

FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES

Today in the morning you will choose to approach work audaciously. You will churn out fancy ideas. However, Ganesha says, by noon, you will feel disoriented again. Ganesha urges you to take a break to re-energise yourself.

TAURUS

This day, you are likely to be in a mood to extend your business activities, launch new venture. Ganesha urges you to hold your horses today, and reminds you that haste makes waste. It would be a good idea to wait for a few days and, in the meantime plan out your projects meticulously, in detail.

GEMINI

You will be more emotional today and people might play with your feelings. Therefore you need to rein in your emotions today when it comes to dealing with people. However, you will meet people who will reciprocate your feelings with equal ardour, if not more, says Ganesha.

CANCER

In all likelihood, today, you are likely to strike a balance between your professional and personal life, predicts Ganesha. The work will be interesting and stimulating, while your time with family will be peaceful and soothing.

LEO

Rise and shine! There is a very bright chance that today will be one of those super energetic and enthusiastic days. Ganesha predicts you will have a great time socialising with neighbours, friends and relatives.

VIRGO

Ganesha foresees a strong probability that you will keep your feet firmly planted on the ground in the face of adversity. The afternoon sun may bring some good returns or much awaited results for you.

LIBRA

Ganesha forecasts mostly superficial and thin-skinned issues as the likely cause of your unease and nervousness today. Matters relating to government rules and regulations will be on the table today at your workplace. But evening promises a lighter fare; your fine taste in arts shall receive applause from all quarters.

SCORPIO

There are chances that you may easily get irritated and infuriated today, predicts Ganesha. Keep a lid on your anger or it may lead to irreconcilable differences. Avoid confrontations and unnecessary complications at work as well.

SAGITTARIUS

You may turn to your family for love and happiness today, predicts Ganesha. But your soul searching will come at a high material cost. In the evening, you may encounter a thrilling love prospect with who you might indulge in some adventurous activity.

CAPRICORN

Work pressure may take a toll on you today, but you will overcome all impediments and excel in whatever work you undertake, says Ganesha. Support and motivation await you at home as family members will be exceedingly tolerant of your actions and endeavours.

AQUARIUS

Action is your forte, so seize the initiative and you will come out a winner! The afternoon sees you happy, but heavy-duty work may take a toll on you. Relax a bit – listen to music, play with your pet, or simply don your best attire and step out to socialise!

PISCES

You are likely to be sweating today at work, and it is neither the weather nor an ill-fitting suit that is the cause, says Ganesha. You will try your best to get your views across, and the post-afternoon lunch siesta is probably the best time to hammer your point home because that is when your boss will have all the energy to argue against.



‘WAS SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BY A DRUG DEALER IN 2018’

Singer-songwriter Demi Lovato, says she lost her virginity in a rape when she was a teenager. She also was sexually assaulted by her drug dealer in July 2018, on the night she had a drug overdose and almost died, added the 28-year-old in a documentary series.

EMMA NERVOUS ABOUT HOSTING THE VOICE LIVE

TV presenter Emma Willis will be hosting the reality show *The Voice*, and she admits being nervous. Willis is hosting the show live for the first time in two years and says that she is worried about doing something wrong.



‘Pandemic gave space to create what we enjoy’

Mumbai: Singer Jonita Gandhi said that music videos are a great way for singers to reach out to their audience. In the case of film songs, she points out, fans only know the actors they see on screen and often have no idea who sang the song.

“We’re living in a visual era. As a singer, especially in Bollywood, we don’t often get chance to be the face of our voice, so listeners don’t get to know who we are. Music videos for independent music gives us the opportunity to be the face of our own voice,” she said.

The singer said the pandemic gave singers a chance to make independent music, and hence the scope to interact with fans directly.

“With the rise of the pandemic, artistes have been exploring (the idea of) making music from home and there’s been a lot more original songs released independently, a lot of them have been in a DIY kind of acoustic or with minimalist production vibes. I think the pandemic gave us artistes a chance to connect with the music within us, and space to create what we enjoy rather than solely commercial tracks, and it seems the audience has developed a taste for it as well,” she said.

ANS

‘Perfectionist’ Jacqueline takes to tightrope walking

Mumbai: Actress Jacqueline Fernandez, who recently finished shooting in Jaisalmer for *Bachchan Pandey*, trained in the art of tightrope walking or funambulism for her role.

It is a skill of walking on a thin wire or rope, the art has a long tradition in various countries and is usually performed by the locals.

Jacqueline was in Jaisalmer for almost three weeks and she learnt the art in about a week’s time.

“It is a tough art to learn where one needs to have the correct body balance to walk on a rope which is tied at a height of almost eight to 10

feet above the ground. Jacqueline learnt the art with ease,” said a source close to the development.

The source added that the actress has also trained in pole dancing and aerial yoga earlier on a personal level, which helped her get the balancing part of the art correctly. It also claimed: “She has given some amazing shots and left everyone spell-bound by learning the art so perfectly.”

ANS



Vir Das to be part of upcoming Hollywood project *The Bubble*

Mumbai: Actor-comedian Vir Das is excited to be a part of Hollywood filmmaker and comedian Judd Apatow’s upcoming comedy project *The Bubble*.

“I have been shooting for this for a bit now and I’m very excited to be part of this mega comedy project. Everyone on this cast is immensely funny and we’re making something special,” Vir said.

