visit of the Taliban comes at a time when intra-Afghan dialogue process is banking on the release of all the Taliban prisoners in Afghan jails, as announced by the Ashraf Ghani led Afghan government after



the Loya Jirga meeting. Shaheen has maintained that the intra-Afghan dialogue can start within a week of the release of all prisoners, adding that this is as per commitment in the Doha peace deal. Pakistan's role in the overall

peace negotiations has been pivotal as it was Islamabad that helped restart the dialogue process after a gap of at least 10 months in October 2019 after US President Donald Trump called off the peace talks, citing militant group continues attacks against the US-led foreign forces. The visit also holds importance in context of the recent endorsement by Pakistan on adding all individuals, entities, organisations and their affiliate groups, listed in the UN Security Council (UNSC) sanction list through a sanctuary order. The addition included important members of the Taliban and the Haqqani Network.

Pakistan's step would now impose a legal binding to freeze all assets, bank accounts, travel bans

and arms embargo against the groups and individuals.

It is expected that the Taliban delegation will be raising their concerns over Islamabad's decision and may seek leverage in barter to compensations or considerations in their stance on initiation of the intra-Afghan dialogue.

Taliban maintain that their remaining 400 prisoners in Afghan jails needs to be released first before materialization of the first round of intra-Afghan dialogue, which would be held in Doha.

On the other hand, the Afghan government has called on the Taliban to announce ceasefire first before release of prisoners, a demand the militant group is not ready to accept.

business



Goa's economy presently is at its most precarious position due to the total collapse of the tourism sector in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and is unlikely to recover for the next 18 months

PUTI GAONKAR | PRESIDENT, GMPF

AXIS BANK CUTS STAKE PURCHASE

Axis Bank has reduced the size of the stake that it plans to buy in Max Life Insurance to 17% from 29%. The private-sector lender's move comes months after media reports said the deal, announced in April, ran into a regulatory roadblock over certain clauses in the agreement



of the day quote

Toll collections were temporarily soft due to frequent and persisting lockdowns during the quarter. With the phase-wise relaxations being implemented now, the normalcy is expected soon

VIRENDR D MHAISKAR | CHAIRMAN AND MD, IRB INFRA

The iMAXX Telematics solution is based on next generation telematics technology. It is an intelligent fleet telematics solution which deploys cutting-edge telemetry technology

JALAJ GUPTA | BUSINESS HEAD, CV, M&M

An analysis has found that Australia's effective unemployment will top 13% again in the coming months due to the COVID-19 pandemic

JOSH FRYDENBERG | TREASURER OF AUSTRALIA

'GST reduced tax rates, doubled taxpayer base'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: The Finance Ministry Monday said the GST regime has reduced the rate at which people have to pay tax, helped increase compliance and doubled the taxpayer base to 1.24 crore.

In a series of tweets Monday, also the first death anniversary of former Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, the ministry said before goods and services tax (GST) was introduced, the combination of value-added tax (VAT), excise, sales tax and their cascading effect resulted in high standard tax rate of up to 31%.

"It is now widely acknowledged that GST is both consumer and taxpayer-friendly. While the high tax rates of the pre-GST era acted as a disincentive to paying tax, the lower rates under GST helped to increase tax compliance," the ministry said.

The number of assessee covered by the GST at the time of its inception was about 65 lakh. Now the assessee base exceeds 1.24 crore.

GST, which subsumed 17 local levies and 13 cesses, was rolled out July 1, 2017. Jaitley held the finance portfolio in the first term of the Modi government since 2014 and was the finance minister when the GST regime came into force.

"As we remember Arun Jaitley today, let us acknowledge the key role he played in the implementation of GST, which will go down in history as one of the most fundamental landmark reforms in Indian taxation," the Ministry tweeted.



In a series of tweets, the Finance Ministry said before GST was introduced, the combination of VAT, excise, sales tax and their cascading effect resulted in high standard tax rate

The multiple markets across India, with each state charging a different rate of tax, led to huge inefficiencies and costs of compliance.

"GST has reduced the rate at which people have to pay tax. The revenue neutral rate as per the RNR (Revenue Neutral Rate) Committee was 15.3%. Compared to this, the weighted GST rate at present, according to the RBI, is only 11.6%," the ministry said.

