



PERFECT ATTITUDE

Actor Kiara Advani says she has bigger issues to look into than sweating over trolling

LEISURE P2



DELHI CAN'T BREATHE & SEE

Health experts flag a spike in number of patients in Delhi reporting irritation in eyes because of toxic pollutants

TWO STATES P7



NO RELIEF FOR PAK

Pakistan may remain on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force, a media report said

INTERNATIONAL P10

SHORT TAKES

State hikes Variable DA of labourers

Bhubaneswar: The state government Wednesday hiked the Variable Dearness Allowance (VDA) at the rate of ₹4.65 per day for labourers. The hike will be payable to all unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled, and highly-skilled categories of labourers working in the state. As per an official notification, the VDA will be payable retrospectively in all the 89 scheduled employments in addition to the minimum rate of wages with effect from October 1, 2020.



IRREGULAR by MANJUL
Please do not step out without mask... at least till elections... every vote counts!

NIA grills youth in City for 5 hrs

Bhubaneswar: An NIA team Wednesday interrogated a student after picking him up from a place under Khandagiri police station area here but not for any terror link, police said. The student was questioned for about five hours at Khandagiri police station but the reason for it was not disclosed to the media. He was picked up with help of the Odisha Police. The student was interrogated at the Khandagiri police station itself.

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	40707.31	↑ 162.94
NIFTY	11937.70	↑ 40.90
DOLLAR	73.96	↑ ₹0.25
EURO	87.42	↑ ₹0.62
GOLD	₹51,277	↑ ₹367
SILVER	₹63,381	↑ ₹257

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP MAX	31.2°C	32.0°C
TEMP MIN	25.6°C	24.0°C
Humidity	98%	92%
Rainfall	10.6mm	9mm
Forecast	Generally cloudy sky	

Festive cheer for central govt employees

UNION CABINET APPROVES ₹3,737 CRORE BONUS FOR NON-GAZETTED STAFF

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved productivity linked bonus and non-productivity bonus for the financial year 2019-20 for over 30 lakh non-gazetted employees. The bonus will be given in a single installment, through Direct Benefit Transfer, before 'Vijaydashami'. It will cost the government a total of ₹3,737 crore and benefit a total of 3.67 crore non-gazetted employees.

This comes as a reason to cheer for the government employees ahead of the festive season. The decision to give a productivity-linked bonus and non-productivity-linked bonus for 2019-20 was taken at the Union Cabinet meeting, Minister of Information and Broadcasting Prakash Javadekar told reporters. The bonus ahead of 'Vijaydashami' and 'Diwali' will encourage the middle-class to go out and spend and thus add to the demand in the economy, he said. The bonus will be disbursed in a week's time. "Payment of Bonus to



non-gazetted employees for their performance in the preceding year is usually made before Durga Puja/Dussehra season. The Government is announcing the Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB) and ad hoc bonus for its non-gazetted employees to be disbursed immediately," a press release said. The Productivity Linked Bonus (PLB) for the year 2019-2020, having financial implications of Rs2,791 crore, will benefit 16.97 lakh non-gazetted employees of commercial establishments like Railways, Posts, Defence, EPFO and ESIC, among others. Ad-hoc Bonus, which is given to non-gazetted Central government employees, will benefit 13.70 lakh staff and will cost the exchequer ₹946 crore.

NEXT STIMULUS SOON

NEW DELHI: The Centre is working on the next stimulus package to support the economy amid positive signs of a fall in Covid-19 cases, a senior finance ministry official said Wednesday. The government has received suggestions from various ministries and sectors on needed measures, Tarun Bajaj, economic affairs secretary at the ministry of finance, told a virtual conference.

Non-PLB or ad-hoc Bonus, which is given to non-gazetted Central government employees, will benefit 13.70 lakh staff. It will cost the exchequer ₹946 crore. A total of 30.67 lakh employees would be benefited from the bonus announcement and the total financial implication will be ₹3,737 crore, the release said. October 12, the Finance Minister announced a number of measures to induce government employees to spend in the upcoming festive season, including a 'LTC Cash Voucher Scheme' and a 'Special Festival Advance Scheme'.

Start Strong. Grow Stronger.

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OMCs planning fuel price relief

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: Consumers can cheer as oil marketing companies (OMC) may actually bring down the retail prices of petrol and diesel this festive season.

Oil sector experts said that with global oil prices under pressure from slowing demand in the second wave of Covid-19 pandemic sweeping several western countries, crude price could fall in coming days. If this holds on for a week or so, there could be positive gains for auto fuel consumers in India by way of a fall in retail price of petrol and diesel.

- Global crude prices are holding close to \$42 a barrel now
- It has been hovering between \$40-42 a barrel for over a month now
- But with lower oil demand and rising inventory, there is fear among oil producing companies that crude prices may start falling again

per litre. In Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, the fuel was sold for Rs87.74, Rs84.14 and Rs82.59 per litre, respectively. Diesel prices in Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata were at Rs70.46, Rs76.86, Rs75.95 and Rs73.99, respectively. But with fresh indications on global oil prices, domestic oil companies could revise the retail price downwards. However, their margins would be protected as oil demand in the country had picked up latterly getting over even the last year's numbers.

Retail sales have picked up with the gradual reopening of the economic activities. First time since lockdown, diesel sale in the country has crossed over the pre-Covid level with the country's most widely consumed fuel witnessing a nine per cent year-on-year growth in the first 15 days of October.

Gunupur tehsildar suspended over stone quarry blast



The mishap site

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The state government Wednesday suspended a tehsildar in Rayagada district in connection with a blast at a stone quarry which had claimed the lives of three workers.

The government suspended Gunupur tehsildar Laxminarayan Sabat, an Odisha Administrative Service (OAS) officer, with immediate effect.

During the period of suspension, the headquarters of Sabat shall be at Collectorate, Rayagada and he shall not leave the headquarters without obtaining the prior permission of the Collector, said an order of the Revenue department. Earlier, Rayagada district Collector Pramod Kumar Behera recommended disciplinary action against the Gunupur tehsildar for allegedly not taking action against illegal stone quarrying at Okilguda. The Collector has also issued show-cause to two Sadar revenue inspectors (RIs). Besides, the district administration has already suspended Gunupur assistant revenue inspector Anup Kumar Marthia. Three labourers, including a woman had died while six others were injured in the blast that occurred last week at the stone quarry.

Triple murder rocks Sambalpur

SAMBALPUR SP KANWAR VISHAL SINGH LISTS THE CASE IN RED FLAG CATEGORY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Sambalpur, Oct 21: Three members of a family including two women were axed to death by their neighbour at Lapada under Mahulapali police limits Sambalpur district allegedly over property dispute Wednesday afternoon.

The deceased were identified as Pirabati Behera (55), a widow, her daughter Sabitri Sahu (30) and son-in-law Girdhari Sahu (38).

After committing the crime, the accused, Naveen Dehuri and his son Hemananda Dehuri ran amok in the village and scared the locals before absconding.

On being informed, Kuchinda SDPO Raj Kishore Mishra and Mahulapali IIC Jyotshnarani Behera rushed to the spot and seized the murder weapon. A forensic team was also pressed into service. Police registered a case and ar-



The two murder accused Naveen Dehuri (R) and his son Hemananda Dehuri

rested Naveen and Hemananda following their interrogation.

Sambalpur SP Kanwar Vishal Singh also visited the crime scene and took stock of the situation. Later, the SP listed the murder case in Red Flag category after assessing the severity of the crime.

While the bodies of Pirabati and Sabitri were found lying in a pool of blood near their house, another body of Pirabati's son-in-law Girdhari Sahu

was found on their farmland.

It was alleged that Naveen and his son Hemananda murdered the widow, daughter and son-in-law as the former was eyeing to grab the land of the widow.

Girdhari had been staying at his mother-in-law's house for the last five years and earning his living by cultivating her farmland. The dispute over property often led to altercation between the two families and matter was also sub-judice in the court.

The harvest time was nearing when it struck to Naveen that it would be easier for him to grab the landed properties of Pirabati if he eliminated all the three family members.

He hatched a plan with his son Hemananda and the two hacked Girdhari to death when he was working on the farmland in afternoon. Profusely bleeding, Girdhari died on the spot.

Machines may take over 85 mn jobs by 2025

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Oct 21: Displacement of around 87 million jobs is expected in the coming years due to shift from human labour to machines, a report by World Economic Forum (WEF) has said.

The 'Future of Jobs Report 2020', however, noted that 97 million new roles may emerge that are more adapted to the new division of labour among humans, machines, and algorithms. "Although the number of jobs destroyed will be surpassed by the number of 'jobs of tomorrow' created, in contrast to previous years, job creation is



slowing while job destruction accelerates," it said.

Employers expect that by 2025, increasingly redundant roles will decline from 15.4 per cent of the workforce to nine per cent, and that emerging professions will grow from 7.8 per cent to 13.5 per cent of the total employee base of company respondents, the report said.

"Based on these figures, we estimate that by 2025, 85 million jobs may be displaced by a shift in the division of labour between humans and machines, while 97 million new roles may emerge that are more adapted to the new division of labour between humans, machines, and algorithms," it added.

It observed that automation, in tandem with the Covid-19 recession, is creating a 'double-disruption' scenario for workers. In addition to the current disruption from the pandemic-induced lockdowns and economic contraction, technological adoption by companies will transform tasks, jobs and skills by 2025.

Here, contaminated water claimed seven lives in just a month

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 21: With all three tubewells in the village pumping out contaminated water and seven lives lost to it, residents of Santekguda under Kalimela block in Malkangiri district are a worried lot.

The panic, however, has not made them seek medical advice. Quacks and sorcerers rule the roost in this tribal-dominated hamlet.

According to a resident, contaminated water has taken seven lives including young and old in the last one month itself.

Though there are three tubewells, reddish contaminated water comes out of all three of them in this tribal village that has 52 families and a population of over 500. Amid lack of better alternatives, the villagers mostly depend upon these tubewells and some nearby ditches

for their drinking water needs. Consumption of contaminated water, meanwhile, has proved fatal for many.

While a mini potable water project at an estimated cost of ₹2,00,000 was constructed in 2017, it has already become defunct.

Despite the adverse health effects, being driven by superstitions, villagers here prefer to resort to sorcery when someone falls sick, instead of availing medical treatment.

It is estimated that waterborne diseases have an economic burden of approximately \$600 million a year in India, a report said.

This is especially true for drought and flood-prone areas, which affected a third of the nation in the past couple of years. Less than 50 per cent of the population in India has access to safely managed drinking water.



Residents say reddish contaminated water comes out of all the three tubewells

Is Pak heading towards a civil war-like situation

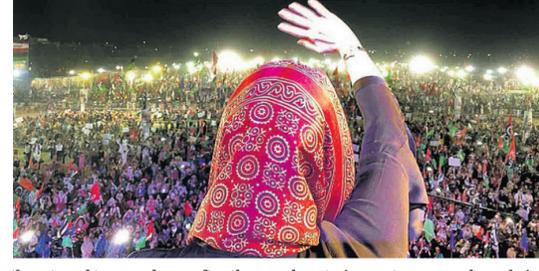
SINDH POLICE RISE IN DEFIANCE AGAINST ARMY AFTER FORMER'S CHIEF IS KIDNAPPED

AGENCIES

New Delhi/Islamabad, Oct 21: In a major show of open defiance against Pakistan Army, police officers in Karachi have threatened to go on mass leave. Sources said this happened after the Sindh Police chief was allegedly kidnapped and coerced to act against PML (N) vice president Maryam Nawaz Sharif.

Sources in Islamabad added that Pakistan is rapidly slipping into a civil war-like situation with the ongoing tussle between the opposition parties and the Army.

At Karachi in Sindh province, headed by Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), the Sindh Police in a major show of defiance against the Pakistan Army have



threatened to go on leave after they were pressurised to arrest PML (N) vice president Maryam Nawaz's husband Safdar Awan.

Sources said that Sindh IGP Mushtaq Mahar and at least two additional inspector generals, seven

deputy inspector generals and six senior superintendents of Sindh Police Tuesday applied for leave in order to 'come out of the shock' caused by the 'episode of registration of FIR against Capt (R) Safdar'.

The Sindh Police Monday arrested Safdar Awan, the husband of Maryam Nawaz Sharif, and the son-in-law of exiled former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, from a hotel in Karachi. The arrest came just hours after the PML (N) vice president criticised Prime Minister Imran Khan's government at a massive rally of People's Democratic Movement (PDM) - an alliance of 11 opposition political parties which have joined hands to challenge the Imran Khan government backed by the Pakistan Army. He was later released on bail. Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa has ordered an inquiry into Safdar Awan's arrest after Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Chairperson Bilawal Bhutto Zardari questioned the Army and the ISI about the incident in a tweet.

Pakistani media quoted Bilawal alleging that the Sindh Police chief was abducted by Pakistan Army and its intelligence wing for a few hours before Safdar Awan was arrested. Bilawal insinuated that Pakistan military had pressurised the Sindh Police to act against Safdar Awan.

The Dawn newspaper reported that a purported voice message by PML (N) leader and former Sindh Governor Muhammad Zubair was shared by a journalist in which Zubair alleged that the Sindh Inspector General of Police, Mushtaq Mahar, was kidnapped and forced to register an FIR against Maryam, her husband Safdar and 200 others for violating the sanctity of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah's mausoleum.



REESE'S LEGALLY BLONDE 3 SET FOR MAY 2022 RELEASE

The Reese Witherspoon-starrer *Legally Blonde 3* will release in May 2022. Witherspoon, who plays 'Elle Woods' in the franchise, had spoken of the project for the first time in 2018. MGM Studios has now officially confirmed the release date on Twitter.

FAST AND FURIOUS FRANCHISE TO BE WRAPPED UP AFTER 11TH FILM

The long-running *Fast And Furious* franchise will come to an end after the forthcoming 10th and 11th films have released. Justin Lin, who directed the third, fourth, fifth, sixth and ninth instalments of the series, will return to helm the final two films, reports *variety.com*.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Today you will feel like displaying your power. If you find that people are awe-struck when you pass by, take it that your labours are doing the trick. Otherwise, take it that you have to get things in better order.

TAURUS
This may be, health wise, a bad day for you. Ganesh urges you to take special care and not to do anything that invites illness or discomfort. The least you can do is to ensure that you do not over exert or get into situations that generate tension and anxiety.

GEMINI
An auspicious and progressive day awaits you. Alongwith your daily work you will also be able to tackle your personal issues as well. You will establish an emotional bonding with some person, or will feel the need to.

CANCER
An awareness of optimism and idealism will mark your activities this day. You may benefit by traversing from one terrain to another. You will be liberal and generous with ideas; your internal beauty will blossom.

LEO
You will have to bear more responsibilities in the office. You need to carefully weigh your alternatives before making a decision. On the personal front, you will need to watch against minor conflicts with your partner cropping up.

VIRGO
Contemplating on past successes will help you gather the resources for achieving more of it in the near future. New contacts will help you make considerable headway on the road to success. Ganesh says your amiable nature will help you in getting along easily with people.

LIBRA
Ganeshji says that today you shall make your competitors and enemies envious of your success in business. Beware, as they shall try to hurt or put down your reputation in varied ways.

SCORPIO
Long pending task of getting your home renovated may begin today. There are a couple of object de art that have caught your eyes and you wish to decorate your home with those artefacts. You may even plan a small celebration to share your home's new look! A great day indeed.

SAGITTARIUS
Your ways to deal with your team mates and colleagues will be strict and disciplined. However, your perfect ways at work will leave them awestruck. Your personal equations will be least affected by your stern ways, says Ganesh. Do not let success go to your head.

CAPRICORN
You are not an impulsive person and this reflects in whatever you do. Money will be on your mind almost through out the day. Generally, you are a penny pincher, but during the later half of the day you will go on a spending spree.

AQUARIUS
Today is your day! Your performance will speak for itself and everyone at work, including bosses, will appreciate your efforts, says Ganesh. Work will not seem burdensome any more, in fact you will enjoy your job like never before.

PISCES
Controversy and differences circle overhead, almost waiting for a chance to corner you. Even though you are a happy go lucky person, you may feel a little run down and disgruntled today.

When Amika Shail turned emotional

Mumbai: Singer-turned-actress Amika Shail plays a pivotal part in the upcoming web series, *Mirzapur 2*. She recalls being emotional when her casting in the show was confirmed.

"I became emotional when the news broke of my confirmation in *Mirzapur*. I had watched season one in 2018 and thoroughly enjoyed it, just like the millions of fans the world over. However, being a part of the show is

magical. My pulse went ticking when on my first day on the sets I saw Kaleen Bhaiyya (Pankaj Tripathi), Guddu (Ali Fazal) and Munna (Divyendu)," she said.

Amika plays a singer in the show. "The character of a singer came naturally to me, it was a dream come true. I learned a lot watching Pankaj ji acting as he has a very raw way of doing things," she added. She started her journey as a singer in the reality show *Little Champs* at the age of nine. She stepped into acting and appeared in television series like *Madam Sir*, *Laal Ishq*, *Abhay*, *Balveer Returns*, and *Udaan*.



Kiara's way to deal with trolls

Mumbai: Actress Kiara Advani remembers the time when she was badly trolled, with netizens accusing her of undergoing botox treatment. She says that was the moment she decided to turn off the notification for comment, which remains the same way till date.

Kiara became a target of trolls last year after a public appearance. "Initially, she (her mother) would feel bad and then she would try not to tell me, because she knows that I don't read, so I wouldn't be aware of it unless someone made it a news thing and put up a headline," Kiara said while talking about trolling.

"For me, it's always (been) like just don't sweat over the small stuff. These are not important things, there are bigger issues and things to look into, but I wish everybody could know the truth that not everything you read is always true," she added.

Opening up about her advice on dealing with trolls during a conversation with actress Neha Dhupia in a podcast of *JioSaavn #NoFilter:Neha*, she said: "We can't keep seeking validation from other people and I think as actors, we tend to do the most."



Happy to beat cancer, says Sanjay



Mumbai: Actor Sanjay Dutt, who recently confirmed that he was fighting cancer, Wednesday shared a health update saying he has come out victorious in his battle with the disease.

Dutt posted a statement on Instagram expressing joy while making the announcement.

"The last few weeks were very difficult time for my family and me. But like they say, God gives the hardest battles to his strongest soldiers. And today, on the occasion of my kids' birthday, I am happy to come out victorious from this battle and be able to give them the best gift I can—the health and well-being of our family," the statement read.

The actor thanked his family and doctors for taking proper care of him. He also expressed his gratitude to well-wishers for showering him with love.

"This wouldn't have been possible without the unwavering faith and support from all of you. I am eternally grateful to my family, friends and all the fans who have stood by me and been my source of strength through this trying time," he concluded.

ICCR's Durgotsav contest to keep festive spirit alive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: With no effective technique in sight to check the transmission of coronavirus, scale of Durga Puja celebration this year, needless to say, will not be like last year's. However, Indian Council For Cultural Relations (ICCR) has launched a contest for the puja revellers to keep their spirit high.

In #ICCRDurgotsav contest, participants have to send selfies in their Durga Puja attire. They can also share selfies taken during puja celebrations at home. Besides, the contestants have to pen two lines on their special association with the festivity in the comment section and tag as many friends as possible to increase their chances of winning.

Ten participants with best selfies and comments will get opportunities to be featured on ICCR's Facebook

and Twitter cover and official website.

The enthusiasts can post their images till the midnight of October 25, 2020. Entries received after that will not be considered, it was learnt. Minakshi Mishra, ICCR's Regional Head, said, "With restrictions on the festive ambience will not be the same as it was last year. Therefore, we aim to keep high the spirit of the revellers by launching this contest."

Meanwhile, several puja committees of the city like Nayapalli and Saheed Nagar have decided to celebrate Dussehra online and made arrangements for live streaming of all the rituals from October 22 to 26 to prevent social gathering.

Earlier the government had issued guidelines that said there shouldn't be more than seven persons in the pandals including the organisers, priests and support staff.