The feature is a comedy about a group of actors and actresses stuck inside a pandemic bubble in a hotel and are attempting to finish a studio franchise film.

The show has a huge cast including Karen Gillan, Iris Apatow, Fred Armisen, Maria Bakalova, David Duchovny, Keegan-Michael Key, Leslie Mann, Pedro Pascal and Peter Serafinowicz. Vir is not only a part of the show but is also producing it.

The show will stream on Netflix.

ANS



Hrithik confesses missing samosas!

Mumbai: When it comes to his menu of choice, Hrithik Roshan does put forth a serious face.

In an Instagram picture he has posted, the actor looks into his lap-top screen intensely. He says he is missing his samosas.

“Don’t be fooled by the serious face. It’s a menu. #itakemyfood-veryseriously #missinmysamosas,” he wrote as the caption.

Speaking about his professional life, Hrithik has been roped in as the lead for the Indian adaptation of popular English series *The Night Manager*.

The actor will essay an Indian version of the Jonathan Pine character, essayed by Tom Hiddleston in the original 2016 limited series based on the 1993 novel by



John Le Carre. The Indian adaptation will start shooting in Mumbai in April. ANS

STATE LEVEL COMEDY PLAY FEST - DAY 4

Fakir Mohan’s sense of humour on display in *Mun Hata Bahuda*



Artists of Srasta enact a scene from play *Mun Hata Bahuda* at Bhanja Kala Mandap, Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: Even as Byasakabi Fakir Mohan Senapati has authored just four novels, 19 short stories and some poetry, he is regarded as the ‘Father of Odia fiction’ and considered among those who come once in an era.

While his novels and short stories are iconic, the poems he composed haven’t been discussed much.

Srasta theatre troupe of Balasore, in a bid to showcase Fakir Mohan’s sense of humour and satire towards the society, staged *Mun Hata Bahuda*, a dramatised version of his poetry of the same name, at Bhanja Kala Mandap here, Wednesday.

The play was part of the comedy drama festival organised by Panchamaveda in collaboration with Shristi Theatre.

Apart from spreading a strong message with a dab of humour, *Mun Hata Bahuda* was different from other dramas staged

so far in the festival as Fakir Mohan himself was the central character in this production. In the play, he tries to bring a positive change in the society while remaining in the purview of social tradition.

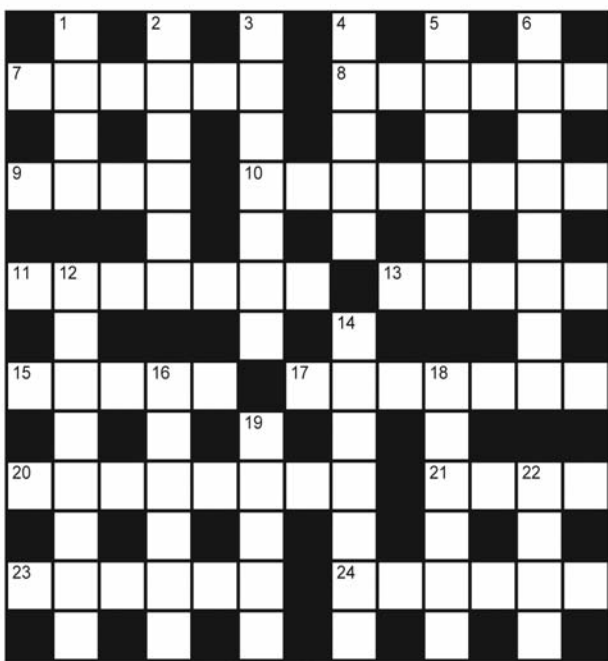
Adapted from the original poem of Fakir Mohan, the play was dramatised and directed by Srasta’s founder Hemendra Mahapatra. He was also conferred with Panchamaveda Samman on the occasion.

The music was scored by Nandakishore Das and Ajitananda Dev Goswami. The artistes who performed on the stage include Sulalit, Sangram, Manoranjan, Shyamray Amitabh and Susmita.

State Planning Board Deputy Chairman Sanjay Kumar Das Burma, State Information Commissioner Dillip Bisoi, Special Secretary of Co-operation department Bharat Chandra Behera and MBS Public School chairman Sourendra Mohapatra were among the guests on the stage.

FUN post

CROSSWORD

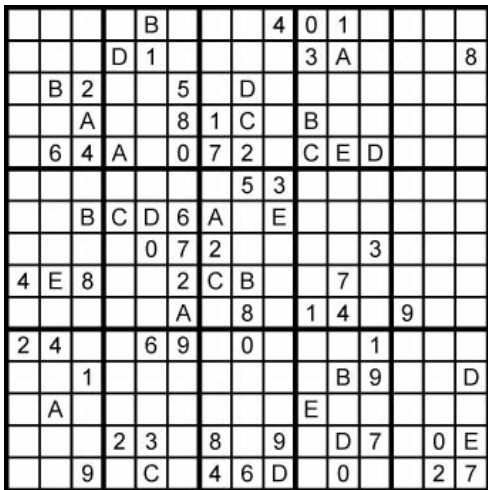


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- Across**
- 7 Flag
 - 8 Former Japanese VIP
 - 9 Ocean predator
 - 10 British kerosine
 - 11 Ennui
 - 13 Own up to
 - 15 Like a gymnast
 - 17 Raise
 - 20 Comes apart at the seams
 - 21 Computer command
 - 23 High regard
 - 24 Woodwind player
 - Down**
 - 1 It grows on you
 - 2 Wacky to the max
 - 3 Superman’s bane
 - 4 Autocrats of old
 - 5 Blundered
 - 6 Boxer
 - 12 Put in order
 - 14 Largest city in Scotland
 - 16 Bread units
 - 18 Optometrist’s concern
 - 19 Smiles broadly
 - 22 Widespread