Businesses with an annual turnover of up to Rs 40 lakh are GST exempt. Initially, this limit was Rs 20 lakh. Additionally, those with a turnover of up to Rs 1.5 crore can opt for the Composition Scheme and pay only 1 per cent tax.

For services, businesses with turnover of up to Rs 20 lakh in a year are GST exempt. A service provider having turnover of up to Rs 50 lakh in a year can opt for composition scheme for services and pay only 6% tax.

"Once GST was implemented, the tax rate on a large number of items was brought down. As of now, the 28% rate is almost solely restricted to sin and luxury items. Out of a total of about 230 items in the 28% slab, about 200 items have been shifted to lower slabs," the ministry said.

13.2 MTPA steel plant to come up soon: JSW

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: JSW Group chairman Sajjan Jindal Monday said that company's integrated steel plant project will come up soon at Jatadhar in Jagatsinghpur district. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Sajjan Jindal, MD of the JSW Group interacted through videoconference.

The plant will have a capacity of 13.2 MTPA. The state government has already allocated land, water and power for the proposed project. Jindal said that the project is being fast-tracked to begin at the earliest.

The Chief Minister stressed on maximum value addition of the available resources within Odisha so as to accelerate job creation and revenue generation. As Patnaik sought to know about the projects of JSW in Odisha, Jindal said that JSW is fully committed to all its projects in the state. He expressed his satisfaction on the support of the state government in providing all the necessary support for its various industrial projects.

Jindal also said that the com-

pany is tying up with IIM Sambalpur to create JSW Centre for Development Studies for the state in the near future. He added that the company has plans to invest over Rs 1 lakh crore in the mineral-rich state in next 10 years.

JSW Steel will also establish a 100-bed hospital and a school at Koida in Sundargarh district in a PPP mode with an objective to develop mining areas for the benefits of the local people. With the full support of the state government, these development projects (in western Odisha) will be established soon.

Chief Secretary Asit Tripathy, Principal Secretary Steel & Mines, Principal Secretary Industries Hemant Sharma, CMD IPICOL, Secretary to CM (S-T) also participated in the discussion.

CM Naveen Patnaik stressed on maximum value addition of the available resources in state so as to accelerate job creation and revenue generation

ADANI GROUP IN TALKS TO BUY OUT GVK IN MIAL



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: Billionaire Gautam Adani's Adani Group is in talks to buy out GVK and some of its partners in the Mumbai Airport as it aims to become the country's biggest private airport operator.

Adani Group is in talks to acquire a 50.5% stake held by GVK Group in Mumbai International Airport (MIAL) and another 23.5% of minority partners, Airports Company South Africa (ACSA), and Bidvest Group, two sources with knowledge of the matter said. The spokesperson of both Adani and GVK refused to comment.

Adani Group had in March 2019 agreed to acquire 13.5% stake of South African company Bidvest for Rs 1,248 crore. However, GVK Group blocked the deal claiming the right of first refusal. But GVK couldn't bring money to the table to buy Bid Services Division Mauritius (Bidvest) stake and the matter went to court.

With GVK Group's finances under strain, it has now come around to the idea of selling the stake to Adani Group, they said.

After seaports, Adani Group is betting big on the airports sector and has won the bids to run six Airport Authority-built non-metro airports in Lucknow, Jaipur, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Thiruvananthapuram, and Mangalore.

It now wants to enter the country's second busiest airport by buying out Bidvest from MIAL, which was stalled after GVK chose to exercise its first right of refusal, and matched the offer that the Adanis made to Bidvest.

SHORT TAKES

CDSL reduces margin pledge

New Delhi: Leading depository CDSL Monday said it has slashed transaction charges up to 91% for margin pledge and repledge. The decision was taken after receiving representations from the broking community and investors, seeking to consider a lower rate revision specifically for margin pledge and repledge transactions, CDSL MD and CEO Nehal Vora said in a statement. Accordingly, in the interest of market development and investors, the depository has decided to reduce the charges substantially, he added.

'Toll collections on recovery path'

New Delhi: Toll collections on highways are on the road to recovery, reaching 85% of the pre-COVID-19 levels in July and if the trend continues the reduction in collections could be below 10 per cent in 2020-21, rating agency ICRA said Monday. It said there were encouraging trends in traffic in July and about 85% of ICRA rated toll road projects have debt service reserve greater than or equal to one quarter of debt obligation and are resilient enough to absorb the COVID-19 induced revenue shock.