FUN post

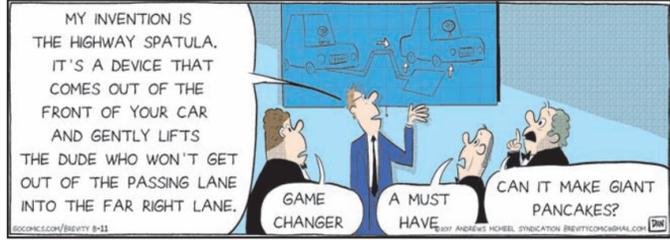
PEANUTS



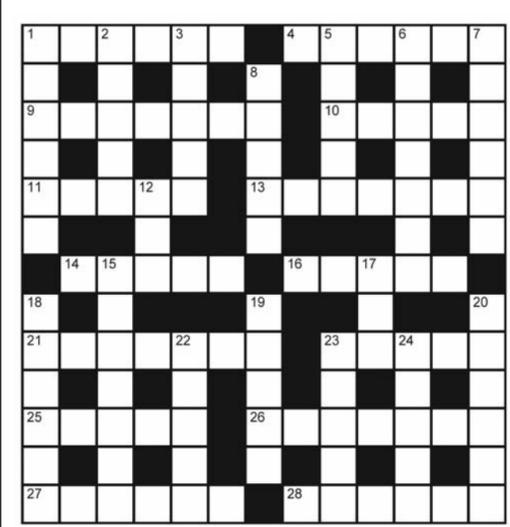
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 1 Quick look
 - 4 Rove
 - 9 Type of sailing ship or seabird
 - 10 Hazardous
 - 11 Still kicking
 - 13 Analyse
 - 14 Barrel part
 - 16 Back street
 - 21 Zoo inhabitants
 - 23 Spa feature
 - 25 Fencing swords
- Down**
- 1 Belly laugh
 - 2 Excuse
 - 3 Origami bird
 - 5 Blood line
 - 6 Detest
 - 7 Jingles
- 8 Free-for-all**
- 12 ___ Appia
 - 15 Spear with three prongs
 - 17 Shepherd's locale
 - 18 Desert
 - 19 Off-center
 - 20 Elevates
 - 22 Fable writer
 - 23 Exhausted
 - 24 Join forces

SUDOKU

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

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

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

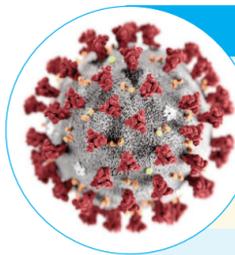
5	3	9	A	B	6	D	7	2	0	C	8	1	4	E
7	8	2	1	D	5	6	4	0	B	E	9	C	A	3
D	6	B	2	3	8	C	1	E	5	A	4	9	7	0
1	E	4	C	0	9	B	8	A	D	3	7	5	6	2
A	0	C	4	E	7	5	9	3	1	6	2	8	D	B
C	5	A	2	4	9	0	7	3	8	6	D	B	1	5
2	D	8	3	6	0	4	B	1	7	9	E	A	C	5
9	B	E	5	8	1	2	A	C	4	0	0	7	3	6
4	1	8	6	7	C	3	E	5	2	B	A	0	9	8
3	7	0	8	4	9	1	6	0	5	1	2	E	4	A
6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

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



ANTI-EXTORTION DRIVE

Police officials participate in the first meeting of the newly-formed anti-extortion task force at Police Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	4,12,65,306	3,07,70,470	11,32,444
India	76,94,792	68,57,032	1,16,497
Odisha	2,74,181	2,54,913	1,181

Deep depression likely over Bay of Bengal



People travel amid rain in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Heavy rain that lashed several parts of the state during past 24 hours will continue to occur for another two days, says Bhubaneswar Meteorological Centre, Wednesday.

The low pressure area formed over central Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood has become a well-marked low pressure area over west-central Bay of Bengal and neighbourhood, the Met Centre said.

It is very likely to move north-westwards during next 24 hours and move north-northeastwards thereafter towards West Bengal-Bangladesh coasts across north-west Bay of Bengal off Odisha coast during subsequent 48 hours, it said. The system is likely to concentrate into a depression by Thursday and further into a deep depression during the subsequent 24 hours.

Under its impact, districts like Ganjam, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Balasore, Gajapati, Khurda, Cuttack, Jajpur, Mayurbhanj and Dhenkanal will receive heavy rainfall, Thursday.

Similarly, some parts of Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Bhadrak, Jajpur, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur would experience heavy rainfall, Friday. The heavy downpour may lead to water logging in low-lying areas, landslide in hilly areas, traffic disruption in urban areas and damage to kutcha houses and informal roads.

Squally weather with wind with speed up to 30-40 kmph (gusting to 50 kmph) is likely to hit the coastal districts of Odisha during next two days, the Met said.

The weatherman has advised fishermen not to venture into sea along and off Odisha coast and North and West central Bay Bengal from Wednesday night to October 24.

Keeping the Met Centre's warning in mind, the state government has advised district Collectors concerned to remain in alert and take all precautionary measures to meet possible flood and landslide like situations.

Meanwhile, the Met department said the southwest monsoon may withdraw from some parts of Odisha in next three to four days.

Onion at ₹80 now, may hit a ton soon

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Even as the price of onion in retail market sky-rocketed to Rs 80 per kg Wednesday from Rs 50 a day before, consumers are all set to shed more tears as unexpected rains have damaged the crop in major onion-producing states in the south.

"It's no less than a nightmare for me when I came to know about the onion price went to market to buy vegetables. During this Covid time, the unexpected price hike is really hurting me," said Bhagyalaxmi Khuntia, a homemaker.

It is the duty of the government to ensure availability of the kitchen essential at a reasonable price, she said.

The price of onion stayed at around Rs 50 per kg in the local markets of Bhubaneswar and the outskirts for about one month but it galloped to Rs 80 Wednesday.

Wholesale onion traders in Bhubaneswar said onion crop in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Maharashtra have been destroyed due to torrential rains.

The retail price of one kg of onion has already reached Rs 80-mark and it is likely to rise further for another three months, said general secretary of All Odisha Traders Association, Sudhakar Panda.

TEARJERKER

■ THE PRICE OF ONION STAYED AT AROUND RS 50 PER KG IN THE LOCAL MARKETS OF BHUBANESWAR AND THE OUTSKIRTS FOR ABOUT A MONTH BUT IT GALLOPED TO RS 80 WEDNESDAY

■ WHOLESALE ONION TRADERS IN BHUBANESWAR SAID ONION CROP IN TELANGANA, ANDHRA PRADESH, KARNATAKA AND MAHARASHTRA HAVE BEEN DESTROYED DUE TO TORRENTIAL RAINS



■ SINCE THE CENTRE HAS REMOVED THE BULB FROM ESSENTIAL COMMODITIES ACT, THE PRICE MAY GO UP TO RS 100 PER KG IN COMING DAYS, SAYS GENERAL SECRETARY OF ALL ODISHA TRADERS ASSOCIATION, SUDHAKAR PANDA

"The wholesale price of the kitchen essential was Rs 4,500 per quintal yesterday (Tuesday). But, today the price stood between Rs 7,000 and Rs 7,500 per quintal. Accordingly, the retail price also increased," he said.

Since the Centre has removed the bulb from Essential Commodities Act, the price may go up to Rs 100 per kg in coming days, said Panda, adding, "It is high time that the government intervened into the matter and taken steps to ensure that consumers get onion at a reasonable price."

A wholesale onion trader said that the governments did not pay attention to the plight of farmers,

who were struggling to get remunerative price for onion.

The onion prices from February to August were abysmally low. At that time, many traders used to dump the produce in bins as there was an excess.

As a double whammy to the farmers, the Centre imposed a ban on export of onions from India, which were in much demand abroad; the international prices, too, have been affected.

In this scenario, if the government decides to import the item to meet the current shortfall, it would take time and by that time the price here would have breached Rs 100-mark, felt the traders.



EYE ON THE PREY

Cranes perch on a mound near Kathajodi river in Cuttack while searching for food, Wednesday

Govt employees to lose 9 offs next year

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Revenue and Disaster Management department, Wednesday, released the holiday list for 2021. However, the list brought no cheers for state government employees as they will lose nine holidays.

According to the list, as many as nine holidays fall on Sunday, second and fourth Saturdays of 2021.

And the government employees will not receive compensatory off against these. The list reads that the state government employees will get total 106 holidays. Out of these, 29

are government holidays, eight are optional holidays, 52 days of the total holidays are Sundays and 24 are second and fourth Saturdays.

The nine holidays which the employees will lose are Easter Saturday, Birthday of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Prathamastami, Subash Bose Jayanti, Dola Purnima, Independence Day, Jhulana Purnima, Nuakhai and Christmas.

"Since the festive/commemorative days as listed fall on Sundays, second Saturdays and fourth Saturdays, those have not been specifically declared holidays," reads the notification issued by the Revenue and Disaster Management department.

₹5Cr flood assistance for Telangana

Bhubaneswar: Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik Wednesday announced an assistance of Rs 5 crore for flood-hit Hyderabad as a gesture from people of Odisha. Naveen's announcement came after his New Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal and Tamil Nadu CM Edappadi K Palaniswami donated Rs 15 crore and Rs 10 crore respectively to Telangana. According to Telangana government, at least 70 people have lost their lives due to floods across the state.

Puja ahead, BMC rolls up sleeves for a cleaner City



Idols at Old Station Bazar puja mandap in Bhubaneswar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC), Wednesday, released a list of about 40 officers that are set to be deployed at various zonal offices for management of sanitation during the festivities.

The designated officers shall be responsible for supervising and monitoring

various activities of sanitation in their respective wards, said the BMC order. While the order mentioned a range of activities assigned to the officers, the primary task is waste segregation, especially that of home-isolated Covid patients. "The officers should consider door-to-door collection of garbage and segregation of waste at source. The officers were asked to visit commercial establish-

ments in their area and ensure that littering is avoided in and around the places. The officers may impose fine or initiate action for closure of shop if any violation is found," the order read.

Apart from daily cleaning activities, the civic body would create awareness among people for safe Durga Puja amidst the pandemic. Citing example of Kerala where massive spike was reported after Onam festival, the BMC has requested people to avoid visiting puja pandals and follow Covid norms.

"The designated officers must ensure that community and public toilets in their wards are properly functioning. Regular cleaning of the toilets should be ensured and overcrowding must be avoided. Any violation of the mentioned suggestions will hold the designated officer responsible," the order added.

Devotee to donate gold for Lord's ornaments

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, Oct 21: A devotee has come forward to donate gold for the making of new ornaments for Srimandir deities, said sources in the Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

The temple authorities Wednesday approved the designs for the new ornaments.

Lord Jagannath and his siblings Lord Balabhadra and Devi Subhadra are adorned with gold ornaments as part of the Suna Beshha five times a year. According to sources, some ornaments of the deities have worn out due to frequent use. So, the temple authorities have planned to make new ornaments for Srimandir deities.

"The ornaments would be made with 5kg gold. A devotee has expressed his willingness to donate gold for the ornaments and bear the making charges. A meeting chaired by SJTA administrator (rituals) today approved the designs for the ornaments," said Srimandir Managing Committee member Ananta Tiadi.

Isolation ward cripples eye care at SCB

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Oct 21: Eye care facility at SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMCH) here has taken a beating as the building of the Regional Institute of Ophthalmology (RIO) is being used as an isolation ward for suspected Covid-19 patients.

The Ophthalmology department is now providing outdoor treatment to people while surgery and other facilities have been virtually stopped since March this year, sources said.

The RIO was asked to vacate a major portion of its four-



The institute is now providing only outdoor treatment while all other facilities have come to a grinding halt

storey building to facilitate the isolation ward. The hospital authorities had asked the institute to use the operation theatre (OT) of the ENT department for emergency cases, sources added.

"The Ophthalmology department was asked to share

the ENT OT for emergency operations only in March this year. Since then, the institute has been providing only outdoor treatment while all other facilities have come to a grinding halt. As a result, many people have been deprived of eye care at SCBMCH," said a

social activist.

According to sources, people from across Odisha and outside depend upon the RIO at SCBMCH for eye care. As per the data, the institute usually conducts cataract operations on around 1,000 patients in a month.

"The eye care facility at the institute has been severely affected by the opening of the isolation ward. This is evident from the fact that the institute has not conducted a single cataract operation in last eight months. Infrastructure woes have also affected the studies of 27 postgraduate students at the ophthalmology institute," said a source.

CORONA VIRUS (COVID-19)

Corona Awareness during Puja Celebration

DO'S

Wash hands frequently for at least 40 seconds

Always wear mask properly

Maintain 2 Mtr. physical distance

Special care for elderly, persons with co-morbidity, pregnant women & children

DONT'S

Don't spit in public places

Don't go to crowded places

Don't travel unless very necessary

Don't violate COVID norms during social & religious events

It is time to change our behavior, our sacrifice will help protect our family & friends

Health & Family Welfare Department, Govt. of Odisha

[http://www.health.odisha.gov.in/](https://www.health.odisha.gov.in/)
[facebook.com/HFWOdisha](https://www.facebook.com/HFWOdisha)
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Odisha's Covid toll at 1,181

WITH 1,931 NEW CASES, STATE'S INFECTION TALLY ROSE TO 2,74,181

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The state Wednesday reported 1,931 new Covid-19 cases, which took the infection tally in Odisha to 2,74,181, while 13 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 1,181, an official of Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department said.

Of the fresh cases, 1,120 were reported from various quarantine centres while 811 cases of the viral infection were detected during contact tracing, said the official.

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, recorded the maximum number of new cases at 273, followed by Cuttack at 153, Angul at 120 and Sundargarh at 104.

Taking to Twitter, the H&FW department said, "Regret to inform the demise of thirteen #COVID19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals."

Four new fatalities were registered in Mayurbhanj district, three in Puri, two in Khurda and one each in Balasore, Angul, Nuapada and Bolangir.

Ganjam district alone accounted for 225 of the 1,181 Covid-19 deaths reported in the state, followed by Khurda (203) and Cuttack (104). As many as 53 Covid-19 patients died in the state due to comorbidities, the official said.

The Covid toll has gone up to 78 in Puri district with three fresh deaths being reported in the Pilgrim City during the past 24 hours. Balasore has so far reported 63 deaths, including one reported in the past 24 hours, while the virus



Khurda recorded the maximum number of new cases at 273, followed by Cuttack at 153, Angul at 120 and Sundargarh at 104

VITAL STATS

Four new fatalities were registered in Mayurbhanj district, three in Puri, two in Khurda and one each in Balasore, Angul, Nuapada and Bolangir

Ganjam district alone accounted for 225 of the 1,181 Covid-19 deaths reported in the state, followed by Khurda (203) and Cuttack (104)

has claimed 55 lives in Sundargarh district.

Over 41.59 lakh sample tests have been conducted in the state, added the official. Meanwhile, 2,716 Covid patients recovered Wednesday, taking the total recoveries in Odisha to 2,54,913.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in a message claimed that Odisha has been successful to contain Covid infection during the last six months.

Patnaik acknowledged the co-operation of all in the fight against Covid and stated that the number of Covid cases in the coastal state has shown a decline trend by coming down to less than 2,000-mark in place of 4,000 in last week of September.

The positivity rate, the CM said, has come down and it will further come down in coming days.

He appealed the people not to be complacent in such a situation and remain cautious till definite treatment or vaccine for Covid is available.

Quoting the experts, Patnaik said that Corona may take a spike in winter, he asked people to take all precautionary measures and to follow Covid protocols strictly, keeping in view the ensuing festivals like Durga Puja and Diwali.

He also appealed to people to avoid crowding at public places and to strictly follow Covid protocols like wearing masks, maintaining physical distance and adhering to hand hygiene.

Vig glare on R&B asst engineer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Vigilance sleuths Wednesday conducted simultaneously raids at properties of Roads and Buildings (R&B) Division-V assistant engineer Sarada Prasad Gauda here in connection with a disproportionate assets case.

According to a source in Vigilance, the raids were carried out at five places simultaneously. The places include a triple-storied building on Plot No-49 Sweete Complex at Ganga Nagar of Unit-VI in Bhubaneswar; office room at Nirmana Soudha in Bhubaneswar and three other places in Ganjam including ancestral house at Badagada village, father-in-law's house at Sorada, house of Sasmita Sahu located at Gandhi Nagar 1st lane at extended Badagada area.

The officer is said to have accumulated assets disproportionate to his known sources of income. The search was carried out on strength of Special Judge Vigilance Misc case No 10/2020.

State registers 43.5% decline in road fatalities during lockdown

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Odisha has registered a 43.5 per cent decline in deaths due to road mishaps in the four months of nationwide lockdown, an official said Wednesday.

Deaths due to road accidents decreased by 43.5 per cent between April and July. 1,048 fatalities were reported in the April to July period as compared to 1,853 fatalities between April to July 2019, informed the State Transport Authority (STA).

The number of fatalities reduced by 74 per cent in April, 42 per cent in May, 18 per cent in June and 19 per cent in July. In the first seven months of the year from January to July, deaths due to road accident has reduced by 30 per cent, the STA said.

As per STA data, 5,125 accidents have been reported between January and July this year. During the same period in 2019, the state had reported 6,690 road accidents.

STATE TRANSPORT AUTHORITY DATA

1,048 fatalities were reported in the April to July period as compared to 1,853 fatalities between the state period in 2019

The number of fatalities reduced by 74 per cent in April, 42 per cent in May, 18 per cent in June and 19 per cent in July

In the first seven months of the year (from January to July), deaths due to road mishap has reduced by 30 per cent

5,125 accidents have been reported between January and July this year as compared to 6,690 during the corresponding period of 2019

Odisha saw 2,401 deaths in the first seven months this year against 3,426 deaths during the corresponding period of 2019

The state witnessed 2,401 deaths in the first seven months this year against 3,426 deaths during the corresponding period of 2019.

Govt issues post-Covid health advisory

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The State Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department Wednesday issued advisories for the follow up and management of health of the COVID patients after their recovery from the viral disease.

The advisories have been sent to all the Collectors for necessary actions. The department admitted

that several associated health ailments have been seen in recovered patients and battled for a holistic approach for their well-being during the post-COVID period.

"After acute COVID-19 illness, recovered patients may continue to report wide variety of signs and symptoms including fatigue, body ache, cough, sore throat, difficulty in breathing increased inci-

dence/worsening of Coronary Artery Disease, Acute Myocardial Infarction, Heart failure, Myocarditis, Stroke, Impaired Cognitive function, persistence of taste and smell abnormality besides occurrence of depression, anxiety and fear," the department advisory said.

At the individual level, the department has asked the recovered patients to continue taking preven-

tive measures against COVID, drink adequate warm water and continue regular household work if health permits. It also asked to resume office works in graded manner.

The department suggested the people to do yoga, pranayama, meditation and morning walks besides consuming nutritious and balanced diet. It also the recovered patients to refrain from smoking and alcohol consumption.

Cong DCC chiefs meet Chellakumar, Niranjan in City



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The newly-elected chairmen of the District Congress Committees (DCC) Wednesday visited the Congress Bhavan here and interacted Odisha in-charge A Chellakumar and Odisha Congress chief Niranjan Patnaik.

Several leaders participated in the meeting which also discussed the roadmap for the bypolls and way to go forward. Chellakumar advised the party workers and the new office bearers to work hard to ensure winning the trust of the people in the state. Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) President Niranjan Patnaik urged the party workers to take the message of development brought under the Congress regime to the people of Odisha.

Enforce nCoV norms strictly: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: As there is chance of further spread of Covid-19 during this festive season, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik asked senior government officers to ensure strict enforcement of the Covid rules and regulations.

Holding a meeting Wednesday to review Covid situation in the state, Naveen advised the officials to be more cautious during the festive season and strictly abide by all the Covid rules. He asked them to undertake massive awareness campaign among people. Any deviation in this regard will not be tolerated, he warned.

Due to the hard work of all the doctors, health workers, police administration and Covid warriors in the state and the efforts of all the concerned departments, the Covid infection rate in the state has been declined. Patnaik has warned that there is no room for complacency.

During the meeting, he advised health department officials to pay more attention to the treatment of patients with co-morbidity.



Holding a review meeting Wednesday, Naveen advised health officials to pay more attention to the treatment of patients with co-morbidity

Keeping livelihood of poor people in mind, the CM instructed to continue all economic activities in the state without any obstacle. The industrial houses should continue their production while all investment proposals should be grounded

on priority basis, he said.

Development Commission Suresh Mohapatra briefed the chief minister on the Covid situation in the state. "Despite the declining number of Covid infections in the state, the administration is on high alert," he said.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health, PK Mohapatra, said that the infection rate in the state has been reduced to 0.71 per cent, while the recovery rate has reached 93 per cent, which is higher than the national average.

The RT-PCR test report is being issued within 24 hours. For the first time since August 18, the number of active patients in the state has come down to below 20,000. It is now in the 18,050, of which 15,515 patients are currently under home quarantine.

Director General of Police Abhay said that special strategies have been put in place for the festive season in consultation with the SPs. Especially sensitive areas are being monitored and arrangements are being made for deployments of additional police force, he said.



Police personnel pay homage to their colleagues who died in the line of duty on the occasion of the Police Commemoration Day at Odisha Police Headquarters in Cuttack, Wednesday

BJP moves Election Commission over BJD's 'poll code violation'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: The state leadership of the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) Wednesday moved the Election Commission seeking their intervention against the alleged violations of Model Code of Conduct by the ruling party leaders in Odisha.

