



HAIL THE FARMER

Actor Sargun Mehta supports the Punjab farmers who are protesting against the Centre's farm Bills

LEISURE P2



MOCKERY OF COVID NORMS

Lakhs of people offered 'tarpan' on the auspicious Mahalaya across West Bengal amid the pandemic

TWO STATES P7



NAVALNY POISONED IN HOTEL

Traces of poison were found on a water bottle from the hotel room where Navalny stayed

INTERNATIONAL P10

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



... And I thought I voted you to power for a full 5-year services

SHORT TAKES

Woman beaten to death by sons

Bhubaneswar: In a spine-chilling incident, a woman was beaten to death by her two sons in an apartment in Airfield police station area here Thursday. Though the exact cause behind the alleged murder is yet to be ascertained, family feud is suspected to have led to the incident. Both the accused are minor, sources said. However, Airfield police seized the body and sent it for post-mortem. The cops also detained the two accused for interrogation initiating an investigation into the incident.

3 terrorists, woman killed in J&K

Srinagar: A woman was killed and two security forces personnel were injured during an anti-terror operation in Jammu and Kashmir Thursday morning, police said. Three terrorists were also killed in the operation, they added. The security forces launched an operation in Batmaloo area of Srinagar after receiving inputs on the presence of terrorists in the area. As the security forces zeroed in the cordon, they came under firing from the terrorists. Two security forces personnel including a deputy commandant of CRPF were injured. In the exchange of firing one woman was killed inside her home.

Heavy rainfall from tomorrow

Bhubaneswar: Many parts of the state will receive heavy rainfall from this Saturday under the impact of a fresh low pressure area which is likely to form around September 20. "A cyclonic circulation lies over north coastal Andhra Pradesh and neighbourhood between 3.1 km & 3.6 km above mean sea level. Besides, a low pressure area is likely to develop over northeast Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood around September 20," said Bhubaneswar Met Centre in a bulletin.

State seeks ₹1,100cr from Centre as flood recompense

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: The state government Thursday sought ₹1,100-crore aid from the Centre for carry-out response support in the wake of recent flood.

Senior state government officers raised this demand before the Central team, which visited state to assess damages caused due to the flood in August this year.

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) Pradeep Kumar Jena said that the state government has requested about ₹1,100 crore as response support. The mitigation measures are being worked out and will be indicated in the final memorandum, he said.

During the meeting, the state government has made a detailed presentation of damage, response, relief, evacuation etc.

The central team appreciated the efforts of the state government and also agreed to the suggestion to consider supporting the state not only in response as per State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) norm, but also include mitigation measures like strengthening of

25.80 lakh people in 135 blocks and 21 urban local bodies of 18 districts were affected due to heavy rainfall and subsequent flood last month

2.25 lakh hectares of crops have suffered more than 33 per cent damage due to the flood

embankments, construction of new embankments, disaster resilient housing support against damaged houses and other resilient infrastructure.

They also appreciated state's approach to disaster management and new approach of seeking assistance from Central government on mitigation measures, Jena said.

About 25.80 lakh people in 135 blocks and 21 urban local bodies (ULBs) of 18 districts have been affected due to heavy rainfall and subsequent flood last month.

About 2.25 lakh hectares of agriculture and crop land have suffered more than 33 per cent damage in the flood. Similarly, about 1,20,000 houses have damaged due to the calamity. Besides embankments, roads, public infrastructure has also been damaged, sources said.



File FIR against Shouri: CBI court

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 17: One of the grandest palace-hotels in Rajasthan was grossly undervalued and sold at a huge loss to the taxpayer in 2002 and former Union Minister Arun Shourie should be charged for it, a special CBI court has said.

In a corruption case involving the sale of Laxmi Vilas Palace Hotel in Udaipur, the court has asked for criminal cases against Arun Shourie, former bureaucrat Pradeep Bajjal and hotelier Jyotsna Suri. The court wants the hotel sale case to be reopened.

"Unknown officers and private persons indulged in this conspiracy from 1999 to 2002 to cause loss of money to the government. The land was valued at ₹45 per square yard. Even a spoon in the hotel would be costlier than that," said a special CBI judge. Hotel Laxmi Vilas was valued at over ₹252 crore but was sold for ₹7.5 crore to hotelier Lalit Suri, said the special CBI court. Jyotsna Suri took charge of the Lalit group of hotels after her husband Lalit Suri's death.

Eco-Retreat at five locations now

BISWA BHUSAN MOHAPATRA, OP

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: In the wake of the overhauling response from the first-ever Eco Retreat Festival held last year at Konark, the state government has decided to organise such events at five other locations this year.

The Tourism department has decided to hold Eco Retreats at exotic locations like Konark, Satkosia, Bhitarkanika, Daringbadi and Hirakud.

On the line of annual Rann Utsav held at Rann of Kutch where the Gujarat government organises tented accommodation for the tourists, the Marine Drive-Eco Retreat was organised last December to showcase the best of Odisha's food and culture for high-end tourists. The festival was held for 49 days. This time, events would be organized for a period of three months starting from December this year.

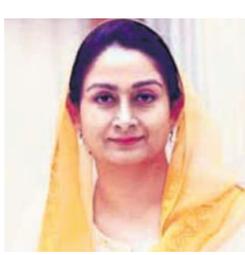
The event is being organised to attract high-end tourists through a mix of luxurious accommodation coupled with adventure and water sports activities.

"As the Eco Retreat at Konark last year was a hit, we have planned to organise such event at five locations this year so that we can attract more number of tourists and make Odisha a brand

Badal quits Modi govt over farm Bills

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 17: Akali Dal's sole Union minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal resigned from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Cabinet Thursday as her party faced heat from farmers over its initial support to ally BJP's farm sector Bills. The minister, who attended the Cabinet meet that cleared the Bills, stepped down shortly before the bill was passed in Lok Sabha, tweeting that she was "Proud to stand with farmers as their daughter & sister". Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Badal said they would support the government from outside but oppose "anti-farmer policies". Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, however, pointed out that the



Akalis still stand with the BJP and called the resignation a "gimmick". Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh said Harsimrat Kaur's resignation was "too little too late". Questioning the Akali Dal's decision to continue to remain a part of the ruling NDA, he said the resig-

nation was nothing more than a gimmick to fool the farmers of Punjab.

The Bills - which the BJP claims is big ticket reform in the agri sector - have hugely upset the farmers of Punjab and Haryana, who have been holding protests for weeks. The government said the bills, which would replace the three ordinances issued in June, will help farmers across the country get a better market and price for their produce.

The Akalis, who initially supported the laws, made a U-turn this week after realising the depth of the farmers' resentment. The party had appealed to the Centre to hold off the Bills till the concerns of the farmers are addressed.

But with the BJP deciding to

push through the bills, the Akalis decided to withdraw support and vote against the Bills in Parliament Thursday.

In his speech during a discussion on two of the Bills - the Produce Trade and Commerce and the Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill - Sukhbir Singh Badal said the proposed laws will "destroy" the 50 years of hard work done by successive Punjab governments to build the farm sector.

Earlier, Badal had claimed that Harsimrat Kaur had "expressed reservations when the matter was taken up during a Cabinet meeting". She had said her ministry opposed the proposal during the inter-ministerial consultation too.

City to be divided into 3 zones for better COVID management

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 17: The twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, will soon witness stricter enforcement of COVID-19 regulations. Director General of Police (DGP) Abhay said this during a meeting held here Thursday to review the COVID-19 situation in twin cities.

Bhubaneswar will be divided into three zones for strict enforcement of Covid norms with one DCP looking after each zone, it was decided. It was also decided that the twin city police will collect more PPE kits and face shields from the state central store and encourage their personnel to use the same.

In the meeting, it was decided to intensify enforcement in market areas and specified hotspots that keep changing from weekend to weekdays. It was also

decided to provide 50 more officers and five more platoons of armed forces to enforce the guidelines.

The meeting was convened a day after Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik expressed displeasure over COVID-19 enforcement drive in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

Meanwhile, the state's Covid-19 tally in the state rose to 1,67,161 Thursday as 4,241 more people tested positive for the infection, while 13 fresh fatalities pushed the state's coronavirus death toll to 669, a health official said. The state had reported its highest single-day spike of 4,270 coronavirus cases Wednesday.

As many as 2,502 new cases were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,739 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing, he said. Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases.

RAJNATH ON BORDER ROW

'No force can stop our troops from patrolling'

China does not accept the customary and traditional alignment of the boundary between India and China: Defence Minister

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Thursday asserted that no force in the world can stop Indian soldiers from patrolling the country's border in Ladakh region.

Making a statement in Rajya Sabha on the situation in eastern Ladakh, he said China has amassed troops on the border and in response India has made appropriate counter deployment. China, he said, made "provocative military manoeuvres" August 29/30 in an attempt to change the status quo in the south bank area of Pangong Lake in the Ladakh region at a time when the two sides were engaged in military and diplomatic talks to de-escalate tensions.

The Defence Minister said there is a mismatch between what China says and does. "Unki kathani aur karni alag hai (their actions are at



variance with their words)," he said

The skirmishes and face-off in the last few months with China, that left 20 Indian soldiers dead and inflicted heavy casualties on the Chinese sides as well were primarily over the issue of patrolling the Ladakh border.

"No force in the world can stop Indian soldiers from patrolling. Our soldiers have sacrificed their lives only for this," the minister said.

He was responding to a clarification sought by former Defence Minister AK Antony on the issue of Indian forces not being allowed to patrol in certain parts of the Galwan valley.

MARKET WATCH	
INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	38979.850 ↓ 323
NIFTY	11516.10 ↓ 88.40
DOLLAR	74.13 ↓ ₹0.05
EURO	87.00 ↓ ₹0.39
GOLD	₹51,4331 ↓ ₹391
SILVER	₹67,894 ↓ ₹887

WEATHER	
BHUB	CTK
MAX 35.9°C	36.0°C
MIN 26.7°C	25.0°C
Humidity 95%	75%
Rainfall Nil	Partly cloudy sky

Rich nations secure deals for 50% Covid vax supply: Report

SUPPLY DEALS HAVE SO FAR BEEN AGREED FOR 5.3 BILLION DOSES, OF WHICH 2.7 BILLION (51 PER CENT) HAVE BEEN BOUGHT BY DEVELOPED REGIONS LIKE THE US, UK, EU, AUSTRALIA, HONG KONG AND MACAU, JAPAN, SWITZERLAND AND ISRAEL

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, Sept 17: A group of wealthy nations representing 13 per cent of the global population have already bought up more than half of the promised doses of future Covid-19 vaccines, according to a report by Oxfam Wednesday.

The non-governmental organisation analysed deals struck by pharmaceuticals and vaccine producers for the five leading vaccine candidates currently in late-stage trials, based on data collected by the analytics company Airfinity. "Access to a life-saving vaccine

shouldn't depend on where you live or how much money you have," said Robert Silverman of Oxfam America.

"The development and approval of a safe and effective vaccine is crucial, but equally important is making sure the vaccines are available and affordable to everyone. Covid-19 anywhere is Covid-19 everywhere." The five vaccines analyzed were from AstraZeneca, Gamaleya/Sputnik, Moderna, Pfizer and Sinovac.

Oxfam calculated the combined production capacity of these five vaccine candidates at 5.9 billion



doses, enough for three billion people given that all five future vaccines will or are highly likely to require two doses.

Supply deals have so far been agreed for 5.3 billion doses, of which 2.7 billion (51 per cent) have been

bought by developed countries, territories and regions, including the US, UK, European Union, Australia, Hong Kong and Macau, Japan, Switzerland and Israel.

The remaining 2.6 billion doses have been bought by or promised to developing countries including India, Bangladesh, China, Brazil, Indonesia and Mexico, among others. The non-profit added that one of the leading candidates, developed by Moderna, has received \$2.5 billion in committed taxpayers' money, but has said it intends to make a profit and has sold the options for all its supply to rich nations.

Oxfam and other organisations are therefore calling for a "people's vaccine" free of charge, distributed fairly based on need.

"This will only be possible if pharmaceutical corporations allow vaccines to be produced as widely as possible by freely sharing their knowledge free of patents, instead of protecting their monopolies and selling to the highest bidder," Oxfam said.

It added that the estimated cost of providing a vaccine for everyone on Earth was less than one per cent of the projected cost of Covid-19 to the global economy.

'Sputnik V': 14 pc report side-effects

MOSCOW: Russian Health Minister Mikhail Murashko said that one in seven volunteers who have received a dose of Coronavirus vaccine 'Sputnik V' have complained of side effects; including weakness, fever and muscle pain. Murashko informed to a Russian daily that more than 300 people have already received the 'Sputnik V' vaccine as part of the three-phase trial, adding that 14 per cent have complained about their health. According to the minister, the side effects are predicted and usually disappear after a day or a maximum day and a half.

leisure

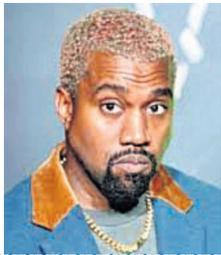


HAYLEY ATWELL IS A MAPLE SYRUP FAN

Actress Hayley Atwell simply loves maple syrup. The actress said: "I love maple syrup. I would say I prefer it all day and can have rest of my life. I just feel like it's very versatile go better with all sorts of things."

KANYE WEST TWEETS VIDEO OF GRAMMY AWARD IN COMMODORE

American rapper Kanye West has tweeted a video of a Grammy Award in a commode, with someone urinating on the trophy. The video tweet comes at a time when West is engaged in a battle with record labels to retrieve rights to his music.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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

ARIES
For no reason whatsoever, you may clam up today. Of course, you will give credit to others wherever they've contributed. But you need to be more generous than that, says Ganesh, and share the secrets of your success with your compatriots.

TAURUS
It is about time that you stopped running from your problems and stand up and face them, suggests Ganesh. Your loved ones will back in your material generosity today. You will be magnanimous with the wallet to impress members of the opposite sex.

GEMINI
It is better for you to swim with the current in all of today's dealings, suggests Ganesh. This will help you effortlessly deal with even the most morbid state of affairs. No need to be a hero, today. Pleasure is the key word for you. Your performance will be satisfying at work, and more than satisfying back home.

CANCER
A shopping spree with your darling is likely to be the highlight of the day, even though you will be paying for almost everything. Though you have decided to be this lavish out of sheer love, your sweetheart will more than return the favour with a sweaty thank you 'return gift' in the evening.

LEO
Seems today is just one of those days when things simply refuse to go your way. It happens to the best of us, says Ganesh, and there isn't much one can do about it except slog it out and find that hidden reserve of moral support.

VIRGO
The time today is ripe to venture into a new business. Projects that have been put-off will finally be completed. Looking into the week ahead, you are most likely to give yourself an energy zap. Parties will be all fun and entertainment.

LIBRA
The clock ticks on, but chances are it can hardly beat you in the race, thanks to your prompt and sincere efforts. Today, you shall be a paragon of excellence. However, Ganesh waves the red flag of caution: it always pays to be safe rather than sorry. Keep your eyes open and pay attention to the fine print before signing any contract or paper.

SCORPIO
It is likely that you shall learn an important lesson in life today. Remember that spite and envy beget enemies. Ganesh advises you to display some errors so as to make you seem more human and approachable.

SAGITTARIUS
Going to private parties is a high probability today. All in all, make the most of it as you get nostalgic with old friends and make plans with new ones. Moreover, relatives will be pleased to meet you after a long time.

CAPRICORN
It's time to prove your extraordinary skills as a professional, says Ganesh. You will go out of your way, and even double your efforts to accomplish set goals, and chances are that you might succeed. Family and friends will be glad that could take out time to spend some happy hours with them. You will also let them know that they mean the world to you, and no matter what, you will be there whenever they need you.

AQUARIUS
It's a day you may want to spend with yourself. But it may still not bring the desired peace and tranquility. An unpleasant situation may force you to deal with reality, says Ganesh. You now realise how much strength you derive from your devotion to God.

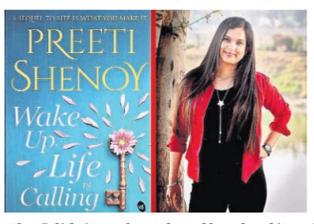
PISCES
While you will need loads of moral support to keep your spirits up, you are also likely to be blessed with the company of a person who is equipped to provide just that. Positive results will come your way as long as you do not give up. Use your imagination and creativity to surge ahead of the competition, says Ganesh.

'Lockdown a time for introspection, self-reflection'

There's so much of online shows that one can watch but beyond a point, the brain needs a different diet and that's where books come in, says bestselling author Preeti Shenoy

New Delhi: Bangalore-based best-selling author Preeti Shenoy, who has to her credit books like *Life Is What You Make It* and *The Secret Wish List*, says that the ongoing pandemic is a time for many for introspection and self-reflection and "simply coming to terms with the shock of what has happened".

people are discovering the joy of reading because there's only so much Netflix you can watch! Beyond a point, your brain needs a different diet and that's where books come in," the author, who has been listed in the Forbes List of the 100 most influential celebrities in India, shared. Since her books are brimming with messages of resilience and hope, she shared how hard it could be to stay positive during hard times.



Sharing about her life in lockdown, the 48-year-old writer said, "In the initial two-three months, I didn't work on anything for publication. I did write every day; but it was for my own self. For the readers, I started 21 days of positivity on my blog, which was free of cost. Over a thousand people subscribed and they would get a post in their inbox every day. So many told me they eagerly awaited those and it helped them. I am glad my writings helped, as there was just too much sadness and grief that I had to process. I am also an artist, and I made a portrait every day. These are such unprecedented and difficult times and I think we all have to come to terms with it in our own ways."

"Everyone says 'be positive'. But positivity is not a tap that can be turned on, at a whim. How does someone be positive when they have lost a loved one or lost a job? It seems impossible. I asked my readers what they found the hardest about being positive. I compiled all their replies and I am now working on a book on positivity, which I hope to complete soon."

Shenoy added that book-reading has always kindled joy in her. "Throughout my lifetime, books were my only friends. I think a lot of

The book on positivity, according to Shenoy, will hopefully help people. "It is not a preachy book and it offers concrete steps that people can take in these times. I will also be working on a sequel to *When Love Came Calling*, as the response to the book, and the demand for a sequel, have been overwhelming!"



Sargun supports Punjab's protesting farmers

Chandigarh: Actress Sargun Mehta Thursday lent support to farmers protesting in Punjab. Several farmers in Punjab have raised voice against the three agriculture ordinances introduced by the Central government. These are the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Ordinance, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services

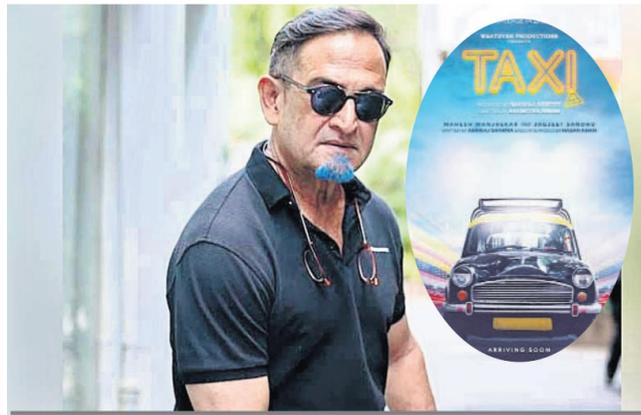
Ordinance and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Ordinance. They have been protesting in different places in Punjab, claiming that the ordinances were not only against the interest of the farmers but were also against the Constitution. Reacting to the protests, Sargun wrote on Instagram: "*Kisaan Virodhi Bill Da Asi Sarey Virod Karde Haan* (we oppose the Bill that is against the farmers)." She shared a picture of farmers at a protest march.