Triller ropes in ex-TikTok exec

New Delhi: US-based photo and video sharing app Triller Monday said it has appointed former TikTok executive Raj Mishra as its Country Manager and Head of Operations for India. Mishra's specialisations include driving aggressive strategies for sales and marketing, business growth and P&L (profit and loss) management for brands that aim for success in the ever-evolving social media landscape in India, a statement said.

MG forays into pre-owned biz

New Delhi: MG Motor India Monday said it has entered pre-owned car business in the country. The company has introduced certified pre-owned car vertical, 'MG Reassure' which aims to provide quick and the best residual value for MG cars to customers across its dealerships, MG Motor India said in a statement. The pre-owned vehicles will be assessed through over 160 quality checks to ensure the leading inspection standards and conduct all necessary repairs before their resale, it added.

MCL produces 43.4 MT coal in April-July, FY'21



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 24: With an aim to achieve 173 million tonne (MT) of coal production, Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) has, so far, produced over 43.4 MT from its Odisha coal blocks in last four months of current financial year.

The subsidiary of Coal India Limited (CIL) has targeted to produce 173 MT of coal in FY'21 amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the first quarter of current fiscal, MCL produced around 33.31 MT of coal from its blocks and 10.17 MT in first month of second quarter.

Despite falling short from achieving monthly target in last four months, the company is hopeful to reach its target by the end of current fiscal.

MCL produced 101.737 lakh tonne (10.17 MT) from underground and open cast mining in July. However, the company had targeted to achieve around 11.37 MT for the same month.

From the underground mining, it produced 0.434 lakh tonne and 101.303 lakh tonne of coal was produced from opencast mining.

To achieve its target, MCL has to produce 14.41 MT of coal per month but the company has been falling short from its monthly target.

Currently, MCL has 48 coal blocks in the state possessing mineable resources of 29,100 MT, which can meet the requirement of thermal coal for another 100 years. MCL has (another) 22 miscellaneous projects in the pipeline that includes washeries, coal gasification and solar power.

BIZ BUZZ

Bhatia takes charge as SBI MD

Mumbai: The State Bank of India (SBI) Monday said Ashwani Bhatia has taken charge as its managing director (MD). He is the fourth MD of SBI, with Dinesh Khara, Arijit Basu and CS Setty being the other three. He will be responsible for the IT and Stressed Assets Resolution Group (SARG) in the new role, the bank said in a release. He would be holding this position up to the date of his superannuation, that is May 31, 2022, the bank said. Prior to this, Bhatia was the MD and CEO of SBI Funds Management. Before joining SBI Funds Management, he was working as chief general manager, corporate centre in SBI, where he was responsible for revamping the credit structure and processes of the bank.



Maruti XL6 drives past 25K-unit sales mark

New Delhi: Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) Monday said its multi-purpose vehicle (MPV) XL6 has crossed the 25,000-unit sales milestone in a year of its launch and helped the company take a leadership position in the segment. The six-seater model, which comes with 1.5-litre petrol engine, has gone on to capture 14% market share in the domestic MPV segment, MSI said in a statement. "There is a significant increase in demand for premium MPVs owing to the ever-evolving customer needs. XL6 stands strong with its feature-rich package of style, space, comfort, performance and safety," MSI Executive Director marketing and sales Shashank Srivastava said. The model has helped the company take a leadership position in the MPV segment with over 50 per cent market share, he added.



Wipro inks partnership with Quaternion

Bangalore: Wipro Limited Monday announced a partnership with Standard Initial Margin Model (SIMM) vendor, Quaternion Risk Management. As part of the collaboration, Wipro will offer SIMM-in-a-box to financial institutions covered under Uncleared Margin Rules (UMR), the Bengaluru-headquartered IT major said in a statement. The offering will allow financial institutions to calculate trade sensitivities, generate CRIF (Common Risk Interchange Format) file and calculate initial margin in-house, according to Wipro. The solution simplifies compliance procedures by including back testing, benchmarking and preparing documentation required for regulatory approval, the statement said. It also offers independent model validation of a firm's own internal SIMM solution, AANA (Aggregate Average Notional Amount) calculation, and Initial Margin exchange threshold calculation/simulation, it was stated.