The party Wednesday accused the State Tourism Minister Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi and Energy

Minister Dibya Shankar Mishra of indulging in blatant violations of Model Code of Conduct in the two assembly seats during the election campaigns in Tirtol and Balasore Sadar where the bypolls are scheduled next month.

BJP leader Lekhashri Samantsinghar and other party leaders Wednesday visited the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) in the state capital and submitted a memorandum on the issue. The party has sought actions against

the culprits.

"Members of the ruling party have been openly defying the Model Code of Conduct in Tirtol and Balasore Sadar where the bypolls are expected soon. Today we came to the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) to raise our concerns relating to the blatant rule violations during elections. We have submitted a memorandum and also proof of our claims," she said.

Lekhashri said that her party had apprised the CEO office how the state ministers Jyoti Prakash Panigrahi and Dibya Shankar Mishra have been openly breaking the established norms of the code of conduct.

"The Energy Minister recently assured some electricity deprived households of getting them connections and NESCO went to the areas and installed electric polls and started electrification works despite the code of conduct in place," she said.

Rlys upgrades signal system in some areas

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: To improve train operations while maintaining punctuality, modern technologies are being used in Railway Signalling System.

Dual Visual Display Units (VDU) with hot standby has been installed at Baudpur for seamless train operations in the yard. Hot standby provides zero changeover time during one system failure as the changeover takes place automatically. System redundancy increases and it is more convenient for fast train operations due to dual VDU provision as compared to warm standby where in the changeover has to be done manually.

Apart from this, it will ensure surge in protection as compared to panel operation due to provision of OFC communication between system and VDU.

Similarly, High Availability Single Section Digital Axle Counter (HASSDAC), another modern technology being used to improve the punctuality of trains and reduces the detention of trains. ECoR has converted the Down Last Vehicle Checking Device in to HASSDAC between Kapilas Road and Byree Stations which will improve the reliability.

FOR A GREENER TOMORROW



Temporary ponds being dug at Kathajodi riverbank for immersion of clay idols of goddess Durga in Cuttack, Wednesday

City school observes World Osteoporosis Day in virtual mode

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: DAV Public School, Kalinga Nagar, Bhubaneswar observed World Osteoporosis Day Wednesday. In this connection, an awareness programme on joint and back pain was organised on virtual platform.

Dr. Smarajit Patnaik, Senior Consultant, Orthopaedics and Joint Replacement Surgery, Apollo Hospital, Bhubaneswar attended the programme as the Chief Speaker and addressed the problems of osteoporosis, osteoarthritis and joint and back pain that have become prevalent now a days.

Dr. Patnaik in his address to the teachers highlighted on the gravity of these health issues unless detected and treated at an early stage. He emphasised on yoga and regular physical exercises. Physical activities during morning and evening are the prime sources in curing this type of problem other than medicines, he said.

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PMAY fails to meet target in Bhadrak

ADMIN SLAPS SHOW-CAUSE NOTICES ON 22 OFFICIALS IN BANT BLOCK; SALARIES HELD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bant/Bhadrak, Oct 21: Even as the government stresses timely completion of housing units under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), the administration has failed to achieve the target in Bant block of Bhadrak. Taking a serious note of the issue, the district administration has served show cause notices on 22 officials in the block, a report said.

The report said that following a directive from the Panchayatiraj and drinking water supply department, the authorities had been asked to ensure cent percent target by September end in the housing units sanctioned under PMAY in 2019-20 (additional) and 2020-21 fiscal. Reviewing the progress of



CAUGHT IN TARDY PACE

Following a directive from the Panchayatiraj and drinking water supply department, the authorities had been asked to ensure cent percent target by September end in the housing units sanctioned under PMAY in 2019-20 (additional) and 2020-21 fiscal

Reviewing the progress of the housing scheme, the district administration came to know that Badabarchikayan, Mohantypada, BTPur, Niloka, Adia, Chhayalisingh, Padhanpada, Odanga, Purusandha, Kadabaranga, Sendhatira and Basantia panchayats have failed to achieve cent percent target in the scheme. Officials involved in the execution of the housing scheme have been held responsible

In both the fiscal years, the work of 117 PMAY units in Badabarchikayan and Mohantypada has not been done while the number of incomplete units in BTPur is 73. Besides, work of 60 units in Niloka, 51 in Adia, 48 in Chhayalisingh, 31 in Padhanpada, 43 in Odanga, 39 in Purusandha, 38 in Kadabaranga, 37 in Ganjanaga, 34 in Sendhatira and 30 in Basantia panchayats remains incomplete

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BTPur, Niloka, Adia, Chhayalisingh, Padhanpada, Odanga, Purusandha, Kadabaranga, Sendhatira and

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The office of the PD has issued show cause notices to 22 officials including 11 panchayat executive officers, five gram rozgar sevaks, a junior engineer, an assistant engineer, a gram panchayat technical assistant, a PA, a WEO and an FEO.

Besides, their salaries for current month were held for. However, these officials have expressed their displeasure over held up salaries.

BDO Rebeka Bilung said the district administration has taken such a step against the officials as the PMAY has failed to achieve the target in the above-said panchayats.

Ganjam minor sister duo meets watery grave while bathing

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khallikote, Oct 21: Two minor sisters slipped into deep water and drowned while they were bathing in a pond at Tulasipur village under Khallikote police limits in Ganjam district Wednesday morning.

The two deceased sisters were identified as ten-year-old Puja and eight-year-old Khushi, who happened to be the daughters of Suresh Pahan, the police said.

Some co-villagers who were bathing in the pond suddenly noticed that the duo had slipped into deep water and informed the family members about this. The family members along with some villagers rescued the two sisters in critical condition, the sources added.

Both sisters were immediately rushed to Khallikote community health centre (CHC). As ill fate would have it, the sister duo died while undergoing medical treatment here.

On being informed, Khallikote police rushed to the spot. Post-mortem of the mortal remains was conducted to ascertain causes of death. Police have launched a detail probe in this connection.

Maoists kill youth suspected as informer

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Oct 21: Maoists killed a person suspected him to be a police informer at Khajuriguda area under Jodamba police station limits of Malkangiri district Tuesday night.

The ultras also roughed up two other persons from the village who were allegedly supporting the deceased in his work and rendered them critical. The deceased has been identified as Das Khemudu and the injured ones are Sana Hantal and Samuru Khila.

Sources said, about 25-30 ultras barged into the house of Das Khemudu and dragged him out Tuesday night. They accused him of passing information about them to the police and beat him up. They also thrashed Sana Hantal and

Samuru Khila who are the neighbours of the deceased.

The Red rebels later took only Das Khemudu with them to a place nearly 5 km from his home and killed him by slitting his throat.

The incident took place after BSF Jawans Monday evening recovered seven landmines and a few tiffin bombs from Swabhiman area in this district.

The murder is suspected to be in retaliation as the ultras suspected them to have informed the police about the planting of landmines and tiffin bombs in the area. The landmines and tiffin bombs were planted by Maoists to cause harm to the security personnel. The IEDs were unearthed by BSF jawans in Swabhiman Anchal dueing a combing operation along with seizure of Maoist items.



SI suspended for drinking wine

POST NEWS NETWORK

Naugaon, Oct 21: A police sub-inspector of Naugaon police station in Jagatsinghpur district was suspended for allegedly consuming liquor during duty hours at a police barrack and for conniving with liquor traders, Wednesday

Bibekananda Sahoo is under suspension with effect from October 21, 2020, for his gross-misconduct and dereliction of duty, an order issued by Jagatsinghpur SP Prakash R stated Wednesday.

The action came after the audio clippings of Sahoo and photographs of him consuming liquor with another person while in uni-



DERELICTION OF DUTY

form in the police barrack went viral in social networking site WhatsApp, Tuesday. On being informed, the SP di-

rected SDPO Priya Ranjan Mishra to conduct a probe and submit a report to him. On receiving the report, the SP suspended him from service with effect from Wednesday.

During the period of suspension, he will remain under the disciplinary control of RI Jagatsinghpur and will draw usual SA and DA, Jagatsinghpur SP mentioned in the order.

In one audio clip, Sahoo is heard asking for liquor after having conversation with someone sitting near him. In viral photographs, the police official is seen sharing a table with a person consuming liquor and asking someone for something.

50 yrs on, 15 forests await 'reserve' tag

INFLUENTIAL PERSONS HAVE GRABBED LARGE TRACTS OF PROPOSED FOREST LAND

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Chandikhole, Oct 21: Even as 50 years have passed since the Cuttack forest division published a notification to convert 15 forests under Dalijoda forest range in this district into reserve forests, the order is yet to be materialized, a report said.

The proposed reserve forests spread over 4346.75 hectares. Taking advantage of the laxity, influential persons have encroached upon large tracts of these forest land and illegally mine black stones, murrans, and laterite stones from these areas.

The abrupt delay has done a lot of damage to some of the proposed reserve forests. The proposed reserve forests like Asia-Charinagal, Balarampur, Madhupur, Bandhapali, Kantigadia, Maulabhanja, Bajragiri are now on the verge of extinction due to the delay.

The forest dept declared 15 forest blocks in Jajpur under Cuttack forest division as proposed reserve forests under Odisha Forest Act-1972 between 1970 and 1981

This has resulted in loss of green cover and bio-diversity in thousands of hectares of forest land. The residents and environmentalists have lodged several complaints at various levels of the administration but the revenue and forest departments only pass the buck.



The delay has only raised questions on the transparency of the administration.

Sources said the state forest department declared 15 forest blocks in Jajpur district under Cuttack forest division as proposed reserve forests under Odisha Forest Act-1972 and Section-4(1) of Indian Forest Act-1927 at different point of time between 1970 and 1981.

However, since then around 50 years have passed but the state revenue and disaster management department is yet to pronounce them as reserve forests under Section 21 of the Odisha Forest Act-1972.

The divisional forest officer (DFO) of Cuttack forest division, in a let-

The proposed reserve forests are Satalundi, Kalkala, Madhupur, Nimiti, Asia Charinagal, Bajragiri, Maulabhanja, Kantigadia, Nalida, Kolha(A), Balarampur, Panchabhaya, Adhikarimala, Barimula, Bandhapalli forests

Collector to direct the forest settlement officer to do the needful in this regard.

Since then the proposal is stuck in red-tape and is limited to exchange of letters. In the past, these forests had wild animals like leopards, bears, elephants, deer and porcupines. However, with the passage of time, they have become a rarity.

The population of wild animals has drastically reduced due to large scale tree felling, establishment of illegal stone quarries and blasting of explosives, senior residents alleged. Reports said the forest department has carried out tree plantation programmes over 500 hectare of land within 2012-2013.

However, no efforts have been made for protection of these trees. When contacted, DFO Sudarshan Patra said the onus of declaring these forests as reserve forest sits on the revenue department. Several letters have been written to the District Collector but nothing has been done in this regard. Efforts to get the comment of Jajpur sub-collector were not successful.

OTV reporter fails to appear before police

Keonjhar: OTV reporter Ramesh Rath, who is allegedly involved in viral of a morphed obscene video of Keonjhar MP Chandrani Murmu did not appear before Town police Wednesday, citing ill health. Police had issued a notice under Section 41 of CrPC to Rath in this connection. His counsel Dhanajay Nayak told police that Rath was sick and could not appear before the police. Rath has sought 15-day time to appear before police. Rath was reportedly lifted by police in Bhubaneswar and was later set free. Police had registered a case in connection with viral video in 2019 and four people were arrested.

Jumbo tramples elderly woman to death

Kamakshyanagar: Amid unabated elephant menace in various parts of Dhenkanal, an elderly woman died after being attacked by an elephant in Julang village under Kamakshyanagar West forest range Wednesday. According to reports, the deceased woman, Dulan Biswal, had gone to attend the nature's call Wednesday morning when she came face-to-face with an elephant who lifted her with the trunk and threw her on the ground. She was later rescued by locals and rushed to the district headquarters hospital at Dhenkanal where she succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment.



RAYAGADA CIVIC BODY EMPOWERS TRANSGENDERS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rayagada, Oct 21: The Rayagada civic body has pushed for empowerment of the third gender. The municipality has launched battery-operated vehicles to collect garbage in the area a couple of days ago. The authorities have decided to engage five transgenders as drivers. They will be imparted training in driving since October 26 and will be in work November 1.

Moreover, the civic body has launched the process of preparing bio compost from collected garbage. The packets of bio composts will be sold to public for Rs 100 each.

The civic body has expedited the Jaga Mission for the slum dwellers. It has identified 1914 eligible people for land.

Silk farmers fret over sub-standard seeds

Affected farmers in Naktideula area of Sambalpur has sought an investigation and compensation for loss

POST NEWS NETWORK

Naktideula, Oct 21: Silk farmers in Naktideula area of Sambalpur district have been suffering losses for various factors like fluctuation in climatic conditions and poor silkworm seeds.

They alleged they were provided poor silkworm seeds by the officials of the Tussar Cooperative Society in Rairakhole. Almost all worms have died after a few days of rearing leading to their incurring huge losses this year.

“Our hope for silk harvest and making a good profit from silk farming at the difficult Covid times has vanished. Now our worry is how to manage our families at this time when alternative means of earning are not in sight,” they lamented.

According to farmers, they had got 2 kg of silkworm seeds each September 25 from Rairakhole Tussar Cooperative society. “We invested a lot of money and time in grooming the seeds for 23 days. Our efforts and funds went down the drains as the seeds were sub-standard and they all died. Now we have no alternative at hand” they rued.



EFFORTS, MONEY GO DOWN THE DRAIN

According to farmers, they had got 2 kg of silkworm seeds each September 25 from Rairakhole Tussar Cooperative society. They invested a lot of money and time in grooming the seeds for 23 days. Their efforts and funds went down the drains as the seeds were sub-standard and they all died. Now they have no alternative at hand

They lamented that their hope for silk harvest and making a good profit from silk farming at the difficult Covid times has vanished. Now our worry is how to manage our families at this time when alternative means of earning are not in sight

There are three types of silkworms such as Tasar, Mulberry and Eri which are cultivated by farmers in Batagan and Jamujori panchayats under this block over years. Sericulture has been their main source of living for them.

“We earn about Rs 10,000 from sericulture. As we have suffered losses this year due to poor seeds, the losses should be compensated,” said farmers like Prabhakar Nayak, Gopinath Nayak and Dhableswar Matari.

Several other farmers like Tarulata Pradhan, Harihar Pradhan, Adhira Pradhan, Rabindra Matari and Aditya

Matiari have demanded compensation for the loss.

They submitted a memorandum to the assistant director of the Deogarh sericulture department through the secretary of the Tussar Cooperative Society.

Several other outfits have demanded a probe into the supply of sub-standard silkworm seeds and action against those involved in this irregularity.

Notably, the central scheme 'Silk Samagra' is prevalent in the state since 2018-19 for promoting silk production. Tassar farmers are provided mone-

tary support under the scheme. Some farmers suggested that the state government should take up several welfare measures like training on sericulture, provision for adequate marketing support, arrangement for field-visits and adequate supply of inputs, in order to make them self-sufficient and strengthen their fiscal standings to promote silk cultivation in the region.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

We the undersigned agreed to extend financial assistance to Mr Suresh Kumar Agrawal, aged about 57 years, C/ Late Gopiram Agrawal, Ward No.-05, Daga Chowk, Po- Khariar Road, Ps- Jonk, Dist. - Nuapada, Aadhaar No.-997764661376. He expressed his inability to produce the original registered sale deed No. 1383/74 dt. 12.08.1974, executed by Mr Maikulal Nigam, S/o- Mr Ganga Ram Nigam of Khariar Road, Ps- Jonk, Dist. - Nuapada in his favour stating that the same has been lost from his possession on 2nd January 2018. He also reported the matter before Jonk P.S.- on 06.01.2018 but the same is not traced out. If the said original sale deed is mortgaged anywhere else for availing loan by him claim of the same is to be made before the undersigned within 15days from today.

Branch Manager, Central Bank of India, Khariar Road

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE
WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
NATIONAL HIGHWAY DIVISION, BARIPADA
No. b-17 (E-mail address- eenhbaripada@yahoo.in)
INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB)
Bid Identification No. EE NH (Baripada) - 04/2020-21
No. 2724 Date: 19.10.2020
1. The Executive Engineer, National Highway Division, Baripada on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids in Single Cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for Road works as mentioned below:
2. Nature of work : Road work
3. No. of work : 01 No.
4. Tender paper cost : Rs. 6,000.00 in ONLINE submission
5. Class of Contractor : 'C' Class / 'B' Class
6. Available of bid document : From 11.00 A.M. of 29.10.2020 to 4.00 P.M. of 09.11.2020
7. Date of opening of Bid : 10.11.2020 at 11.00 A.M.
8. The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
Sd./ A.K. Das
Executive Engineer, N.H. Division, Baripada
OIPR-34050/11/0001/2021

FORM G INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST Under Regulation 36A (1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016	
RELEVANT PARTICULARS	
1. Name of the corporate debtor	SWAIN ALUMINIUM PVT. LTD.
2. Date of incorporation of corporate debtor	20/03/2009
3. Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	ROC-Cuttack
4. Corporate identity number / limited liability identification number of corporate debtor	U27203OR2009PTCO10687
5. Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	House-2, Green Park, Saisitree Vihar, Bhubaneswar, OR - 751021 IN
6. Insolvency commencement date of the corporate debtor	20/02/2020
7. Date of invitation of expression of interest	22/10/2020
8. Eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(h) of the Code is available at:	The interested parties/ prospective Resolution Applicant shall submit Expression of Interest in accordance with sub regulation 7 of Regulation 36A of the IBB (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016 ("CIRP Regulations"). The eligibility criteria are mentioned in the detailed invitation of Expression of Interest to submit Resolution Plan pursuant to sub Regulation 3(a) of Regulation 36A of the CIRP Regulations, which is available at: http://www.insolvencyandbankruptcy.in The same can also be obtained via email at: swainaluminium@aaisolvency.com
9. Norms of ineligibility applicable under section 29A are available at:	The norms of ineligibility under Section 29A are mentioned in the detailed invitation of Expression of Interest to submit Resolution Plan pursuant to sub regulation 3(a) of Regulation 36A of the CIRP Regulations which is available at: http://www.insolvencyandbankruptcy.in The same can also be obtained via email at: swainaluminium@aaisolvency.com
10. Last date for receipt of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	05/11/2020
11. Date of issue of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	07/11/2020
12. Last date for submission of objections to provisional list	13/11/2020
13. Date of issue of final list of prospective resolution applicants	16/11/2020
14. Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	16/11/2020
15. Manner of obtaining request for resolution plan, evaluation matrix, information memorandum and further information	The Resolution Professional will share the request for resolution plan / evaluation matrix / information memorandum in the electronic form after verification of KYC, capacity to invest, capability to manage and eligibility under section 29A of IBC, 2016 and pre-qualification criteria, if any approved by COC
16. Last date for submission of resolution plans	16/12/2020
17. Manner of submitting resolution plans to resolution professional	The Resolution Plan along with all supporting information, documents and various formalities/authorisations shall be submitted to the Resolution Professional at the following address: AAA Insolvency Professionals LLP, Mousumi Co. Op. Housing Society, 15B, Ballygunge Circular Road, Kolkata-700019. The Resolution Plan along with all supporting information, documents and various formalities/authorisations shall also be submitted in an electronic format by enclosing a password protected pdf drive. Details will be provided in the request for Resolution Plan
18. Estimated date for submission of resolution plan to the Adjudicating Authority for approval	As soon as the Resolution Plan is approved by the Committee of Creditors.
19. Name and registration number of the resolution professional	Mr. Binay Kumar Sighania IBBI/PA-1/IP-P00041/2017-18/10102
20. Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	BKS & Co. Diamond Heritage 16 Strand Road, Unit-519, 5th Floor, Kolkata, West Bengal-700001. Email: binay1@yahoo.com
21. Address and email to be used for correspondence with the resolution professional	AAA INSOLVENCY PROFESSIONALS LLP, Kolkata Office: Mousumi Co. Op. Housing Society, 15B, Ballygunge Circular Road, Kolkata-700019 Email: swainaluminium@aaisolvency.com
22. Further Details are available at or with	AAA INSOLVENCY PROFESSIONALS LLP, Kolkata Office- Mousumi Co. Op. Housing Society, 15B, Ballygunge Circular Road, Kolkata-700019 Email: binay1@yahoo.com
23. Date of publication of Form G	22/10/2020

“ The soul attracted leaned to the Abyss: It longed for the adventure of Ignorance. **”**
SRI AUROBINDO



Real men are vegan

When I was growing up in army cantonments, meat was on our table every day. It was taken for granted that military men ate meat because they were 'real' men. In my grandfather's house all the women were vegetarian, but he had to have his meat at both meals and the vegetarian women cooked it for him. When I became vegetarian, I had to listen to any number of men yapping on about how they avoided 'ghasphoos'. I've never heard such talk from a woman.