Bhumi's unique plan to celebrate sisterhood

Mumbai: Actress Bhumi Pednekar plans to watch her new film, *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitaare*, with her sister Samiksha Pednekar, and calls it a special sister screening. "Samiksha and I will watch *Dolly Kitty Aur Woh Chamakte Sitaare* together once it releases this week. We watched the film together at Busan the first time and for me the film's journey literally started with my sister by my side. We had the best time together in Busan. We've now made a plan to watch the movie again and it will be our special sister screening!" she said.

The film is directed by Alankrita Srivastava and also stars Konkona Sen Sharma. The two actresses play sisters in the film.

"The film celebrates womanhood and sisterhood and I couldn't think of a better way to watch the movie. It will be a true-blue sister screening and I'm really excited to have this moment with her," said Bhumi.



Mahesh returns as actor in Taxi No. 24

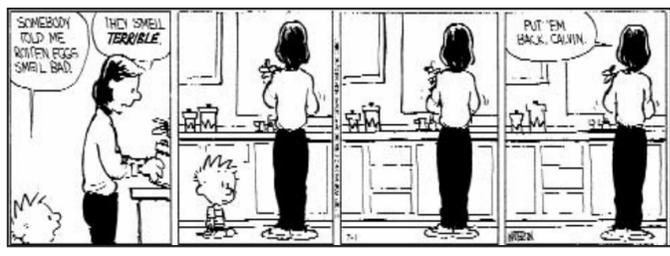
Mumbai: Mahesh Manjrekar returns as actor in *Taxi No. 24*, a digital film shot in large-format. The film also features Jagjeet Sandhu, last seen in the web series *Paatal Lok*, and actress Anangsha Biswas, who made a mark in the web shows, *Mirzapur* and *Hostages*. Directed by Saumitra Singh, *Taxi No. 24* is a suspense thriller.

"As a director, when you get fast paced stories that surprise, you want to tell such stories as soon as possible. My motive is to showcase how life often offers unwelcome surprises," said Singh. The film also features Girish Sharma, Rajat Arora, Shalini Chauhan, Amisha Sinha, Ankita Sahu, Tushar Rungta in supporting roles, and is written by Abhiraj Sharma

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

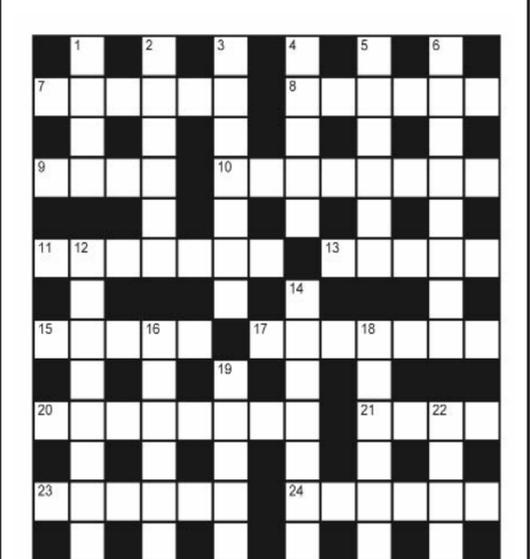


BREVITY



FUN post

CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Rap session?
 - 8 Cane material
 - 9 Vega's constellation
 - 10 Largest of the Canary Islands
 - 11 Listlessness
 - 13 Analyse
 - 15 Cut short
 - 17 Gigantic
 - 20 Hair style
 - 21 Tooth part
 - 23 Country houses
 - 24 Kind of monkey
 - 4 Hard wood
 - 5 Common sense
 - 6 Links rental (4,4)
 - 12 Nectar
 - 14 Swaps
 - 16 Popular fund-raiser
 - 18 Tidbit
 - 19 Bogus
 - 22 Sonata, e.g.

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

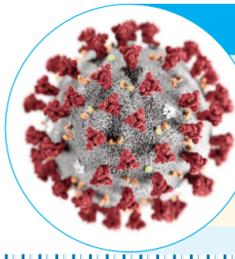
5	8	6	2	0	4	9	1	7	A	3	C	E	B	0
A	4	B	C	0	3	2	E	D	6	8	9	1	7	5
C	7	9	5	E	8	B	3	0	4	2	1	B	A	D
0	2	A	B	6	C	8	5	0	D	7	3	4	9	
E	D	3	9	1	7	A	6	4	5	E	B	2	C	8
B	C	5	6	9	0	7	D	2	8	1	3	A	E	4
D	2	E	8	A	1	4	C	3	B	7	5	9	0	6
7	1	4	B	3	D	0	9	8	A	6	C	5	2	
3	A	0	E	7	C	1	5	9	2	A	4	D	8	B
6	8	4	2	5	8	A	C	0	D	7	3	1		
E	5	1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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



DUSSEHRA PREP

An artisan making a clay idol of Goddess Durga at Sheikh Bazar puja mandap in Cuttack, Thursday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	3,01,27,635	2,18,75,696	9,46,726
India	51,18,253	40,25,079	83,198
Odisha	1,67,161	1,33,466	669

Demolition at Tagore's Patherpuri sparks row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Sept 17: Demolition of the boundary walls of Patherpuri Hostel, which carries the memories of Vishwakabi Rabindranath Tagore, has stirred a hornets' nest as the alumni of Samanta Chandra Sekhar (SCS) College here have vehemently opposed the move.

An action committee of ex-students of SCS College has urged the district administration to take immediate steps to renovate the dilapidated hostel.

The committee also threatened to intensify its agitation if the administration does not reconstruct the boundary walls of the hostel within a week.

"Patherpuri Hostel bears the memories of Vishwakabi Rabindranath Tagore. A single inch land of the old hostel cannot be diverted to any other activities. The administration should take immediate steps to preserve the hostel. The student and youth mass will not tolerate any attempt to divert the hostel land for other use," said members of the action committee at a press conference here Thursday.

Members of the action committee have decided to meet SCS College



File photo of Patherpuri Hostel in Puri

OP PHOTO

principal, the local MP and MLA to put forth their demand for preservation of Patherpuri Hostel.

Among others, SCS College former students Sujit Mahapatra, Bhabani Shankar Acharya, Umakanta Nayak, Sashwat Mahapatra, Rajesh Mishra, Chetan Mishra, Sanjeev Rathsharma, Bhagwan Padhiary, Jayanta Kumar Dash, Rabinarayan Nayak and Bishwanath Dash were present at the press conference.

According to locals, Tagore had

landed properties in Chakratirtha area of Puri. He had constructed a building on the land and named it as Patherpuri. The renowned poet used to stay at Patherpuri during his visits to the Holy city Tagore had written some of his poems during his visits to the Pilgrim city, locals claimed.

The locals further claimed that Tagore had donated Patherpuri to SCS College for the establishment of a hostel. Patherpuri was converted into a hostel in 1945.

MUTE WITNESS

- TAGORE HAD CONSTRUCTED THE BUILDING ON HIS LAND AT CHAKRATIRTHA AND NAMED IT AS PATHERPURI
- THE RENOWNED POET USED TO STAY AT PATHERPURI DURING HIS VISITS TO THE HOLY CITY
- TAGORE HAD WRITTEN SOME OF HIS POEMS DURING HIS VISITS TO THE PILGRIM CITY

Subsequently, a ladies hostel, named as Sukanya Hostel, was constructed near Patherpuri hostel.

"Around 300 students were staying at Patherpuri and Sukanya Hostels. Patherpuri Hostel had celebrated its golden jubilee in 1998. However, the two hostels were shut for students around a couple of years ago. Since then, no step has been taken to renovate the dilapidated hostels," said a few locals.

Recently, the administration had demolished a portion of the boundary walls of Patherpuri Hostel for expansion of a road to the Blue Flag beach of Puri, sources said.

25 fatal accidents in state's coal mines since 2017

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: A total of 25 fatal accidents have been reported in the coal mines of Odisha since 2017, recent data from the Ministry of Coal and Mines claimed.

According to the latest provisional data from the ministry, the state has already seen five fatal accidents and one serious accident this year.

The data claimed that the state saw five fatal coal accidents in coal mining plants while one serious accident was too reported from the areas in 2017.

In 2018, the number of fatal accidents at such sites increased to eight while two other serious accidents were reported from coal mines in Odisha. Likewise, seven persons lost their lives in coal mines while two serious accidents were also reported from the state in 2019.

The ministry said that three deceased from Odisha have already received compensation from the government in 2020 for the current year's accidents while compensation of one of the employees is under process.



IN A NUTSHELL

The state saw five fatal coal accidents in coal mining plants while one serious accident was too reported from the areas in 2017

In 2018, the number of fatal accidents at such sites increased to eight while two other serious accidents were reported from coal mines in Odisha

Three of the deceased have already received compensation for the current year's accidents

Citing the prime reasons for more accidents in coal mines, the ministry said that underground coal mining is more hazardous and geo-mining conditions in the mine is totally different as compared to non-coal mines and opencast mines.

"Volume of production of coal and removal of 'over burden' is much more and deployment of machinery in underground coal mines is also more in comparison with non-coal mines. Risk/hazard of exposure of employees is more in coal underground mines as compared to non-coal mines," the ministry said. The ministry has claimed to have

taken some preventive steps too to minimise the accidents. These include preparation and implementation of risk assessment based safety management plans, preparation and implementation of principal hazards management plans along with trigger action response plan.

The ministry said that some other steps are: Conducting safety audit of mines, online centralised safety monitoring system for monitoring different safety parameters and formulation of site specific risk assessment based Standard Operating Protocol.

Amar: Don't politicise nCoV mgmt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: The Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Thursday said that the opposition parties should refrain from indulging in politics as far as COVID care is concerned.

BJD MLA Amar Satpathy asked the parties to refrain from doing politics over the issue but welcomed their suggestions.

He said, "There is ample time and opportunities to do politics in the days to come. This time is crucial and politics should not be done on the matter of general health of the state. The opposition parties can of course give their suggestions on any loopholes if they find in the treatment of COVID in the state."

The leader also said that some MLAs may join the Assembly proceedings through videoconferencing. However, he clarified that there

The BJD clarified that some MLAs may join Assembly proceedings through videoconferencing

is no bar on visit of the leaders to the Assembly if they test COVID negative. He also said that more arrangements could be worked out after the MLAs are tested for the virus.

He said, "All the MLAs are allowed to visit Assembly during the Session. However, like the Parliament, the legislators who want to attend the Session through videoconferencing, can do so. This should not be viewed otherwise."

"The Speaker and the state administration are alert and conscious of the situation and are eager to run the Assembly too," said the Barchana legislator.

Patients left in the lurch: Cong

BHUBANESWAR: The state Congress has attacked the state Health department against the alleged apathy of the department towards ensuring basic sanitation and hygiene at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. Party leader Manas Choudhry Thursday alleged that poor and vulnerable are virtually left in hazardous situation at the hospital especially during COVID-19 pandemic. The party leader also shared a video of the Ophthalmology department of SCB on social media. In the video, bodies of patients were seen lying on the floors of the hospital unattended while several used PPE kits were seen piled up at several corners of the hospital.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



BJP leader Ashok Sahu passes away

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Senior leader of Odisha unit of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Ashok Sahu passed away Thursday. He was 68.

Sahu was a former IPS officer who died at his Pithapur residence in Cuttack following prolonged illness, family sources said.

Political leaders across party lines have condoled Sahu's demise. He had unsuccessfully contested for Kandhamal Lok Sabha seat from the saffron camp in 2009.

He was eager to contest from the same seat again when a by-poll was conducted October 15, 2014. However, he was denied a party ticket and the BJP had fielded former MP Rudra Madhab Rai in Kandhamal, who lost the election.

Soon after the by-poll results were announced, Sahu had raised the question on social media as to why the 'Modi Magic' did not work in Odisha, saying that the party should introspect about it. Following his statements on social media, Sahu who was then the BJP state unit's vice-president, was suspended from the party on charge of indiscipline.

1 held for misbehaviour

Bhubaneswar: A man was arrested for allegedly misbehaving with a woman police official after being fined for not wearing a face mask here. The arrested has been identified as Bikash Kumar Pradhan, 25, son of Surendra Pradhan of Khaira area in Ganjam. He stays at Kolathia locality under Khandagiri police limits in Bhubaneswar. He allegedly misbehaved with the cop when he was charged him with ₹100 as fine for not wearing a mask.

Governor, CM greet PM on his birthday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Governor Ganeshi Lal, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and Union Ministers Dharmendra Pradhan and Pratap Sarangi, Thursday, greeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his birthday and wished him good health and long life.

As the Prime Minister turned 70 Thursday, Ganeshi Lal prayed to the almighty for his good health and long life.

"Honble Governor wishes Honble Prime Minister Sri @narendramodi ji a very happy birthday and prays the almighty for his Good health and longevity," said the Governor's official Twitter handle in a post.

The Chief Minister took to Twitter to greet the Prime Minister: "Warm birthday wishes to Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji. May you be blessed with good health



BJP activists offer earthen lamps in front of Lingaraj temple in Bhubaneswar to observe the 70th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Thursday

OP PHOTO

and long life," Patnaik tweeted.

Hailing Modi as the most popular leader in the world and an illustrious Prime Minister of the country, Petroleum and Steel Minister Dharmendra Pradhan prayed to Lord Jagannath for his long life and good health. "Modi Ji has been making ceaseless efforts to build an empowered and Atmanirbhar Bharat through strong

will power, decisive leadership, hard work and an inclusive approach," he said in a message.

Union Minister of State for MSME, Pratap Sarangi wished the Prime Minister good health and long life and expressed optimism that his resolve to place the poor and deprived sections on the path of development will soon become a reality. Among others, BJP national vice-

president Bajjayant Panda, Odisha BJP President Samir Mohanty and Lok Sabha member Aparajita Sarangi greeted Modi on his birthday.

"In @narendramodi Ji, India has a leader with enormous popularity, admired worldwide, championing social reforms & implementing policies that improve the lives of ordinary people & reinforce our security. Heartfelt greetings on his birthday, & prayers for his long & healthy life," Panda said in a Twitter post.

"On the 70th birthday of Honble PM @narendramodi, I convey my best wishes. All my prayers to God for his good health, fortune, energy, happiness and long life. May he keep leading us for years to come," Aparajita Sarangi, BJP MP from Bhubaneswar, tweeted. The state unit of BJP is celebrating the PM's birthday as "Sewa Divas" and organising a number of social service and welfare programmes on the occasion.

Anubhav: No clarity in Bills on farmers

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, Sept 17: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Anubhav Mohanty Thursday urged the Centre to refer the Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill 2020 and Farmers' (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill 2020 to the standing committee.

Speaking on the Bill in Lok Sabha, the Kendrapara MP said that the Bills lack clarity and there is a need to send it to standing committee for scrutiny. He said the Bills were brought in haste.

He also said that farmers are paying fees even when they do not use the services of Agricultural Produce & Livestock Market

Committee (APMC). The infrastructure at APMCs is poor, he added.

Mohanty said that farmers will need more capital, information on price fluctuation, better access to credit facilities, storage facilities in order to get benefit from the Bills. The proposed laws will have the impact of gradually abolishing APMCs. Abolition of APMC in Bihar has adversely affected the farmers' interests, the BJD MP added.

Significantly, Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said the Bills are aimed at making farming profitable.

The minister also clarified that these Bills would not have any impact on the Minimum Support Price (MSP) mechanism which will continue.

HOMAGE TO ANCESTORS



People offer 'Shradha' to their ancestors at Bindusagar tank in Bhubaneswar on the occasion of Mahalaya, Thursday.

OP PHOTO

Kitchen gardens to help reduce MDM costs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: The state government is going to introduce kitchen garden concept in state-run schools under mid-day meal (MDM) scheme soon.

Briefing the media Wednesday afternoon, the state nodal officer for MDM, Gangadhar Sahu, said that the government has provided ₹5,000 each to 43,000 schools in the state to implement this scheme.

"Schools were asked to set up nutritional gardens and plant all-season fruit-bearing trees like lemon, papaya and drumstick including long-term fruit-bearing plants like jackfruit during monsoon. Moreover, the schools may plant seasonal vegetables," Sahu said.

Schools having boundary walls and with adequate water facilities will take up the kitchen garden scheme, Sahu added.

School authorities will procure requisite kits from state Horticulture



PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

Schools having boundary walls and with adequate water facilities will take up the kitchen garden scheme

The govt has provided ₹5,000 each to 43,000 schools to implement the scheme

School authorities will procure the kits from Horticulture dept which will assist the schools with the technical knowhow for the initiative

department which will assist the schools with the technical knowhow for kitchen garden. A committee will be formed under the chairmanship of the district Collector to oversee its implementation.

"During a visit to Malkangiri, we found that some schools have produced truckloads of pumpkins. Some schools in Kandhamal and

Keonjhar districts have produced huge quantity of tomatoes," he said.

"Launching of the scheme has been postponed in view of COVID-19 outbreak. Once the pandemic situation is over, schools will take up the scheme on their own," Sahu expressed.

The scheme aims at cutting down expenses incurred by schools in

procuring vegetables from local markets for MDM. The basic aim of this scheme is also to involve all school students.

Even much before launching of the scheme, some schools in Malkangiri, Kandhamal and Keonjhar districts had already started kitchen gardens on their own, the MDM nodal officer pointed out.

Virus caseload rises to 1.67L

13 NEW FATALITIES PUSH ODISHA'S NOVEL CORONAVIRUS DEATH TOLL TO 669

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: State's COVID-19 tally rose to 1,67,161 Thursday as 4,241 more people tested positive for the infection, while 13 fresh fatalities pushed Odisha's novel coronavirus death toll to 669, an official of Health and family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

The state had reported its highest single-day spike of 4,270 coronavirus cases Wednesday.

Fight against COVID-19

Khurda registered the highest number of new cases at 647, followed by Cuttack (389) and Puri (291)

Four fresh fatalities each were reported in Puri and Khurda districts, two in Gajapati and one each in Balasore, Cuttack and Subarnapur districts

Ganjam district has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus deaths at 215, followed by Khurda (100) and Cuttack (55)

As many as 2,502 new cases were detected in quarantine centres, while 1,739 people tested positive for the infection during contact tracing, the official added.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at



A newly-posted ANM takes stock of health condition of a COVID patient under home isolation in Puri

647, followed by Cuttack (389) and Puri (291).

Four fresh fatalities each were reported in Puri and Khurda districts, two in Gajapati and one each in Balasore, Cuttack and Subarnapur districts, the official pointed out, adding that as many as

53 COVID-19 patients have so far died in the state due to other ailments.

Ganjam district has so far reported the highest number of coronavirus deaths at 215, followed by Khurda (100) and Cuttack (55), the H&FW official said.