SUDOKU

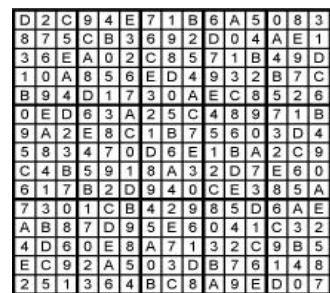
To solve the Sudoku puzzle, each row, column and box must contain the numbers 0 to 9 and the letters A to E.



SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

SUDOKU



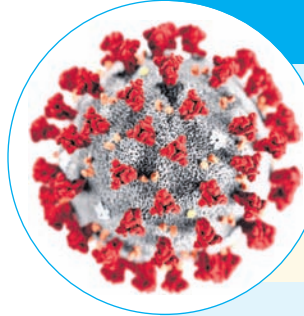
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



SECURITY CHECK

A team from the elite NSG inspects security arrangement at Srimandir in Puri, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	12,14,84,750	9,79,24,308	26,85,303
India	1,14,38,734	1,10,45,284	1,59,044
Odisha	3,38,405	3,35,857	1,918

Herd immunity a long process: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The state government will continue to extend all support the Union government in the fight against Covid-19 pandemic, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said, Wednesday.

Patnaik said this during the interaction of Prime Minister with all the chief ministers on Covid-19 situation through videoconferencing.

“As a country with huge population, achieving herd immunity will be a long process and in the meantime we all need to be extremely careful. We will continue to extend all support to the Union government in this fight against Covid,” he said.

Over the last one year, the world has seen unprecedented crisis due to the Covid-19 situation. It was a difficult year for every human being as the virus spread to all parts of the world. Families and societies have been affected not only in terms of health crisis but also severe im-



We need to be careful as multiple surges of Covid spread is the reality in many countries and as witnessed in many states in India as well. We cannot go back to the era of lockdowns

NAVEEN PATNAIK | CHIEF MINISTER

pact on the economy and livelihoods as well, Naveen said.

Stating that Odisha is affected by disasters like cyclones almost every year, the Chief Minister said, “Our administrative machinery is well prepared to deal with crisis situations. Thankfully, with the cooperation of people of Odisha we have been able to control the pandemic and limit its damage to a large extent.”

He thanked the scientific community for developing vaccines at such short notice and said, “The roll-out of the vaccine has been helpful in providing hope to the citizens that

the end of the pandemic is nearing. It's a matter of pride for us that India is leading in vaccine manufacture. We need to involve further the private sector in expediting the vaccination program.”

“We need to be careful as multiple surges of Covid spread is the reality in many countries and as witnessed in many states in India as well. We cannot go back to the era of lockdowns,” the CM stated.

However, he added, at the same time people need to ensure that the virus spread is also contained through renewed efforts in awareness and enforcement.

Treat scribes as frontline workers: State to Centre

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The state government, Wednesday, urged the Centre to include some more categories of people who were engaged in ensuring essential services and Covid-19 surveillance & containment as frontline workers (FLWs) for Covid-19 vaccination.

In a letter to Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, state H&FW department Additional Chief Secretary PK Mohapatra stated that government officials who were engaged in Covid-19 surveillance and containment measures are being vaccinated as FLWs in Odisha since February 2021.

However, many categories of persons who are at risk of exposure to infection due to the nature of their work have not been included as frontline workers. These categories included journalists and personnel of the print and electronic media, staff engaged in maintenance of essential services, members engaged at airports, railway stations and port, and servitors of Jagannath and Lingaraj temples. “I request you to kindly consider the above categories for Covid vaccination on priority and communicate necessary approval at an early read,” the letter said.

Bypoll: Pipli to have 348 booths to keep Covid at bay

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: As some parts of India are experiencing a second wave of Covid-19, the office of the State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) announced Wednesday an increase in the number of booths in the poll-bound Pipli constituency to ensure social distancing.

Odisha CEO Sushil Kumar Lohani said at a presser here that Pipli bypolls will be conducted with strict adherence to the Covid-19 norms. “We have increased the number of polling booths for Pipli bypolls. Last time voting was done in 271

booths, this time the number will be increased to 348. We will also ensure the presence of not more than 1,000 voters at one polling station. Suspected Covid-19 patients will be provided to tents and they will cast their votes in the last two hours,” said Lohani. “All voters will be thermally screened before they enter the booth,” Lohani added. Lohani also stated elderly people can avail of postal ballots. “Those above 80 years, differently-abled and Covid-19 patients and suspects can opt for postal ballots,” he informed. Lohani also said that the office has adequate EVMs and VVPATs to conduct

the elections. Informing that all officials involved in conducting the Pipli bypolls will be considered as frontline workers, Lohani said that they would receive priority in Covid-19 vaccination. The CEO also informed that a nodal officer would be appointed to monitor the Covid-19 safety protocols during the elections.