'Covid sparks oil industry's shift towards lower growth'

THE PANDEMIC HAD INCREASED THE PRESSURE ON THE LARGE INTEGRATED OIL AND GAS COMPANIES TO ADJUST THEIR PRODUCT MIXES AND REDUCE THEIR CARBON FOOTPRINTS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 24: The large-scale market disruption from the coronavirus pandemic will unsettle long-term energy consumption patterns in the developed markets while heightening oil and gas price volatility, Moody's Investors Service said Monday. According to the credit rating agency, the industry's uneven, extended recovery will depend on a gradual improvement in demand as global economic activity picks up, particularly in the key consumption markets of China, Southeast Asia, and the US.

The pandemic had increased the pressure on the large integrated oil and gas companies to adjust their product mixes and reduce their carbon footprints. These companies seek further opportunities to increase operations with lower carbon intensity, and with redoubled efforts to reduce break even production costs.



Earnings for national oil companies (NOCs) will recover gradually over the next two to three years, but the extent and speed of recovery will depend on how soon normal economic activity resumes, and on any post-Covid policy actions that their government sponsors take, Moody's Investors Service said in its in-depth report on oil

and gas sector.

The report said that an extended oil price slump sparked partly by the pandemic will amplify disparities between stronger and weaker exploration and production (E&P) companies. This would mean that well-capitalized E&P companies and oil majors will consolidate US shale assets, and the uni-

verse of leveraged E&P companies will shrink substantially amid waning bank and investor support as a prolonged downturn further discourages debt investors from the E&P sector.

An extended oil price slump sparked partly by the pandemic will amplify disparities between stronger and weaker E&P companies

Another change that Covid disruptions would bring is that cheap fuel prices will no longer stimulate demand for refined products as a crude glut continues. A recovery in fuel demand will depend on economic growth, and on the strength of the markets for particular refined products, the report by the agency said.

With regard to refining margins,

the report estimates that it will improve along with demand in 2021, but probably remain below mid-cycle levels.

"Decreasing volumes of oil and gas will lead to an inflection point in the midstream sector's cash flow, as E&P customers slash capital's pending and renew or renegotiate contracts. Rising regulatory scrutiny will make it harder to win social licenses to build interstate pipelines and other large projects, slowing investment, and companies will increasingly need to finance themselves as capital access tightens," said the report.

Moreover, Demand destruction and cash flow deterioration in the first half of 2020 imply significant trouble for the global oilfield services and drilling (OFS) sector. While the handful of investment-grade OFS majors can weather some prolonged industry stress, most speculative-grade OFS companies face an extreme liquidity crunch.

PNB expects to restructure loans worth ₹40K cr

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 24: The country's second largest lender Punjab National Bank on Monday said it expects to restructure loans worth about Rs 40,000 crore as per RBI-approved guidelines, scheduled to be out soon.

The Reserve Bank of India had earlier this month allowed one-time restructuring of corporate and personal loans to help entities amid the COVID-19 crisis.

"Our total loan book is Rs 7.21 lakh crore at June end. MSME (loan book) stands at Rs 1.27 lakh crore. Out of this, 14% is under NPA. Now with respect to the book that we are looking at (for loan restructuring), a rough estimate what we are seeing is that anything around 5-6% of the credit book may be eligible under the restructuring profile.



"This 5-6% comes to about Rs 40,000 crore. Major composition of this, of about 50%, would be corporate books," PNB MD and CEO S Mallikarjuna Rao told reporters at a virtual news conference.

The corporate loans will be restructured based on the recommendations of the KV Kamath committee.

"With respect to larger credit books above Rs 100 crore, RBI has appointed a committee headed by KV Kamath. Now they are going to give us the details...whether it would be sector specific or category specific, that we will come to know in next few days.

COMAN HELPS BAYERN CLAIM SIXTH EUROPEAN CUP TITLE AS THE FORMER PSG LAD INFLECTS BLOW ON FRENCH GIANTS

Neymar, Mbappe fail to lead PSG to first CL crown

ASSOCIATED PRESS
Lisbon, August 24: Neymar and Kylian Mbappe sat side by side on Paris Saint-Germain's bench after the 0-1 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final here. While Mbappe stared at the field in despair, Neymar cried and covered his face Sunday. It wasn't the ending they had hoped for.