Milestone in plasma therapy

Odisha has set a milestone of administering plasma on more than 1,000 novel coronavirus patients, the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said Thursday, congratulating the doctors and health workers for their relentless efforts in fighting the pandemic.

The H&FW department took to the Twitter to say, "It's an admirable achievement for the entire team of Plasma Therapy to cross the milestone of administering Plasma to over 1000 patients. Plasma has been made available to any patient in need - both in Government or Private Covid healthcare facility." "Heartfelt thanks to the plasma donors who have a big role in this achievement! Heartiest Congratulations to the entire team for their relentless efforts daily!" it added.

Plasma therapy for critical coronavirus patients was launched in Odisha at the SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik July 15.

Meanwhile, 3,607 patients recovered Thursday, taking the total recoveries in Odisha to 1,33,466, the official said, adding that the state has so far tested over 26.19 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 51,824 Wednesday.

CREATIVE STROKES



An artist gives finishing strokes to a graffiti at Power House Square in Bhubaneswar, Thursday, spreading awareness on novel coronavirus

COVID violations: ₹9L fine collected



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sep 17: In order to ensure strict enforcement of COVID-19 rules, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation has collected about Rs 9 lakh as fines during the last five months against offenders for not wearing masks or practicing social distancing.

Following directives of Health and Family Department, the BMC had issued an order earlier in April that those found short of following COVID regulations were to be fined Rs 200 for first three offences and Rs 500 subsequently.

As per sources, the BMC between the period of 24th April to 14th Sept has collected a total fine of Rs 8.83 lakhs. While most of the fines included offences against not wearing of masks, social distancing and other COVID norms, the penalties also included spitting in public.

"All three zones under the BMC have observed thousands of violators against COVID during the period when the rule came into force. However, these fines are not built for purpose of earning revenue but to ensure that people follow the regulations which is meant for their own safety," said a senior Enforcement Officer at BMC.

Fines were collected for not wearing face mask covering nose and mouth, for spitting in public places & violating social distancing norms

It can be mentioned here that civic authority had reported fine collection of Rs. 17,600 from 88 violators within 10 days of implementation of rule. As per sources, North and South West Zone had reported about 40 violators each within week of implementation of rule. Moreover, major shopping areas such as Market Building and Unit 4 market were sealed following violation of COVID norms and detection of several positive cases in the area.

Meanwhile, observing the rising cases in the city, experts were of the opinion that the 'civic authority hasn't done enough'. "Bhubaneswar has gradually become the hotbed for COVID in the state. Yet people are constantly violating the norms. A fine of Rs 200 is too meager and thus citizens are not very serious against following the regulations," said Prashant Bhusan, a social activist here.

Heavy rainfall from tomorrow

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Many parts of the state will receive heavy rainfall from Saturday under the impact of a fresh low pressure area which is likely to form around September 20.

"A cyclonic circulation lies over north coastal Andhra Pradesh and neighbourhood between 3.1 km & 3.6 km above mean sea level. Besides, a low pressure area is likely to develop over northeast Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood around September 20," said Bhubaneswar Met Centre in a bulletin.

Under its impact, heavy rainfall is likely to occur at one or two places over Malkangiri, Nabarangpur, Koraput and Rayagada districts, September 19. Thunderstorm with lightning would also occur at one or two places in Balasore, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Puri, Khurda, Nayagarh, Ganjam, Gajapati, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Kandhamal, Dhenkanal and Kalahandi districts, Saturday.

Similarly, few places of Malkangiri, Koraput, Nabarangpur, Ganjam, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Balasore, Cuttack and Khurda district will witness heavy to very heavy rainfall on the next day.

On September 21, heavy rainfall will occur in Sonepur, Sambalpur, Angul, Deogarh, Bargarh, Boudh, Jajpur, Bhadrak, Kalahandi, Malkangiri, Koraput, Kandhamal, Jharsuguda, Cuttack and Kendrapara districts, the Met said.

Meanwhile, office of the Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) has asked district Collectors to remain in alert and take precautionary measures to meet any eventuality.

Reassess holding tax for 40k properties: HC to civic body

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sep 17: Following Orissa High Court order, the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) is all set to reassess and collect new holding tax from about 40,000 properties under its authority for a period between 2019-20 to 2020-21.

As per directions from GA department, the civic authority after 21 years had revised the benchmark value of land cost in October last year. The BMC's move was challenged by different organisations in court. However, the Odisha High Court in its judgment Sept 4 ordered the BMC for revision and collection of all non-assessed holdings within 15 days.

"We have asked the Zonal Deputy Commissioners (ZDCs) of South-East, South-West and North Zones in the city to complete revision of all the non-assessed properties within 15 days. The reassessment will be done retrospectively with effect from April 1, 2019. After completion of the reassessment process, the ZDCs will collect 50 per cent of revised assessment amount to be paid towards any holding from the period 2019-20 to 2020-21," stated a senior BMC official.



However, observing the pandemic in the city, the civic body will allow proprietors of all commercial and residential properties to pay the amount in quarterly or half-yearly installment. "The 15-day deadline to complete reassessment may also be likely extended as the Covid-19

crisis is affecting work owing to limited manpower," the official added.

It needs to be mentioned here that as per Odisha Municipal Act, 1950, the BMC which collects holding tax is supposed to increase the benchmark value of land in every two years as per state government directions. However, since 1988, holding tax or benchmark value has not been revised under BMC jurisdiction resulting in major revenue loss to the exchequer.

FEMALE BEAR AT NZP DIES

POST NEWS NETWORK

Barang, Sept 17: A female bear, Arati, at Nandankanan Zoological Park (NZP) here died while undergoing treatment at the zoo's healthcare facility, an official said Thursday.

According to sources, the 27-year-old bear was under treatment at the ICU of NZP's veterinary facility here ever since she developed breathlessness Monday. "She didn't respond to medications and died early Thursday," said an official.

Arati was brought to Nandankanan from Ranchi September 13, 2013. Sources said a few of the carnivorous mammals at Nandankanan were vaccinated for tuberculosis around a fortnight ago.

"And since then, health of many of them began deteriorating," a source pointed out, adding that another bear 'Liza' is undergoing treatment at NZP's veterinary facility.

NZP has virtually become a graveyard for animals as it has been witnessing frequent deaths.

Bridging digital divide 'crucial'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, access and equity, which are foundations of quality education systems, are being confronted across the country. Our greatest worry is that differences in parental involvement and lack of digital access compound inequality.

While digital education has mostly remained unsuccessful and unviable, governments must address the challenges, said panellists during a National Webinar on "Status of Quality Elementary Education in India during covid19: Challenges and Opportunities".

The webinar was jointly organised by multiple Civil societies, RTE Forum and education activists. Speaking on the webinar, Ramakant Rai, Country Convener, National Coalition for Education said "quality elementary education for all children cannot be ensured in a situation when 32.2 million children in our country are out of school, according to the 75th round survey of National Sample Survey Organization.

Though the government is

ONLINE EDUCATION



launching online education to bridge the learning gap, this is not viable in our country where only 15% of the people have access to the internet. While stating the NITI Ayog report, Rai said "the government is only concerned about educational output, without a single mention of the input invested to achieve this. Further, the National Education Policy has smashed away the RTE Act. We must save education from being privatised as education is much more than learning".

Experts on the occasion highlighted on the ensuring role of the standing committee on education in Gram Panchayat level which is being ignored by the machinery, need for collective action and building up grassroots movement to persuade and influence government action in this regard.

Divyang lady's ordeal exposes Puri admin apathy

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: The ordeal of a physically handicapped lady deprived of all basic benefits under various social security schemes has exposed the brouhaha over the people-friendly governance claims by state government authorities.

She has been running from pillar to post requesting various officials including the Puri district collector and Tehsildar to get justice, but to no avail.

The Puri district administration's indifference towards her misfortune has even irked the Odisha Lokayukta who has been approached by the lady as a last resort.

The 46-year-old wheelchair-bound victim, Binodini Jena is a resident of Kanalpada village under Satyavadi block of Puri. She used to stay along with her elderly father and step-mother in a kutcha house in her village.

Speaking to Orissa POST, Jena said that the Kutcha house was completely destroyed in the devastating cyclonic storm Fani in 2019. She has been staying in a corner of a

Binodini has been running from pillar to post requesting various officials including the Puri Collector and tehsildar to get justice, but to no avail

neighbor's house since then.

Jena also claimed that she has not been getting any benefit under a plethora of government-run social security schemes in the state barring a meagre Rs700 disability allowance that includes Rs200 for rice.

Adding salt to her injury, even some officials at the BDO office misappropriated around Rs6000 to 7000 pending due of the allowance money, alleges Sushil, a local social activist.

The activist alleged that many ineligible persons managed to fetch help for house construction under Fani rehabilitation aid with the help of officials and local leaders but an unfortunate Jena neither get a house nor any monetary help.



A wheelchair-bound Binodini Jena at Lokayukta office in Bhubaneswar

She approached the Lokayukta after failing to get any response from the district administration in December 2, 2019. Subsequently, the

Lokayukta send notice to the Puri district Collector and Nimapara Tehsildar to submit their respective reply in this regard December 23, 2019.

The Nimapara Tehsildar informed the Lokayukta that the village of victim falls under the jurisdiction of Satyavadi tehsildar. On the other hand, the Puri collector did not give any reply in response to the Lokayukta's order.

Later, Lokayukta taking pity on the condition of Jena asked the Collector to personally take initiative and address her problem March 2, 2020. Jena spends more than Rs 1000 and sought help of at least three villagers to accompany her to the Lokayukta in Capital on each hearing day.

However, the ADM who met Jena instead asked her to open a beetle shop and offered her Rs 10000 as aid which was cruel joke for the hapless divyang lady.

Finding no other way, the lady again approached Lokayukta who send fresh notices to the district authorities for appearance 15 September, 2020. But none of the authorities or their representative appeared before Lokayukta Tuesday too.

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-Cookiemana-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.

Doorstep classes rile teachers, parents

Doctor, nurse crunch hits health services in Ganjam

SETBACK TO ALMP IN BARGARH OVER COVID FEARS



icked and do not allow teachers from outside, fearing spread of infection," they pointed out. They also said that most of the

villages. Teachers also fear that they would contract the virus in pandemic affected villages, if they visit. On the other hand, a teacher has been asked to impart teaching in five villages. Most of these teachers are aged over 50 and having chronic diseases. Another thing they pointed out that a teacher is supposed to teach 20 to 40 students.

The teachers' association observed that visiting villages to impart education is as good as inviting Covid infections for them while locals oppose outside teachers coming to their doorsteps.

The association has demanded immediate halt of the ALMP at the crucial Covid times.

BOUDH STUDENTS TREK HILLS TO ATTEND 'ONLINE' CLASSES

HARABHANGA: Children with bagfuls of books trekking up a hill has been a common sight at Palasakutuni village of Dhalapur panchayat under Harabhanga block in Boudh district.

According to the villagers, the children trek the hill every day to take online classes. As the network signal is poor in the village, students have no other choice but to go to a higher place to receive signals and attend online classes.

With the schools and colleges being closed owing to COVID-19 pandemic, online classes have become the new normal.

But reality bites when it comes to rural hilly pockets. Here, network signal is poor, nay next to no signal at all. The other problem the students are faced with is that most of them do not have android phones that are quintessential to take online classes.

The students of Palasakutuni village are experiencing these problems.

"Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the village school has been closed. Our students are facing a lot of problems to keep pace with the syllabus. The teachers are teaching the students online. Where the internet signal is good, the students there are taking classes seamlessly. But our students are not that fortunate," observed Sanuj Pradhan, a villager.

Some other villagers including Sanjay Palia and Abhi Danta alleged, "Our children are facing a lot

of difficulties to take online classes. Every morning they have to go to the nearby hillock. No mishap has occurred as yet, touch wood. But if it happens, who will be responsible."

When contacted, district education officer (DEO) Gendra Kujur said the department is aware of the problem the children of Palasakutuni village are facing nowadays. "The district collector has already been informed about the problem and soon something will be done to address it," he added.



POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, Sept 17: A large number of vacant posts of doctors and nurses at health centres has affected medical services in Ganjam district, a report said.

The shortage has worsened the healthcare at the times of Covid when focus is on treating Covid cases. It was alleged that cancer, liver, high blood pressure, diabetes patients are deprived of availing proper treatment for last five months.

According to information from the district administration, 319 doctor posts are lying vacant at different hospitals in the district while there is a need for 537 doctors to look after the healthcare.



The poor healthcare scenario in the district can be gauged from the fact that only 218 doctors are managing health services in the district.

Besides, severe shortage of nurses has left an impact on the healthcare system. Only 96 nurses work at different primary and community health centres whereas the district actually requires 656 nurses.

The posts of 542 nurses are lying

vacant. Moreover, posts of 63 pharmacists, 85 women health workers, 223 male health workers, 36 lab technicians, 13 radiographers, 13 Ayush doctors are lying vacant.

The CDMO has already apprised the state government about the shortage of doctors and nurses.

The district has 580 health centres including 460 sub-centres, 89 single-doctor public health centres (PHCs) and new PHCs, 30 community health centres (CHCs) and a district headquarters hospital here.

According to government norms, at least six doctors, including four specialists, should be posted in each CHC. Several hospitals, including the ones at Digapahandi, Patrapur and Kodala are running with doctor shortage.

Mystery shrouds death of woman, son in Sundargarh

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Sept 17: In a mysterious development Thursday, the body of a woman was found inside the room of her house at Govindpur village of Bonai area in Sundargarh district. Her one-year-old son also died at a hospital here Thursday. He had been admitted with injuries on various parts of the body. The deceased woman was identified as Ashtami Kisan.

According to sources, an altercation took place Wednesday night between the woman and her husband Dambaru Kisan. Then everything was normal. However, the woman was found dead Thursday morning inside the house. Lying beside her was her son with injuries.

The infant was rushed to the Rourkela Government Hospital (RGH). However, he could not be saved.

On being informed, local police reached the spot and seized the body of the deceased and sent it for post-mortem. Cops have also launched an investigation to ascertain the reasons behind the death of Ashtami.

The woman's family members have leveled murder allegations against her husband. However, Ashtami's in-laws claimed that she died after consuming poison.

So far police have not been able to locate Ashtami's husband Dambaru. They are also in dark as to how the infant was injured.

Female jumbo hit by train dies

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sundargarh, Sept 17: A female elephant was killed after being hit by a goods train between Jareikela and Manoharpur villages in Bisra area of Sundargarh district Wednesday evening, forest officials said Thursday.

The incident took place around 10 pm Wednesday when a herd of 10 elephants was crossing the railway tracks between the villages of Jareikela and Manoharpur. The empty goods train which was passing through the spot hit the female elephant killing her on the spot. The other elephants had a close shave, forest official said.

The train after hitting the animal came to a stop a few hundred metres down the track. Locals who witnessed the accident tried to catch the loco pilot and the guard. However, both fled the spot.

Later, irate locals staged a demonstration on the track stopping the movement of trains.



The 'rail roko' was only withdrawn after officials of the Indian Railway reached the spot and promised action against the errant driver. Normalcy in movement of trains was restored after three hours. Forest department officials seized the elephant's body and sent it for post-mortem, Thursday morning.

Locals alleged that the train was not below the speed of 50 kmph as prescribed for that particular locality. It is known to be an elephant route and hence the Railways instructed all drivers to drive at less than 50 kmph. Also, the driver did not blow the horn as is the norm while passing through that particular stretch. They demanded proper investigation into the matter.

Snake-bite victim treated by black magic in Balasore

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Sept 17: Yet another incident of snake-bite victim falling back on black magic instead of seeking medical help has come to the fore in Soro block of Balasore district.

While the exact date of the incident is yet to be ascertained, the video of the incident has gone viral.



The victim was learnt to be a resident of Anantapur village and he was rushed to a government health centre. What's even more surprising is the fact that the ritual was held inside the hospital premises and that the healer is learnt to be a lecturer.

In the video, the lecturer can be seen treating the victim with on-lookers standing by as mute spectators.

"This is not the first incident where a traditional healer is engaged to cure snake-bite victim. People are doing this due to their illiteracy and blind faith in superstitions. A lot still remain to be done to get the people free from these superstitious beliefs," a senior citizen wishing not to be named observed.

Kin carry deceased's body on trolley



POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, Sept 17: Family members carrying the body of a deceased on a trolley at Rasagovindpur in Mayurbhanj district has gone viral. It has exposed the failure of the state government's 'Mahaprayan Scheme'.

Sources said, Dukhi Marandi

(46) of Gobara village under Rasagovindpur block was admitted to a local community health centre after he fell ill. He had breathed his last Tuesday. The deceased's wife and his family members carried the body on a trolley in full public view to their house Wednesday morning.

Commuters and local people shot videos of the incident and later those went viral. They did not get a proper vehicle to carry the deceased to his residence.

Gajendra Marandi, a relative of the deceased said the hospital did not provide them with any vehicle to carry the body back home. "With no options left, we hired a trolley

for Rs800, wrapped up the body and pulled the trolley to the village, five kilometres from the hospital. When contacted, the medical officer in-charge of the health centre, Dr Debashis Pattanayak said the deceased's wife had been told that a vehicle would be arranged Wednesday morning to send her husband's body to the village. "But they did not wait for it and took the body without informing anyone. If it is necessary we will inform the police about the incident, Pattanayak said.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had launched the 'Mahaprayan Scheme' August 25, 2016. Under the scheme, the Red Cross provides free transport to the poor.

Pharmacist sacked, action against doc sought

POST NEWS NETWORK

Dhenkhal, Sept 17: Dhenkanal district administration dismissed a pharmacist for dereliction of duty after a video of a woman trying to resuscitate her Covid-19 infected husband at Dhenkanal district headquarters hospital (DHH) went viral.

In the video, a Covid-19 patient is seen collapsing at the main door of the fever and flu ward of the DHH. His wife is seen making repeated attempts to revive her husband, but failed. She is seen sobbing inconsolably at the ward doorstep.

In this connection, the contractual pharmacist was disengaged from duty. The patient identified as

Sushant Prusti (50) of Nadhara village in Angul district had been undergoing treatment in Angul.

He had come to Dhenkanal DHH for an antigen test Monday. As they reached the hospital, Sushant collapsed at the main door. His wife sought help from the medical staff but none moved. As the video shot by some onlookers went viral, netizens flooded it with comments,

alleging utter medical negligence.

However, Chief District Medical Officer (CDMO) Dr Sujatarani Mishra had refuted the allegations. She said the patient had comorbidities like high blood pressure and diabetes.

Bolangir CCR in-charge succumbs to Covid

BOLANGIR: After fighting with Covid-19 at a Bolangir Covid designated hospital for over a week, a corona warrior breathed his last Wednesday.

However, Health and Family Welfare Department updated the news Thursday. As per reports, the corona warrior has been identified as Inspector Bijayananda Karkara of Bolangir district. He worked as the in-charge of the

Corona Control Room at Bolangir SP office. Karkar also worked at Bolangir Town Police Station and Titlagarh Police Station. He had developed fever and flu like symptoms a week ago before testing positive for Covid-19. He was undergoing treatment at a Covid hospital in Bolangir.