Lohani informed that the number of vehicles used by candidates while filing nominations will be restricted. He however said that the final plan for security arrangements and use of CCTV and other amenities during election is yet to be finalized. “It will be done soon,” he informed.

Swain seeks Goyal's intervention in paddy row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: State Food Supplies and Consumer Welfare Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain wrote to Union Consumer Welfare, Food and Public Distribution Minister Piyush Goyal seeking his intervention in issues pertaining to paddy procurement in Odisha.

In his letter, Swain cited the extreme shortage of funds at the Odisha State Civil Supplies Corporation (OSCS) and slow evacuation of grains from Food Corporation of India (FCI) godowns which have reportedly affected the paddy pro-

curement process in the state.

“Odisha is expected to have a surplus of 30 lakh MT rice which needs to be evacuated by FCI in the current kharif season. The FCI has so far evacuated only 6.80 lakh MT of rice from Odisha. For the current month, FCI, Odisha Region has received an extremely low quantity movement plan for evacuation from the state,” Swain said.

He also said that such slow pace can lead to lesser evacuation of expected quantum of rice from the state as set by the government.

“This will have serious consequences of overloaded godowns in

FS&CW Minister RP Swain cited extreme shortage of funds at the OSCS and slow evacuation of grains from FCI godowns

state and preventing timely receipt of rice from custom millers which in turn would be a major roadblock in smooth procurement of paddy during the ensuing Rabi season and the next Kharif season,” he said.

The minister in his letter has

sought Goyal's intervention to resolve the issue. “I would, therefore, earnestly request your kind intervention to resolve the above said problems so as to ensure smooth paddy procurement operations,” Swain said.

Swain also revealed that the OSCS is in a state of poor health.

“The OSCS is reeling under shortage of funds. Borrowing from banks has reached Rs 19,000 crore since there is a huge unpaid sum towards provisional and advance subsidy of Rs 5,616 crore (as on 10.3.2021),” Swain told Goyal in his letter.

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Little gain for state even after 19 hearings: BJD

POST NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi, March 17: Requesting the Union government's intervention in resolving Mahanadi river water dispute with Chhattisgarh, Biju Janata Dal (BJD) MP Bhartruhari Mahtab Wednesday expressed dissatisfaction over the stalemate in Mahanadi water dispute tribunal.

Mahtab, while speaking during Zero Hour in Lok Sabha, said that even after 19 hearings on the Mahanadi water dispute between the riparian states, Odisha has got no benefit from the tribunal. He also said that the statutory tenure of the tribunal ended March 12 and no decision has been taken on the extension of the tenure of the tribunal. "The tribunal was constituted by the Union government in 2018 following the order of the Supreme Court," he added.

Highlighting the gravity of the

MAHANADI WATER DISPUTE



matter, the Lok Sabha MP from Cuttack said the water level of Hirakud Reservoir has come down by six feet before the onset of summer. He also said that more than six districts of Odisha have been using the water of Hirakud reservoir for household purposes.

The BJD MP said that the Mahanadi River water flow to Odisha has been obstructed due to construction of barrages by

Chhattisgarh and requested the Union government to intervene in the matter and ensure adequate flow of water to Odisha during the summer.

It is to be mentioned here that Odisha and Chhattisgarh have filed petitions in the Mahanadi water dispute tribunal in respect to sharing of Mahanadi river water. Odisha in its petition claimed that Chhattisgarh has constructed sev-

eral barrages on the river obstructing the water flow to Odisha. Odisha has sought stay on the construction and operation of barrages being built on the Mahanadi river and also for maintaining specific flow of water during the non-monsoon months - November to May. The tribunal had concluded the hearing in the interim application filed by Odisha seeking stay on the operation of barrages in Chhattisgarh and for ensuring minimum flow of 1.74 MAF during non-monsoon months, from November to May, in 2019. The tribunal has since then reserved the order on the interim application.



ODISHA IN PARLIAMENT

Biju Babu foiled Pak infiltration: Khan

BJD MP Muzibulla Khan Wednesday urged the Centre to confer Bharat Ratna on former Odisha Chief Minister and legendary freedom fighter Biju Patnaik. Khan also highlighted the role of Biju Babu in saving Kashmir from Pakistani infiltrators.

Speaking during Zero Hour in Rajya Sabha, the BJD MP lauded the legendary leader's pivotal role in the freedom struggle of Russia, Indonesia and India. Pointing out Patnaik's unmatched contribution in building what he termed an 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', he said, "The legendary leader had set up

BJD MP Muzibulla Khan urged the Centre to confer Bharat Ratna on former CM of Odisha Biju Patnaik

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited around 60 years ago. And it is his foresight for which we've been able to become self-reliant today." Khan also said about Patnaik's role in saving Kashmir from Pakistani infiltrators. "We all feel proud while talking about Kashmir: When Pakistani forces attacked Kashmir, it was Biju Patnaik who flew a sortie carrying Punjab regiment to Srinagar and helped saving Kashmir from the infiltrators," Khan added.