On a visit to Jaipur, I had lunch with Dr. Mehta, the ex-head of SEBI and founder of the Jaipur Foot movement. I drew back in horror when I dipped into the curry. It tasted like meat. My host explained the origins of the dish and why they had prepared it specially for me. Two centuries ago, a sage turned the women of the royal families of Rajasthan vegetarian. But since the men were adamant about hunting, fighting and eating meat, the women secretly created a recipe out of wheat and ghee which tasted exactly like meat. The only problem is that the preparation takes hours so it has now become very rare.

Food and gender have been, and continue to be, closely intertwined. It's less 'you are what you eat' than 'you eat what you are'. Women are expected to be compassionate and virtuous, so veganism and vegetarianism are seen as feminine. Men are defined as rough and tough, so eating meat is masculine.

Everyone knows that eating meat is bad for health and humanity, the environment, the economy and animals. The ongoing pandemic is an extreme reminder of all of the above, and meat eating has definitely dipped. But rationally it should have ended. The trouble is that simply making an information-based appeal about the benefits of a vegetarian diet ignores the primary reason why men eat meat: It makes them feel like 'real' men. And 'real' men are entitled to eat whatever they want, whenever they want, and wherever they want. Damn the consequences.

The last vestige of prehistoric man as 'hunter' is his consumption of meat. The man today may be a lazy, paunchy shopkeeper selling plastic toys, and the meat cheap, supermarket sanitised slabs, but in his own mind he is the ultimate male proving his masculinity by stabbing his fork into a fatty steak. The idea is so ingrained that according to research by the University of Hawaii, men often eat more meat in situations where they feel their masculinity is under threat. Which is why for years, until I stopped it, live animals used to be dropped by plane to border areas of the army so that they could get fresh meat.

So why is eating meat still seen as a symbol of manliness? In her book, *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, Carol Adams explores how the media has marketed meat as a sign of masculinity to boost sales. We've all seen the overtly sexualised commercials selling that idea. In addition to clever marketing, it has been the misleading medical theories emphasising meat as the primary source of protein, which is linked to strength, which is seen as masculine. There is also the misbelief that masculinity requires risk-taking (dangerous driving, excessive drinking); hence the association between unhealthy eating and masculinity: if you're a real man, you shouldn't be so concerned about your health. Numerous studies have found that larger portions and unhealthy food are perceived as more masculine, while healthy food and smaller portions are considered more feminine.

There is also the class angle that, in the past, it was the rich or masters who ate meat which is prepared but not partaken by the slaves. In fact, the English bragged about how they were able to colonise India because their soldiers ate red meat unlike the native men.

What is it that deters men from turning vegetarian? Social anxiety. Paradoxically, these so-called 'real men' are actually afraid to quit meat for fear of being dubbed feminine. In a Twitter poll directed at men, 45 per cent of respondents reported their biggest barrier to leading a vegan diet was social stigma, the fear of being called 'beta males with limited options in the outside world', with 'way low testosterone levels', 'x/y organisms who don't eat meat, not men', 'pushovers, controlled by women, who have feminine characteristics', people who 'aren't capable of hunting and gathering' and 'soy-boy, low testosterone feminists'.

The good news is that there's a growing new sensibility that strongly challenges these outdated stereotypes. Most famously, the documentary *The Game Changers* follows elite special forces trainer James Wilks as he showcases the world's top athletes in sports as cross-country running, boxing, wrestling, football and Formula 1 racing, including former bodybuilder Arnold Schwarzenegger, all of whom credit their health and performance to their vegan diets. When asked about his relationship with masculinity and power-lifting after he adopted a vegan lifestyle, Nick Squires, a champion power-lifter and vegan of five years said, "There's so much in the way of traditional gender roles that I think cause men to be reluctant about veganism. Putting aside the misinformed conception that you need animal proteins to build muscle, there's an idea that men need to be muscular, and to most people this is tied to the consumption of animal products." He is living proof that it isn't. In fact, another study found that a plant-based diet leaves men feeling more satiated than a diet including meat and dairy, because they had increased levels of healthy bacteria in the gut.

With better education is dawning a more authentic understanding of masculinity. A recent study found that men who had more education generally consumed less meat. This is further evidenced by another paper, published in the journal *Appetite*, which examined the compelling link between meat, gender and class status. Part of the research involved offering participants a 'beast burger' presented as either meat-based or vegetarian. The highest demand for the meat option came 'from those who rated themselves lower in socioeconomic status.' Meat, to the extent that it's associated with power, becomes 'substitutable for the status they lack.' The lower you are on the totem pole, the more likely you are to cling to the old-fashioned symbols of masculinity like meat.

Unravelling the strong cultural association between men and meat is critical to the prospects of global sustainability. So, come on out all you closet male vegans and vegetarians. The earth is even more threatened than your fragile male egos. Admit it: real men do eat 'ghasphoos' and are lovin' it.

To join the animal welfare movement contact gandhim@nic.in, www.peopleforanimalsindia.org



Maneka Gandhi

The last vestige of prehistoric man as 'hunter' is his consumption of meat



Ashok Mahapatra

HISTORY TELLS US THAT THE CHINESE HAVE NEVER HONOURED ANY AGREEMENT IN THE PAST AND THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO DO SO IN FUTURE. THIS SHOULD BE BORNE IN MIND WHEN NEGOTIATING WITH THEM

FOCUS CHINA

TIBET, TAIWAN CARDS

The Preamble of the Indian Constitution ensures that all Indian citizens have the liberty of expression. Furthermore, freedom of the press has been included as part of freedom of speech and expression under Article 19 of the Constitution. It has also been established that the press plays a significant role in the democratic machinery. These are the basic elements of a functional democracy.

In contrast, while the constitution of the People's Republic of China (PRC) declares that citizens enjoy freedom of speech and freedom of the press, these freedoms are tightly restricted by specific laws and regulations. The only people in China who can publish criticisms or opinions contrary to those of the Communist Party of China (CPC) are senior members of the CPC. Therefore, the recent open letter issued to the Indian media not to recognise Taiwan by celebrating or marking the 'National Day of Taiwan' is not surprising. The same letter asks India to honour its commitment to the 'One China' policy. In response, the Ministry of External Affairs stated, "There is a free media in India that reports on issues as it sees fit."

The Indian media has by and large ignored the open letter. In this context, the CPC should be reminded that commitment or agreement is a two-way process and of the 'One India' policy. The response of the Foreign Minister of Taiwan tweeted was "#India is the largest democracy on Earth with a vibrant press & freedom-loving people. But it looks like communist #China is hoping to march into the subcontinent by imposing censorship. #Taiwan's Indian friends will have one reply: GET LOST! JW."

Following its defeat in the Sino-Japanese War and pursuant to the Treaty of Shimonoseki, the Qing Empire ceded the islands of Taiwan and Penghu to Japan. The loss of Taiwan then became the rallying point for the Chinese nationalist movement in the years that followed.

After the end of the World War



While President Xi Jinping has usurped absolute control of the CPC, he is nowhere near being a cult figure like Mao Zedong or Deng Xiaoping. He has many aspiring politburo members around, hoping that he will err

In 1949, Taiwan was awarded to the Republic of China (ROC). Thereafter, the Chinese Civil War resumed between the Chinese Nationalist Party, Kuomintang (KMT), led by Chiang Kai-shek and the CPC led by Mao Zedong. Subsequent to the defeat of the KMT on the mainland, the CPC founded the PRC. Following their defeat, the KMT fled in 1949 to Taiwan with the aim to retake mainland China.

From 1949 until his death in 1975, Chiang Kai-shek ruled Taiwan with an iron hand with the sole aim of retaking mainland China. Following his death, Taiwan began a process of reforms to the political system. Despite its diplomatic isolation, Taiwan is industrialised and technologically advanced. To add to this, the people are disciplined. Taiwan has its own Constitution for democratic governance and directly elects its President and the legislature, and maintains its national defence as well as foreign affairs.

What these prove is that for all practical purposes Taiwan is a sovereign and independent Nation State. The truth is that the PRC rules only Mainland China and has no control of but only claims to Taiwan as part of its territory under the 'One China' policy. Taiwan could do well by making a diplomatic statement laying to

rest the misnomer that Taiwan is a part of China. This could be done with subtlety by dropping the word 'China' from its official name. This should be followed by strengthening informal diplomatic relations by recognising suo motu the maps of all countries having territorial disputes with the PRC and increasing economic activity as well as people-to-people contact.

Recently President Xi, visualising the worst-case scenarios, ordered the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to scale up its battle-readiness. The Chinese foreign ministry went on record to say that it does not recognise the creation of the Union Territory of Ladakh. It also opposed the building of infrastructure by India on its side of the LAC. China conveniently forgets that they were the first to build border infrastructure right up to Ladakh as well as the road from Tibet to Xinjiang through Aksai Chin. China has been unnerved by India's slow but steady improvement in border infrastructure allowing for faster movement of troops and weapon systems in the forward areas. India has a long way to go before it can correct the asymmetry. But it has now started to challenge the dragon's dominance in the entire border from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh.

History tells us that the Chinese

have never honoured any agreement in the past and they are unlikely to do so in future. This should be borne in mind when negotiating with them. This is also time India starts playing its Tibet and Taiwan cards openly to rattle China. While it may not be appropriate to establish direct diplomatic relations with Taiwan, this is the appropriate time to upgrade India's representative offices in Taiwan to enhance trade and economic activity. China will have no ground to officially object to this. India should also provide moral support to the Tibetans fighting for Independence like that provided by China and Pakistan to various insurgent groups in India.

Furthermore, South China Morning Post has cited defence observers saying there has been an increased deployment of resources by the PLA on the South East coast of China. This poses a threat not only to Taiwan but also India and other neighbouring ASEAN countries. While inviting Australia to participate in trilateral Malabar naval exercise of Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD or QUAD) is commendable, this is also the appropriate time to extend the same invitation to other ASEAN countries with which China has territorial disputes. It would even be better to officially invite these ASEAN countries to be a part of QUAD. Furthermore, as a form of reassurance, Taiwan should be invited as an observer.

While Xi has usurped absolute control of the CPC, he is nowhere near being a cult figure like Mao Zedong or Deng Xiaoping. He has many aspiring politburo members around, hoping that he will err. Hence, it will not be unreasonable to assume that he would take some decisions without really evaluating the consequences. Now, civilised Nation States (which should also include Taiwan) need to stand together and be prepared that the dragon does not take the world back to medieval times.

The writer is retired Director, Maritime Safety Division, International Maritime Organization, UN.

SPECTRUM VACCINATION

Inoculation against poverty



Anuradha Gupta

VACCINES PROTECT UP TO THREE MILLION LIVES EVERY YEAR. THEY ARE OFTEN THE FIRST AND ONLY HEALTH SERVICE TO REACH POOR HOUSEHOLDS

A recent poll found that one in three Americans would not be willing to receive a Covid-19 vaccine, while anti-vaxxers have reportedly gained at least 7.8 million social media followers since 2019. Like the pandemic itself, anti-vax misinformation and rumours know no borders. The biggest tragedy is that the resulting vaccine hesitancy threatens to hurt the poor people the most.

The poor have already been hit hardest by the pandemic. Increasing numbers of women and children from marginalised populations are falling outside the reach of public services – as reflected in the increased incidence of gender-based violence, the rise in teenage pregnancies, and the decline in skilled birth attendance. One million more children could die in the next six months because of the pandemic's knock-on effects, with the bulk of these deaths occurring among the poor. Vaccines protect up to three million lives every year. They are often the first and only health service to reach poor households. People living in squalid conditions bereft of basic sanitation, safe drinking water, hygiene, cleansing agents, and adequate nutrition are most at risk of contracting and dying from vaccine-preventable diseases. And when ill, they often

lack the financial means to access healthcare. Timely protection with vaccines, which keep diseases in poor communities at bay and reduce preventable child deaths, is therefore their best bet for survival.

By spreading misinformation, anti-vaxxers are increasing the risk of deaths among poor children. An explosion of vaccination-related falsehoods in the Philippines is a major reason why the country's childhood immunisation rate has plummeted from 87 per cent in 2014 to 68 per cent today. This resulted in a resurgence of polio and measles cases last year, with the poor bearing the brunt.

Similarly, in Cameroon, false rumours that the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine causes sterility is scaring parents into refusing it for their daughters. This has put millions of girls at risk of a virus that causes up to 90 per cent of all cases of cervical cancer, which kills 311,000 women every year, primarily in low-income countries. Girls from poor communities need this vaccine the most, because they often have no access to cervical cancer screening. The HPV vaccine is their best protection. Most women who die of cervical cancer are in the prime of their youth, and leave behind infants and children. The threat posed by

misinformation is not confined to HPV vaccines. Equally dangerous anti-vax theories make millions of children vulnerable to other preventable diseases. The development of Covid-19 vaccines – and rapid, fair, and equitable access to them – is the only way to end the present health crisis swiftly. But it won't end unless and until we boost people's resilience to false information and build confidence in vaccines. Achieving this will require positive and fact-based information campaigns from trusted sources, and cooperation with social media platforms, so that their algorithms are not abused to propagate harmful rumours. Historically, the wealthiest got preferential access to vaccines, while the poor had to wait decades. With establishment of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance in 2000, this stark inequity began to shrink. Today, rich and poor have almost equal access to life-saving vaccines.

In India, anti-vaxxers thwarted the introduction of life-saving vaccines in the publicly funded national immunisation programme for several years. As a result, vaccines for Hepatitis B, rotavirus, and pneumonia were available only in private markets at exorbitant prices that only the rich could afford. Poor families whose children were dying in large numbers from these diseases

did not have the money to buy vaccine protection. The anti-vaxxers filed a legal petition in court to stop us from introducing these vaccines. On behalf of the government, I argued that "the petitioners are not against vaccines but against free vaccines for the poor." The court concurred. This paved the way for the introduction of new vaccines and saved lives, particularly among the most vulnerable.

That episode raises the question of who has the least to lose from these anti-vax rumours. Often, they originate among people who are privileged enough not to care about timely prevention. They may live in areas where preventable diseases have been largely eliminated, and are perhaps protected by herd immunity through the vaccinations of those around them. And if they do get sick, they can access quality medical treatment.

Anti-vaxxers' misinformation drive ignores those with the most to lose by not vaccinating: the poorest and most vulnerable, who risk dying or sliding into medical impoverishment if they or their loved ones get sick. For much of the world's population, vaccination means inoculation against poverty.

The writer is Deputy CEO of Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. ©PROJECT SYNDICATE

WISDOM CORNER

- Experience is one thing you can't get for nothing. OSCAR WILDE
- Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change. STEPHEN HAWKING
- If you can dream it, you can do it. WALT DISNEY

WORDSWORTH

■ Umpty

The word umpty-flumph was seen used recently in the sense of an indefinitely large number ("umpty-flumph years ago.") The term umpty-flump does appear online a number of times in the same sense. Both must be variations on the fairly common US forms umpty-umph or umpty-ump, which date back rather more than a century. This developed at the time of the First World War into umpteenth and umpteenth. Umpty has also for many years appeared in compounds such as umpty-eleven or umpty-thousand. It works well in such cases because it is similar in form to number words such as twenty or thirty. The Oxford English Dictionary says that umpty is a "fanciful representation of the dash in Morse code", basing this on iddy-umpty, a military slang term of the early 20th Century for a dot followed by a dash. It was a nonsense syllable in poetry, for example as umpty-tumpty-tiddle-dee.

How serious is govt?

Sir, How serious is the government? People heard Prime Minister Narendra Modi's speech on coronavirus seven times from March to October. He promised to get rid of the pandemic soon, but the result is different. People followed what he said. Now let us consider the points the PM has put forth in his speech on October 20. He asked us to stay alert until the vaccine has arrived, laxity will not help until the vaccine came, the recovery rate has increased, the death rate has come down, and stressed that he wants to see everyone healthy. The speech was good to hear, but what is the truth? If the government is seriously concerned over the present plight of the people, then why set the date for elections in Bihar? At the same time, by-elections in Odisha and elsewhere are due. How serious is the election commission on this? The doctors and health experts have opined that the poll-related rallies in Bihar in these corona times are suicidal. Not many are seen following social distancing protocol. Not a single leader has spoken of masks and social distancing norms. The Covid-19 scenario may worsen.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Poverty in India

Sir, Whichever way we slice it and dice it, the shameful reality is inescapable; that, over a sixth of India is permanently hungry and undernourished. According to the Global Hunger Index 2020 report, India's ranking is abysmal. A reason why food is not distributed equitably is that 40 per cent of all food produced goes waste at godowns, restaurants and during community feasts. Hunger cannot be combated without a strategy. Lack of dietary diversity, inter-sectoral coordination and political will, poorly monitored nutritional programmes and inadequate public food distribution system hamper the growth and development of the economy. The government is urged to adopt an integrated policy framework to facilitate the increased use of irrigation and newer farming techniques. The public distribution system must be made transparent and more reliable. The government should come up with more holistic schemes. The crop diversification area needs to be re-assessed.

Khushboo Ved, UJJAIN

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
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Raj follows Punjab, to bring bill against Centre's farm laws

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, Oct 21: After Punjab, Rajasthan's Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot too has decided to convene a special session of the Assembly to discuss the farm laws.

Tuesday, Gehlot called a cabinet meeting and announced that Rajasthan will also call a special session of the Legislative Assembly 'to preserve farmers' interest'.

He tweeted after the cabinet meeting: "The Council of Ministers have decided that a special session of the Legislative Assembly should be convened soon in the interest of the farmers of the state to preserve their interests."

"In the session, the effect of the laws implemented by the Government of India will be discussed and amendment Bills should be brought in the interest of the farmers of the state," he said.

In his other tweet, Gehlot said, "The Indian National Congress, under the leadership of Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi, stands firmly in favor of our 'Annadata' farmers and our party will continue to oppose the anti-farmer laws that the NDA government has enacted."

Sources said that the meeting discussed restoring the rights for dispute settlement in the purchase of crops by the civil court. "In Rajasthan, arrangements for settlement of crop purchase disputes should be retained with the Mandi Samiti or Civil Court," it was decided in the meeting, sources said.



Centre vs states

In a first in the country, Punjab's Legislative Assembly led by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Tuesday unanimously passed three legislations and formally rejected the Centre's agricultural laws brought by the BJP-led Union government

Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot called a cabinet meeting and announced that Rajasthan will also call a special session of the Legislative Assembly 'to preserve farmers' interest'

The council of ministers decided that a special session of the Legislative Assembly will be convened soon and amendment bills will be brought to preserve the interests of the farmers, an official statement said.

The council also emphasised on the imperative of procurement of crops at minimum support price (MSP). The council observed that the re-

moval of the maximum limit of stock of various agricultural commodities under normal circumstances under the Essential Commodities Act after the implementation of the new agricultural laws will increase black marketing, unauthorised storage and rise in prices.

It was also discussed in the meeting that the provision of MSP in the Contract Farming Act will be in the interest of the farmers of the state, the statement said.

The meeting also discussed the coronavirus situation in the state government's efforts to deal with it.

The council decided that the mass movement against COVID-19 in the state should be extended for a month till November 30

In a first in the country, Punjab's Legislative Assembly led by Chief Minister Amarinder Singh Tuesday unanimously passed three legislations and formally rejected the Centre's agricultural laws brought by the BJP-led Union government.

The air pollution reaches a peak in Delhi and its surrounding regions every winter, when pollution from stubble burning and local sources combines with the suspended water droplets in the lower atmosphere to form a thick blanket of noxious smog

Delhi docs flag rise in eye problems

AIR POLLUTION

The air pollution reaches a peak in Delhi and its surrounding regions every winter, when pollution from stubble burning and local sources combines with the suspended water droplets in the lower atmosphere to form a thick blanket of noxious smog

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 21: As Delhi reels under another tryst with air pollution, several public health experts have flagged a spike in the number of patients reporting irritation in eyes because of toxic pollutants. The noxious air causes dry eye disease, which if left untreated, could lead to vision problems, they warn.

The air pollution reaches a peak in Delhi and its surrounding regions every winter, when pollution from stubble burning and local sources combines with the suspended water droplets in the lower atmosphere to form a thick blanket of noxious smog, thus creating health hazards.

Wednesday, the capital city's 24-hour average air quality index stood at 258, which falls in the 'poor' category. The System of Air Quality Weather Forecasting and Research



Their eyes were already reeling under the increased screen time because of the coronavirus pandemic and now they are having irritation in eyes because of chemicals, and pollutants in the air

DR ROHIT GERA

(SAFAR) categorises air quality in the 0-50 range as good, 51-100 as satisfactory, 101-200 as moderate, 201-300 as poor, 301-400 as very poor and above 400 as severe.

Dr Rohit Gera, a Delhi-based eye doctor, said that various cases of irritation in eyes have been reported, especially in children as well as office-goers due to the deteriorating air quality. "Their eyes were already reeling under the increased screen time because of the coronavirus pandemic and now they are having irritation in eyes because of chemicals, and pollutants in the air."