Similarly, two corona warriors of Bhubaneswar also succumbed to the virus in the recent past.

"His antigen test was positive. He collapsed while sitting at the main gate due to a massive heart attack," CDMO had said.

On the other hand, Dhenkanal District Collector Bhumesh Chandra Behera said a show-cause notice has

been served on the CDMO over this issue.

"At the same time, a recommendation has already been sent to the state government to initiate action against the doctor on duty on that particular day," Behera said.

Organic veggies beat price spiral for Keonjhar denizens

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, Sept 17: Fresh vegetables grown organically by tribals in hilly areas are available in markets of this town round the year. These types of vegetables have always been the first choice of people. This is because farmers use various types of organic fertilizers to grow their produce.

However, organic vegetables have disappeared from the markets after COVID-19 lockdowns came in. Now with restrictions eased and vehicles plying, the markets in this town have been once again flooded with organic vegetables.

These days one can find papaya, plantain, cucumber, colocasia, egg plants, sweet potato, elephant foot yam being sold by the roadside. Apart from organically grown, these vegetables are sold at comparatively cheaper prices to those sold by retail traders. This is the reason why people in this town have not been really hit



Tribal women selling organic vegetables on road side in Keonjhar town

the way consumers in other places of Odisha have been by the steep rise in vegetable prices.

According to locals, if the town has a cold storage, they will get more of these organically grown vegetables. At the same time, the tribals will also

benefit. "They come to the market by buses, trucks or pickup vans. Sometimes, they leave with us produce that remain unsold. They do not want to take those back as they have to pay again for them," said the locals. "If there is a cold storage in this

town, they won't have to throw away their unsold produce and they will make good profits," they added.

The tribal people also complained that they have to brave the weather to sell their produce. Sometimes they have to sit under a scorching sun, at other times they get drenched by heavy rains. All of them pleaded for some form of shelter over their heads.

"If there is a resting place allotted to us, it will be good. At times we return to our villages late into the night through dense forests. There is always the possibility of being attacked by animals. If there was a place to rest, we would have definitely taken shelter if needed," they stated.

These days, however, residents of this town are facing problems accruing from organic vegetables. This is because retailers are buying the produce in large quantities and at minimal prices. Then these traders sell the same products at exorbitant rates, alleged some locals.

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE BIRAMITRAPUR MUNICIPALITY, BIRAMITRAPUR
"E" Procurement Notice
Tender ID: 2020-ORULB-62697
Tender Call Notice No.2393/BM/2020-21, Dt.16.9.2020

- Name of work : Civil Construction works as mentioned in website.
- No. of works : 05 Nos. of work.
- Bid value : Rs.0.81 lakhs to Rs.3.51 lakhs
- Period of completion : 45 days to 02 calendar months(sixty days).
- Date and time of availability, received : From 10.00 A.M. dt.21.9.2020 to dt.01.10.2020 upto 5.00 P.M. only.
- Bids received online shall be opened on Dt.: 06.10.2020 at 11.30 A.M.
- Submission of original documents : From 10.00 A.M. dt.03.10.2020 to dt.05.10.2020 upto 5.00 P.M.
- Name & address of the officer : Executive Officer, Biramitrapur Municipality inviting bid

For further details can be seen from the Procurement portal: www.tendersodisha.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Officer
Biramitrapur Municipality

FOCUS DIPLOMACY

DEALING WITH DEVIL



Deepening convergences with USA while managing differences with China, and soft-balancing major powers are a throwback to the days of non-alignment. Juggling several balls in the air at a time is easier said than done. Maintaining strategic independence in an interdependent world is a tall order

and personality, dominated the foreign policy in the beginning. What happened to America's foreign policy after Nixon resigned following the Watergate scandal? What is happening to China under Xi Jinping?

Until the advent of the BJP into power with a majority government led by Atal Behari Vajpayee, Nehruvian foreign policy was followed under the slogan of 'Continuity and Change'. In this, there was only continuity and no change except the tweaking of the concept of non-alignment to say 'genuine non-alignment' under the brief Janata Party period.

Nehru alone dominated the foreign policy arena until 1964, or till his death. Nehru was considered an idealist, less of a pragmatist. Vajpayee added his personal weight both as a foreign minister in the Janata government and later as Prime Minister. He had announced, "Nothing stops India and United States from becoming natural allies". Manmohan Singh, widely considered a weakling by his critics, broke tradition, took a political risk and signed the nuclear deal with the US in 2005. The Leftist allies of his government withdrew support although the government survived with the backing of the Samajwadi Party.

Prime Minister Modi has not signed any substantive agreement on either economy or security with the world's biggest power, the US, despite overtures by the latter. Perhaps, he built a personal rapport with President Donald Trump through two big public rallies in the US and in India. A solid bilateral agreement on trade or security was expected out of such public display of friendship and partnership.

Both normatively and in praxis, the comprehensive national power of a country is the key determinant in matters of diplomacy. The power consists of a strong economy, sound political order, peace, harmony and national unity. Our economy, even before the pandemic, was crumbling. There are lots of statistics in the public domain including the government sources to show the pathetic situation of the economy.

Paradoxically, we are fighting China but our economy is hooked to the trade with it. Even at present, in Covid times, and the border face-off, our trade with China is growing more than with any other country. Our security strategy is making us spend heavily on procuring armaments. A study on the Links of Disarmament and Development says how the cost of

one fighter aircraft could run our schools for years; likewise, the cost of a missile could run all our old-age homes for years together. Therefore, in order to be able to invest in development of people and infrastructure, we need to have a different security strategy.

Our political traditions, ethos and systems have been our greatest strength. Drawing on Buddha, Ashoka, Gandhi, Tagore we have won the confidence of the world. Our political diversity and pluralism have connected us to the world of democracy, human rights, civil liberties, dignity and solidarity. But, of late, we are witnessing disharmony and discord in the society which is affecting our foreign policy. Remember, the proposed visit of Shinzo Abe to Assam in December 2019 did not happen due to riotous situation in the state following the imposition of NRC. If the visit took place, a big trade investment treaty would have been signed.

James N. Rosneau, the American political scientist said that foreign policy is credible and effective when public officials are accountable to the citizens. Also when there is harmony between the Executive and the Legislature. Is this the case today in our country? Look at the state of Pakistan from 1947 to 1989 because of political instability caused by military coups. So, to downplay India's politics of pluralism and democracy, will undermine our national interest and its articulation in our foreign policy.

Finally, the talk of participating in a multi-polar world is impractical. Deepening convergences with USA, while managing differences with China and soft-balancing major powers are a throwback to the days of non-alignment. Juggling several balls in the air at a time is easier said than done. Maintaining strategic independence in an interdependent world is a tall order. A NATO like alliance is a greater bulwark against aggressive and expansionist neighbours like China. So, our foreign policy determinants have to be reassessed. Is the government on the ball!

The writer is Prof of International Relations, JMI.

Dr D K Giri

A NATO LIKE ALLIANCE IS A GREATER BULWARK AGAINST AGGRESSIVE AND EXPANSIONIST NEIGHBOURS LIKE CHINA. SO, OUR FOREIGN POLICY DETERMINANTS HAVE TO BE REASSESSED

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh spoke in Parliament this Tuesday on the border face-off with China. Rajnath Singh is an old hand in governance, deeply experienced and extremely articulate. Yet, his statement to Parliament was esoteric, evasive and laconic.

Disappointing, that he did not say a word about what government is intending to do in order to restore the status quo ante pre-May 2020. He was full of platitudes on diplomacy and sentiments about the Army and the 20 soldiers who laid down their lives on 15 June. There is hardly any divergence of opinion or emotions about our Army. Hence, it was esoteric.

No one is itching for a war unless it is imposed, although there is a slender voice doing the rounds that we should give the Chinese a bloody nose even if we get one in retaliation. Diplomacy based on dialogue, negotiations and international campaign is any day a better option than war, however limited. But, in diplomacy, what is our bargaining chip?

Foreign policy is a strategy of a state vis-à-vis other states or international entities and of achieving specific goals defined in terms of national interest, said Plano and Olton in the International Relations Dictionary. Interestingly, there are key determinants which define our national interest which in turn strengthens those determinants. It is not one or a set of factors but it is interplay of several factors under different circumstances that make a foreign policy. There are also external stimuli which a country reacts to and domestic determinants that shape and anchor a foreign policy. While external factors are not necessarily under the control of a country, the indigenous ones are.

In the formative years, immediately after Independence, our foreign policy was based on anti-colonialism, peace and progress, non-alignment, political traditions, security imperatives and above all, the personality and the outlook of the leader. Jawaharlal Nehru, who was both Prime Minister and foreign minister, through his talents, experience

SPECTRUM HEALTH

Moment of truth as Covid-19 spreads

Seth Berkley, Richard Hatchett, and Soumya Swaminathan

WITH THE WORLD'S LARGEST AND MOST DIVERSE VACCINE PORTFOLIO - WHICH CURRENTLY COMPRISES NINE CANDIDATES ALREADY IN DEVELOPMENT AND A FURTHER NINE OR MORE UNDER EVALUATION - COVAX WILL ACT AS A GLOBAL INSURANCE POLICY

Almost in its tenth month, the Covid-19 pandemic is still wreaking havoc on economies and lives around the world. But while the end of the crisis seems as far away as ever, the fact is that we are approaching a potential turning point. World leaders now have an opportunity to seal the deal on a global framework that puts international co-operation above vaccine nationalism in stopping the pandemic.

The moment of truth will be at midnight on September 18. That is the deadline for countries to join the Covid-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX), an initiative launched by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the World Health Organization, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. COVAX represents the best chance we have to provide people in all countries with rapid, fair, and equitable access to Covid-19 vaccines as soon as they become available. The initiative has already achieved an extraordinary scale, with more than 170 countries already signaling their intent to join.

Nothing like COVAX has ever been attempted, and the short time frame in which it has been as-

sembled makes it all the more remarkable. If successful, this will be the first time that the international community has come together to ensure equitable and simultaneous access to new lifesaving pandemic interventions for rich and poor alike.

As we head into the fall, and Covid-19 continues to spread, the global death toll is approaching one million, with monthly economic losses estimated at \$500 billion. Under these conditions, ensuring fair, universal access to vaccines is necessary if we are to bring the crisis to an end. Until everyone is protected, everyone will remain at risk of the disease, its adverse economic effects, or both.

As the only truly global approach available, COVAX's importance cannot be overstated. Although there are more than 200 Covid-19 vaccines in development and at least 35 clinical trials underway, the vast majority are likely to fail. Historically, candidate vaccines at the preclinical stage have less than a 10 per cent chance of succeeding. And of those that do advance to the clinical trials stage, only around 20 per cent will ultimately be approved. Given these odds, even

wealthy governments that are currently negotiating bilateral deals with individual vaccine manufacturers cannot guarantee access to a vaccine on their own.

COVAX's initial aim is to have two billion vaccine doses available by the end of 2021, as that should be enough to protect high-risk/vulnerable populations and frontline health-care workers. But to hit that target, we first need the legally binding commitments of as many countries as possible.

After the sign-up deadline of September 18, the priority will be to complete the development and testing process to ensure that all forthcoming vaccines are both effective and safe. COVAX will need to put in place agreements with drug manufacturers, so that it can begin delivering vaccines at scale as soon as they are approved. And donor funds will be needed to subsidize the purchase of vaccines for low and lower-middle-income countries.

But even with financial solutions in place, the process of distributing vaccines will pose significant challenges. The delivery of Covid-19 vaccines will be the single largest vaccine deployment the world has ever seen, and it will

have to be executed at a time when misinformation (the "infodemic") is threatening to undermine public confidence in vaccine safety.

Though the pandemic is far from over, we at least have a global solution in sight. COVAX represents the best hope that we have for bringing a prompt end to the crisis. When people look back and marvel at how quickly the scientific community and development practitioners responded to the Covid-19 threat, they will be able to point to the speed with which governments put aside national interests in the name of international cooperation and solidarity. Whatever specific moment future historians choose as the pandemic's turning point, there will be little doubt that the creation and widespread adoption of the COVAX framework played an indispensable role in ending it.

Seth Berkley is CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. Richard Hatchett is CEO of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations. Soumya Swaminathan is Chief Scientist of the World Health Organization.

© PROJECT SYNDICATE

My God is love and sweetly suffers all.

SRI AUROBINDO



Safety first

Our state government, like its counterparts in India, arranged to bring back migrant workers from across the country in the aftermath of the Covid-19 outbreak. The Railways, on its part, rushed in with special trains and ferried lakhs of workers from Gujarat, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, among others to Odisha. Not to take a chance, the government plied buses to bring back the left-over workers still stuck in other states. It was treated like a natural calamity and given all the focus and seriousness it deserved. Thousands of quarantine centres had been set up to provide transit shelter to workers and local Sarapanchs were given power at par with District Collectors to facilitate the decision-making process at the ground level. The state government also put in place structured incentives to attract migrants and take care of their needs in quarantine centres. Incentives, both in cash and kind, were announced to facilitate the safe incoming of workers. More importantly, district administrations were directed to create jobs for these people under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) and to make the most of other state and Central government schemes. Authorities were directed to map varied skills of returnees and provide them with jobs according to their skills. Over five lakh workers had returned to Odisha between May and July.

However, now we can see how all these programmes flopped. Not long after the migrant workers reached here, they began to be disillusioned with the promises of the state government. In the absence of quick job guarantee programmes, suitable to workers with different skills, we can now see a rush among them to go back to their workplaces. Under Unlock 4.0, the Centre has allowed most industrial activities to resume. Taking advantage of this, people from Bolangir, Sonapur, Nuapada, Ganjam, Korraput, Rayagada and Sambalpur districts are preparing to go back to where they had come from. With Nuakhai festival gone, they want to go back to their workplaces. Reports reveal that firm owners in Gujarat and Tamil Nadu have engaged middlemen and contractors to lure workers as they are set to resume operations. Workers on their part also are showing keenness to return and have reportedly accepted advance money from middlemen. The eagerness of workers to go back, even as the pandemic has been in an increasingly virulent form, can be gauged by the fact workers move in buses to reach far-off places. Last week, a bus from Ganjam full of migrant workers, on its way to Gujarat, met with an accident near Raipur in Chhattisgarh, killing eight people on the spot and leaving many more injured. Another bus aboard migrant workers bound for Tamil Nadu overturned at Rayagada leaving eight people critically injured. Such accidents happen as people, jobless for months, are desperate to go back to their workplaces. The administration fast failed to provide them with jobs. It is now showing criminal negligence by not ensuring the safety and security of these outbound people. As the government brought them here, it was obligatory on its part to find them gainful employment. Now that they are left to fend for themselves and being forced to arrange their own return, the administration should ensure their safe passage. Earlier, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan urged Railway Minister Piyush Patel to ply Shramik Special trains to ferry workers back to their workplaces. This was welcome. Train journeys are relatively safer. The despondency and desperation of returnees stem from the fact that they failed to find remunerative employments during repeated lockdowns and shutdowns. While the resilience of our economy is pushing workers to go back to their workplaces despite the pandemic worsening, the authorities must step in and ensure migrant works reach their destinations safely.

WISDOM CORNER

The bird is powered by its own life and by its motivation. **API ABDUL KALAM**

Others have seen what is and asked why. I have seen what could be and asked why not. **PABLO PICASSO**

I hear, I know. I see, I remember. I do, I understand. **CONFUCIUS**

WORDSWORTH

Tinker's damn

A question is, "Why the tinker in a tinker's damn?" There are two theories about this. One points to the very low social status of tinkers, itinerant menders of pots and pans, and to their well-known tendency to include a swearword in every sentence. So, to say that something "isn't worth a tinker's damn", is to say that it's of no value at all, not worth even a moment's consideration. A more ingenious explanation was put forward in the latter part of the 19th Century: when a tinker was soldering a pot, he would make a small wall out of bread dough around the place he was to flood with solder in order to stop it from spreading. After he had finished, he would naturally throw the dough away as being of no further use, so that "a tinker's dam" was equally something of no value. A century ago, the compilers of the First Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary were scornful of this attempt to make a simple matter more complicated, though it is still to be found in current works on phrase histories. It speaks to that part of us that wants to convert the mundane to the magical, to find something of mystery and interest in even the most ordinary of expressions. The simpler story is much the more likely. It is supported by variations such as tinker's curse and tinker's cuss.

Tinny

Tinny was once common in both Australia and New Zealand, though it has fallen somewhat out of use. That's very probably because other slang senses have superseded it, such as those for a can or tin of beer and for a lightweight aluminium boat. As it happens, the first example recorded in print is from New Zealand, in the Chronicle of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force of 1918: "Remarks are heard on the 'tinny' luck or otherwise of the [poker] players while the 'stiffs' bemoan their luck." A comment in a book by Eric Partridge two decades later asserts that it was First World War soldiers' slang. Both the Oxford Australian Dictionary and the Oxford New Zealand Dictionary say the origin is the earlier slang tin for money. This is known from 1836. The Oxford English Dictionary notes, "Said to have been first applied to the small silver coins of the 18th century, which before their recall in 1817 were often worn quite smooth without trace of any device, so as to resemble pieces of tin." Part of the stimulus for inventing it may have been the even older brass for money, which is known from the sixteenth century. Various compounds of tin appear in the record earlier than tinny. The Bulletin of Sydney noted in 1898 that a tin back is "a party who's remarkable for luck". Much later, tin-arsed appears as a term for a person who is remarkably lucky. This has puzzled some writers, who don't see the historical link with the money sense of tin, and have suggested it means somebody who is well protected in the fundament by a metal sheet so a kick there doesn't cause any pain. The variant tin bum is known in New Zealand.

LOL

BURGLARS

Story goes that two burglars were robbing an apartment in the suburbs. Suddenly, they heard the police car sirens. "Quick! Jump out of the window!" said the first burglar. "But we're on the 13th floor!" protested the second burglar. The first burglar replied, "This is no time to be superstitious! Quick!"