PSG must go for yet another year without the Champions League title after lackluster performances by Neymar and Mbappe at the Stadium of Light.

The French team's biggest stars had disappointing performances after helping PSG to reach the final of the top European club tournament for the first time.

PSG paid big money to sign them in their bid to finally win the Champions League, but they couldn't come through in the decisive game.

"I'm proud because Neymar played another game where he showed his incredible ability and mentality," PSG coach Thomas Tuchel said.

"As for (Mbappe), it was tough because he had a big injury and missed a lot of training sessions. It's a miracle he was with us."

The 21-year-old Mbappe entered the mini-tournament in Lisbon coming off an ankle injury. He missed the first half of the quarterfinals against Atalanta but had started in the semifinals and the final.

Both Mbappe and Neymar failed to capitalize on first-half chances that could have changed the story of the game, and neither was effective in the second half when PSG needed to come back from a

In football, you have to accept that in a match luck can play a big role. We had chances and didn't score them, but we can't say it's anyone's fault

THOMAS TUCHEL | PSG COACH

goal down. Mbappe had one of the best scoring opportunities just before half-time with a close-range shot from inside the area, but the ball was weakly struck for an easy save by Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer.

Neymar had enjoyed his best chance with a dangerous run into the area in the 18th minute, but his shot was stopped by Neuer. Mbappe earlier had a couple of opportunities from inside the area but couldn't get the ball past Bayern defenders.

The pair also failed to capitalize on PSG's best opportunities in the second half. Mbappe's run in the 72nd didn't lead to a significant chance, and Neymar had the ball by his feet inside the area in stoppage time but failed to find the target or a teammate.

The 28-year-old Neymar was having his big chance to shine and to show that he could win a European title without the help of Lionel Messi, his teammate when he lifted the trophy with Barcelona in 2015. It was also an opportunity for Neymar to prove that he has what it takes to be considered the best player in the world.

After picking up the runner-up's medal Sunday, Neymar got to touch the Champions League trophy as he walked past it. But that was the closest he got to it this time.



THE INVINCIBLES!

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lisbon, August 24: Kingsley Coman headed Bayern Munich to a sixth European Cup title, scoring against boyhood club Paris Saint-Germain to seal a 1-0 victory in the first Champions League final to be played without fans.

While Bayern won their first final since 2013 Sunday, PSG have yet to lift the European Cup despite more than USD one billion being spent on players in nine years.

More than USD 500 million was spent on Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Angel Di Maria but PSG looked far from formidable or threatening against the Bavarian giants who felt more assured on European club football's biggest stage.

As the costly front three were frustrated in front of goal, it was instead a winger who was born in Paris and started his career at PSG who inflicted the blow.

The 24-year-old Coman ghosted in at the far post unchecked by the



'CHEER UP MATE': David Alaba consoles Neymar after the match

PSG defense and was ready to meet a cross from Joshua Kimmich in the 59th minute.

It capped an incredible transformation this season under Hansi

Flick, who emerged from the shadows in November, with a promotion to the top coaching job with Bayern fourth in the Bundesliga.

The season is now over - three months later than planned due to the coronavirus pandemic pause in play - with Bayern treble winners just as it was in 2013. The European Cup joins the Bundesliga trophy - won for an eighth successive season - and the German Cup.

But the singing PSG contingent around the directors' box was silenced in a stadium that was largely empty due to coronavirus restrictions. And when the final whistle blew, Neymar was in tears, embraced by Bayern rival David Alaba.

PSG's footballing superstars were subdued at a final which lacked the usual pre-match entertainment from pop stars.

Not that PSG lacked chances to take the lead at a final that should have been played in Istanbul in May, rather than the Portuguese capital in late August when sea-

sons usually begin not end.

Only the presence of 'Istanbul' on the match ball that Neymar struck at Bayern goalkeeper Manuel Neuer in the 18th was a reminder here of the pandemic-enforced change of location.

Neymar did spark the move that saw Ander Herrera and Di Maria combine but the Argentine could only strike over.

And an interchange between Herrera and Mbappe before halftime ended with a weak shot from the French forward.