Gera, an ophthalmologist at Ujala Cygnus Group of Hospitals, added: "Some have also been developing dry eye symptoms. It is a chronic condition and if left untreated for a long time, it can lead to vision prob-

lems. One needs to include food which contains omega 3 and antioxidants besides drinking loads of water to manage dry eye syndrome."

He said that if the air seems hazy from pollution, people should limit time outdoors, protect eyes with sunglasses, or clear safety glasses. "If you wear contact lenses, clean them thoroughly. The need of the hour is to give rest to the eyes and relax," he added.

Dr Tushar Grover, Medical Director of the Vision Eye Centre, said that the widespread perception that pollution mostly impacts lungs is misconceived, as it is also severely detrimental to eye health. "As toxic pollutants come in contact with outer surface of the eye, especially cornea and conjunctiva,

they feel itchy, irritated and become red with a moderate to sharp burning sensation."

"The eyes can develop dry eye disease which can not only cause discomfort but also lead to blurring of vision due to damage to the surface of the eye. Smog in winters can lead to severe dry eye, impairing both the quantity and quality of tears produced, as a result of which your eyes are deprived of necessary lubrication. Additionally, the risk of catching eye infections also increases," he added.

Grover stressed the importance of observing practices such as wearing sunglasses when stepping out, keeping hydrated, avoiding rubbing of eyes, washing hands before touching their eyes, taking frequent breaks from use of laptops and mobiles and having their eyes periodically lubricated with eye drops.

As per the Central Pollution Control Board, out of 35 pollution monitoring stations, the air quality index in as many as nine stations is in the very poor category, while 20 stations recorded the index in the poor category, five logged it in moderate category and two remained non-functional.

Vivek Vihar in Delhi eastern district recorded the highest AQI at 367, followed by 348 by the pollution monitoring station at west Delhi's Dwarka Sector 8. Delhi's neighbouring areas, including Ghaziabad, Faridabad, Noida, Greater Noida, Meerut and Gurugram are also recording foul air. Faridabad is currently the most polluted amongst all.

GREENFIELD HIGHWAY TO COME UP IN RAJASTHAN

THE HIGHWAY WILL BE DEVELOPED AS AN UNDERGROUND PASSAGEWAY PASSING THROUGH THE MUKUNDRA HILL TIGER RESERVE

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: A 60 kilometre-long stretch of greenfield highway will be constructed in Rajasthan under the Bharatmala Pariyojana to ensure high speed traffic movement between Delhi and Mumbai.

The highway will be developed as an underground passageway passing through the Mukundra Hill Tiger Reserve.

A source from the Ministry of Environment said the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wild Life (NBWL), in its meeting headed by Union Environment Minister Prakash Javadekar, earlier this month, recommended the proposal of National Highway Authority India (NHAI) for development of eight lanes Greenfield Highway which will stretch from Bhenda Hera village to Moondiya village section of the highway in Rajasthan.

The Greenfield highway will be a 59.625 km long tunnel passing through the Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve in Rajasthan.

"The proposed highway is part of Bharatmala project and will connect several towns like Gurgaon, Alwar, Bharatpur, Dausa, Sawai Madhopur, Tonk, Bundi, Kota, Jaora, Ratlam etc. and give an in-



frastructure fillip to the states of Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra," the ministry source said.

The highway will be access-controlled and ensure high speed traffic movement from Delhi to Mumbai. The proposed alignment is selected to cover one of the most important North-South arterial connectivity in the country, further interspersed with feeder highways on its either sides.

"The proposed road network is passing through the Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve and the NBWL recommended the project as a tunnel to be constructed under 8 lanes (Greenfield Highway) from Bhenda Hera village to Moondiya village Section of NH-148N (Total length 59.625 Km) passing through Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve and its Eco-Sensitive Zone involving 26.6354 hectare land.

"The start and end faces of the tunnel shall be minimum 500m away from boundary of Mukundra Hills Tiger Reserve as per condition imposed by National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). This project shows that development can be done without impacting the environment and wildlife," the ministry source said.

The government envisages building 34,800 km of highways at a cost of about ₹5.35 lakh crore under the ambitious Bharatmala Pariyojana. "A total of 322 projects in a length of 12,413 km have been awarded under Bharatmala Pariyojana till August, 2020. Further, 2,921 km has been constructed under the Project till the same date," the Ministry had said.

'Thousands benefited from plasma therapy'

The Centre is considering to remove convalescent plasma therapy from the national clinical management protocol for Covid-19

The Delhi health minister, himself a Covid-19 survivor, asserted that plasma therapy helped save his life too

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain Wednesday asserted that over 2,000 COVID-19 patients here have benefitted from plasma therapy which also saved his life, a day after a top ICMR official indicated that the Centre was considering removing it from the clinical management protocol.

At a press conference, Jain also said these patients received convalescent plasma through the dedicated plasma banks of the city government, besides other people getting it directly from donors.

The first plasma bank was opened July 2 by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal at the state-run Institute of Liver and Biliary Science (ILBS) in south Delhi. After that another bank was opened at LNJP Hospital, a dedicated coronavirus facility.

"We have been doing it (plasma therapy) trials after getting due permission. The ICMR-AIIMS study has not shown much breakthrough. But people are getting benefitted from it here, and over 2,000 have benefitted by receiving plasma from the dedicated bank only," Jain said, when asked about the Centre considering removing it from COVID-19 clinical management protocol.

The Delhi health minister, himself a COVID-19 survivor, asserted



PRESENTLY, THE USE OF OFF-LABEL CONVALESCENT PLASMA FOR TREATING COVID-19 PATIENTS IN THE MODERATE STAGE OF THE ILLNESS IS ALLOWED UNDER "INVESTIGATIONAL THERAPIES"

HOWEVER, A RANDOMISED CONTROLLED TRIAL, LED BY THE INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH (ICMR), ON 464 PATIENTS IN 39 HOSPITALS IN 25 DISTRICTS ACROSS 14 STATES AND UNION TERRITORIES HAS SHOWN THAT PLASMA THERAPY DOES NOT REDUCE MORTALITY OR PREVENT PROGRESSION OF COVID-19 FROM MODERATE TO SEVERE

that "this has helped save my life too".

The health minister had tested positive for COVID-19 in June and was hospitalised. He was later administered plasma therapy at a leading private hospital here, following which he had recovered and later also urged others to donate plasma.

"Even America has acknowledged its benefit. And, research is going on it world over. Delhi in a way is a pioneer in it and plasma therapy benefits have been seen. You should go and ask family members of those patients who were administered the plasma therapy,"

he said.

The Centre is considering to remove convalescent plasma therapy from the national clinical management protocol for COVID-19, a top ICMR official had said on Tuesday.

Presently, the use of off-label convalescent plasma for treating COVID-19 patients in the moderate stage of the illness is allowed under "investigational therapies".

However, a randomised controlled trial, led by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), on 464 patients in 39 hospitals in 25 districts

across 14 states and union territories has shown that plasma therapy does not reduce mortality or prevent progression of COVID-19 from moderate to severe.

At a press conference Tuesday, ICMR Director General Balaram Bhargava said, "We have had discussions in the national taskforce and we are in discussion with the joint monitoring group that this (convalescent plasma therapy) may be deleted from the national guidelines. The discussion is ongoing and more or less we are reaching towards that."

'Lost' river that ran through Thar 172,000 years ago found

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Researchers have found the evidence of a 'lost' river that ran through the central Thar Desert, near Bikaner, as early as 172 thousand years ago, and may have been a life-line to human populations enabling them to inhabit the region.

The findings, published in the journal Quaternary Science Reviews, represent the oldest directly dated phase of river activity at Nal Quarry in the central Thar Desert.

The study by researchers from The Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History in Germany, Anna University in Tamil Nadu, and IISER Kolkata indicates that Stone Age populations lived in a distinctly different Thar Desert landscape than we encounter today.

This evidence indicates a river flowed with phases of activity dating to approximately up to 172 thousand years ago, nearby to Bikaner, Rajasthan, which is over 200 kilometres away from the nearest modern river.



These findings predate evidence for activity in modern river courses across the Thar Desert as well as dried up course of the Ghaggar-Hakra River, the researchers said.

The presence of a river running through the central Thar Desert would have offered a life-line to

Paleolithic populations, and potentially an important corridor for migrations, they said.

The researchers noted that the potential

importance of 'lost' rivers for earlier inhabitants of the Thar Desert have been overlooked.

"The Thar Desert has a rich prehistory, and we've been uncovering a wide range of evidence showing how Stone Age populations not only survived but thrived in these semi-arid landscapes," said Jimbob Blinkhorn from The Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.

"We know how important rivers can be to living in this region, but we have little detail on what river systems were like during key periods of prehistory," Blinkhorn said.

Studies of satellite imagery have shown a dense network of river channels crossing the Thar Desert, according to the researchers.

"These studies can indicate where rivers and streams have flowed in the past, but they can't tell

us when," explained Professor Hema Achyuthan of Anna University.

"To demonstrate how old such channels are, we had to find evidence on the ground for river activity in the middle of the desert," Achyuthan said.

The team studied a deep deposit of river sands and gravels, which had been exposed by quarrying activity near the village of Nal. The researchers were able to document different phases of river activity by studying the different deposits.

"We immediately saw evidence for a substantial and very active river system from the bottom of the fluvial deposits, which gradually decreased in power through time," Achyuthan said.

The researchers used a method called luminescence dating to understand when quartz grains in the river sands were buried.

The results indicated that the strongest river activity at Nal occurred at approximately 172 and 140 thousand years ago, at a time when the monsoon was much weaker than today in the region.

River activity continued at the site

between 95 to 78 thousand years ago, after which only limited evidence for the presence of a river at the site, with evidence for a brief re-activation of the channel 26 thousand years ago, the study found. The river was flowing at its strongest during a phase of weak monsoonal activity in the region, and may have been a life-line to human populations enabling them to inhabit the Thar Desert, the researchers said.

The timeframe over which this river was active also overlaps with significant changes in human behaviour in the region, which have been linked with the earliest expansions of Homo sapiens from Africa into India, they said.

"This river flowed at a critical timeframe for understanding human evolution in the Thar Desert, across South Asia and beyond," said Blinkhorn.

"This suggests a landscape in which the earliest members of our own species, Homo sapiens, first encountered the monsoons and crossed the Thar Desert may have been very different to the landscape we can see today," he added.

across 14 states and union territories has shown that plasma therapy does not reduce mortality or prevent progression of COVID-19 from moderate to severe.

At a press conference Tuesday, ICMR Director General Balaram Bhargava said, "We have had discussions in the national taskforce and we are in discussion with the joint monitoring group that this (convalescent plasma therapy) may be deleted from the national guidelines. The discussion is ongoing and more or less we are reaching towards that."

Delhi Police launches 'cops on wheels' to increase visibility

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: To increase police visibility and combat crime, cops in the outer-north district of Delhi will patrol the streets on bicycles as part of a new initiative launched Wednesday.

'Cops on Wheels' was flagged off by Deputy Commissioner of Police (outer-north) Gaurav Sharma from his office in Samaypur Badli on Police Commemoration Day.

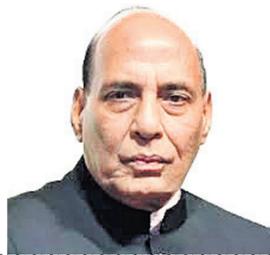
It will cover high footfall areas and those prone to street crime in the district, police said.

Police personnel on bicycles from all the eight police stations of the outer-north district will patrol every corner of their respective beats including the hot spots, a police officer said.

A Delhi Police vehicle will accompany each patrolling team to round up habitual offenders caught red handed for violating the law, said Sharma.

The Thar Desert has a rich prehistory, and we've been uncovering a wide range of evidence showing how Stone Age populations not only survived but thrived in these semi-arid landscapes

JIMBOB BLINKHORN | RESEARCHER



Indian soldiers have done a miraculous job in their standoff with the Chinese troops along the LAC in Ladakh
RAJNATH SINGH | DEFENCE MINISTER

KAZIRANGA NATIONAL PARK REOPENS

The Kaziranga National Park, famed for one-horned rhinoceros, was opened to tourists Wednesday, after being closed for seven months due to COVID-19 pandemic



of the day quote

The work of police is witnessing new challenges and new dimensions in the areas of terrorism, fake currency, narcotics control, cybercrime, arms smuggling and human trafficking. It is a challenge to prepare the police forces for the new dimensions that have emerged in the last 2-3 decades



The BJP government is holding a government Khat Sammelan over the bills which are against the interest of the farmers, but is not listening to the pain of the farmers



The next logical step in the process of defence reforms in India is the formation of Integrated Theatre Commands to synergise the capabilities and combat potential of the three armed services during war and peace



GEN. MANOJ MUKUND NARAVANE | INDIAN ARMY CHIEF

SHORT TAKES

Dubey's wife questioned

Lucknow: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has questioned Richa, the widow of gangster Vikas Dubey, regarding the financial dealings of her late husband. The Enforcement Directorate is probing a money laundering case, which was registered last month against Vikas Dubey and his 10 associates, including his financier Jaikant Bajpai, under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. The probe agency had reportedly registered the case on the basis of around 60 FIRs against Vikas Dubey and his associates in different parts of Uttar Pradesh. Officials had said that they came across instances where prima facie money had crossed the border.

Minor raped

Muzaffarnagar (UP): A 16-year-old girl was allegedly abducted and raped by her neighbour in a village in Uttar Pradesh's Shamli district, police said Wednesday. The matter came to light following a complaint by the girl's family in Kairana police station, they said. The incident took place Tuesday when the girl was alone at her house. The man allegedly took her to an isolated place and raped her, police said. She disclosed the matter to her family, following which they lodged the complaint, they said.

Man killed

Mumbai: A 25-year-old was allegedly brutally killed by two unidentified men in Deonar area of suburban Mumbai, police said Wednesday. Zahid Zulfikar Sheikh, a resident of Shivaji Nagar, was sleeping below an under-construction bridge when two men attacked him with a paver block late on Tuesday night, an official said.

Youth arrested

Palghar: A 22-year-old youth has been arrested for allegedly raping his 3-year-old neighbour in Nala Sopara town of Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said Wednesday. The accused, who is a street vendor, lured the victim who was playing outside their residential building on Monday evening, sub-inspector Nitin Koli of Tuljipolice station said. He took the child to an isolated spot, where he allegedly raped her, the official said, adding that the girl rushed to her mother in an injured state and told her about the attack.

BIG JOLT: KHADSE SET TO JOIN NCP

Set to join the NCP, Khadse said that he was repeatedly targeted by Fadnavis on trumped-up graft charges which have still not been proved

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Oct 21: In a big jolt ahead for the BJP ahead of the Bihar elections, its senior Maharashtra leader Eknath Khadse Wednesday quit the party, holding former Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis responsible for his decision. Set to join the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi partner Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) on Friday, Khadse said that he was repeatedly targeted by Fadnavis on trumped-up graft charges which have still not been proved.

This has come as a major embarrassment for the BJP as Fadnavis is the party's in-charge for the upcoming Bihar polls, voting for which starts from October 28. Making it clear that he nursed no grouse against the BJP's Central leadership, Khadse said that "except state President Chandrakant Patil, no BJP leader has called me up so far". "My family and I have been humiliated for four years... I worked hard to build up the party in the state for 40 years and this is what I had to undergo. I am going alone," Khadse told media persons after resigning as a primary member of the BJP.

Ejected as a minister in June 2016 after graft charges surfaced against him, Khadse - the de facto No 2 in the cabinet headed by Fadnavis - faced further agony after BJP denied a ticket in the 2019 Assembly elections, and he remained a political pariah. Khadse detailed how he was humiliated for over four years in the BJP even though "no party, including Shiv Sena, Nationalist Congress Party or Congress, has ever demanded any investigations or my resignation" at that time. "So many agencies probed me, but nothing emerged... Then, one lady



levelled some molestation charges against me to which Fadnavis asked that a FIR should be lodged against me. This was the kind of low-level politics played against me," an emotionally-charged Khadse said.

Among the tallest BJP leaders with huge grassroots support, Khadse, 68, hails from Muktainagar, Jalgaon, which he represented from 1989-2019, while his daughter-in-law Raksha Nikhil Khadse was elected twice (2014-2019) as BJP Lok Sabha MP from Raver.

Considered an efficient administrator and powerful orator, groomed by the late Pramod Mahajan and the late Gopinath Munde, Khadse is now expected to blunt the Opposition Fadnavis-led BJP's tirade on the MVA and Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray.

Ironically, Khadse had once tutored Fadnavis in legislative politics, but was by-passed by the central leadership for the CM's post when the party came to power in 2014, forcing him to play second fiddle to Fadnavis. State NCP President and Minister Jayant Patil announced that NCP would lay the red carpet for Khadse - who is willing to work under Sharad Pawar's leadership - on Friday afternoon, and claimed that many other BJP activists and legislators are likely to follow suit in the coming days. In a guarded reaction amid speculation that the new entrant would join the state cabinet soon, Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said: "We welcome Khadse to the MVA family."

Gurung pledges support to Mamata

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Oct 21: Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) chief Bimal Gurung, who was absconding since 2017 after he was charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, resurfaced in Kolkata Wednesday evening at the Gorkha Bhavan in the city's satellite township of Salt Lake.

"We are not moving away from our Gorkhaland demand. We will only support the party which will take it forward. The Centre didn't meet the commitment it made to us. But West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee fulfilled all the promises she made," Gurung told a press conference here.

Gurung said that his party would support the Mamata Banerjee-led



Trinamool Congress in the 2021 West Bengal Assembly polls. "I am breaking all my ties with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-

GURUNG SAID THAT HIS PARTY WOULD SUPPORT THE MAMATA BANERJEE-LED TRINAMOOL CONGRESS IN THE 2021 WEST BENGAL ASSEMBLY POLLS

GURUNG WAS CHARGED UNDER THE UAPA IN CONNECTION WITH A GRENADE ATTACK AT THE KALIMPONG POLICE STATION AND AN EXPLOSION IN DARJEELING'S CHOWK BAZAAR AREA IN 2017. HE WAS ABSCONDING FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS

myself from the NDA. I would like to break our ties with the BJP," he said, adding that GJM will forge an alliance with Trinamool and give a befitting reply to the BJP through an electoral mandate in the hills.

Gurung was charged under the UAPA in connection with a grenade attack at the Kalimpong police station and an explosion in Darjeeling's Chowk Bazaar area in 2017. He was absconding for the past three years.

Calling Mamata Banerjee his political idol, the GJM chief said: "There is no permanent friend and enemy in politics. I am a political leader. I am not an anti-social or anti-national. I will be happy even if I am arrested today after the press conference."

EC notice to Nath on 'item' jibe

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Election Commission Wednesday issued a notice to former Madhya Pradesh chief minister and Congress leader Kamal Nath on his "item" jibe at BJP candidate and state minister Imarti Devi, saying his remarks were found to be in violation of the model code in place in the state due to the assembly by-election.

Madhya Pradesh BJP leaders, led by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Monday held a protest against Kamal Nath, while the National Commission for Women sought an explanation from the Congress leader

"Now, therefore, the Commission gives you an opportunity to explain your stand in making the above said statement within 48 hours of receipt of this notice, failing which



the Election Commission of India shall take a decision without further reference to you," the notice said.

Addressing a poll meeting Sunday in Gwalior's Dabra town, where the BJP has fielded Imarti Devi, Kamal Nath had said the Congress candidate was a "simple person" unlike his opponent who was an "item".

Madhya Pradesh BJP leaders, led by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Monday held a protest against Kamal Nath, while the National Commission for Women sought an explanation from the Congress leader for his remark.

Kamal Nath, who is the state Congress president, had later expressed regret over it and asserted that he did not say anything disrespectful. The EC notice said it had received a complaint from the BJP as well as a reference from the National Commission for Women against Nath.

"...the video clip and transcript of the speech made by Kamal Nath on October 18, 2020 at Dahra, Gwalior have been examined in the Commission and the statement found to be in violation" of the provisions of the model code of conduct, the notice said.

India releases Chinese soldier

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 21: India in a goodwill gesture ensured the release of a Chinese soldier who had strayed inside Indian territory across the disputed zone of the Line of Actual Control.

The astray Chinese soldier was detained two days back in the Demchok sector in the disputed border in Eastern Ladakh. The Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) corporal had told Indian agencies that he had crossed the disputed border to retrieve a yak that had strayed into India.

He was handed over at Chushul Moldo meeting point on Tuesday night. Earlier, the Indian Army in a statement said: "A PLA soldier identified as Corporal Wang Ya Long was apprehended in the Demchok sector of Eastern Ladakh on October 19, 2020 after he had strayed across the LAC."