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

'No' to Q Hour

Sir, As there is no Question Hour during the present session of Parliament, the Opposition is right in saying the government is trying to trample on democratic values. Question hour makes the executive accountable to the legislature. Also, there will be no break during the current fortnight-long session from September 14. There is reason to suspect that the democratic foundation of the Parliament system is being hampered in the guise of the reigning pandemic situation. The MPs are denied the chance to question the government on its controversial actions vis-à-vis the economy, handling of the pandemic, the situation along the LAC, etc. Social distancing can be practiced to prevent crowding in the Parliament, and its duration can be extended, if need be. So, why only a fortnight-long session and imposing of curbs on such ground? Question Hour is of great importance. It cannot be cancelled on one pretext or the other. The government should not run away from questions. It must rather be prepared to answer each and every query. It is important that the Question Hour is restored for this session as well. *P. Shantarami Jena, BERHAMPUR*

Jaya against drugs

Sir, Yesteryear actress Jaya Bachan has created a storm in Parliament over drug peddling in Hindi film world. Restraint is well-advised in such situations. Member Ravi Kishan has rightly pulled up the Hindi film mafia over the existing trend that is playing havoc with precious lives. Drug abuse needs to be checked. Else, the coming generations will suffer. The daughter of Jaya Bachan is not spared also. From all quarters across the nation, there is protest. The Narcotics Control Bureau is investigating into related matters. The government should not leave any stone unturned to bring the guilty to book. Curiously, Jaya Bachan did not speak a word on actor Sushant Singh Rajput's murder. *Naresh Mandal, BHADRAK*

Same-sex marriages

Sir, The Centre has opposed a petition seeking legal provision for same-sex marriages. Two years after Section 377 got scrapped, not much has changed for the LGBTIQI community. The government is still hesitant. This community continues to face serious issues at the workplace, as also over property rights, and so on. As many as 29 countries have legalised same-sex marriages. The reason given by the Centre is such a law would contravene the Hindu Marriage Act 1955, wherein law talks of 'husband and wife' in matters of regulating marriages or prohibited relationships. *Animesh Mishra, DHENKANAL*

COVID NORMS GO FOR TOSS

Thousands gather for 'tarpan' at Kolkata ghats

Thousands of people were seen violating safety guidelines as most of them did not ever bother to wear masks and use the sanitising channels while entering the ghats on the occasion of Mahalaya

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Sept 17: Gross violations of COVID-19 social distancing norms were seen at several ghats of river Ganga in Kolkata and it's adjoining Howrah district as people came in hordes to offer tarpan Thursday morning.

Thousands of people were seen violating safety guidelines as most of them did not ever bother to wear masks and use the sanitising channels while entering the ghats on the occasion of Mahalaya.

The auspicious day marks the last day of Shradh and the beginning of the Durga Puja festivities, the day when the goddess Durga is believed to have descended on Earth.

People in West Bengal traditionally wake up early morning Mahalaya in a bid to make offerings to divine entities as per Vedic

practice remembering their forefathers and their departed souls.

Amid announcements of maintaining physical distancing guidelines made by the Kolkata Police and disaster management teams, the rituals were performed, at a time when the daily figures of Corona cases reached an all-time high in India.

The state ruling Trinamool Congress volunteers also distributed free masks at several ghats, including Ahiritola Ghat, and joined hands with the police to do the crowd management activities.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee also extended warm regards to all the residents of the state.

"On the auspicious occasion of Mahalaya, I extend my warm regards to one & all. Although COVID-19 has restricted how we celebrate festivals, we shall not allow it to



dampen the spirit of this Durga Puja," she said. She urged everyone to come forward, extend a helping hand to those in need and spread joy everywhere.

"As a part of this pledge, I vow to ensure that this Durga Puja, no one is devoid of the festivities," Banerjee tweeted, greeting everyone on Shubho Mahalaya.

On the other hand, state Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) activists had performed the ritual of Tarpan on the eve of Mahalaya for its slain activists, despite the

city police's efforts to prevent the programme to be held at a Kolkata ghat. Initially, the venue was decided at Baghbazar ghat in north Kolkata, then changed to Golabari ghat in Howrah - exactly on the other side of the mighty river.

The Kolkata Police officials cited the prevailing COVID-19 situation for its action and had dismantled a temporary podium Wednesday erected for the Shahid Tarpan, in memory of slain BJP activists in Bengal in order to avert a political face-off.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 17: Forests in West Bengal will be opened for tourists from September 23, officials said Thursday.

Every year the forests close down for two months due to the Monsoon -- from July 15 to September 15, but because of the COVID-19 pandemic the forests have been out of bounds for tourists since the beginning of the lockdown in March, they said.

The state government decided to open the forests ahead of the festive season as the prolonged closure was bleeding the tourism economy, they added.

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests Ravikant Sinha said the decision to open the forests was taken at a meeting chaired by Forest Minister Rajib Banerjee Wednesday. He said guidelines will be issued for tourists and the details will be decided at a meeting on Friday.

Banerjee had earlier said that the government was working out modalities to open forests and national parks for tourists during the festive season.



EVERY YEAR THE FORESTS CLOSE DOWN FOR TWO MONTHS DUE TO THE MONSOON -- FROM JULY 15 TO SEPTEMBER 15

BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC THE FORESTS HAVE BEEN OUT OF BOUNDS FOR TOURISTS SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE LOCKDOWN IN MARCH

Meanwhile, Mujnai tea garden in Birpara-Madarihat area in West Bengal's Alipurduar district reopened Wednesday after a gap of 21 months, and around 1,000 workers have again joined work, officials said. The reopening of the tea estate brought cheers among workers ahead of the festive season.

Madarihat MLA Manoj Tigga and the trade union leaders were present during the joyous occasion, the officials said. However, several tea gardens remain closed in north Bengal, particularly in the Dooars area, causing immense distress to thousands of workers, they added.

Truck owner set ablaze in UP for not paying dues

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaunpur (Uttar Pradesh), Sept 17: A truck owner in Uttar Pradesh has been set ablaze for apparently not paying his dues to a financier in Jaunpur district. Two of his attackers are in custody.

Satya Prakash Rai, 51, was set on fire Wednesday in Ghanshyampur area. Eyewitnesses managed to catch two of the accused, while others managed to escape.

Station Officer (SO) Badlapur Srijesh Yadav said two persons were in police custody while Rai has been admitted to a district hospital. Rai's son Shyamanand who was accompanying him on the truck told reporters that they were returning to Azamgarh after loading concrete from Reeva in Madhya Pradesh.

He alleged that when their truck was passing through Badlapur, some car-borne men intercepted them and after posing as agents of a financier, they demanded to know the reason for not paying the monthly instalment of a loan taken by Rai to buy the truck for the past five months. When they mentioned

the provision of relaxations given by the government in repaying the instalments during the COVID-19 pandemic period, the agents first allowed them to go, Shyamanand said. However, he alleged that the agents again intercepted their truck when it was passing through Ghanshyampur area. Shyamanand said he was sitting in the cabin and his father got down to talk to the agents when he suddenly heard his father's cries. "I saw my father engulfed in flames and took a blanket from the truck's cabin to save my father while locals started chasing those agents."

"Two of them were caught and handed over to police by local natives while the other two managed to escape in their car," Shyamanand added. Rai was initially rushed to a nearby hospital but in view of his deteriorating condition, doctors referred him to the district hospital.

Station Officer (SO) Badlapur Srijesh Yadav said the two accused were in police custody and further investigation in the case has been initiated on the basis of their interrogation.

Nearly 1.5 crore labourers to get free religious trips

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lucknow, Sept 17: The Uttar Pradesh government is planning to take nearly 1.5 crore labourers, employed in about 6.5 lakh commercial establishments and 20,500 factories and workshops in the state, on government funded religious trips.

The scheme is likely to be announced by Chief minister Yogi Adityanath November 10, the birth anniversary of Dattopant Thengadi, RSS ideologue who founded the Bhartiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS), a trade union organisation which acts as a pressure group to enforce pro-labour policies.



According to the UP labour welfare board chairman, Sunil Bharala, the scheme would be named after Swami Vivekananda and would be the first of its kind.

"It is aimed at ensuring that labourers not only get time off from their daily grind but are also able to acquaint themselves with

the country's rich cultural and religious diversity. To my mind, there is no such scheme anywhere that allows labourers free travel and stay," Bharala said.

This, incidentally, is among the three schemes that the board is currently working on - the other two being a scheme to encourage the children of labourers to take to sporting activities and another one that would seek to fund the cost of textbooks for the meritorious poor.

Bharala said, "All of our schemes would be named after great personalities. For instance, the religious tourism scheme could be named after Swami Vivekananda, the textbook one after great litterateur Mahadevi Verma and the sporting one could be after late former India cricketer and UP minister Chetan Chauhan, or late VHP leader Ashok Singhal or former RSS chief Rajju Bhaiyya."

The initiative comes in the backdrop of RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's recent Lucknow visit, during which he called upon the cadres to focus on migrants and labourers in urban areas, farmers in rural areas and the environment.

The board is also preparing a database of all labourers employed in various commercial outlets and factories.

PROTEST TURNS UGLY



NSUI workers and students pelt stones on police force during a protest over a UP government proposal that will bring about major changes for Group B and Group C state government employees, in Prayagraj

PTI PHOTO

Mamata greets Modi on birthday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, Sept 17: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee greeted Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his 70th birthday Thursday.

Banerjee, a strong critic of the prime minister, wished him a healthy and successful year. "My

greetings to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi Ji on his 70th Birthday. I wish him a healthy and successful year ahead," she tweeted.

Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar and his wife Sudesh planted saplings on the sprawling Raj Bhawan complex grounds to mark the Prime

Minister's birthday.

They planted saplings of jamun, pomegranate and litchi.

The BJP's West Bengal unit organised blood donation camps at several places in West Bengal, including Lake Town, Jackson Lane and B K Pal Avenue in Kolkata, Bishnupur in Bankura district, Agradwip in Purba Bardhaman and Siliguri, a party spokesman said. The West Bengal Chhatra Parishad, the students' wing of the Congress, marked the day as 'National Unemployment Day'.

It set up tea and pakoda stalls at College Street in front of the Calcutta University campus, Chhatra Parishad general secretary Md Salim said, alleging that employment opportunities in both government and private sector in the country have shrunk to abysmal levels during Modi's government.



Villagers build bridge for SSB troops near UP-Nepal border

THE BRIDGE HOLDS IMPORTANCE AS IT PROVIDES A VANTAGE POINT TO THE TROOPERS PATROLLING THE BORDER, AND PARTICULARLY AFTER A ROW OVER THE CONSTRUCTION OF A ROAD BETWEEN PILLARS 38 AND 39 BY THE NEPALESE SIDE

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Pilibhit, Sept 17: A group of villagers in Pilibhit have built a bamboo bridge for the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) troopers, about 200 metres from the Uttar Pradesh-Nepal border.

The 25-metre-long and 1.2-metre-wide bamboo bridge on a deep-water channel has been built by the Bamanpur Bhagirath village head, Gurdev Singh, with assistance from the locals.

Ajay Kumar, Commandant, SSB's 49th Battalion, said: "A bridge was urgently needed for the frequent, prompt and unhindered movement of SSB patrolling pickets, especially during the night."

"The bridge will assist us in keeping an eye on any encroachment from the Nepalese side into the Indian territory as

was reported in June this year."

He added that his Nepalese counterpart from the Armed Police Force (APF) had given consent for the construction before the work started.

The construction of the bridge was initiated September 10 and it was completed in just five days at a cost of merely Rs 50,000 on the water channel known as Sutia drain.

As the village panchayat had no provision for the construction, the locals were encouraged to contribute.

The money was contributed by villagers. The bridge holds importance as it provides a vantage point to the troopers patrolling the border, and particularly after a row over the construction of a road between pillars 38 and 39 by the Nepalese side.

The road construction work was, however, halted after Indian

authorities took up the matter with their Nepalese counterparts, but the SSB is keeping a tight vigil to ensure the construction work does not resume in any manner.

"The road construction work was suspended till the time joint survey teams of the two countries demarcate the territories. Till then, we have to ensure that no violation of the status quo takes place. Thus, the bamboo bridge will prove advantageous to us in serving our objective," said Kumar.

Purampur block development officer Neeraj Dube said: "The bridge was built by village head Gurdev Singh for the SSB's 49th Battalion, but it would also facilitate village farmers to have easy access to their farms - around 75 to 80 acres - situated close to the porous border on the other side of the drain."



slow on the preparation," she said. Sources at Kumartuli said that only a few idols, those which are made of fibre or which will travel to remote corners of the country from Kumartuli, have been given the finishing touches so far. The rest are still in an unfinished state.

Since the budget for Durga Puja has been slashed by organisers from across platforms, the artisans of Kumartuli also had to make heavy compromises on the pricing, size and volume of the Goddess to make them fit into tiny budgets.

Interestingly, the traditional family pujas of Kolkata also made certain changes in their annual celebration. According to sources in Kolkata's Daw family, this year their Durga idol would be smaller in size than the previous year.

They said that even the dhakis would be brought in from their villages two weeks before the five-day festivity actually starts. Sources at Kolkata's famous Shobhabazar Raj Bari said that they would also not allow any outsider to participate in their family puja as part of COVID-19 safe measures.

This year, the scene was completely different at Kumartuli located in the crumbling neighbourhood of north Kolkata. Most of the studios wore a deserted look with half-done Durga idols and many of them still remained as mere bamboo structures.

"The rituals to draw the eyes of Goddess Durga couldn't be performed this year on Mahalaya as most of the idols were not ready. Many of the puja organisers have still not booked their idols and sent an advance," said Kumartuli artisan Chaina Pal, adding that if they do not receive an advance payment and booking how would they finish the idols on time.

Pal said that unlike every year, this time the festival would be held after more than one month from the day of Mahalaya. "That also made all the artisans and organisers go



Employment is dignity. For how long will the govt deny it? RAHUL GANDHI | CONGRESS LEADER

COVID-19 INFO

Over 11,600 Indians abroad have been infected with coronavirus as per details available with the country's missions, the government informed the Rajya Sabha Thursday



of the day quote

As per the information received from NALSA (National Legal Services Authority) for the period from April 2020 to June 2020, legal aid and assistance have been provided in 2,878 domestic violence cases and petitions have been filed in 452 cases under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005



SMRITI IRANI | WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT MINISTER

The Congress MPs have been fighting against these dangerous anti-Punjab ordinances from the outset and knew which way to vote, unlike those of the SAD, whose MPs were totally lost due to the total lack of clarity or direction from their leadership, which has been changing its stance on key issues to suit their personal interests



MANISH TEWARI | CONGRESS LEADER

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) suffered a loss of around Rs 1,609 crore due to the closure of metro services in view of the COVID-19 pandemic



HARDEEP SINGH PURI | UNION HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Shah discharged

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah, who recently recovered from COVID-19 and was admitted to AIIMS for a complete medical checkup, was discharged Thursday evening, officials said. He was admitted to the premier hospital September 12. The home minister has been discharged from AIIMS, an official said. Earlier in the day, Shah had addressed an event in his constituency Gandhinagar in Gujarat through video conference.

MCD worker stabbed

New Delhi: An MCD worker was stabbed by a man here after an altercation broke out between the two over a cleaning issue, according to police. The incident took place Wednesday morning in South-East Delhi's Jamia Nagar. "At about 7 a.m. when the victim Sonpal was on duty, Mohd Shiraz, a resident of Azeem Dairy, attacked him with a knife after an argument over cleaning. Sonpal sustained injuries on his neck and right arm," said South-East DCP R.P. Meena. The accused has been arrested a case of attempt to murder was registered at the Jamia Nagar police station.

Woman ends life

Banda (Uttar Pradesh): A 28-year-old woman committed suicide after killing her two-year-old daughter in Banda district's Chilla locality, police said. According to the police, Rajni first killed her daughter Shalini and then committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling fan. The incident took place late Tuesday night. The villagers told the police that her husband Shivdas had married another woman, which often led to a dispute between the couple.

Three killed

Giridih (Jharkhand): Three persons, including two teenagers, were killed in separate incidents of lightning strikes in Jharkhand's Giridih district, police said Thursday. The incidents took place in Bagodar, Bengabad and Pachamba police station areas Wednesday evening, an officer said.

OPPN LEADERS MEET PREZ

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Opposition leaders met President Ram Nath Kovind Thursday and raised questions about the role of the police during the February riots, besides expressing their lack of confidence in the probe of the incident.

In a joint memorandum, the leaders raised their concerns over the probe into the riots being conducted by the Delhi Police. The Delhi Police has set up Special Investigation Teams (SIT) and its Special Cell is also probing the aspect of conspiracy behind the Delhi riots in which 53 people lost their lives.

"There are, however, serious questions about the role played by the Delhi Police during the violence and also the manner in which the police is harassing and attempting to falsely implicate activists and young people who took part in the anti CAA/NRC/NPR movements as the perpetrators of violence. Such a manufactured conspiracy theory has now begun to falsely implicate political leaders," it said.

The memorandum also criticised the police for the reference made to CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechury citing disclosure statements by the accused. "This is a disturbing trend that raises serious questions over the manner of such investigations," the leaders said.

They also alleged that there are several publicly documented accounts and videos of police being "complicit in the violence, directing mobs pelting stones or looking the other way when mobs were indulging in violence".

DELHI RIOTS CASE



IN A JOINT MEMORANDUM, THE LEADERS RAISED THEIR CONCERNS OVER THE PROBE INTO THE RIOTS BEING CONDUCTED BY THE DELHI POLICE. THE MEMORANDUM CRITICISED THE POLICE FOR THE REFERENCE MADE TO CPI(M) GENERAL SECRETARY SITARAM YECHURY CITING DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS BY THE ACCUSED

"During the violence, a disturbing video emerged showing uniformed policemen assaulting young men lying injured on the road and forcing them to sing the national anthem while repeatedly beating them with lathis. "One of the men, Faizan, succumbed to his injuries a few days later," the memorandum said highlighting other such instances, including one in which they alleged the "DCP stood quietly next to a BJP leader who was instigating violence against the protestors, warning that if they did not vacate the road, he would do it himself".

"Despite several complaints being filed alleging involvement of senior police officials in the violence, including a DCP, additional commissioner and SHO, it appears no

urgency has been accorded to identifying the policemen involved in the violence and ensuring that they are brought to book," it said.

It also pointed out that while the police was "silent" on the alleged hate speech of BJP leaders, and turned a blind eye towards the role of its own personnel during the violence, the probe appeared to be pursuing a line of inquiry "criminalising the protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA)" and portraying them as a conspiracy which resulted in the riots in Delhi.

"The entire investigation appears to be aimed at arriving at a pre-meditated theory about a conspiracy propounded by the Home Minister in Lok Sabha in March 2020, before any investigation had even begun into the riots," it said.

Karnataka minister writes letter to deity

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Sept 17: Even as the debate on a possible Cabinet expansion in Karnataka is still raging, state Health and Family Welfare Minister B. Sriramulu Thursday allegedly sought the blessings of famous deity Durga Devi or 'Gade Durgamma' to make him Deputy Chief Minister at the earliest by writing a letter to the deity.

Sriramulu was in Yadgir to take part in Kalyana Karnataka Utsav in Kalaburagi.

The famous Gonal Durga Devi temple is situated in Shahapur taluk of Yadgir district which is 500 kms from Bangalore.

Sriramulu is part of the Chief Minister's programme and several dignitaries have already landed in Kalaburagi to be part of Kalyana Karnataka Utsava, (a day celebrated to commemorate Hyderabad-Karnataka Liberation Day which was rechristened as Kalyana Karnataka Utsava from last year.) On this day the region was liberated from the rule of the Hyderabad Nizam.

Prior to going to Kalaburagi, Sriramulu landed in Yadgir and he first headed to temple in Gonal village in Shahapur taluk. He performed puja and then he placed his letter on the deity's feet and sought blessings from her.

According to a source close to the minister, he wrote a letter which was signed by him containing two lines stating that he



Prior to going to Kalaburagi, Sriramulu landed in Yadgir and he first headed to temple in Gonal village in Shahapur taluk. He performed puja and then he placed his letter on the deity's feet and sought blessings from her

wanted to be Deputy Chief Minister at the earliest, and it must be fulfilled.