Guidelines out for PG admissions

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: The Higher Education department Wednesday issued guidelines and timeline for Post Graduate (PG) vacant seats admission in universities and colleges for 2020-21 session.

Rajesh Kumar Sahoo, Deputy Director of Higher Education department, said that admission for PG subjects will be held as per guidelines. Priority will be given to students who have qualified Common PG Entrance Test (CPET)



examination-2020 and not taken admission anywhere. Subject wise merit list will be prepared and a master list will be released in e-spaces of respective universities and colleges by March 19. Universities and colleges will contact students from the list and admit these students in vacant seats.

Second priority will be given to students from the OJEE merit list/National level entrance test or any equivalent test conducted by national agency if the students

Better accessibility for differently-abled

BHUBANESWAR: The Higher Education department Wednesday directed all universities and colleges in the state to improve the accessibility of persons with disabilities (PwDs) in educational institutions and campuses.

In a letter to the registrars of universities and principals of colleges, Ranjan Kumar Nayak, Under Secretary to Higher Education department said that in some campuses, there is lack of ramps and other facilities for the differently-abled in old buildings.

Earlier, Sulochana Das, State commissioner for PwDs, had written to the Higher Education department highlighting the issue.

from master list are not available or not willing to take admission.

The admission should be completed by March 31.

In February, the department had released the timeline and guidelines for State Public Universities and all degree Colleges for PG spot-II admissions for the session 2020-21.

The state had conducted CPET for the first time for admission into PG courses offered by state public universities and colleges between October 12 and October 22, 2020 at 28 examination centers in the state.

More allocation sought for health infra

The BJD Wednesday urged the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) to allocate more funds for development of healthcare infrastructure in Odisha.

Taking part in the discussion on Demands for Grants under MoHFW for financial year (FY) 2021-22, BJD MP from Jagatsinghpur, Rajashree Mallick, hailed PM Narendra Modi as well as Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for effective management of Covid-19 pandemic.

Mallick informed the Lower House that the central allocation to Odisha in fight against vector-borne diseases has been consistently reduced since 2017. While urging the Centre to establish another AIIMS at Sundargarh, the BJD MP demanded increased support for effective functioning of the National Health Mission in Odisha. Mallick urged the Centre to release the pending funds for construction of medical colleges and hospitals in the state. She highlighted the need for a super speciality hospital in Paradip. She also urged the Centre to upgrade the IGH in Rourkela.

Sujeet bats for bank branches in every GP

BJD MP Sujeet Kumar Wednesday urged the Centre to set up at least one bank branch at every gram panchayat (GP) of the country.

Speaking during Zero Hour in Rajya Sabha, Kumar highlighted how tribals in the undivided KBK districts have been suffering due to lack of access to banks.

"In 2014, the RBI had ordered opening of bank branches in unbanked rural areas. However, a little has been done in this regard,

especially in the KBK districts. As a result, tribals are unable to enjoy the benefits of several direct benefit transfer (DBT) schemes like MGNREGS, Mamata Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana," the BJD MP pointed out.

Kumar also cited an example of Thuamul Rampur block in Kalahandi which has a single commercial bank branch even though it has 24 gram panchayats with a population of 77,840

as per the Census 2011.

"There is only one commercial bank branch of State Bank of India to cater to this tribal population. The sole branch is unable to meet the banking needs of the people as it has been reeling under a host of issues including staff crunch. Such situations are common across the KBK region," Kumar pointed out, urging the Centre to open at least one bank branch in every gram panchayat of the country.

Swachhata Mission at Choudwar College

Cuttack: District Collector Bhabani Shankar Chayani Wednesday launched the Swachhata Mission at Choudwar College here. While visiting the ongoing annual training camp of National Cadet Corps (NCC) being conducted by 1(O) Artillery Battery at Choudwar College, Chayani interacted with the cadets and staff besides emphasising on issues related to safe drinking water and maintenance of good hygiene. The district Collector was accompanied by Commander of NCC Group Headquarters at Cuttack. The event was organised by NCC Group Headquarters Cuttack in coordination with Choudwar College and OTM School.