India had said that the PLA soldier has been provided medical assistance to protect him from the vagaries of extreme altitude and harsh climatic conditions.

ACTIVE CASES REMAIN BELOW 7.5 LAKH-MARK

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Active cases of COVID-19 in India settled below the 7.5 lakh-mark for the second successive day, while the national case fatality rate (CFR) has dropped to 1.51 per cent, the Union Health Ministry said Wednesday.

Presently 14 states and UTs including Chhattisgarh (0.96 pc), Jharkhand (0.87 pc), Andhra Pradesh (0.82 pc), Telangana (0.57 pc), Bihar (0.49 pc), Assam (0.44 pc) and Kerala (0.34 pc) are reporting case fatality rate of less than 1 per cent.

The Centre has advised states and UTs to aim at bringing down the CFR below 1 per cent. There are 7, 40,090 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 9.67 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

With a high number of COVID-19 patients recovering every day, India's steady trend of posting high levels of daily recoveries also continues. A total of 61,775 recoveries have been registered in a span of 24 hours in the country whereas 54,044 new infections were reported during the same period, the ministry said.

This is when 10, 83,608 tests have been conducted in a span of 24 hours in the country, it underlined. "Successful implementation of test, track and treat strategy along with timely and appropriate treatment has led to the consistent slide in the fatality rate. The national CFR has fallen to 1.51 per cent today," the ministry said.

A total of 67, 95,103 people have recuperated from the disease so far in the country. Higher number of single day recoveries has resulted in a continuous increase in the national recovery rate, which is fast approaching 89 per cent (88.81%).

The ministry said that 77 per cent of the new recovered cases are observed to be concentrated in 10 states and UTs. Karnataka outnumbered Maharashtra in new recovered cases with more than 8,500 new recoveries. Maharashtra and Kerala both contribute more than 7,000 to the new recoveries.

GEARING UP



Devotees carry an idol of Goddess Durga to install in a pandal on the eve of Durga Puja festival in Tezpur, Wednesday

4 CHILDREN FOUND DEAD

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Lalitpur (Uttar Pradesh), Oct 21: Four children, aged between seven to 14 years of age and belonging to one family, were found dead in a village in Uttar Pradesh's Lalitpur.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the demise of the four children. He has asked the district administration to provide financial help to the bereaved family.

The incident took place on Tuesday evening when some people saw the children lying in a water-filled pit near a check dam and informed the police.

The police carried out a rescue operation and the children were sent to the community health centre where they were declared brought dead.

The victims' family has alleged that the children were murdered over a land dispute by their kin who live in the same village.

The police have registered a case in connection with the incident. Further investigation is underway.

STUDY INFO

Air pollution contributed to death of 16.7L people

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Air pollution contributed to the death of 16.7 lakh people in India in 2019, with over a lakh of them less than a month old, a new global study by a US-based NGO has revealed.

According to the State of Global Air, 2020, a report on global exposure to air pollution, released by Health Effects Institute (HEI) on Wednesday, air pollution is the biggest health risk in India.

"Outdoor and household particulate matter pollution contributed to the death of more than 1.16,000 Indian infants in their first month of life in 2019. More than half of these deaths were associated with outdoor PM2.5 and others were linked to the use of solid fuels such as charcoal, wood, and animal dung for cooking.



"Long-term exposure to outdoor and household air pollution contributed to over 1.67 million annual deaths from stroke, heart attack, diabetes, lung cancer, chronic lung

disease, creating a growing concern that exposures to high levels of air pollution could exacerbate the effects of COVID-19.

Dan Greenbaum, the president of HEI, said an infant's health is critical to the future of every society and this newest evidence suggests an especially high risk for infants born in south Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. "Although there has been a slow and steady reduction in household reliance on poor-quality fuels, air pollution from these fuels continues to be a key factor in the deaths of these youngest infants," he said.

Infants in the first month of life are already at a vulnerable stage. But a growing body of scientific evidence from multiple countries, including recent ICMR-supported studies in India, indicates that particulate air pollution exposure during preg-

nancy is linked to low birth weight and pre-term birth, the report said. The new analysis reported in the State of Global Air this year estimates that nearly 21 per cent of neonatal deaths from all causes are attributable to ambient and household air pollution.

"Addressing impacts of air pollution on adverse pregnancy outcomes and newborn health is really important for low- and middle-income countries, not only because of the high prevalence of low birth weight, preterm birth, and child growth deficits but because it allows the design of strategic interventions that can be directed at these vulnerable groups," said Kalpana Balakrishnan, an expert in air pollution and health. The report said overall, air pollution is now the largest risk factor for death.

of the day quote

The pandemic's ill-effects on the Indian economy will soon be wiped out and it will bounce back in the next one year



JYOTIRADITYA SCINDIA | BJP LEADER

Police officials must unsparingly crack down with an iron fist upon forces attempting to create rift between religions and castes in the state



YS JAGAN MOHAN REDDY | ANDHRA CM

Police Commemoration Day is about expressing gratitude to our police personnel and their families all across India. We pay tributes to all the police personnel martyred in the line of duty. Their sacrifice and service would always be remembered



NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Two drown, 13 rescued

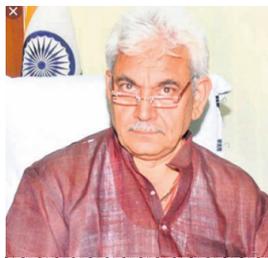
Gadchiroli (Maharashtra): Two women in Maharashtra are feared drowned as 18 hours have lapsed after a boat capsized at a remote spot on Indravati River, while 13 of their co passengers, including 10 men, were safely rescued, officials said here Wednesday. The incident happened late Tuesday when the boat carrying 15 villagers, including 5 women, suddenly overturned near Somanpalli village. "Mobilising rescue teams immediately, we managed to rescue 10 men and 3 women while a search continues for the 2 missing women who are presumed dead," an official of Gadchiroli Police said.

Four rescued

Thane: The police rescued four women from a spa in Maharashtra's Thane city and arrested its manager for allegedly using the premises for flesh trade, an official said Wednesday. Acting on a tip-off, the Anti-Human Trafficking Cell of the Thane police raided Elegant Spa on Ghodbunder Road on Tuesday evening and rescued four women from the premises, the official said.

Trader robbed

Ahmedabad: Two unidentified men attacked a gold trader and robbed him of valuables worth ₹37 lakh in Jetpur town of Rajkot district Wednesday, police said. Chiman Vekaria was attacked by two robbers, who allegedly threw chilli powder on his face and snatched a bag containing 700 gm of gold worth ₹35 lakh and ₹2 lakh cash, sub-inspector P B Vaghela of Jetpur police station said. The attack took place when the victim, a trader from neighbouring Dhoraji town, was passing through a narrow lane connecting Nana Chowk and Soni Baazar, the official said.



Police must strengthen its community support base as there is need for comprehensive reforms to deal with radicalisation of youth

MANOJ SINHA | JAMMU AND KASHMIR LT GOVERNOR

REMARKABLE DEVELOPMENT

In a remarkable development, Telangana's Covid-19 recovery rate has crossed 90 per cent as the state continued to see more recoveries than new infections



Maintain discipline: EC to parties

By not following the norms, the EC said, the political parties and candidates are not only flouting its guidelines "with impunity" but exposing themselves as well as the public attending the rallies or meetings to the danger of infection during the pandemic

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: The Election Commission Wednesday took a serious view of "utter violation" of social distancing norms during poll campaigning and leaders addressing public meetings without wearing masks in complete disregard of its guidelines.

In an advisory issued to presidents and general secretaries of all recognised national and state parties, the poll panel said chief electoral officers and the district machinery would be expected to invoke appropriate and relevant penal provisions against candidates concerned as well as organisers responsible for such violations.

Separate instructions for strict compliance of guidelines are being issued to chief electoral officers and state governments of poll-going states, it said. "It has come to the notice of the Commission instances of such public meetings where large crowds assembled in utter violation of social distancing, and the political leaders and campaigners addressing the gatherings without



wearing masks in complete disregard of the guidelines and instructions issued by the Election Commission," the poll panel said. By not following the norms, the EC said, the political parties and candidates are not only flouting its guidelines "with impunity" but exposing themselves as well as the public attending the rallies or meetings to the danger of infection during the pandemic.

As the most important stakeholders in the electoral process, the parties are duty-bound to observe the norms determined by the Commission for electioneering, it noted. Non-compliance of instructions during the period of public interface will attract actions as per provisions of the Disaster Management Act, 2005, besides invocation of the

provisions of the Indian Penal Code and other legal provisions, the EC warned referring to its guidelines issued in August.

"The Commission has taken a serious view of the laxity on the part of political parties and candidates, on the ground, in terms of maintaining crowd discipline, and hereby reiterates and further advises them to demonstrate utmost vigil and care during electioneering," the advisory said.

Campaigning is on for Bihar Assembly polls as well as for bye-elections in other states. Assembly polls in Bihar will be held in three phases on October 28, November 3 and November 7. Most of the assembly bypolls will be held on November 3. Bypolls to the Valmiki Nagar Lok Sabha seat in Bihar and some assembly seats in Manipur will take place on November 7.

The election commission's advisory comes a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people to follow all COVID guidelines, including wearing of masks, especially during the festive season. With the onset of festival season, PM

Modi on Tuesday made an impassioned appeal to people to follow COVID-19 guidelines, saying this is not the time to be careless as the virus is still around and even a small negligence can dampen the festive spirit.

The poll panel also referred to its October 9 advisory in which it had sought the cooperation of all political parties in following instructions related to COVID-19 at all stages, especially wherever public interface in physical form is involved.

The previous advisory had said the observance of preventive measures, including wearing masks, use of sanitiser and social distancing is a duty cast upon all the stakeholders in the larger interest of public health. "As representatives of public, this onerous responsibility rests with the political parties to ensure that they not only cooperate with the district machinery in following the due norms of public health safety as prescribed but also instil a sense of discipline for civic behaviour in their cadre while doing ground management during campaign times," it had said.

5 dead, 34 hurt in bus mishap

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 21: Five people were killed and 34 others injured when their speeding bus fell into a gorge in Maharashtra's Nandurbar district in the early hours of Wednesday, a police official said.

The accident took place at Kondaibari ghat around 3.15 am when the private bus, going from Buldhana to Surat in Gujarat, tried to overtake another bus which was also heading to the same destination from Malkapur, he said.

While overtaking in the ghat section, the bus driver saw a truck coming from the opposite direction. In an attempt to avoid a collision with the truck, the bus driver lost the control over the wheels, he said. As a result, the bus fell into the over 30-feet deep gorge, located around 370 km from here, the official said.

Three bus passengers, including a female, the vehicle's driver and cleaner died, Nandurbar Superintendent of Police Mahendra Pandit said. The accident took place on the Surat-Kolkata National Highway (NH-6) where road work is going on, he said.

Only one lane of the highway is operational at the accident spot, the official said. On getting information about the accident, police, local rescue teams and district administration officials rushed to the spot.

Out of the 34 injured people, 26 were admitted to Nandurbar Civil Hospital, four in a government-run hospital in Visarwadi, three were shifted to Surat and one was taken to a hospital in Jalgaon. The last person was rescued from the bus at around 11.30 am, the official said, adding that the victim, who received a minor foot injury, was stuck in the ill-fated vehicle for more than eight hours. A case of accidental death was registered at Visarwadi police station, he added.

ASSAM RIFLES JAWAN KILLED

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Itanagar, Oct 21: An Assam Rifles jawan was killed while another received bullet injuries Wednesday during an encounter with suspected militants in Tirap district in southern Arunachal Pradesh, the police said.

An official of the Tirap district police control room said that the incident took place when a convoy of Assam Rifles came under attack by suspected terrorists at the Sanliam tri-junction on Khonsa Lazu road of the district, which shares borders with Myanmar.

"In the ensuing gunfight, a jawan of the para-military force died while another sustained bullet injuries," the official said on condition of anonymity. Massive combing operations are being carried out in the area by the Assam Rifles troops to nab the militants, suspected to belong to the National Socialist Council of Nagaland-Isak-Muiwah (NSCN-IM).

Further details of the incident are awaited. It was not immediately known how many Assam Rifles troops were patrolling the area during the terrorist attack. This was the second militant attack on Assam Rifles this month. On October 4, an Assam Rifles jawan was killed while another was hurt in an ambush by suspected militants in Changlang district of Arunachal Pradesh.

CALCUTTA HC SOFTENS STAND

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kolkata, Oct 21: A day ahead of Mahasashti, the Calcutta High Court Wednesday partially relaxed its order in which it previously declared all Durga Puja pandals as no-entry zones for visitors amid the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

After Durgotsav Forum -- an umbrella body of 400-strong Durga Puja organisers in Kolkata -- appealed for a review of the order, the court Wednesday allowed entry of up to 45 people at a time.

The high court also said that Dhakis (traditional drummers) may be permitted, not within the pandal area but in the no entry zone outside the pandal. Dhakis should wear mask and maintain hygiene and physical distancing norms.

The court directed all puja pandals to strictly maintain 'no entry zone' guidelines for all other purposes. It said the list of persons allowed should be decided on daily basis. These lists must be put outside the pandals every day at 8 a.m.

The original order was modified in the aspects that charts may include 30 names for smaller pujas but not more than 15 people can enter inside the pandal at a time. Similarly, 60 names for larger pujas but not more than 45 people can remain or stay inside the pandal at a time.

The directive, however, said that no other reliefs would be granted as that would have the effect of diluting the order. The high court refused to pass any orders on the appeals by Kalyan Banerjee, who appeared on behalf of the Durga Puja organisers, to allow two important rituals like Anjali (offering prayers) and Sindoor Khela (playing with vermilion).

Earlier on Monday, the court had directed all Durga Puja pandals (marquees) in West Bengal to be



After Durgotsav Forum -- an umbrella body of 400-strong Durga Puja organisers in Kolkata -- appealed for a review of the order, the court Wednesday allowed entry of up to 45 people at a time

made into no-entry zones in the interests of the public. The court said that a five-meter zone for smaller pandals and ten-meter zone for larger pandals are also included within the no-entry zone.

In view of the coronavirus outbreak, it said that the area will have to be barricaded and demarcated as no-entry zone except for named personnel who have to be identified by organizers in advance whose presence shall be required for performing the puja. The order is applicable throughout West Bengal including all the pujas who have received ₹50,000 from the Mamata Banerjee-led state administration.

All the major pujas, as referred to in the Kolkata Police Manual, are to be considered as larger pandals and shall maintain 10-meters buffer zone all around from the extremity of the pandal, the order said.

Considering the on-going coronavirus pandemic, the high court also directed the state government to conduct awareness campaigns requesting people to maintain social distancing guidelines and appeal not to descend on streets like the regular years.

Man detained for tonsuring wife over trivial issue

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Badaun (Uttar Pradesh), Oct 21: A man allegedly beat up his wife, tonsured her and locked her up in the house when she insisted on attending the last rites of her uncle.

He has been detained by the police. The incident took place in Bisauli town on October 17 and the woman remain locked up till she managed to break free and flee to her aunt's house on Monday.

Then, she went to the police station to lodge a complaint against her husband and in-laws. Seema Devi, 31, told the police that she was being regularly tortured and abused by her husband, Rajpal,



who is an alcoholic.

The couple has been married for nine years and have a son. Seema blamed her in-laws and said that they invariably supported their son when he abused her. "My father's elder brother passed away on October 17. He was like my father and I wanted to see for him for the last time but Rajpal would

not allow me to go. When I insisted, he thrashed me blue and black and later, shaved my head. My in-laws did not try to rescue me."

She said that she did not want to return to because she feared a threat to her life and also the safety of her son. SSP Badaun, Sankalp Sharma, said on Wednesday, "We have registered an FIR under IPC sections 509 (act or gesture intended to insult the modesty of a woman), 500 (punishment for defamation) and 498A (cruelty to a married woman) against the husband, his parents, in-laws and one relative. The husband and the relative have been detained and action is being taken as per law."

MATTER OF LIVELIHOOD



Vendors make broomsticks for sale during Unlock 5 in Karad, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

IIT Kharagpur's 'COVIRAP' gets ICMR certification

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 21: 'COVIRAP', the diagnostic machine developed by the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur researchers, has been successfully validated for its efficacy in Covid-19 detection by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), the Institute said Wednesday.

After rigorous testing with patient samples by an authorized ICMR laboratory, adhering to their strict guidelines, ICMR has now granted certification for this Covid-19 Diagnostic Test. This test has been designed to be fairly easy to conduct and affordable as well and can produce results within one hour.

"This is indeed one of the greatest contributions in the history of medical science, particularly in the



area of virology, and is well set to replace the PCR-based tests to a large extent," Professor VK. Tewari, Director, IIT Kharagpur, said in a statement.

This new testing method implements a highly reliable and accurate molecular diagnostic procedure that can be conducted in an ultra-low-cost portable device unit de-

veloped by the research team. The test results are rendered via a custom-made mobile application for dissemination without requiring manual interpretation.

"This innovation has made high-quality and accurate Covid testing affordable for the common people with a testing cost of around ₹500 which can further be reduced through government intervention," said Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank, Union Education Minister. "This machine can be developed at a cost of less than ₹10,000 with minimal infrastructural requirement making the technology affordable to common people. The testing process in this new machine is completed within one hour," Nishank added.

While the Institute can produce the testing kit up to a certain scale,

patent licensing will facilitate commercialisation opportunities for medical technology companies. Dr. Mamta Chawla Sarkar, an internationally acclaimed virologist who oversaw the patient trials on behalf of ICMR-National Institute of Cholera and Enteric Diseases (NICED) said: "A detailed scrutiny of the testing results has clearly shown that this assay holds the capability of detecting extremely low levels of viral loads than any other method based on similar principles of testing." The novel diagnostic test has been subjected to rigorous testing protocols as per the ICMR guidelines, at ICMR-NICED, an Institute authorised by ICMR. ICMR-NICED has further certified the test to be extremely user-friendly.

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh), Oct 21: The services of two temporary casualty medical officers (CMO) of AMU's Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College (JNMC) have reportedly been terminated, ostensibly over the Hathras case.

One of the two doctors, Mohammad Azimuddin Malik, alleged that his "opinion" in the Hathras case could be one of the reasons for his removal.

"We had never given any statement, but presented our opinion as a doctor to the media persons in Hathras case and that could be one of the reasons for my removal from JNMC," Malik said.

The government hospital, however, has denied the charges. Malik had contradicted the Uttar Pradesh Police, which alleged that there

was no sign of rape on the body of the slain Dalit girl. He had given a statement that the samples taken for Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) examination 11 days after the September 14 assault "held no value".

This contradicted the police, which cited the FSL report, and said that there was "no semen on the body, so there was no rape". The other CMO whose services were terminated is Obaid Intiazul Haque. He refused to comment on the reasons for his removal.

The doctors were issued an 'urgent letter' on Tuesday asking them "Not to perform any further duties in the medical college". The reason for their removal was not given in the letter issued by hospital in-charge SAH Zaiedi.

Malik said that he was appointed against 'leave vacancy'.

international



I am currently preparing to lift the state of severe emergency in Bangkok and will do so promptly if there are no violent incidents
PRAYUTH CHAN-OCCHA | THAI PRIME MINISTER

STRICT RULES

Germany's Cabinet approved draft legislation that will allow for tougher punishment of sexual abuse of children and the possession of child pornography



of the day quote

One of the most inspiring things about this year has been to see so many young Americans fired up, organising, marching and fighting for change
BARACK OBAMA | FORMER US PRESIDENT

Schools and other educational institutions in Bangladesh were unlikely to reopen in November as previously suggested due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic
DIPU MONI | B'DESH EDUCATION MINISTER

What leaves me optimistic is the longer-term perspective I have on the US-India relationship
STEPHEN BIEGUN | US DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE

SHORT TAKES

Thai protesters continue rallies

Bangkok: Student activists applied to a court Wednesday to revoke a state of emergency the government declared last week to try to rein in Thailand's growing protests. Demonstrations have continued daily in a movement that calls for Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha to step down, for a more democratic constitution and for reforms to the monarchy — a revered institution traditionally treated as sacrosanct in Thailand.

Five killed in explosion in Pak

Islamabad/Karachi: At least five people were killed and 20 others injured Wednesday due to a powerful explosion in a four-storey building in Pakistan's Sindh province, police said. At least two floors of the building near Maskan Chowrangi in the Gulshan-e-Iqbal area in Karachi were severely damaged, creating fears that casualties may rise. The death toll in the incident has increased to five, Faisal Edhi of the Edhi Ambulance Service said.

Hurricane Epsilon nears Bermuda

Miami (US): Hurricane Epsilon, the 10th of this very busy Atlantic season, was moving toward Bermuda Wednesday. Epsilon is expected to make its closest approach to the island Thursday night, and there is a risk of a direct impact, according to the US National Hurricane Centre. A tropical storm watch is in effect for Bermuda and residents have been urged to closely monitor the storm.