The source further added that Sriramulu before going to the temple visited the temple priest, Mariswamy's house and from there both went to the temple and performed the puja.

According to the popular belief here, whoever goes to this temple and wishes something for him or her or their family, they do write a letter and place it on the feet of Durga Devi and seek her blessings to fulfill that wish.

ACTION SOUGHT AGAINST KATJU

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 17: A PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking legal action against former Supreme Court judge Justice Markandey Katju for casting aspersions and making insinuations on the integrity and credibility of the Indian judiciary while deposing for fugitive diamondaire Nirav Modi before the Westminster Magistrate court of the UK.

The PIL has been filed by Nand Kishore Garg through advocate Shashank Deo Sudhi. "The Indian judiciary must not take this issue casually as such derogatory deposition made the entire judiciary suspect in the eyes of the international community. It is high time to redeem the glory of Indian judiciary by acting proactively to stop such routine false allegations," said the plea.

It contended that the deposition made by Katju is highly derogatory and insulting to the entire judicial system of India. "His allegations amount to questioning the very credibility of judicial institution where millions of citizens are reposing their faith and trust. The allegation of fairness of judicial administration is totally unfounded as the justice delivery system of India is quite strong and robust," argued the petitioner. The petitioner has urged the top court to issue a broad guideline on issues of public criticism/maligning of the judicial system and it's serving judges especially from those who served the highest institution of our country.

India slams Pak over new map

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: The government Thursday said it has rejected Pakistan's "obsession" with "territorial aggrandisement" supported by cross-border terrorism, in a reference to Islamabad unveiling a new political map laying claim to Indian territories.

Minister of State for External Affairs V Muraleedharan said the government continues to respond "appropriately" to Pakistan's malicious actions and propaganda, including on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, at various international fora. He was replying to a written question on the issue in Rajya Sabha.

Pakistan released the new map August 4 laying claim to union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and parts of Gujarat. "Government has rejected Pakistan's

Pakistan released the new map August 4 laying claim to Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and parts of Gujarat

obsession with territorial aggrandisement supported by cross border terrorism," Muraleedharan said in the written reply, calling release of the map by Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan as "absurd".

"It has also been emphasised that Pakistan should desist from laying untenable claims to Indian territories, which have neither legal validity nor international credibility," he said.

Replying to a separate question

on suspension of work visas like H1B by the Trump administration, he said India is engaged with Washington and the US Congress on the issue.

The minister said the decision may temporarily affect movement of Indian skilled professionals who avail non-immigrant visa programmes of the US. "Government of India closely consulted all stakeholders and engaged with the US administration and Congress on issues related to movement of Indian professionals, including those pertaining to the H-1B programme," Muraleedharan said.

"These issues were also raised during the India-US Foreign Office Consultations held virtually July 7. We have emphasised that this is a mutually-beneficial partnership which should be nurtured by easing mobility of skilled professionals," he said.

Maha Covid surge leads to 'voluntary' Janata curfews

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 17: Alarmed by the increase in spread of the Covid-19 scourge, people in several cities and towns in Maharashtra are opting for voluntary 'Janata curfews' to control the pandemic, officials said Thursday.

Nagpur, the state's second capital, has decided to go for a 'Janata curfew' for two of the remaining weekends of September -- starting from September 18 night till September 21 morning followed by September 25 night till September 28 morning.

Nagpur Mayor Sandeep Joshi has appealed that the decision be taken at the behest of demands from peoples' representatives and the common citizens in view of the rising Covid-19 cases and deaths in the city.

"Despite repeated appeals, some irresponsible citizens continue to flout rules and pose a threat. Lockdown is no solution as it is not permitted by the government. However, we have decided to implement a 'Janata curfew' with voluntary partic-



ipation of people," Joshi urged. The announcement came after the Nagpur Mayor and Municipal Commissioner Radhakrishnan B. met officials and legislators like Nago Ganar, Girish Vyas, Krishna Khopde, Vikas Kumbhare, Mohan Mate, Standing Committee Chairman Vijay Jhalke, Dayashankar Tiwari, Sandeep Jadhav, Tanaji Vanve and Additional Municipal Commissioners Ram Joshi, Jalaj Sharma and Sanjay Nipane, besides medical authorities.

Radhakrishnan B. said given the current state of the city, there was a greater need for social responsibility and not a lockdown which was a period of preparation to tackle an impending situation.

Pulwama-type attack averted

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Sept 17: A Pulwama-like tragedy was averted by security forces after a large quantity of explosive material was recovered in south Kashmir's Pulwama district Thursday.

Acting on a tip-off about the presence of terrorists of proscribed terror outfit Jaish-e-Mohammed, the police along with the Army and CRPF conducted a joint search of a nursery area near forests of village Gadikhal in Awantipora.

During the search, two explosive dumps were found which were concealed underground in two different 250 litre plastic tanks.

"In one plastic tank, 416 high-explosive gelatine sticks have been recovered while in another plastic tank, 50 detonators were recovered. The detonators were destroyed by the Bomb Disposal Squad on the spot, due to their risk of carrying/transporting," police said. Police said by virtue of this recovery, security forces have been able to avert a major terror attack by means of explosive substances. The spot is close to Lethpora in Pulwama on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway where 40 CRPF jawans were killed in a suicide attack.

VOICING CONCERN



Members of various farmer organizations on their way to stage a protest against the Central government over agriculture-related ordinances in Patiala, Thursday

SHOCKING REVELATION

22 Armymen died in 3 years on high altitude duty

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 17: In a shocking revelation, 22 Indian soldiers have lost their lives without any battle in the last three years because of their duty in highly treacherous terrain along the borders in Jammu and Kashmir high altitudes.

The causes of the deaths in the Siachen Glacier and other super high altitude areas range from those directly related to high altitude like High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema (HAPO) and Pulmonary Thromboembolism (PTE) to other general causes.

Eight of the Indian Army soldiers lost their lives while serving at these high altitudes in 2019 and the similar number of troops of the force in 2018. However, a total of

six soldiers died in 2017. The Ministry of Defence has revealed the details in Parliament Wednesday in a written reply to the query of Bharatiya Janata Party MP Gowdar Mallikarjunappa Siddeshwara.

Minister of State for Defence Shripad Naik informed the Lok Sabha when asked: "Whether it is a fact that there have been some casualties of soldiers serving at high altitudes".

Asked about the government action taken to prevent such casualties and provide a congenial atmosphere to the soldiers working at high altitudes like Siachen, the minister said: "Indian Army is deployed in highly treacherous terrain along the borders in Jammu and Kashmir, where there is constant threat of crevasses, avalanches and



other weather-related calamities to the troops.

"The government undertakes several steps to prevent casualties like pre-induction medical examination, requisite medical cover at all medical echelons which are well equipped to deal with any high al-

Question. Steps are also undertaken to utilise modern technological equipment for the rescue missions, prevention of accidents and ensuring rapid and timely evacuation of the casualty, apart from issuing of regular advisories, he said.

The Indian Army's mountain warfare experience and strategies make its troops the 'most skilled in the area'. From the northern borders in Jammu and Kashmir to Arunachal Pradesh, the easternmost part of the country, a large number of Indian soldiers are deployed in the mountains and have mastered the art of fighting in the snowy landscape as well as the harsh barren vastness of Ladakh, the region where they are currently in an eyeball-to-eyeball situation with the soldiers of China's People's

Liberation Army.

At present, the world's largest and experienced country with plateau and mountain troops is neither the US, Russia, nor any European powerhouse, but India, read an article by Huang Guozhi, a senior editor of the Modern Weaponry magazine and a Chinese expert. Huang stated that since the 1970s, the Indian military has established and expanded in size and has personnel trained for fighting in the mountains on a large-scale. India also plans to create a mountain strike force of more than 50,000 troops. The Indian Army is the best practitioner of mountain warfare with maximum experience because its officers and personnel spend a major part of their service in the mountains.



India is actively engaged in the ongoing inter-governmental negotiations on reform of the powerful body at the UN and has been working alongside other like-minded countries and groupings

V MURALEEDHARAN | MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

READY FOR LAUNCH

India has four fully built satellites ready for launch and shipment to the rocket port out of the 12 that were built during 2019-2020, said a senior official of Indian Space Research Organisation



of the day quote

Less than 3 percent population in 177 tribal-dominated districts in the county has been detected as positive for coronavirus

ARJUN MUNDA | UNION TRIBAL AFFAIRS MINISTER

Unit 3 of Kakrapar Atomic Power Plant (KAPP), the 700 MW Pressurised Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR), is expected to be commissioned by November this year

JITENDRA SINGH | UNION MINISTER

The Maharashtra government will try to give justice to the Maratha community when it undertakes police recruitment

ANIL DESHMUKH | MAHARASHTRA MINISTER

FRUITS OF LABOUR



A farmer leaves walnuts to dry in the sun during harvesting season, amid COVID-19 pandemic, in Anantnag district of South Kashmir

PTI PHOTO

FIGHT AGAINST COVID

'Govt wants to bring down mortality rate'

Vardhan said there are chances that a vaccine could come in the country early next year but till then it is necessary for people to follow social distancing and wear masks

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan Thursday said the government is aiming to bring down India's COVID-19 mortality rate to less than 1 per cent from the current 1.64 per cent, which is still the lowest in the world.

Replying to a debate in Rajya Sabha, he said the country's recovery rate of 78-79 per cent is one of the highest in the world, adding though the total cases may have crossed 50 lakh, active cases are less than 20 per cent. Deaths in India due to coronavirus are less than many nations in Europe and the government is determined to better the testing rate of the US, he said.

Vardhan said there are chances that a vaccine could come in the country early next year but till then it was necessary for people to follow social distancing and wear masks. The minister said that despite the number of cases, the mortality rate in the country remained one of the lowest in the world. He said steps like testing, isolation of infected persons and other steps can be attributed to this lower mortality rate. Citing the examples of Spain and Brazil, he said the mortality rate in those countries was over 11 times that of India.

"We want to bring it (mortality rate) to less than one per cent. We have 50 lakh cases right now but out of these, only 10 lakh are active cases in the country right now," Vardhan said. He said that various international experts had predicted that the cases in India will rise to 300 million by July-August, resulting in death of 5-6 million people.

"In the country of 135 crore people, we are doing 11 lakh tests now and are second to the US only. It has



been possible only due to the united fight against the disease," he said. On development of a vaccine, he said that the Science and Technology ministry, ICMR and drug companies have come together for a solution. Even this matter is also being personally monitored by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he added.

"Vaccines can come in future. Extensive planning is underway to execute how to manage the scenario," Vardhan said. During this time, his reply was interrupted for few minutes as the sound system faltered with members in Rajya Sabha unable to hear. Vardhan was speaking from his allocated seat in Lok Sabha.

Continuing after few minutes of disruption, he said there are three vaccine candidates which have reached phase one, two or phase three level. "Under the prime minister, an expert group is studying this. We expect by the beginning of next year we can have a vaccine in the country. In this regard we are also coordinating with WHO and global organisations," he said.

India is among few countries globally which has been able to isolate the virus, Vardhan noted.

SHORT TAKES

Arunachal CM tests negative

Itanagar: Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu Thursday said that he has tested negative for COVID-19. He had tested positive for the virus September 15. Khandu, who is currently in home isolation in New Delhi, tweeted that he has tested negative for coronavirus after he conducted a repeat test Wednesday.

Girl gangraped

Godda (Jharkhand): A tribal girl has allegedly been gangraped in Jharkhand's Godda district, police said Thursday. One accused has been arrested and a manhunt has been launched to nab the other, district Superintendent of Police Y S Ramesh said. The incident took place near Basdiha village in Lalmatia police station area Tuesday night, he said. As per the FIR lodged by the survivor, she was going to Lalmatia with her friend on a motorcycle Tuesday evening when their vehicle got stuck in the mud near Basdiha, the officer said. "Two motorbike-borne passersby beat her friend up, snatched his mobile phone and dragged the girl to a nearby bush, where they took turns to rape her till late night," the SP said.

Four electrocuted

Kota: Four people have died of electrocution in two separate incidents in Jhalawar district of Rajasthan, police said Thursday. A 22-year-old man, identified as Narender Singh, was electrocuted Thursday morning in the Unhel Police Station area while he was trying to switch on a motor to water crops in a field. The victim's grandmother, Kamla Kanwar (62), tried to save him but was killed too, SHO Bhanwar Singh said.

Two arrested

Ballia (UP): Two people were arrested here Thursday for posting objectionable pictures of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on social networking sites, police said. Mannu Ram and Ankit Yadav were arrested and booked under the IT Act for sharing objectionable pictures of the prime minister on Facebook and WhatsApp, SHO Sukhpura Virendra Yadav said.

Man injured

New Delhi: A 30-year-old sweeper was injured when a man attacked him with a knife after an argument broke out between them in southeast Delhi's Jamia Nagar area, police said Thursday. The victim, Sonpal, a resident of Nehru Nagar, works as a sweeper in the municipal corporation on contract basis in Jamia Nagar.

THREE MILITANTS, WOMAN KILLED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Srinagar, Sept 17: Three local militants and a civilian woman were killed, while two CRPF personnel, including an officer, sustained injuries in a predawn gun-battle Thursday in the Batamloo area of the city here, officials said.

This takes the number of militants killed this year to 177 in 72 operations. The number includes 22 foreign terrorists. Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Firdousabad locality in Batamloo area at around 2.30 am following information about the presence of militants there, the officials said.

They said the search operation turned into an encounter after the militants opened fire on security forces. A civilian, identified as Kaunsar Riyaz (45), was killed in the firing, while two CRPF personnel, including an officer, were injured, the officials said. The injured personnel were taken to hospital, they said.

Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh said all the three militants killed in the encounter were locals from south Kashmir. Addressing a press conference at the Police Control Room (PCR) Srinagar, the DGP said that in the early hours of the day, security forces, while acting on a lead, zeroed in on a house where the militants were hiding.

"They were given a chance to surrender, but they refused and fired. One CRPF officer and another CRPF man sustained injuries in the initial exchange of firing. The officer is critical and we are praying for his recovery," Singh said. He added that the forces conducted the operation in a professional manner and killed all the three militants.

"However, a woman was caught in crossfire. Her death is very unfortunate, and we express sympathy with the bereaved family," the DGP said. The officer was accompanied by IGP, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar and IG, CRPF, Srinagar sector, Charu Sinha. "Arms and ammunition were recovered," he said.

Defence employee arrested

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Rewari, Sept 17: A civilian defence employee was arrested for passing on classified information to a Pakistani Military Intelligence (MI) unit after he had been honey-trapped on Facebook.

Official sources said that based on a specific input of Lucknow based Indian Military Intelligence (MI), the Haryana Police's Special Task Force (STF) Wednesday arrested Mahesh Kumar, the civilian employee of Military Engineering Services (MES), from Rewari for sharing the information to a young woman associated with the Pakistani MI in return for money.

Kumar, according to police, was reportedly in touch with operatives of the Pakistani MI unit for the last two and a half years and has received money from them on multiple occasions. Sources said that in June, Lucknow MI received the input that a mobile number used by Kumar, who was posted in Jaipur, was passing on defence related information to a woman working for



The Haryana Police's Special Task Force Wednesday arrested Mahesh Kumar, the civilian employee of Military Engineering Services from Rewari

Pakistani military. Kumar addressed the Pakistani operative as "Madamji". An operation code-named "Op Madamji" was launched by the MI unit to identify the suspect and ascertain the veracity of the input. After investigation, Kumar worked as a civilian cleaning staff in MES Jaipur and was friends with at least three known and

established Pakistani Intelligence Operative (PIO)-run Facebook accounts.

Sources said that Kumar had received at least two payments of ₹5,000, each from his Pakistani handlers via Kerala.

The payment module was very similar to what had surfaced in the Rajasthan based espionage case, 'Op Desert Chase', wherein Vikas Kumar and Chiman Lal were arrested. In the first week of September, Kumar was found staying in and around Rewari.

The MI shared the case details with the STF Haryana and a joint team of both the agencies investigated it further.

A swift operation to apprehend and interrogate the suspect was planned for September 13-14. However before the Lucknow MI could obtain desired sanctions and place a team near Rewari, the suspect suddenly moved out of Haryana, the sources said.

The STF Haryana recently indicated that Kumar was likely to visit Rewari again Wednesday.

SUSHANT DEATH CASE

CBI team back in Delhi

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 17: Almost a month after the Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) went to Mumbai to probe the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput, it has returned to Delhi and will hold a meeting next week with the AIIMS forensic team, sources said Thursday.

According to CBI sources, the team of the SIT has returned to Delhi and will now be holding meetings with the AIIMS forensic team Sunday and later in the coming week also to take its medico legal opinion in the case.

The team had gone to Mumbai together with the forensic team August 20, a day after the Supreme Court gave its nod to the CBI probe into the death of the late actor. During

the CBI's stay in Mumbai, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) forensic team also visited the flat of Sushant and recreated the crime scene along with Sushant's sister Mitu, Pithani and personal staff.

The CBI last month had roped in the AIIMS forensic department to take its assistance in studying the autopsy report prepared by the Cooper Hospital, the crime scene recreation and to guide the federal agency if there was any foul play in his death. Sushant was found dead in his Bandra flat June 14.

AIIMS Forensic Department head Dr. Sudhir Gupta has constituted a medical team to assist the CBI. AIIMS sources said, "We are in the process of perusal of the case after due medical board meeting and subsequent meeting with the CBI."

100-yr-old Assam woman beats Covid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Guwahati, Sept 17: Her age may have posed a challenge but 100-year-old Mai Handique's battle against COVID-19 was won by her positivity, doctors said Thursday.

Handique, Assam's oldest COVID-19 patient, was discharged from the Mahendra Mohan Chowdhury Hospital (MMCH) in Guwahati Wednesday, they said. A resident of the Mothers' Old Age Home, she was admitted to the hospital ten days ago after testing COVID-19 positive.

The doctors and nurses who were treating her held a small celebration before she was discharged. Handique, who was beaming with excitement, joined the party singing several Assamese songs in her full-



throated voice.

Handique, called Aita (grandma) by all at the hospital, said that she enjoyed her stay and the food. "We were given fish or meat on most of the days while egg and banana were given daily. We were also given 'ruti-bhaji' (chappatis and vegetables) which I enjoyed the most," she said.

She also thanked all those who treated her, saying, "The girls (the nurses) and the doctors took very good care." Handique also had a special word of praise for

Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma -- "He is doing very hard work for all of us and I bless him to continue to help people who are suffering from this disease."

Sarma, too, wished her on the recovery. "Steele resolve of 100-year old Mai Handique is monumental. With brilliant support of doctors at MMCH, she defeated coronavirus, giving us a lesson in having the right will power," he said.

A doctor treating Handique said, "Initially, we were worried due to her age and she also has hypertension, but she was always cheerful and in a positive frame of mind."

Twelve residents of the Mothers' Old Age Home have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and five of them have been discharged so far.