Perhaps the only surprise was that there was no 56th goal of the season by Bayern forward Robert Lewandowski.

For once his scoring contribution was not needed as this season like no other ended with a 21st successive win for Bayern as part of a 30-game unbeaten run.

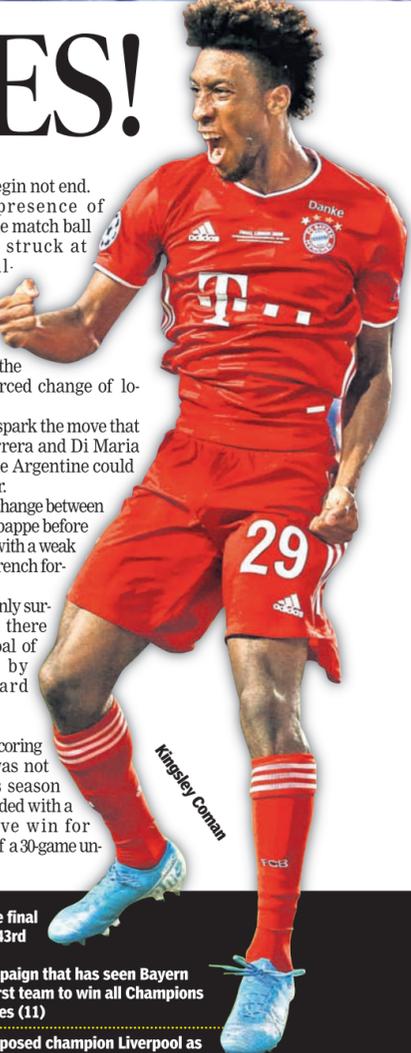
The goal in the final was Bayern's 43rd of a perfect European campaign that has seen Bayern become the first team to win all Champions League matches (11)

Bayern join deposed champion Liverpool as six-time champions of Europe, only behind AC Milan (7) and Real Madrid (13)

It was the first final to end 1-0 since Real Madrid beat Juventus in 1998 which was also the last final to feature teams who qualified as domestic champions

Robert Lewandowski emerged as the top scorer with 15 goals to his name, followed by Dortmund's Erling Braut Haaland (10)

Bayern's 8-2 win over Barcelona is the highest scoring knockout game in Champions League era



Fans clash with Paris riot police

PARIS: Dozens of disgruntled PSG fans clashed with French riot police on the Champs-Elysees after their team lost to Bayern Munich in the Champions League final in Lisbon.

Hundreds of other supporters trudged away from the famed avenue here following the 0-1 defeat, which ended PSG's bid to join Marseille as the only French club to win Europe's elite football competition.

Close to the Champs-Elysees, a dozen riot police in full gear burst into a bar to aggressively remove people, because some were not wearing masks, or were failing to keep social distancing amid coronavirus concerns.

Over in western Paris, there were also incidents when riot police used tear gas to disperse fans gathered outside the club's stadium.

PSG beamed the match on two giant screens at their Parc des Princes stadium, with 5,000 fans allowed inside in keeping with the maximum allowed for soccer games in France.

But only minutes before kick-off, at 9 pm local time, hundreds of fans were still queuing and frustrations soon escalated because they could not see the biggest game in their club's history.

PSG was trying to end decades of gloating from bitter rival Marseille - still the only French club to have

won the competition in 1993.

Despite huge backing from Qatari investors QSI, including more than USD 500 million spent on Neymar, Kylian Mbappe and Angel Di Maria, PSG has never won the competition.

The defeat was met with huge celebrations in Marseille, where fans cheered and let off flares and fireworks. Extra security measures had been put in place for Sunday evening with 3,000 police deployed on the Champs-Elysees, as well as to prevent large numbers gathering outside Parc des Princes.

Police arrested 36 people Tuesday after groups of fans at the foot of the Arc de Triomphe broke off into scattered violence and shop windows were smashed.



French riot police confront PSG fans outside the Parc de Princes Stadium, Sunday

Future Group pulls out of IPL central sponsorship list

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 24: Retail conglomerate Future Group, which is currently going through a restructuring phase, has pulled out of BCCI's central sponsorship list for the IPL.