Three dead in club shooting

Houston: Three people were killed in a shooting at a Houston nightclub where about 30 people had gathered for an open mic night and authorities were searching early Wednesday for suspects, police said. Police had been called to the DD Sky Club at about 9:45 pm Tuesday on reports of multiple people dead inside, Houston Police Commander Caroleta Johnson told the Houston Chronicle.

NAB denied further custody of Sharif

Lahore: A Pakistan court has rejected the National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) request for the further physical remand of Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly Shehbaz Sharif in the money laundering and illegal assets reference and sent him to jail on judicial remand. The NAB had arrested Sharif September 28.

Pak unlikely to exit FATF grey list



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, Oct 21: Pakistan may remain on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as it has been unable to comply with six of the 27 points in the global terror financing and money laundering watchdog's action plan, a media report said Wednesday. The Paris-based global watchdog will hold its virtual plenary session from October 21 to 23. It will review Pakistan's progress on the 27-point action plan. The FATF had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019, but the deadline was extended later on due to the COVID-19 pandemic. "The country will succeed in exiting the FATF's grey list by June next year," The Express Tribune reported, quoting diplomatic sources. The report said Pakistan is unlikely to exit the FATF grey list, but the country has managed to avert being blacklisted. It said that the country had completed its legal formalities and informed the watchdog that it had managed to comply with 21 of the points in the action plan. Pakistan has succeeded in making 20 per cent progress in the remaining six points of the action plan, it said. The country has complied with

the points related to money laundering. The remaining six points pertain to terrorism financing. The International Cooperation Review Group of the FATF has acknowledged that Pakistan had complied with 21 points of the action plan, the report said. Seeking to wriggle out of the FATF's grey list, debt-ridden Pakistan in August imposed financial sanctions on 88 banned terror groups and their leaders, including 26/11 Mumbai attack mastermind and Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed, Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) chief Masood Azhar and underworld don Dawood Ibrahim. Pakistan won a three-month further extension to complete FATF's 27-point action plan because of the coronavirus pandemic. The deadline was June this year, but the FATF extended it due to the postponement of its plenary. In February, the FATF gave Pakistan, which missed 13 targets, a four-month grace period to complete its 27-point action plan against money laundering and terror financing committed with the international community. In its third plenary held virtually in June, the FATF decided to keep Pakistan in the grey list as Islamabad failed to check flow of money to terror groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM).

15 KILLED IN AFGHAN STAMPEDE FOR VISAS

An estimated 3,000 Afghans had congregated on the open ground outside Pakistan's consulate to collect tokens needed to apply for visa

REUTERS

Jalalabad, Afghanistan, Oct 21: At least 15 people were killed in stampede among thousands of Afghans gathered near Pakistan's consulate Tuesday as jostling broke out between people applying for visas, officials in the eastern city of Jalalabad said. An estimated 3,000 Afghans had congregated on the open ground, usually used for sports or public gatherings, outside the consulate, waiting to collect tokens needed to apply for a visa, two provincial officials told Reuters a day after the tragedy. An Afghan news channel transmitted images of them holding passports aloft to secure a token. Images taken after the stampede showed scores of passports strewn across the ground. "The visa applicants jostled to secure their token from the consulate officials...the crowd got out of control, leading to a stampede," said an Afghan official. A survivor described to Reuters how tempers frayed and the crowd became unruly in the lead up to



the stampede. "I stood in the queue all night but at some point people got angry and started pushing, many of us fell on the ground," said Farmanullah, who goes by a single name. Eleven of the 15 victims were women, and several senior citizens were among more than a dozen injured, Sohrab Qaderi, a provincial council member, said. Tens of thousands of Afghans every year travel to neighbouring Pakistan to secure medical treatment, education and jobs. The two countries share a nearly 2,600-kilometre border. Pakistan hosts about 3 million Afghan refugees and economic migrants, who have fled violence, religious persecution and poverty in their war-torn country.

HAPPY FACE



A male western lowland gorilla baby rests after being delivered by his mother at the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston, Massachusetts

Jamal's fiancée sues Saudi Crown Prince

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Washington, Oct 21: The Turkish fiancée of slain journalist Jamal Khashoggi has sued Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, accusing him of ordering the murder, the media reported. The civil lawsuit was filed Tuesday in Washington D.C. by Hatice Cengiz and Democracy for the Arab World Now (Dawn), a rights group Khashoggi, who had been living in self-imposed exile in the US, founded before his death, the BBC reported. In the lawsuit, Cengiz claimed personal injury and financial losses over Khashoggi's death, while the rights group alleged that its operations were hampered. "The objective of the murder was clear, to halt Khashoggi's advocacy in the US for democratic reform in the Arab world," the BBC quoted the lawsuit as saying. It added that Khashoggi, also a prominent critic of the Saudi government, was murdered "pursuant to a directive of defendant Mohammed bin Salman".

BREXIT TALKS

EU tells Britain to make up its mind

AGENCIES

Brussels, Oct 21: The European Union told Britain Wednesday to make up its mind on Brexit, putting the onus back on London to unlock trade talks as the bloc's chief negotiator said an agreement was still within reach with 10 weeks to go. A frustrated European Union and piqued Britain exhorted each other this week to compromise to avoid a disruptive finale to the five-year Brexit drama that would add to economic pain from the coronavirus crisis. "Time is very short and we stand ready to negotiate 24/7, on all subjects, on legal texts. The UK has a bit of a decision to make and it's their free and sovereign choice," European Council President Charles Michel told the European Parliament. He said Britain's answer would determine its level of access to the EU's internal market of 450 million consumers. The EU's Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier told the parliament an agreement was still



"within reach". "Time is of the essence... Along with our British counterparts, we must find solutions to the most difficult areas," Barnier said, in comments that pushed sterling higher: London has this week refused to continue full negotiations, saying the EU must "fundamentally change" its stance. The bloc sees this as bluff by Prime Minister Boris Johnson but has also extended an olive branch by talking up UK sovereignty, as well as the EU's readiness to discuss intensively, across the board and on specific legal texts. A UK spokesman said London noted "with interest"

Barnier's comments that touch "in a significant way on the issues behind the current difficulties in our talks". Barnier and his UK counterpart David Frost were due to talk on the phone at 1400GMT Wednesday. Norway, Britain in provisional trade agreement on goods for no-deal Brexit scenario. Britain, one of Europe's biggest military powers, has also formally notified the EU of its intention to withdraw from the bloc's military missions by the end of this year, EU diplomats said on Wednesday as had been announced by London earlier.

'nCoV unlikely to be eradicated'

REUTERS

London, Oct 21: The coronavirus will be around for "evermore" as it is unlikely it will be eradicated, a British scientist on the government's advisory committee for the pandemic said Wednesday, although a vaccine would help improve the situation. Britain, like other countries in Europe, is currently in the grip of a resurgence in COVID-19 infections, with much of the country under local restrictions and more than 21,000 daily cases reported Tuesday. "We are going to have to live with this virus for evermore. There is very little chance that it's going to become eradicated," John Edmunds, a member of Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies (SAGE), told lawmakers. Although the coronavirus will be around indefinitely, Edmunds said that the prospect of a vaccine towards the end of the winter should impact the government's strategy now.



"If vaccines are just around the corner then, in my view, we should try and keep the incidence as low as we can now, because we will be able to use vaccines in the not too distant future," he said. He said the UK had played a "clever game" in investing in different coronavirus vaccines. Britain has signed supply deals for six different COVID-19 vaccines, with 340 million doses secured across different types of technologies. "I think we will be in a reasonable position in months," he said. "I don't think we're going to be vaccinating everybody but to start, maybe the highest risk people, healthcare workers and so on."

NASA spacecraft collects rock samples from asteroid Bennu

A NASA SPACECRAFT SUCCESSFULLY TOUCHED DOWN ON THE RUGGED SURFACE OF ASTEROID BENNU, COLLECTING A SAMPLE OF ROCKS DATING BACK TO THE BIRTH OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM TO BRING BACK TO EARTH

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, Oct 21: After a four-year-long journey, NASA's OSIRIS-REx spacecraft successfully touched down on the rugged surface of asteroid Bennu Tuesday, and unfurled its robotic arm to collect a sample of rocks dating back to the birth of our solar system to bring back to Earth, the US space agency said. The Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security, Regolith Explorer (OSIRIS-REx) spacecraft briefly touched the near-Earth asteroid to collect dust and pebbles from its surface for delivery to Earth in 2023. Asteroid Bennu is currently more than 321 million kilometres from the Earth. It offers scientists a window into the early solar system as it was first taking shape billions of years ago and flinging ingredients that could have helped seed life on

Earth, NASA said. If Tuesday's sample collection event, known as "Touch-And-Go" (TAG), provided enough of a sample, mission teams will command the spacecraft to begin stowing the precious primordial cargo to begin its journey back to Earth in March 2021. Otherwise, they will prepare for another attempt in January, according to NASA. "This amazing first for NASA demonstrates how an incredible team from across the country came together and persevered through incredible challenges to expand the boundaries of knowledge," said NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine. "Our industry, academic, and international partners have made it possible to hold a piece of the most ancient solar system in our hands," Bridenstine said in a statement. OSIRIS-REx fired its thrusters to nudge itself out of orbit around



Bennu, extending the shoulder, then elbow, followed by the wrist of its 3.35-metre sampling arm, known as the Touch-And-Go Sample Acquisition Mechanism (TAGSAM). The spacecraft then transited

manoeuvres to allow it to precisely target the sample collection site, known as "Nightingale." Ten minutes later, the spacecraft fired its thrusters for the second "Matchpoint" burn to slow its descent and match the asteroid's rotation at the time of contact. It then continued a treacherous, 11-minute coast past a boulder the size of a two-story building, nicknamed "Mount Doom," to touch down in a clear spot in a crater on Bennu's northern hemisphere. The size of a small parking lot, the Nightingale site is one of the few relatively clear spots on this unexpectedly boulder-covered space rock. "This was an incredible feat — and today we have advanced both science and engineering and our prospects for future missions to study these mysterious ancient storytellers of the solar system," said Thomas Zurbuchen, associate administra-

tor for NASA's Science Mission Directorate at the agency's headquarters here. "A piece of primordial rock that has witnessed our solar system's entire history may now be ready to come home for generations of scientific discovery, and we can't wait to see what comes next," Zurbuchen said. NASA said all spacecraft telemetry data indicates the TAG event executed as expected, adding, however, it will take about a week for the OSIRIS-REx team to confirm how much sample the spacecraft collected. The spacecraft carried out TAG autonomously, with pre-programmed instructions from engineers on Earth. The OSIRIS-REx team will begin to assess whether the spacecraft grabbed any material, and, if so, how much. The goal is at least 60 grammes, which is roughly equivalent to a full-size candy bar, NASA said.

business

of the day quote

The discoms face the twin challenges of a decline in electricity demand, exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis, and expensive and under-utilised legacy thermal power contracts at a time when ambitious growth in new renewable energy capacity is being targeted

GAGAN SIDHU | CO-AUTHOR, CEEW-CEF ADVISER

Prestige and Brigade group have joined together to develop one million sq ft area in this (commercial) project. It will have a shopping mall and a small hotel of around 125 keys in this project

IRFAN RAZACK | CHAIRMAN AND MD, PRESTIGE GROUP

The moment is now for us to be vocal, but we need to expand the definition of local, rather than shrink it. We should rework our economic models, initiate forward-looking labour policies, create equilibrium between land, labour and capital, and make economic development more inclusive

ISHTEYAQUE AMIAD | PRESIDENT, PUBLIC AFFAIRS FORUM OF INDIA

SHORT TAKES

CIL poised for output ramp-up

New Delhi: State-owned Coal India Ltd (CIL) for the first time in the current fiscal October 20 neutralised the negative growth in coal production for the year. The coal production of 265.69 million tonnes (MTs) October 20 was at level with last year's output on the same date with the company posting a marginal 0.04 MT increase in volume terms, CIL said. CIL arm MCL with progressive coal production of 71.17 MTs, and Northern Coalfields Limited at 60 MTs have played catalytic role in wiping off CIL's negative production trend, it said.

Nestle registers single-digit growth

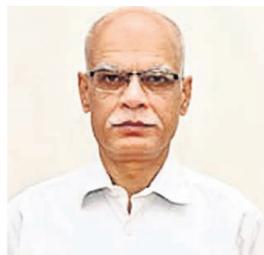
New Delhi: Swiss food and drink company Nestle has reported a 'mid-single-digit growth' in the Indian market in the July-September quarter, helped by its popular brands Maggi, Nescafe and KitKat. Overall, the South Asian market has "continued to perform well", Nestle said Wednesday in its post-earnings statement.

Yes Bank unveils festive offer

New Delhi: Yes Bank Wednesday introduced festive season offers with discounts on processing fee on loans, low-cost EMIs, gift vouchers, cashbacks as well as various consumer loans at competitive interest rates. Unveiling the 'Khushiyon Ki Karein Zimmedari Se Tayyari' campaign, Yes Bank said customers can avail hassle-free loans (personal and business loans), 2-wheeler and auto loans up to 100% of on-road prices at competitive interest rates, topped up with tailored options and flexible payment plans.

Cathay Pacific cuts 8,500 jobs

Hong Kong: Hong Kong airline Cathay Pacific Airways said Wednesday it would cut 8,500 jobs and shut a regional airline as it grapples with the plunge in air travel due to the pandemic. About 5,300 employees based in Hong Kong and another 600 elsewhere will likely lose their jobs, and 2,600 unfilled positions will be cut.



The government is open to further stimulus measures to boost the coronavirus-hit economy
TARUN BAJAJ | ECONOMIC AFFAIRS SECRETARY

SBI OFFERS ADDITIONAL CONCESSIONS

Lending major State Bank of India (SBI) has announced concession in home loan rates by as much as 25 basis points. Accordingly, an interest concession of 25 bps will be provided for buying homes of above ₹75 lakh, based on 'CIBIL score and through YONO' (app)



Govt may sweeten deal further for AI sale bid

THE SUBMISSION OF INITIAL BID OR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST MAY BE EXTENDED BY 45 DAYS TO TWO MONTHS TO DECEMBER

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Oct 21: The government may further extend the date for submission of bids for Air India sale date beyond October 30 to give investors more time to make an offer while sweetening the deal terms further, finance minister's officials privy to the development said.

The submission of initial bid or expression of interest (EoI) may be extended by 45 days to two months to December. Also, officials said that bidders would be given the option to decide on the quantum of debt in Air India books that they will like to absorb rather than freezing the debt amount and seeking investors' bids.

As per the Air India EoI floated by DIPAM in January, of the airline's total debt of ₹60,074 crore as of March 31, 2019, the buyer would be required to absorb ₹23,286.5 crore, while the rest would be transferred to Air India Assets Holding Ltd (AIAHL), a special purpose vehicle.

With the proposed changes, buyers will decide on the level of debt that they will take and the one taking the largest debt may be considered favourable to be declared winner.

Disinvestment secretary Tuhin



Kanta Pandey has also hinted at changes in the current structure of Air India transaction process in an interaction with journalists last week.

For the government, Air India has now become a test case on how to get investor interest in adversarial market conditions. While the airlines financials are already under severe pressure, the Covid-19 pandemic had further dented the prospects of the aviation industry putting the sale process under further problems. The bidding process for the debt-ridden airline has been postponed four times earlier and of October 30 deadline is changed now, it would be fifth such extension.

Sources said that changes in the structure of the sale process to facilitate investors would go by the principle of letting buyers decide the enterprise value of Air India

rather than its market cap or using other valuation methodology. The enterprise valuation determines the value of an entity based on its market capitalisation and also debt in books and cash balances.

Sources said that changes in the valuation method has been approved by a CGD (Core Group on Disinvestment) headed by the cabinet secretary at its meeting last week and now it would be placed before AISAM (Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism).

For Air India, the government is finding it tough to get investors on board. A Tata Group led consortium was considered favourite to take over the airline earlier but its interest in the airline lately has been subdued. With foreign airlines bleeding over fall in air travel during the pandemic, getting investors would be difficult.

'India at doorstep of economic revival'

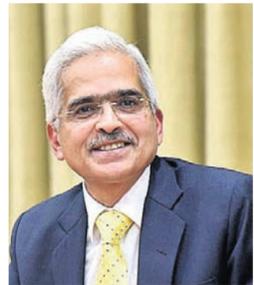
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das Wednesday said the country is at the doorstep of economic revival on the back of accommodative monetary and fiscal policies being pursued by the central bank and the government.

Das was speaking at the launch of the book 'Portraits of Power: Half a Century of Being at Ringside', written by former bureaucrat and current chairman of the Finance Commission NK Singh.

"We are almost at the doorstep of revival process and it's very important that the financial entities have adequate capital (to support growth)," he said.

Many of them have already raised capital and others are planning, he said, adding they would certainly do so in the coming months.



Das further said India followed the fiscal expansion path to deal with COVID-19-related challenges.

"I think post COVID, once there is containment of pandemic, the government will certainly have to spell out a fiscal roadmap that India should adopt," he said.

Both fiscal and monetary policies are in an accommodative stance, he added.

Govt relaxes import norms for onion to boost supply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: The government Wednesday relaxed import norms till December 15 to facilitate the early shipment of onion to boost the domestic supply and check the retail prices of the key kitchen staple. The Union Consumer Affairs Ministry, in a statement, said it will also offload more onion from its buffer stock in the open market to contain price rise.

An estimated Kharif crop of 37 lakh tonne is likely to start arriving in the Mandis that will give reprieve to the rising prices, it added. According to the ministry, a sharp spike in onion prices in the past 10 days by ₹11.56/kg has taken the all-India retail price of the commodity to ₹51.95/kg, which was 12.13% higher than the last year's price of ₹46.33/kg.

The retail price of onion has shown a marked increase from August-end 2020, though the price level was below that of last year till October 18, it said.

To facilitate import of onion, the ministry said, "The government has on October 21 relaxed the conditions for fumigation and additional declaration on Phytosanitary Certificate (PSC) under the Plant Quarantine Order (PQ), 2003 for import up to December 15, 2020".

The Indian High Commissions have been instructed in the relevant countries to contact the traders to push for greater onion imports to the country. Such consignments



of imported onions, which arrive at Indian ports without fumigation and endorsement to that effect on the PSC, would be fumigated in India by the importer through an accredited treatment provider.

If Stem and Bulbs nematode (Ditylenchus Dipsaci) or onion maggot (Hylimna Antiqua) is detected it would be eliminated through fumigation and the consignments to be released with no additional inspection fee.

"An undertaking will be obtained from the importers that the onion will be used only for consumption and not for propagation," the ministry said.

Such consignments of onions for consumption will not be subjected to four times an additional inspection fee on account of non-compliance of conditions of import under the PQ order, 2003, it added.

In order to moderate prices, the ministry said that onion from the buffer stock is being released in a calibrated manner from the second half of September 2020 to major mandis, retail suppliers such as Safal, Kendriya Bhandar, and NCCF as well as state governments. "More will be done in the coming days," it added.

GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY

Vedanta Lanjigarh holds awareness campaign



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Lanjigarh, Oct 21: Vedanta Limited, Lanjigarh, India's premier producer of metallurgical grade alumina, conducted a week-long programme to sensitise the communities around the plant area and beyond, on the importance of handwashing and hand hygiene. The programme marked the celebration of Global Handwashing Day 2020, October 15 and continued until October 21.

The programme covered around 200 beneficiaries of 50 Nand Ghars, Vedanta Group's flagship corporate social responsibility project, in Kalahandi and Rayagada districts.

It highlighted this year's Global Handwash Day theme - 'Hand Hygiene for All', with special focus on sanitation and hygiene in the backdrop of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

Vedanta Nand Ghar and Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) teams collaborated to organise various programmes to

sensitise local communities about the importance of handwashing with soap, as a preventive measure to stop the spread of corona virus as well as other potential diseases.

Along with the frontline workers, members of local Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRI) and community influencers, they conducted door-to-door campaigns in villages, including demonstrations on proper handwashing steps and public awareness sessions to educate about the importance and benefits of washing hands.

Company's COO Rakesh Mohan said, "At Lanjigarh, we have championed various facets of public health, hygiene and sanitation, from making the region malaria-free to bringing quality healthcare to the doorsteps of people through Vedanta Hospital."

Vedanta's social interventions in the domains of sustainable livelihood, women empowerment, quality education, health, water and sanitation, bio-investment and community infrastructure reach out to a total of 59 villages in Lanjigarh and nearby areas, benefiting about a lakh people in a year.

It empowers more than 3,000 women from 305 self help groups, provides healthcare services to about 60,000 people annually, gives educational support to more than 2,800 students, has planted more than 5.4 lakh trees in the community, and built 500 plus infrastructural projects at community level.