Modi turns 70, wishes pour in from across world

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Prime Minister Narendra Modi turned 70 Thursday, a landmark birthday that saw greetings pour in from across the world and country with the President and Vice President joining international leaders and leading politicians in wishing him and lauding his contribution.

The ruling BJP organised nationwide events, mainly aimed at public service, to celebrate the birthday of its charismatic and most successful leader with party president J P Nadda releasing a book, "Lord of Records", which highlights 243 "unprecedented" achievements of the Modi government.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Nepal's Prime Minister K P Sharma

Oli and Bhutanese Prime Minister Lotay Tshering were among the world leaders who extended wishes to Modi. Putin lauded Modi's personal contribution to the strengthening of strategic partnership between India and Russia while Oli spoke of continuing to work closely together towards strengthening bilateral relations, in their messages to the Indian Prime Minister.

Merkel noted that they have succeeded in consolidating further the traditionally good relations between Germany and India for the benefit of the peoples of the two countries, while Tshering expressed confidence that India will achieve greater transformation under his leadership. Back home, leaders from across the political spectrum offered their wishes to Modi, who is celebrating his sixth straight birthday as Prime



Children celebrate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 70th birthday, at Waghbil village in Thane, Thursday

PTI PHOTO

Minister after taking over in 2014. He acknowledged birthday mes-

sages from national and world leaders and also thanked many others

for their wishes.

Wishing the Prime Minister, President Ram Nath Kovind said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi Ji congratulations on your birthday and best wishes. You have presented an ideal in showing commitment to India's life values and democratic traditions." "My compliments and prayers that the almighty keeps you healthy and joyous always, and the country keeps getting your valuable services," he said.

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu said Modi has made tireless efforts to take the country to new heights and asserted that his work will pave the way for India to become self-reliant. Wishing the Prime Minister, top BJP leaders said India's stature on the world stage under his leadership and his life dedicated to the welfare of the nation is an in-

spiration for them.

In a series of tweets, BJP president J P Nadda wished Modi, saying that under his leadership India moved swiftly on the path of progress and raised its stature at the world stage. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi wished Modi a happy birthday. Home Minister Amit Shah said Modi is loved by everyone.

The Prime Minister, he said, connected deprived sections of the society with mainstream of development. NCP president Sharad Pawar wished an abundance of good health and happiness to Modi.

Union Minister Prakash Javadekar launched a website, narendra70.in, which has a collection of articles on Modi from leading lights from different walks of life and which also throws light on his life journey.

international



“We hope we get a vaccine, that’s not a guarantee, and even when we do there’s still a lot of work to do, and I think we can do a hell of a lot right now to drive and control this virus, and we need to really step up our efforts to do that”
DR MIKE RYAN | HEAD OF THE WHO HEALTH EMERGENCIES PROGRAMME

NOBEL FOR GRETA THUNBERG

This year’s Nobel Peace Prize could go to green campaigner Greta Thunberg and the Fridays for Future movement to highlight the link between environmental damage and the threat to peace and security, some experts say



of the day quote

I’m determined to work hard for the people and get results so we can live up to their expectations
YOSHIIDE SUGA | JAPAN’S NEW PRIME MINISTER

We can’t allow the Good Friday Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland to become a casualty of Brexit
JOE BIDEN | DEMOCRATIC PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

We will return to the US to re-impose sanctions so that the arms embargo will become permanent next week
MIKE POMPEO | US SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Kim unlikely to address UNGA

Seoul: North Korean leader Kim Jong-un is unlikely to send a video address to the annual UN General Assembly later this month, an official at the South Korean Foreign Ministry said Thursday, adding that Pyongyang’s top envoy to the world body will speak instead. With world leaders set to join the gathering via video links due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, speculation has lingered that Kim could deliver a rare video address to the top-level general debate session slated to begin September 22, reports Yonhap News Agency.

Tanker fire: SL court summons captain

Colombo: A Sri Lankan court Thursday issued a notice to the captain of the Greek-owned oil tanker that caught fire off the country’s eastern coast to appear before it on September 28. The Colombo chief magistrate court’s order comes a day after Attorney General Dappula de Livera staked a claim of \$1.8 million for the costs incurred on dousing the fire on board the Panama-registered tanker MT New Diamond that went up in flames September 3.

Emergency period declared in Bolivia

La Paz: Bolivia’s Interim President Jeanine Anez has declared a national emergency after forest fires scorched more than half a million hectares in the region of Santa Cruz de la Sierra. According to the Forest and Land Authority, 598,716 hectares of area were affected by fires in the first week of September.

Pak closes 22 Edu institutes in 48 hrs

Islamabad: At least 22 educational institutions in Pakistan have been closed down during the last 48 hours for failing to comply with the government-issued standard operating procedures for curbing the spread of COVID-19, the country’s coronavirus control body said Thursday.

‘UN facing its 1945 moment’

United Nations: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned that the world body was facing its own “1945 moment”, noting that efforts must be made to “meet that moment”. “In this 75th anniversary year, we face our own 1945 moment. We must meet that moment,” Xinhua news agency quoted Guterres as saying at a press conference at the UN headquarters in New York Wednesday.

5 Chinese hackers targeted Indian networks, says US

The indictment stated that the Indian govt’s network was compromised in 2019

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Sept 17: The US Justice Department has charged five Chinese citizens with hacking over a 100 companies and institutions in America and abroad, including the Indian government’s networks, and stealing valuable software data and business intelligence.

Deputy US Attorney General Jeffrey Rosen Wednesday announced three indictments have been unsealed in the matter that collectively charge five Chinese nationals with computer hacking and charge two Malaysian nationals for helping some of those hackers target victims and sell the fruits of their crime.

The Malaysian nationals were arrested Sunday and the Chinese nationals have been declared fugitive, according to a Justice Department statement.

Rosen severely criticised the Chinese government. “The Department of Justice has used every tool available to disrupt the illegal computer intrusions and cyberattacks by these Chinese citizens. Regrettably, the Chinese Communist Party has chosen a different path - of making China safe for cyber-criminals so long as they attack computers outside China and steal intellectual property helpful to China,” the deputy attorney general said. “In about 2019, the conspirators compromised Government of India websites, as well as virtual private networks and database servers supporting the Government of India. The conspirators used VPS PROVIDER servers to connect to an Open VPN network owned by the Government



of India,” the indictment said. In the attacks, the conspirators installed ‘Cobalt Strike’ malware on Indian government-protected computers, it added. According to the charges, the computer intrusions affected over 100 companies in the United States and abroad.

The victims ranged from software development, computer hardware, telecommunication, social media and video game companies. Non-profit organisations, universities, think-tanks, foreign governments, pro-democracy politicians and activists in Hong Kong were also targeted. Security researchers have tracked the intrusions using labels “APT41,” “Barium,” “Winnti,” “Wicked Panda,” and “Wicked Spider.” These intrusions facilitated the theft of source code, software code signing certificates, customer account data, and valuable business information, the researchers said.

These intrusions also facilitated the defendants’ other criminal schemes, including ransomware and “crypto-jacking” schemes, the latter refers to the group’s unauthorised use of victim computers to mine cryptocurrency. The Chinese hackers also targeted government computers and networks of Vietnam and United Kingdom.

Pakistan to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan to full-fledged province



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Sept 17: Pakistan has decided to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan’s status to that of a full-fledged province, a Pakistani media report Thursday quoted a senior minister as saying.

India has clearly conveyed to Pakistan that the entire union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of the country by virtue of its fully legal and irrevocable accession.

According to a report in the Express Tribune, Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs, Ali Amin Gandapur, on Wednesday said that Prime Minister Imran Khan would soon visit the region and make the formal announcement to elevate Gilgit-Baltistan to the status of a full-fledged province with all constitutional rights.

Gandapur said Gilgit-Baltistan would be given adequate representation on all constitutional bodies, including the National Assembly and the Senate.

“After consultation with all stakeholders, the federal government has decided in principle to give constitutional rights to Gilgit-Baltistan,” the minister told reporters. India has said the Government of Pakistan or its judiciary has no locus standi on territories illegally and forcibly occupied by it.

India completely rejects such actions and continued attempts to bring material changes in Pakistan occupied areas of the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Navalny poisoned in hotel

NAVALNY FELL VIOLENTLY ILL ON A FLIGHT IN RUSSIA LAST MONTH AND WAS AIRLIFTED TO BERLIN FOR TREATMENT

REUTERS

Moscow, Sept 17: The nerve agent used to poison Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny was detected on an empty water bottle from his hotel room in the Siberian city of Tomsk, suggesting he was poisoned there and not at the airport as first thought, his team said Thursday.

Navalny fell violently ill on a flight in Russia last month and was airlifted to Berlin for treatment. Laboratories in Germany, France and Sweden have established he was poisoned by a Novichok nerve agent, a poison developed by the Soviet military, though Russia denies this and says it has seen no evidence. A video posted on Navalny’s Instagram account showed members of his team searching the room he had just left in the Xander Hotel in Tomsk on Aug. 20, an hour after they learned he had fallen sick in suspicious circumstances. “It was decided to gather up everything that could even hypothetically be useful and hand it to the doctors in



Germany. The fact that the case would not be investigated in Russia was quite obvious,” the post said.

The video of the abandoned hotel room shows two water bottles on a desk, and another on a bedside table. Navalny’s team, wearing protective gloves, are seen placing items into blue plastic bags. “Two weeks later, a German laboratory found traces of Novichok precisely on the bottle of water from the

Tomsk hotel room,” the post said. Vladimir Milov, a former deputy energy minister and an ally of Navalny, said his team had outmanoeuvred the FSB security police with their quick thinking: “They took the evidence from under their noses and shipped it out of the country.”

Navalny’s ally Georgy Alburow told Reuters “the bottles flew with Alexei” when he was airlifted to Germany August 22.

‘MOCKERY’ OF SOCIAL DISTANCING



People queue at a test center following an outbreak of the coronavirus in Southend-on-sea, Britain

PAK GOVT FREEZES OVER 900 ASSETS OF JuD, JeM

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, Sept 17: The Pakistan government has frozen a total of 964 assets of proscribed organisations Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) as it takes action against elements involved in terror financing and money laundering as part of efforts towards fulfilling requirements of the Financial Action Task Force’s (FATF) 27-point action plan.

As per the Interior Ministry, 907 of the frozen assets belonged to the JuD and 57 to the JeM. Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs Ali Muhammad Khan said that the provincial home departments had taken the action to freeze assets of the JuD and the JeM under the United Nations Security Council (Freezing and Seizure) Order 2019, issued by the Foreign Affairs Ministry.



“A total of 611 properties of the JuD were frozen in Punjab, 108 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 80 in Sindh, 61 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (Pakistan-occupied Kashmir), 30 in Balochistan and 17 in the Islamabad Capital Territory,” he told the Senate, the upper house of the Pakistani legislature, about the government’s progress against proscribed outfits.

“Eight properties of the JeM were frozen in Punjab, 29 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 12 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, four in the Islamabad Capital Territory, three in Sindh and one in Balochistan,” he added.

Giving details, Khan said: “The frozen properties of the JuD include 75 schools, four colleges, 330 mosques and seminaries, 186 dispensaries, 15 hospitals, 62 ambulances, a funeral bus (hearse), three disaster management offices, 10 boats, 17 buildings, a plot, agricultural land and two motorcycles.”

The frozen assets of JeM, Khan said, include “53 mosques and seminaries, two dispensaries and two ambulances.”

The steps come at a time when Pakistan is working hard to comply with all the 27 points of the Action Plan given by FATF to see itself out of the ‘grey list’.

Sally leaves massive floods on US Gulf Coast

REUTERS

Pensacola, Fla. Sep 17: Hurricane Sally moved northeast Thursday, where it was expected to bring more than a foot of rain to some areas, one day after it flooded streets and knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of homes and businesses on the US Gulf Coast.

Sally made landfall early Wednesday near Gulf Shores, Alabama, with winds clocked at 105 mph (169 kph), making it a Category 2 storm on the five-step Saffir-Simpson scale of intensity. As of late Wednesday, it was moving north at 12 mph (19 km per hour) after being downgraded to a tropical depression, the US National Hurricane Center said, with maximum winds of 30 mph (50 kmh). The storm is believed to have killed one person in Alabama.

Some parts of the coast were inundated with more than two feet (60 cm) of rain, as the slow-moving storm flooded communities.

‘Wearing eyeglasses may offer some protection from Covid’

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Beijing, Sept 17: Daily wearers of eyeglasses might be less likely to be infected with the novel coronavirus, say scientists who call for further, large-scale studies to assess the relationship between eye protection and the risk of contracting COVID-19.

The single-centre study, published in the journal JAMA ophthalmology, assessed 276 hospitalised COVID-19 patients at Suzhou Zengdu Hospital in China, and observed that those who wore eyeglasses for an extended period of time were relatively uncommon among the study participants.

Based on this observation, the researchers, including those from The Second Affiliated Hospital of Nanchang University in China,

speculated that wearing eyeglasses for more than eight hours per day may be protective against the novel coronavirus infection.

They hypothesised that this may be due to eyeglasses acting as a barrier that reduces the frequency with which people touch their eyes.

“All those who wore glasses for more than eight hours a day



had myopia and included 16 of 276 patients. The proportion of people with myopia in Hubei

province, based on a previous study, was 31.5 per cent,” the study noted. According to the researchers, the proportion of people with short-sightedness, or myopia, was much higher in the general population than among those with COVID-19.

nCoV plunges additional 150mn kids into poverty: UNICEF

NOT ONLY ARE MORE CHILDREN EXPERIENCING POVERTY THAN BEFORE, THE POOREST CHILDREN ARE GETTING POORER AS WELL, THE REPORT NOTES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

United Nations, Sept 17: An additional 150 million children globally have been plunged into poverty since the COVID-19 pandemic hit earlier this year, taking the number of children living in multi-dimensional poverty across the world to approximately 1.2 billion, according to a new UNICEF analysis.

The new analysis, which was done by the UNICEF and child rights organisation Save the Children and published Thursday, reveals that the number of children living in multi-dimensional poverty - without access to education, health, housing, nutrition, sanitation, or water - has increased by 15 per cent since the start of the pandemic.

This means that an additional 150 million children have been

plunged into poverty since the pandemic hit earlier this year, it said.

“The number of children living in multi-dimensional poverty has soared to approximately 1.2 billion due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” the analysis said. UNICEF, in a release, said that the multi-dimensional poverty analysis uses data on access to education, healthcare, housing, nutrition, sanitation and water from more than 70 countries.

It highlights that around 45 per cent of children were severely deprived of at least one of these critical needs in the countries analysed before the pandemic. The analysis paints a dire picture already and UNICEF warns the situation will likely worsen in the months to come. Not only are more children experiencing poverty than before,

PANDEMIC’S HIDDEN THREAT



Save the Children and UNICEF said they are committed to continue to monitor this evolving situation and work with governments and civil society to confront it

the poorest children are getting poorer as well, the report notes.

Before the pandemic, the average number of severe deprivations per child were around 0.7 and it is now estimated to have increased by 15 per cent to around 0.85. “COVID-19 and the lockdown measures imposed to prevent its spread have pushed millions of children deeper into poverty,” UNICEF Executive

Director Henrietta Fore said. “Families on the cusp of escaping poverty have been pulled back in, while others are experiencing levels of deprivation they have never seen before. Most concerning, we are closer to the beginning of this crisis than its end,” Fore said.

The report notes that child poverty is much more than a monetary value. Although measures of monetary poverty such as household income are important, they provide only a partial view of the plight of children living in poverty.

UNICEF said social protection, inclusive fiscal policies, investments in social services, and employment and labour market interventions to support families are critical to lifting children out of poverty and preventing further devastation.

business



The Telecom Service Providers procure and deploy telecom equipment from vendors based on their techno-commercial interests. Hence, no such data is maintained by DoT

SANJAY DHOTRE |
MINISTER OF STATE, COMMUNICATIONS

SENSEX FALLS 323 POINTS; FINANCE STOCKS PLUNGE

The key Indian equity indices slumped with the BSE SENSEX closing over 320 points. The decline in the market was caused by a selloff across the sectors, led by finance, banking and metal stocks.



of the day quote

Beyond the gross merchandise value that the M series has built out to do, the number of consumers who have come into the M series will be in excess of 20 million devices



ASIM WARSI |
SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT, SAMSUNG INDIA

Toyota Group in India is targeting to invest over ₹2,000 crore in India in the coming years on technology and electrification, both for the domestic and the exports market



MASAKAZU YOSHIMURA |
TKM MANAGING DIRECTOR

Making colours accessible to all through our 'Any Colour One Price' approach is our tribute to every Indian's love for colour



PARTH JINDAL |
MANAGING DIRECTOR, JSW PAINTS

RBI buys ₹10k-cr bonds from secondary markets

AGENCIES

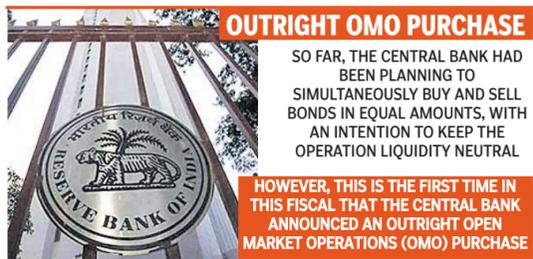
New Delhi, Sept 17: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday announced an outright purchase of ₹10,000 crore of bonds from the secondary markets, to be conducted on September 24.

So far, the central bank had been planning to simultaneously buy and sell bonds in equal amounts, with an intention to keep the operation liquidity neutral. However, this is the first time in this fiscal that the central bank announced an outright open market operations (OMO) purchase. In OMOs, RBI buys or sells bonds from the secondary markets.

The RBI had carried out an outright OMO purchase operation of ₹15,000 crore on March 26. After that, all the OMOs were simultaneous buy and sell operations, in which the central bank bought long term securities and sold short-term securities, also called 'Operation Twist' in market parlance.

In the latest round of outright OMO purchase, the RBI would be buying bonds maturing between 2026 and 2031. The central bank said it was doing so in view of the "current liquidity and financial conditions."

Well, the liquidity surplus in the



banking system has indeed come down from their recent highs of ₹7 trillion to ₹4.67 trillion as on Wednesday, but it is still at a huge surplus. However, investors now expect the banking system to be flush with liquidity, and as such a substantial reduction in surplus liquidity causes flutters and puts pressure on the bond yields. RBI may have wanted to arrest that before yields climb up.

"We still have a long way to go insofar as the borrowing programme is concerned," said R K Gurumurthy, head of treasury at Lakshmi Vilas Bank.

The government's annual borrowing target is ₹12 trillion, of which more than half has been borrowed at near 6 per cent yields,

which is a decade low cost of borrowing for the government, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said on Wednesday. The 10-year bond yield closed at 6.03 per cent on Thursday.

However, the outright OMO announcement has important ramifications for the future. The bond market has been demanding an OMO calendar, and expects the central bank to chip in with at least ₹2-3 trillion of OMO support to accommodate the heavy borrowing programme. This is also a kind of indirect monetisation, and the central bank has tried to avoid that. However, the OMO announcement removes any such doubt that it is the beginning of many such operations to come.