Future Group has been forced to pull out as the company is reportedly on the verge of a takeover and has suffered losses due to the prevailing hostile economic climate in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Yes, Future Group has pulled out of IPL central sponsorship and that's the reason their logo has been removed from the IPL website. At this point of time, I won't like to elaborate on the development," a BCCI veteran confirmed the development to PTI.

When a Future Group official was contacted, he refused com-

ment but industry insiders confirmed that the pullout was on cards because of the financial health of the company.

"Future Group has been in bad shape since the start of COVID-19. It was bound to happen that they wouldn't have been able to spend Rs 40 crore to be a part of BCCI's central sponsorship pool. Hence, the pull-out is not a surprise," the source said.

"Right now, the Future Group is going through a restructuring phase and there are talks with multi-national conglomerates about its potential takeover in the next few weeks. So sponsoring sporting events at the moment wasn't top priority for Future Group," he added.

It is learnt that education-technology company Unacademy is in line to become one of the official sponsors along with credit card payment app Cred.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Olympic flame to go on display in Tokyo from September 1

Tokyo: The Olympic flame will go on display at the Japanese Olympic Museum from September 1, the Japanese Olympic Committee (JOC) announced Monday. The flame was last seen in Fukushima after the torch relay was cancelled following its arrival from Greece but before it could start on the planned tour of Japan after the decision to postpone the Games in March due to the new coronavirus pandemic. With the Olympics postponed until 2021, organisers had been discussing how best to store and present the Olympic flame whilst in Japan. They have chosen to display the flame at the JOC museum which is near the National Stadium purpose-built for the Games. The flame will be on display from September 1 to November 1.

Bolt tests COVID-19 positive days after his birthday party

Kingston: Usain Bolt has reportedly tested positive for coronavirus just days after partying with guests including England star Raheem Sterling for his 34th birthday in Jamaica. Nationwide90fm, a radio station in Jamaica, reported that the greatest sprinter of all time has contracted the disease and will spend time in self-isolation as a result. The publication says that the 34-year-old took a test for the virus a few days ago and discovered Sunday that he had tested positive for the disease. Bolt was honoured a surprise birthday party August 21 which was attended by a host of big names. Manchester City star Sterling, Bayer Leverkusen attacker Leon Bailey and cricket legend Chris Gayle are believed to have been in attendance.

Bhaichung Bhutia Stadium to be inaugurated post pandemic

New Delhi: A floodlit, 15,000-capacity stadium in Sikkim, to be named after Indian football great Bhaichung Bhutia, will be inaugurated once the COVID-19 pandemic subsides. The stadium is in Namchi, which is 25 kilometres away from the maestro's birthplace in Tinkitum. "It's our tribute to one of the best Indian footballers. Even after hanging his boots, Bhutia has been a role model to many and will continue to inspire footballers of India, let alone Sikkim," Sikkim Football Association president Menla Ethenpa was quoted as saying by the All India Football Federation (AIFF). "We can't repay for what he has done for Indian football. But a stadium named after him might be a small homage towards the great footballer," he added. This is going to be the first-ever stadium in the country to be named after any footballer.

Tisya becomes youngest scuba diver from Odisha

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, August 24: Tisya Panigrahi, a Dubai-based girl, has become the youngest scuba diver from Odisha after completing her professional association of diving instructors (PADI) junior Open Water Scuba Diver's course, Saturday.

The 10-year-old is a student of Raffles World Academy School in Dubai. She jumped off into the Arabian Sea in the Gulf of Oman on the east coast of UAE at Fujairah to complete her certification dives and obtained her prized license Sunday.

Notably, she went down to 33 feet and practiced her skills in her last training dive. PADI is the world's largest scuba diving training and certification organisation which

was founded in 1966 in USA.

Tisya's certification process involved a four-day training programme which consisted of class room sessions, training in the swimming pool and finally four dives in the open sea. To be eligible for this training, she also had to pass a basic endurance test - which involved a 200m swim including a 10-minute floating session in sea.

Born in Sambalpur, Tisya is the daughter of Priyadarshini Panigrahi, who is also a scuba diver, and Soumitri Nanda. "I was itching to turn 10-year-old, as one can learn diving and enroll for the course only after reaching 10 years of age. In fact, I wanted to do the course on my 10th birthday but, I could not do so because of the pandemic. Obtaining the license is a dream comes true for me," said Tisya.