Honda 2Wheeler India begins festival offers

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Oct 21: Amid the festival fervor, Honda Motorcycle & Scooter India Pvt. Ltd (HMSI) brought a bouquet of six irresistible offers with attractive savings going up to ₹11,000 to cater to the diverse needs of its customers.



Director (Sales & Marketing) HMSI Yadvinder Singh Guleria said, "Recognising that this festival is unlike any before, Honda's committed efforts to ensure 'safety first' across all its network via its comprehensive sanitisation, social distancing measures has given added confidence to our customers. Now, with the start of Navratri, we are witnessing increase in enquiries, bookings and test rides at showroom. Adding to the excitement of Honda's expanded BS-VI lineup is our festival surprise - the Honda Super 6 offer. For Honda 2Wheeler customers, now is the best time to ride home their dream Honda 2Wheeler with big savings up to ₹11,000."

Sony India unveils Durga Puja offers

Bhubaneswar: Sony India has announced exciting consumer offers ahead of the Durga puja with attractive offers coupled with easy finance schemes like easy EMIs with zero down payment and up to 10% additional cashback. Sales Head of Sony India Satish Padmanabhan said, "We have been focusing on providing the best-in-class products and technology to our customers. Durga puja is one of the key festivals and we are very happy to extend unique consumer promotional offers and easy finance schemes for our customers." Sony India will offer up to 30% discount on MRP and two years of warranty on select BRAVIA televisions. The company is also offering Wireless Noise Cancellation headphones (WH-CH700N) worth ₹12,990 free on purchase of select BRAVIA television sets. Additionally, customers will also get a discount voucher of up to ₹2,500 to purchase Google Nest Hub and Google Nest Mini with their television sets. Sony has also announced a special BRAVIA smart pack which offers TV stick free on purchase of select range of BRAVIA televisions. With a wide range of Sony Soundbars to choose from, customers can get an enhanced and compelling cinematic experience right in the comfort of their home. Customers can save up to ₹10,000 on purchase of Soundbar with BRAVIA TVs from 102 cm (40) and above.

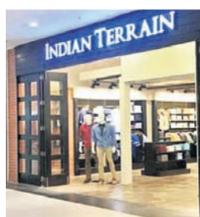
NTPC CMHQ organises walkathon in City

Bhubaneswar: In pursuance of directions received from the government under Jan Andolan for COVID-19 Campaign, employees of NTPC Coal Mining Headquarter, Ranchi Tuesday organised a walkathon to create awareness on three messages - wear mask, follow physical distancing, maintain hand hygiene. Employees also undertake to follow and encourage others to follow the key COVID appropriate behaviours. The main objective behind this campaign is to reach each and every citizen of India and to make them aware of the Jan Andolan Campaign on COVID-19. To make the walkathon effective, masks and hand sanitisers were distributed to 100 beneficiaries mainly local commuters, street vendors and daily wagers etc. The headquarter has also planned to outreach maximum citizens through popular radio jingles in association with local FM channel.



Indian Terrain, Fairtrade India join hands

Bhubaneswar: India's leading menswear & boys wear brand Indian Terrain joined hands with Fairtrade India to create an exclusive sustainable fashion line that protects the environment and empowers fair trade farmers. With the social and environmental footprint of fashion getting bigger it is becoming increasingly important for brands to drive change. Indian Terrain recognises its role in making sustainable fashion more mainstream. The commitment to become India's first high street brand to launch a Fairtrade Capsule is a step in this direction. The Fairtrade labelled collection/capsule by Indian Terrain means that social and environmental sustainability standards have been followed at the farms and factories that make the collection/capsule. It means that farmers have access to a fair price for their produce, no harmful pesticides were used, child labour was prohibited, and that the environment was protected while making these clothes.



e-Tailing to become \$200bn opportunity by 2025: Report

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Oct 21: Online spending, which has got a boost during the pandemic, is expected to grow at an annual rate of over 35% to \$200 billion in the next five years, and a lot of this growth will come from direct-to-consumer brands, according to a report.

The domestic direct-to-consumer (D2C) market is estimated to be \$100 billion by 2025, or 11% of the total retail market that is slated to touch \$1.7 trillion by then, investment bank Avendus Capital said in the report.

Overall retail market stood at \$977 billion in 2019, it said.

The domestic retail market, which is the fifth largest globally, is projected to surpass \$1.7 trillion by

2025, driven by e-tailing. Of the total retail market, only 17% was in the modern trade in 2019, which is slated to touch 31% by 2025.

The rise in online shopping is fuelled by the 639-million strong internet population, which is growing at 24%. The country has added 80 million shoppers in the past three years to reach 130 million now, according to the report.

The domestic e-tail market, which stood at a low \$39 billion in 2019 or 4% of the total market, is slated to touch \$200-billion opportunity, enjoying a share of 11% of the total market, it said.

The report also said the online ecosystem and evolving consumer needs have made new business models viable and have led to the emergence of D2C



distribution channels.

Leading domestic D2C brands include Lenskart, Licious, Zivame, Boat, Wow Skin Science, Healthkart,

Mamaearth, MyGlamm, Sugar, Incnut, Country Delight, Atomborg, and Lifelong among others.

"We expect high levels of funding

The domestic direct-to-consumer (D2C) market is estimated to be \$100 billion by 2025, or 11% of the total retail market

The domestic retail market, which is the fifth largest globally, is projected to surpass \$1.7 trillion by 2025

The rise in online shopping is fuelled by the 639-million strong internet population, which is growing at 24%

Leading domestic D2C brands include Lenskart, Licious, Zivame, Boat, Wow Skin Science, Healthkart, Atomborg, and Lifelong among others

activity in this space, as more successful D2C outcomes will validate the hypothesis for newer capital deployment," said the report, adding

that the addressable market for this segment is \$100 billion by 2025.

It added that robust consolidation is anticipated in the next three-four years, either as roll-ups or incumbents buying new-age D2C companies.

Globally, D2C brands have shown mixed results, and the leading names in this category are companies like Warby Parker, Allbirds, Away, Fenty Beauty and Perfect Diary.

The key drivers for D2C brands in the country are beauty and personal care, food and beverages, and fashion.

D2C brands refer to businesses that have majority of their revenue or customer acquisition from D2C online channels or started with an online-first distribution before going omnichannel.

RR, SRH LOCK HORNS IN MUST-WIN MATCH

SIRAJ, CHAHAL DEMOLISH KKR



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dubai, Oct 21: The inexperienced young guns of both Rajasthan Royals (RR) and Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) would like to put their hands up in testing times when both teams square off in a must-win IPL game Thursday.

Whether it is Priyam Garg, Abdul Samad of SRH or Kartik Tyagi, Riyan Parag of the RR, the youngsters from both sides will be feeling the pressure of doing something out of the box in case their illustrious seniors fail in that pursuit.

SRH are currently tottering at the second last place in the eight-team table with just six points from nine games while RR are a notch ahead with eight points after their comprehensive win over Chennai Super Kings in the previous game.

SRH can't afford to slip up even one bit since another loss would rule them out of the play-offs race. The RR would hope to continue with the winning momentum and hope that their foreign recruits continue to perform like they did against CSK.

They got their campaign back on track after two heavy defeats and would also have the edge over SRH, who lost to KKR in the Super Over in their previous game.

Losing Super Over contests often push teams back as KKIP found out after their opening loss to Delhi Capitals. One more loss would make it extremely difficult for the RR to stay alive.

While Jofra Archer continues

to be the backbone of RR's bowling attack, the wrist-spinning duo of Shreyas Gopal and Rahul Tewatia were terrific in the middle overs against CSK and skipper Smith would be hoping for an encore from his bowlers.

In batting, Jos Buttler looked in ominous form the other night, forcing Smith to play the second fiddle but RR would need more consistent partnerships upfront.

All-rounder Ben Stokes is yet to fire and Robin Uthappa had been their weakest link so far, which might prompt Smith to give a go to someone like Punjab dasher Manan Vohra.

The other aspect that hurt them is Sanju Samson's form which like every other year has gone from good to bad and now worse.

SRH, on the other hand, would still be smarting from the Super Over loss to KKR Sunday. David Warner and Co. would definitely be hurt by that loss but they need to come out of that shock quickly and re-strategise if they want to keep themselves afloat in the T20 event. The team heavily relies on their batting unit, mainly on the top four comprising Jonny Bairstow, Warner, Manish Pandey and Kane Williamson.

AGENCIES

Abu Dhabi, Oct 21: Mohammed Siraj (3/8) and Yuzvendra Chahal (2/15) wreaked havoc in a stunning display of swing and spin bowling as Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) completely outplayed Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to script a comprehensive eight-wicket victory in their IPL encounter here, Wednesday.

Siraj and Chahal spelled doom for KKR, who could just manage a paltry 84 for eight. In reply, RCB completed the job in 13.3 overs.

Chasing a small total, RCB were off to flying start as the openers - Aaron Finch (16) and Devdutt Padikkal (25) - added 46 runs, including a 44-run power-play.



Yuzvendra Chahal



From L: Mohammed Siraj (C) celebrates a wicket with his teammates; Virat Kohli and Gurkeerat Mann have something to laugh about during their partnership



However, RCB had a double blow in the seventh over.

First, Kiwi pacer Lockie Ferguson (1/17) got rid of Finch and then, two balls later, a miscommunication between Padikkal and Gurkeerat Mann (21 n o) cost the former's wicket. After that, it was all a cake walk for RCB as skipper Virat Kohli (18 n o) and Mann took their side home without taking much risk.

Earlier, Siraj (4-2-8-3) ran through the KKR top order to trigger a stunning batting collapse and became the first bowler in the history of IPL to bowl two maiden overs while Chahal (2/15) stymied their revival hopes. It is KKR's second-lowest

wicket-maiden over, getting rid of Tom Banton (10) in the process. His figures read an astonishing 2-1-0-3 at that time.

Tripathi nicked one straight back to AB de Villiers behind the stumps and in the next ball Siraj ran through the gates of Rana for a golden duck.

In his next over, he accounted for hard-hitting English batsman Banton with a scrambled seam delivery to cap the best ever opening two overs in the IPL.

In between, Navdeep Saini (1/23) dismissed the in-form opener Shubman Gill (1) after the young opener mistimed a pull to be caught by Chris Morris as KKR looked in

shambles with 14/4 inside four overs. KKR had their most-experienced batsmen in Morgan and Karthik in the middle. But Chahal exposed latter's woes against leg-spin bowling as he trapped him leg before following a successful review.

The 27-run partnership for the eighth wicket between Ferguson (19) and Kuldeep Yadav (12) allowed KKR to go past 80-run mark.

BRIEF SCORES: KKR 84/8 (Eoin Morgan 30; Lockie Ferguson 19; Mohammed Siraj 3/8, Yuzvendra Chahal 2/15) lost to RCB 85/2 (Devdutt Padikkal 25, Gurkeerat Mann 21 n o; Lockie Ferguson 1/17 by 8 wickets.

IPL ROUND UP

HOLDER DISAPPOINTED

DUBAI: West Indies captain Jason Holder has expressed his disappointment over none of the IPL teams taking a knee in solidarity with the 'Black Lives Matter' movement, which, he feels, has gone unnoticed in the world's most glamorous cricket league. Holder, who is member of SRH in the IPL, made the statement while receiving the prestigious Peter Smith Award on behalf of the West Indies cricket team in a virtual ceremony organised by the Cricket Writers' Club. "To be honest, I haven't had one conversation up here around it (BLM). Sometimes it seems it has gone unnoticed, which is a sad thing," Holder said in his address posted on Cricket West Indies website. Taking a knee as a gesture of support to BLM started in the West Indies' Test series in England this summer. It followed the global furor over African American George Floyd's death at the hands of a white police officer in Minneapolis.

BRAVO OUT OF IPL WITH GROIN INJURY

DUBAI: Chennai Super Kings all-rounder Dwayne Bravo has been ruled out of the ongoing IPL with a groin injury, dealing a massive blow to the already struggling side which has very slim chances of advancing to the play-offs. The 37-year-old Bravo couldn't bowl the final over against Delhi Capitals in a match in Sharjah October 17. Skipper MS Dhoni was forced to bowl Ravindra Jadeja, who conceded three sixes. "Dwayne Bravo is ruled out of the IPL due to a groin injury," CSK CEO Kashi Viswanathan told PTI. Bravo played six games and scored only seven runs in two innings. However, he got six wickets in as many games with an economy rate of 8.57. CSK were already hamstrung by absence of senior players Suresh Raina and Harbhajan Singh, both of whom pulled out citing personal reasons.

CL ROUND-UP

Lazio beat Dortmund

Rome: Lazio's Ciro Immobile scored against his former club Borussia Dortmund in a 3-1 home victory marking their return to the Champions League group phase after a 13-year absence Tuesday. Their second strike was credited as an own goal by keeper Marwin Hitz while substitute Jean-Daniel Akpa-Akpro got the third as the Italians shrugged off poor form in the new Serie A season to secure a winning start to their Group F campaign. Dortmund's Norway striker Erling Haaland kept up his prolific Champions League scoring form with a second-half goal to make it 1-2 but that was the German club's only consolation.

Sevilla hold Chelsea

London: Chelsea were frustrated by a disciplined Sevilla as their opening Group E fixture in the Champions League ended in a cagey 0-0 draw at Stamford Bridge Tuesday. Europa League winners Sevilla, who have been a thorn in the side of English clubs in Europe, contained Chelsea's attacking threats in a game of few clear chances. Sevilla dominated possession in the first half with Nemanja Gudelj's header forcing a save from Edouard Mendy. Chelsea's most productive spell came after the restart when Kurt Zouma and Ben Chilwell both headed good chances straight at Sevilla keeper Yassine Bounou. Yet it was a night of defensive superiority as Chelsea manager Frank Lampard experienced his first 0-0 draw since taking over at his former club.

Angelino shines

Leipzig: Midfielder Angelino struck twice in four minutes to give RB Leipzig a 2-0 victory over Istanbul Basaksehir Tuesday and help them to make a winning start in the Champions League group stage. Leipzig, last season's surprise semifinalists who are unbeaten in all competitions so far this season, went in search of a quick goal and after a few early chances Angelino put them in the driving seat in the 16th minute. The 23-year-old, on loan from Manchester City since January, beautifully controlled a Kevin Kampl cross into the box with a fine first touch, pivoted on the spot and fired in for the lead. He completed a quick counter attack four minutes later after the Turks lost possession in their own half.

Sweet 16 for Messi as Barca triumph

Parisians perished in Paris as Man Utd win

REUTERS

Barcelona, Oct 21: Lionel Messi became the first player to score in 16 consecutive Champions League seasons as he guided 10-man Barcelona to a 5-1 victory over Hungarian side Ferencvaros in their Group G opener at the Camp Nou Tuesday.

Messi netted from the penalty spot in the first half for his 116th career goal in the competition, before the lively Ansu Fati added a second.

Philippe Coutinho grabbed another goal early in the second half but Barca defender Gerard Pique was dismissed for impeding Tokmac Nguen, leading to a penalty for the visitors that was converted by Igor Kharatin.

Any thoughts of a dramatic comeback were quashed though as 17-year-old Pedri netted his first Barca goal after arriving from second-tier Las Palmas at the start of the season, and Ousmane Dembele added the fifth late on.

The Catalan side move above Juventus on goal difference at the top of the table after the Italian



Lionel Messi takes the penalty; (inset L) Gerard Pique is shown the red card; (inset R) Pedri celebrates his goal against Ferencvaros at Camp Nou, Tuesday

champions won 2-0 away at Dynamo Kyiv earlier Tuesday. The pair will meet in Turin, October 28.

Messi handed his side the lead after he both won and converted a penalty, bringing up another milestone in his career. Former Manchester United winger Ryan Giggs is the only other player to net in 16 Champions League seasons,

though the run was not consecutive. Fati then beat the offside trap from Frenkie de Jong's lobbed pass and steered the ball into the net on the volley, before Coutinho profited from intricate build-up play by Messi and Fati to score.

Ferencvaros, however, created what looked like being a nervous final 20 minutes as Pique could not

4 PLAYERS TO GET NEW CONTRACTS

BARCELONA: Barcelona have announced contract extensions for four first-team players, including experienced centre back Gerard Pique whose new deal until June 2024 would extend his stay at the Catalan side to 16 years. Barca confirmed a buy-out clause of 500 million euros in the contract, and said the extension was "subject to the player making a certain number of appearances from the 2021-22 season". First-choice goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen also signed a new deal to June 2025, while centre back Clement Lenglet and midfielder Frenkie de Jong have been offered contracts up to June 2026. Ter Stegen, De Jong and Lenglet will have buy-out clauses of 500mn euro, 400mn euro and 300mn euro respectively.

handle the pace of Nguen and hauled the striker back in the box, seeing red for his indiscretion as Kharatin easily converted the spot-kick. But late goals from substitutes Pedri and Dembele against the tiring visitors sealed a satisfactory night for Koeman.

REUTERS

Paris, Oct 21: Manchester United got their Champions League campaign underway in emphatic style when Marcus Rashford's late goal earned them a 2-1 victory at Paris St Germain Tuesday, handing the French champions their first group-stage home defeat in 16 years.

Rashford netted three minutes from time, 18 months after scoring the decisive goal in a 3-1 win at PSG that sent United into the quarter-finals after a 0-2 first-leg home defeat.

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's United side went ahead in the Group H encounter with a twice-taken Bruno Fernandes first-half penalty before Anthony Martial's own goal after the break gifted PSG the equaliser; only for Rashford to wrap up the win with a precise low shot. It was PSG's first Champions League group-stage defeat at the Parc des Princes in 25 games, having last lost 3-1 to CSKA Moscow in 2004.

Thomas Tuchel's side looked nothing like the one who reached the final of last season's competition as they lacked energy throughout in an empty Parc des Princes.

Paul Pogba surprisingly started on the United bench while Marquinhos was not included in PSG's starting 11, having not recovered in time from a groin injury he sustained on Brazil duty.

He was replaced by Abdou Diallo, who fouled Anthony Martial in the box, handing the visitors a penalty which was converted by Fernandes on his second attempt. Keylor Navas had saved the first-spot kick but it had to be retaken after the keeper was judged to have moved off his goal line.

It was a poor start from PSG, who had two chances through Angel Di Maria and Layvin Kurzawa, but lacked aggression.

Kylian Mbappe slalomed through the defence before curling a shot towards the top-right corner, but United keeper David de Gea stretched to tip the ball away three minutes into the second half.

Seven minutes later, Martial headed a Neymar corner into his own net, handing PSG an unexpected equaliser. The visitors pressed harder in the closing stages and deservedly regained the advantage when Rashford beat Navas with a low, diagonal shot into the bottom corner from just inside the box.

Morata helps Juve defeat Kyiv

REUTERS

Kyiv, Oct 21: Juventus made a winning start in the Champions League as they defeated Dynamo Kyiv 2-0 thanks to a pair of classic poacher's goals from Alvaro Morata in their Group G opener Tuesday. Juve coach Andrea Pirlo enjoyed

his first win as a manager in Europe's elite club competition, which he won twice with AC Milan during his playing days as a midfielder.

With Cristiano Ronaldo ruled out following a positive test for COVID-19, Dejan Kulusevski was twinned with Morata up front and

Federico Chiesa created some early chances for the visitors.

However, Juve suffered an early setback when defender Giorgio Chiellini had to be substituted in the 19th minute with what appeared to be a hamstring injury, forcing Pirlo to reshuffle his defence before Morata came to the rescue.

A clever backheel by Aaron Ramsey set up Kulusevski and although the Swedish winger's shot was saved, Morata was on hand to fire home the rebound and the Spaniard then stole in front of his marker to head home from close range in the 84th minute.

The COVID-19-limited crowd roared on the hosts but Kyiv struggled to create decent chances on their return to the Champions League after a four-year absence as Juve comfortably closed out the win.

Juventus host Barcelona in their next group game October 28, while Dynamo Kyiv travel to Hungarian side Ferencvaros.

Action to begin at SAI centres from Nov first

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Oct 21: Sporting activities will resume at the SAI facilities across the country from November 1, keeping in mind next year's Tokyo Olympics and paralympics, Sports Authority of India (SAI) said Wednesday. SAI also said "athletes who have to travel beyond 500 km will be provided with an air ticket while those athletes who are stationed less than 500 km may travel by Train in 3rd AC."

Training at NCOEs and STCs were suspended March 17 due to the outbreak of the novel coronavirus. SAI has decided to "provide accommodation to all coaches and support staff of the NCOEs/STCs" in order to create a bio-bubble.

SAI said athletes have the option of joining SAI centres post Diwali and authorities will also apprise the athletes.



Right on the money: Alvaro Morata wheels away in celebration after scoring against Dynamo Kyiv, Tuesday



MARCUS RASHFORD