6.6 MILLION PRO JOBS LOST: CMIE

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 17: An estimated 6.6 million white collar professional jobs, including engineers, physicians, teachers, were lost between May and August, bringing their employment to the lowest level since 2016 and wiping out the gains made over the last four years while five million industrial workers were out of work during the period, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy said.

According to CMIE weekly analysis based on the data from the 20th wave of CMIE's Consumer Pyramids Household Survey released every four month, the biggest loss of jobs among salaried employees was of white-collar professional employees and other employees.

These include software engineers, physicians, teachers, accountants, analysts and the type, who are professionally qualified and are employed in some private or government organisation. This, however, does not include qualified self-employed professional entrepreneurs.

"From a peak of 18.8 million white collar workers employed in the country during May-August 2019, their employment fell down to 12.2 million in the May-August 2020. This is the lowest employment of these professionals since 2016," CMIE said.

Petrol demand returns to pre-COVID-19 levels



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: India's petrol sales rose for the first time in the first half of September since the country's lockdown in late March, signalling demand may have returned to pre-COVID-19 levels.

Petrol sales between September 1 and 15 rose 2.2 per cent year-on-year and were up 7 per cent over the previous month, according to preliminary industry data.

Diesel sales continue to be in negative territory, with demand falling 6 per cent year-on-year. But the demand was 19.3 per cent higher over August 2020. This is the first time that petrol sales in the world's third-largest oil importer have risen since the March 25 nationwide lockdown crippled economic activity and sent demand plummeting.

Petrol sales rose to 9,65,000 tonnes during the first half of September as compared to 9,45,000 tonnes in the same period a year back and 9,00,000 tonnes during

Diesel sales continue to be in negative territory, with demand falling 6 per cent year-on-year

August 1-15, 2020. Demand for diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country, fell to 2.13 million tonnes from 2.25 million tonnes in September 1-15, 2019. Sales were 1.78 million tonnes during the first half of August this year. Industry sources said while the Indian economy has started to pick up with lockdown restrictions being lifted since June, local lockdowns by states have hampered the demand quickly picking up.

Petrol sales have picked up as commuters are increasingly preferring to personal transport to public transport.

The September rise in petrol is a turnaround from the sharp drop witnessed in August.

SHORT TAKES

P-note investment continues to soar

New Delhi: Investment through participatory notes (P-notes) in the domestic capital market surged to over ₹74,000 crore till August-end, making it the highest level in 10 months. This marks the fifth consecutive monthly rise in the investment through the route, also signaling at growing confidence of foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in the local market. P-notes are issued by registered FPIs to overseas investors who wish to be part of the Indian stock market without registering themselves directly.

Coal India spend ₹1,978 cr on CSR

New Delhi: State-owned CIL and its subsidiaries have spent a total amount of ₹1,977.76 crore on Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) during the last four financial years, according to official data. Coal India Ltd (CIL) and its subsidiaries have collectively spent ₹489.67 crore, ₹483.78 crore, ₹416.47 crore, ₹587.84 crore respectively. "National Miner Coal India Ltd (CIL) spent a total amount of ₹1,977.76 crore on CSR during FY16-17 and FY19-20," Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi said.

MSME Min issues fresh guidelines

New Delhi: The Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) ministry on Thursday said it has come out with new guidelines for two schemes - pottery and beekeeping activities. It said that for pottery activity, the government will provide assistance of pottery wheel, clay blunger, and granulator. "It will also provide wheel pottery training for traditional pottery artisans and Press Pottery training for pottery as well as non-pottery artisans in Self Help Groups," it added.

HMT shares zoom over 123 per cent

New Delhi: Shares of Happiest Minds Technologies Ltd had a stellar debut at the bourses on Thursday and closed over 123 per cent higher against its issue price of ₹166 per share. The stock of the IT services firm, which got listed at ₹351 apiece, reflected a gain of 111.44 per cent from the issue price on the BSE, rose to a high of ₹395, a jump of 137.95 per cent during the day.

PMGKY SCHEME 109.75L free refills in state

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: In order to alleviate the socio-economic fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of India announced free refills facility for all the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana consumers across India.

As per the report, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have delivered 109.75 lakhs refills to Odisha PMUY beneficiaries under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana. The Ministry also stated that around ₹571.72 crore was spent by industry on free refill scheme under PMGKY for Odisha beneficiaries.

State details of refill issued and amount spent from April, 2020 to August, 2020 under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana to the PMUY beneficiaries was given by the Union Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas Dharmendra Pradhan in the Rajya Sabha in a written reply.

There are 47.48 lakhs Ujjwala connection in Odisha out of 88.1 lakhs total LPG connections in the state.



Initially, the scheme was offered for a total of 3 free refills for 3 months that is April, May, June and later it was extended to another next three months July, August and September, 2020.

OMCs in Odisha till April 14 had delivered 5.88 lakhs free LPG refills to PMUY customers in the state. OMCs have initiated fund transfer amounting to ₹341 crores

as advance amount of 1st refill.

PMUY commenced May 1, 2016 to provide deposit free LPG connections to adult woman of poor households.

According to report, about 200.3 lakh connections were released in financial year of 2016-17 across India. Also 155.7 lakh, 362.9 lakh and 82.64 lakh connections were released in consecutive three fiscals from its inception.

DECLINE IN CARGO TRAFFIC AT PORTS: GOVT

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: The cargo traffic at India's major ports has declined considerably March onwards, adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government said Thursday.

COVID-19 impact at major ports started from March 2020, Shipping Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said in reply to a question in the Lok Sabha. There was a considerable decline in the total traffic, containers traffic and other than containers traffic in March, April, May, June, July and August, 2020 as compared to the corresponding months in

2019, the minister said.

However, recovery has started since June 20, he said. The minister said Shipping Ministry issued necessary directions from time to time to all ports to put in place a screening, detection and quarantine system for disembarking seafarers or cruise passengers.

Apart from this, the steps taken include obtaining self-declaration from arriving crewspassengers, installing thermal scanners and procuring Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), N-95 masks, among others, besides creating awareness among the travellers at ports.

Titan, SBI launch contactless payment watches

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 17: In a bid to offer safer purchase solutions in the retail space, watch brand Titan Company Limited partnered with country's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) to introduce Titan Pay powered by YONO SBI.

Through this partnership, Titan and SBI are launching a range of stylish new watches with contactless payment functionality for the first time in India. With this launch, SBI account holders can tap their Titan Pay watch on contactless payment POS machine without the



need of swiping or inserting their SBI bank card.

Payments of up to ₹2000 can be made without entering a PIN. A secure certified Near-Field

Communication (NFC) chip embedded in the watch strap by Tappy Technologies enables all the functionalities of a standard contactless SBI debit card.

The payment feature on these watches will be accessible on over 2 million contactless MasterCard-enabled Point-of-Sale (POS) machines in the country. This exclusive collection of elegant watches include 3 styles for men and 2 for women and are attractively priced between ₹2995 and ₹5995 to make it widely accessible to all SBI and Titan consumers.

The company authorities said that the product will not only satisfy the consumer's banking needs but will also serve today's evolving consumers with its classic and sophisticated designs.

Indian slips in Global Smart City Index; S'pore on top

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 17: Four Indian cities -- New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru -- witnessed a significant drop in their rankings in the global listing of smart cities that was topped by Singapore.

The Institute for Management Development (IMD), in collaboration with Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), has released the 2020 Smart City Index, with key findings on how technology is playing a role in the COVID-19 era.

In the 2020 Smart City Index, Hyderabad was placed at the 85th position (down from 67 in 2019), New Delhi at 86th rank (down from 68 in 2019), Mumbai was at 93rd

place (in 2019 it was at 78) and Bengaluru at 95th (79 in 2019).

Cities in India (New Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bengaluru) suffer significant drops this year. This can be attributed to the detrimental effect that the pandemic has had where the technological advancement was not up to date, the report said.

It further added that Indian cities have suffered more from the pandemic because they were not prepared. From 15 indicators that the respondents perceive as the priority areas for their city, all four cities highlighted air pollution as one of the key areas that they felt their city needed to prioritise on.

For cities like Bangalore and Mumbai, this was closely followed by road congestion while for Delhi



and Hyderabad it was basic amenities, the report said.

The 2020 Smart City Index (SCI) was topped by Singapore, followed by Helsinki and Zurich in the second and the third place respectively.

Others in the top 10 list include Auckland (4th), Oslo (5th), Copenhagen (6th), Geneva (7th), Taipei City (8th), Amsterdam (9th) and New York at the 10th place.

In SCI's context, 'smart city' de-

SIGNIFICANT DROPS

Hyderabad was placed at the 85th position (down from 67 in 2019), New Delhi at 86th rank (down from 68 in 2019), Mumbai was at 93rd place (in 2019 it was at 78) and Bengaluru at 95th (79 in 2019)

Cities in India suffer significant drops this year. This can be attributed to the detrimental effect that the pandemic has had where the technological advancement was not up to date

turing perceptions of randomly chosen 120 residents in each city.

Hundreds of citizens from 109 cities were surveyed in April and May 2020 and asked questions on the technological provisions of their city across five key areas health and safety, mobility, activities, opportunities and governance.

Reflected in this year's rankings is that cities have ever differing approaches to technology as managing the pandemic has become increasingly important in local politics, the report said.

We cannot ignore the impact of COVID, said IMD's Professor Arturo Bris, who led the work of the ranking as the Director of the World Competitiveness Center at the Swiss management institute which is behind it.

MALINGA A MISSING LINK: ROHIT



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Abu Dhabi, Sept 17: Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma Thursday conceded that 'incomparable' Sri Lankan pace legend Lasith Malinga, who has opted out of this year's IPL, will be severely missed by his defending champion team given his 'unbelievable' past performances.

The 37-year-old Malinga, who is IPL's highest wicket-taker with 170 scalps to his credit, has pulled out citing personal reasons in a major blow to the four-time champions. MI will take on the Chennai Super Kings in this season's lung-opener September 19 here.

"I don't think it is easy to come and fill his boots. He has been a match-winner for Mumbai. I have said it many times, whenever we sort of find ourselves in trouble, Malinga was the one to

bail us out from that," Rohit said in a pre-season online press conference.

"His experience will be missed, what he did with MI is unbelievable and it is unfortunate that he is not a part of the team this year.

"We have got likes of (James) Pattinson, Dhawal Kulkarni, Mohsin (Khan) and these are the names that we are looking to replace Malinga with. But obviously what Malinga did for Mumbai, it is not just comparable," he added.

Talking about his own role, Rohit said he will continue to open. "I opened the entire tournament last year and I will continue to do that. Again I keep all the options open, whatever the team wants, happy to do that.

"Even when I play for India, message from my side to the management has always been the same 'do not close any doors' keep all the options open and I will do the same here as well," he said.

India's white-ball vice-captain also felt that correct reading of conditions would be crucial to his team's fortunes. "The challenge for us will be to adapt to these conditions here which probably none of us are used to, because not a lot of cricketers from our group have played here," Rohit said.

"I think mentally it is about going out there and understanding what the pitch is doing, and based on that, you need to plan your game - whether it is your batting or bowling. So we have had a good chat around the

group about that," he elaborated.

According to Rohit, the team's past performances in the UAE in 2014, when it made the play-offs but not the final, won't matter now.

"...eventually the pitches here are going to play a big part and to understand that and adapt quickly and play to your potential, play according to what is being asked of is very crucial here. The past performance will not play a part this time around," he stressed.

Rohit recalled playing the Asia Cup in the UAE and how the pitches were behaving differently at the beginning and at the end of the tournament. He expects something similar this time around too.

"...the first game that we played and the finals that we played, there was a lot of difference in how the pitch was behaving. So we certainly expect the same, as it is going to be a long tournament. The slowness of the pitch will be a big factor," he said.

Rohit also said that not only the spinners but the seamers will also get a lot of assistance in terms of reverse swing.

"...there will be some reverse swing and we have got some good quality in our line-up as well, who can explore that. We have got balance and variety in our bowling attack, so we can use it depending on the conditions and team composition," he said.



“CSK ARE PROBABLY ONE OF THE SUCCESSFUL IPL TEAMS AND YOU CAN'T TAKE THEM FOR GRANTED...THEY WILL COME OUT ALL GUNS BLAZING. SO, WE WILL BE EXPECTING A GREAT CONTEST AND WE NEED TO FOCUS ON WHAT WE NEED TO DO AS TEAM AND ALL OUR BASES ARE COVERED
ROHIT SHARMA
ON LUNG-OPENER



DEADLY DUO: Alex Carey celebrates his ton with fellow centurion Glenn Maxwell in Manchester, Wednesday
PHOTO: ESPNCRICKINFO

Maxwell, Carey tons lift Oz in title decider

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Manchester, Sept 17: Glenn Maxwell (108, 90b, 4x4, 7x6) and Alex Carey (106, 114b, 7x4, 2x6) struck centuries in a 212-run stand to help Australia reach a record target of 303 at Old Trafford with two balls remaining and secure a 2-1 ODI series win over England.

Mitchell Starc (3/74) started the third and deciding ODI Wednesday by taking wickets from the first two balls of the match, and ended it by sweeping a four for the winning runs under lights as the Australians consigned England to their first loss in a bilateral ODI series at home since 2015.

It was a record ODI chase at the Manchester venue - bettering England's 286/4 against New Zealand in 1986 in a 60-over match - and gave Australia a famous series win over the World Champions to take back Down Under from their white-ball tour that also included a 1-2 loss in a T20I series.

Replying to 302/7, Australia slumped to 73/5 only for Carey and Maxwell to produce Australia's highest sixth-wicket partnership in ODIs and turn the tide. While Carey was the steadier of the pair, Maxwell delivered some trademark big hits all over the short boundary on one side of the ground.

Maxwell eventually fell with 15 balls left and Australia needed 14 off the last two overs. Carey couldn't see the tourists home, either, departing for 106 to a fabulous diving catch by Mark Wood off the seventh-to-last ball.

Starc entered, with Australia needing 10 off the last over bowled

by leg-spinner Adil Rashid, and smashed his first ball down the ground for six. After two singles, Starc swept Rashid round the corner and the ball sped to the boundary rope, sealing a three-wicket win and sparking cheers from his teammates on the balcony.

Indeed, England, who won the toss, did well to reach 300 after recovering from losing the wickets of Jason Roy and Joe Root from the opening two balls of the match bowled by Starc. Jonny Bairstow (112, 126b, 12x4, 2x6) was England's star, scoring his 10th ODI hundred with a nonchalant flicked six off Pat Cummins bringing up three figures.

Chris Woakes (53 n o, 39b, 6x4) provided the hosts a late flourish to make Australia's task even harder. Sam Billings (57, 58b, 4x4, 2x6) too contributed well to the team's cause.

England will regret a no-ball by Jofra Archer (1/60) - his first in ODI cricket - off which he had Carey caught at third man when on nine. Wicketkeeper Jos Buttler also dropped a tough chance off a nick by Maxwell when 44.

It was England's only series loss of their international summer - during which all of their games have been played in a bio-secure bubble without fans - after taking on the West Indies, Ireland, Pakistan and Australia in various formats.

BRIEF SCORES

England 302/7 (Jonny Bairstow 112, Sam Billings 57, Chris Woakes 53 n o; Adam Zampa 3/51, Mitchell Starc 3/74) lost to Australia 305/7 (Glenn Maxwell 108, Alex Carey 106; Chris Woakes 2/46, Joe Root 2/46) by three wickets.

NEWS IN BRIEF

India drop in FIFA rankings

Zurich: The Indian team are ranked 109th in the world in the September 2020 release of the FIFA Rankings, Thursday. The Blue Tigers, amid the coronavirus pandemic, were ranked 108 from the November 2019 to July 2020 editions. There was no release of FIFA rankings in August 2020. The ranking of Qatar (55), Bangladesh (187) and Afghanistan (149) have remained unchanged. Portugal (5th) and Spain (7th) have gained a place in the top 10 with Uruguay and Croatia losing a spot respectively. Belgium, France, Brazil and England continue to top the chart, in that order.



his brace with a shot that

Messi brace fashions Barcelona win

Barcelona: Lionel Messi scored his first goals of Barcelona's pre-season as coach Ronald Koeman left Luis Suarez and Arturo Vidal off his team for a second friendly match. Messi netted two goals and set up one more in a 3-1 victory over second-tier Girona, Barcelona's second training match since Koeman took over as coach. Messi's perfectly placed pass sent Francisco Trincao clear for the Portugal forward to square the ball to Coutinho, who only had to scoop in the 20th-minute opener. Messi doubled the lead in the 45th with a wrong-footed shot from outside the area that went in off the upright. Samuel Saiz got Girona on the scoreboard after halftime before Messi got a deflection off a defender to fool the Girona goalkeeper.

Fed Cup changes name

London: The Fed Cup is changing its name to honour tennis great Billie Jean King, the woman whose lifelong battle for equality and social justice laid the foundation for generations that followed. The Billie Jean King Cup will become the first major global team competition to be named after a woman, the International Tennis Federation said Thursday. "I'm still in shock," the 76-year-old King said of the tribute. "It's really a privilege, and it's also a responsibility. It's wild, it's great, it's wonderful."

TATA MOTORS
Connecting Aspirations

THIS DURGA PUJA HAPPINESS RETURNS HOME

AVAIL BENEFITS UP TO ₹70,000. EMI STARTS FROM ₹4111**

NEW FOREVER RANGE OF CARS FROM TATA MOTORS

NEXON
with Electric Sunroof
Benefits up to ₹20000*
EMI starts from ₹5999**

TIGOR
India's Safest Sedan
Benefits up to ₹33000*
EMI starts from ₹4444**

ALTROZ
India's Safest Hatchback
EMI starts from ₹4799**

TIAGO
New Powerful
BS6 Engines with AMT
Benefits up to ₹28000*
EMI starts from ₹4111**

HARRIER
with Automatic Transmission
and Panoramic Sunroof
Benefits up to ₹70000*
EMI starts from ₹12399**



SAFETY

DRIVING PLEASURE

DESIGN

Your safe online car-buying experience

tata motors click to drive

WORLD CLASS SAFETY & QUALITY
INDIAN MADE

To book a test drive, call: 18002098282 or visit www.cars.tatamotors.com

Authorised Tata Motors Dealers:

BHUBANESWAR:
Dion Automotives-
9319452597

BHUBANESWAR:
Trupti Enterprise-
8448512636

NAYAGARH:
Trupti Enterprise -
9311324875

PARADIP
Trupti Enterprise :
9311324877

CUTTACK :
Gugnani Autocars-
7303658971

JAJPUR :
Gugnani Autocars-
9311324871

ANGUL :
Monalisha Motors -
7303658551

ROURKELA:
Balamotors-
7303658556

SUNDARGARH:
Balaram Motors-
8448512739

BERHAMPUR:
Dion Automotives-7358716017

BHAWANIPATNA: Lankeswari Motors - 7358716031
RAYAGADA: Lankeswari Motors - 9311324878

JEYPORE/ SAMBALPUR:
Lankeswari Motors - 7428094709

BALASORE/BHADRAK/MAYURBHANJ: Premier Motors: 9148625958.
BARIPADA : Premier Motors: 9311324879