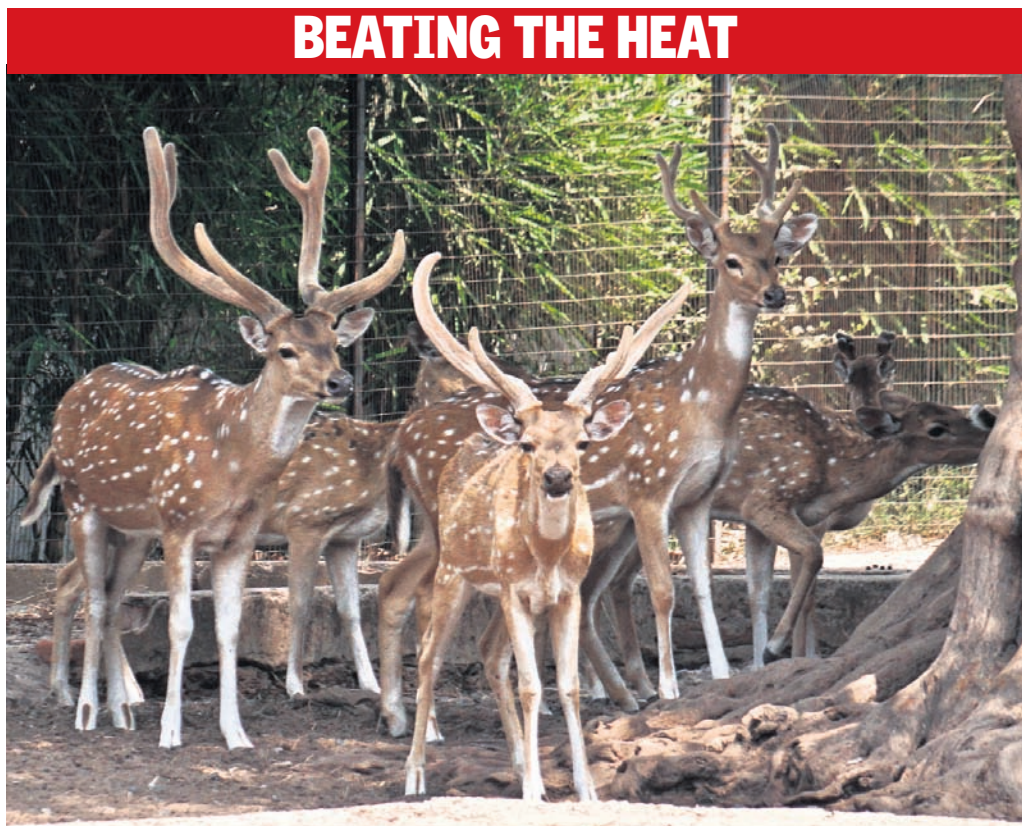
Act against sand mining, SPCB told

Bhubaneswar: The State Environment Impact Assessment Authority has asked the Odisha State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) to act against illegal sand mining in Balasore. The institution wrote to SPCB on the basis of a complaint from villagers of Benapur where the local community had alleged rampant illegal sand mining.

WASSUP TODAY

- BHUBANESWAR**
- 13th Kalinga Herbal Fair, Idco Exhibition Ground, 10am
- 4th day of Krushi Odisha 2021, Biju Patnaik Playground, Baramunda, 5.30pm
- Sarat Smriti Sansad, Buddha Mandir, near Unit-III Exhibition Ground, 6.30pm
- 27th Guru Pankaj Utsav and Maheri Samman, Rabindra Mandap, 6pm
- Play 'Somarasa' by Panchameda, Bhanja Kala Mandap, 6.45pm
- CUTTACK**
- Protest by SCB Medical Public School, Collector's office, 10am
- JATNI**
- 13th Biswa Maha Yagna of Maa Dakshina Kali, Niranjanpur, 6pm

Programmes/announcements for **wassup** today may be sent to opwassup@gmail.com for record, it must also carry the sender's mobile number for our verification, but not for publication.



A herd of deer takes shelter under a tree at Tulasipur park in Cuttack to save themselves from the scorching sun, Wednesday

Nimasahi slum dwellers evicted



POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, March 17: The Cuttack Municipal Corporation (CMC) Wednesday evicted the dwellers of Nimasahi slum here for the expansion of Taladanda canal road.

As many as 85 houses and a temple at the slum were demolished as part of the eviction drive, said an official the CMC. Three earth-movers were engaged in the eviction drive while two platoons of armed police personnel were deployed at the spot to maintain the law and order, added the official.

CMC Deputy Commissioner Abinas Rout, Zone-I Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Amarendra Panda and Chaullaganj police in-charge Tapas Pradhan

supervised the eviction drive. The civic body deployed eight vehicles to relocate the belongings of the evicted people, sources said.

"The evicted slum dwellers have been accommodated in a temporary camp on the premises of OMP 6th Battalion. The civic body will provide food to the slum dwellers for eight days. This apart, each family has been provided with an assistance of ₹50,000 to build new house," said CMC Commissioner Ananya Das.

It is learnt that the civic authorities have allocated alternate plots to the evicted slum dwellers. "They can utilise the financial assistance to build new houses on the plots allotted to them," said the CMC Commissioner.

Depts told to procure 'Mo Khata' from ULBs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: In a bid to promote organic manure prepared at urban local bodies (ULB), the Odisha government, Wednesday, issued instructions to all government organisations to procure 'Mo Khata' (compost) from their concerned ULBs only.

In a letter to different departments such as Forest, Agriculture, Handlooms, Panchayati Raj and ST&SC Development, Secretary of Odisha Housing & Urban Development department, G Mathivathanan stated that organisations shall have to procure 'Mo Khata' from their nearby ULBs at ₹20 per kg.

"Mo Khata is the product of ULBs made in partnership with the community-based institutions as Mission Shakti, transgender groups among others. The revenue generated out of this endeavour flows

'Mo Khata' is the product of urban local bodies made in partnership with the community-based institutions including Mission Shakti, transgender groups among others

back to the community in the form of wages, incentives and honorariums," the letter said.

Procurement from open market or private dealers will only be permitted when the concerned ULBs will be unable to cater to demands. The exception will also take into account the communication period by the ULBs and the department allowing a reasonable

duration for supply.

It can be mentioned that the ULBs are processing solid waste in a decentralised manner vis a vis micro composting centres (MCCs) and materials recovery facilities (MRF). The biodegradable wastes are processed in MCCs and converted into organic compost, Mo Khata, which is sold at ULBs at ₹20 per kg.

Centre lauds compost initiative

The Union government Wednesday applauded the Odisha government's initiative of promoting use of compost made from bio-degradable waste at all its departments. Taking to Twitter, Durga Shankar Mishra, Secretary to Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) said, "This is an excellent initiative to greatly strengthen and the revenue sustainability of decentralized municipal solid waste management systems."

Four injured as City transformer explodes

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, March 17: At least four persons including a father and his son sustained critical burn injuries as a power transformer exploded in Chadrasekharpur area here in the wee hours of Wednesday.

According to a source, the injured persons had been working at the tiffin stalls in front of the Omfed plant in Chadrasekharpur. They were preparing snacks for customers in the morning when the transformer exploded and four to five stalls caught fire. Oil from the transformer fell on them leaving four persons critically injured in the fire incident, an eyewitness expressed. Informed, a team of fire-fighters strived for over half an hour and doused the flames.

All of them were rushed to Capital Hospital here. Later, three of them were shifted to SCBMCH in Cuttack after their health conditions deteriorated, a police official said. The exact reason of the fire mishap has not been ascertained yet.

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

AUTO SECTOR SHOWING A ‘V’ SHAPE RECOVERY: JYOTE MOTORS

Despite several challenges caused by the pandemic, the auto sector is getting back to its growth trajectory. During an interaction with **Orissa POST, Devjyoti Patnaik, CEO cum MD of Jyote Motors** says the industry is showing a ‘V’ shape recovery and it will continue for next two-three years. Excerpts from an interview

- **What was the impact of the pandemic on auto sector and its present scenario?**
- The pandemic affected two-wheelers more than four-wheeler segment. The lockdown was declared to contain the outbreak of Covid-19. However, we saw there was a gradual rise in demand from July to March, 2021. The auto sector is showing a V shape recovery. People now prefer their own cars to travel because of the pandemic. We witnessed the same mindset in rural markets as well. There is now a boom in demand. But, the demand for the luxury brands has gone down.
- **Will there be a continual growth in this sector?**
- See, we saw a distress market in 2019 when GDP was down and later the pandemic hit the market. However, the auto sector has witnessed a growth and I believe it will continue for next two to three years. We also believe, since the auto sector is growing, the country's GDP will also grow.
- **Your opinion on the Scrappage Policy**
- Under the policy, life of a commercial vehicle will be capped at 15 years and private vehicles 20 years. This is a good policy and we were waiting for it to happen. Vehicle owners will now start replacing old cars and the demand for new vehicles will rise in the market. It

will help the overall economy.

■ **Is infrastructure ready for CNG and electric vehicles?**

■ For electric vehicles, we have a lot of time. It is just a beginning. Gradually, maybe 5-7 years later, there will be electrification. We need to create good infrastructure and increase the range of electric vehicles. But today CNG is a good option for the vehicle owners to opt for. The Centre and the state government have geared up for this project. We have several CNG stations and there will be more such installations. Petrol and diesel vehicles contribute 98 per cent to sales. But in next two years, CNG will account for 20 per cent of the sale. People now need to be aware of using CNG vehicles; they should feel secure riding a CNG vehicle.

■ **Support of state government**

■ The state government is very supportive. We have businesses in Kolkata and in Odisha. But we feel comfortable in doing business in Odisha. It is



an industry-friendly state. Odisha government is providing digital registration of cars in just two days. But our neighbouring states take 7-10 days to do that.

■ **Any suggestion**

■ Auto sector is a capital intensive industry. Auto dealers require big land to set up their servicing centres. The government should come forward and help these dealers by facilitating them with land so that they set up their infrastructure in different locations.

THERE'S NEVER A BAD TIME TO DO A GOOD THING: SUNJOY HANS

‘... I always looked for challenges. It is challenges that push me to work harder and give my best. The sense of achieving something good despite the odds is unbeatable’

The best kind of entrepreneurs are believed to be born, not made. They are perceived to be impulsive and inventive types who never shy away from taking risks to blaze new trails.

Although **Lalchnd Group founder chairman Sunjoy Hans** was born into a business family and had an early exposure to the world of commerce while assisting his elder brothers as a helping hand at his father's shop in Market Building, Bhubaneswar, he was not born to run the family business.

His first foray into entrepreneurship could not have been farther from it, both figuratively and literally as he committed himself to providing food supplies and essentials to an Australian company contracted by Oil India to drill off the port of Paradip. He did his job so well that he received two more contracts from the company to do the same thing in neighbouring West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

After a few years of heavy touring to successfully complete those contracts, when Sunjoy decided to settle down with a silver gifts shop in his hometown, many business experts advised him against doing so due to the dismal state of the jewellery sector in those times.

Instead of being discouraged, he took that situation as an opportunity to change the jewellery scene in Odisha for the better, and for good.

By introducing the people of the state to BS-hallmark gold jewellery and raising awareness about the importance of having pure gold, to bringing in the finest jewellery design from across the

nation and world, to implementing best-quality customer service—all under one roof at Lalchnd Jewellers – Sunjoy managed to achieve that.

And he deservedly reaped the benefits. As Odisha's most trusted luxury brand, LCJ now boasts of three of the largest jewellery showrooms in Eastern India. A fourth one – the largest of them all – will add another 35,000 square feet to the 90,000 sq ft that LCJ showrooms occupy at prime locations in the twin cities of Bhubaneswar and Cuttack.

Similarly, when Sunjoy branched out into the hospitality sector many years ago, industry pundits had warned him against doing so – firstly, because jewellery and hospitality are poles apart as businesses; and secondly, because he was starting out with the once-popular Prachi hotel that had been infamously bearing heavy losses for a long time.

“What those people never understood is that I was always looking for challenges. It is these challenges that push me to work harder and give my best. The sense of achieving something good despite the odds is unbeatable,” Sunjoy says.

The troubled establishment registered profit within a month after being taken over and re-branded as The New Maroon under the Lalchnd brand. There has been no looking back since then. Apart from having one of the grandest hotels of Odisha in the heart of Bhubaneswar, the Lalchnd Group also boasts some of the most popular restaurants in the state capital.

Even when the mother of all challenges presented itself last year in the form of Covid-19,

Sunjoy responded in a unique way. At a time when a nationwide lockdown following the outbreak of the global pandemic saw businesses closing down and mass layoffs trending upwards at a frightening rate, he set up the Lalchnd Foundation to help the most underprivileged sections of society survive the coronavirus onslaught.

When posed with questions about the practicality of that decision, he was famously quoted by the media as saying: “There's never a bad time to do a good thing.”

Besides, those who know about the history of Lalchnd Jewellers are well aware how Sunjoy has strongly supported the traditional tarakasi filigree artisans (who had been struggling for survival) by employing the finest among them at LCJ to craft exquisite jewellery designs for diverse tastes and markets.

Therefore, after winning a laundry list of prestigious awards for him-

self and his group from the industry over the past decade, Sunjoy has now deservedly earned another feather in his cap – the Business Eminence Award from the Dharitri Group. Sunjoy Hans is the founder chairman of Lalchnd Jewellers.



Truck driver fined ₹1K for not wearing helmet

POST NEWS NETWORK

Berhampur, March 17: In a bizarre incident, a truck driver here was fined ₹1,000 for his ‘fault’—he drove his truck without wearing a helmet, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after Pramod Kumar Swain visited the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) recently to renew the permit of his truck, March 12.

Swain was shocked when RTO officials handed him a challan issued by the Berhampur traffic police, December 25, last year. It was mentioned in the challan that he had been fined ₹1,000 for ‘driving without a helmet’. He was also made to pay a fine of ₹500 each for other reasons. The challan has been drawn against the registration number of his truck.

He tried to explain his side but in vain. Left with no option, Swain paid the fine following which the RTO officials renewed the permit of his truck.

When contacted, Traffic police IIC Sunil Kumar Behera said this might have happened due to use of the registration number of the truck in some bike or due to wrong feeding of data in the computer system.

RAIBANIA: WATER CRISIS DEEPENS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Raibania, March 17: With the advent of summer, most hilly regions of Raibania in Balasore have been hit by severe water crisis. According to reports, locals have been facing lots of problem in availing drinking water.

It is said that excessive exploitation of water by private and government lift irrigation points have been responsible for the groundwater level in the region to plummet deeper. Water bodies like ponds, pools and even tube wells have all gone dry. People in the tribal-dominated panchayats like Khudua Majhisahi, Sadrabandh, Shyamnagar, Olmara, Raibania, Makidia, Khuada, Baradiha and Kalma are now struggling to get even a bucketful of drinking water.

AFTER A LONG HIATUS, ULTRAS PUT UP POSTERS, BANNERS IN RAIGHAR

Maoists make presence felt

POST NEWS NETWORK

Raighar, March 17: People in Raighar area of Nabarangpur district were panicked after Maoists put up banners and posters Tuesday. Maoists have opposed the tree felling in forests and demanded that the price of Kendu leaves be hiked to Rs 500.

According to reports, Raighar used to be a Maoist hotbed earlier. Their activities had been suppressed for a few years. Now, the posters and banners have made their presence felt in Raighar block.

Red banners were hung across a road in Hatiganon panchayat Tuesday night and blocked the road by laying logs.

Hatiganon bordering on Chhattisgarh is 25 km from the block headquarters. In the banners, Maoists have demanded bonus to kendu leaf pluckers in 15 days.

They have appealed to the people to join their movement for



“As life of kendu leaf pluckers is always fraught with danger in forests, they should be given insurance cover of ₹6 lakh in case of death...” ultras demanded in a poster

rights on jal, jami and jungle.

They also wanted to raise the prices of mahula flowers to Rs 100 per kg; Rs 70 to tamarind; Rs 90 to mustard; wild tulasi to Rs 25 and

Rs 500 to incense sticks per kg.

“As life of kendu leaf pluckers is always fraught with danger in forests, they should be given insurance cover of Rs 6 lakh in case of death; Rs 4.5 lakh in case of grievous injuries. People should come out to demand their rights,” they said on the banners.

Some bundles of wires were found at the place while holes on the ground were found in the area. People suspected that the left wing ultras might have planted tiffin bombs in the area.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhadrak, March 17: Alleging large-scale irregularities in paddy procurement by SHGS and token lapses, hundreds of farmers under the banner of Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Mahasangh lay siege to NH-16 in Bhadrak Wednesday. Farmers from Gelatua panchayat came with over 30 tractors loaded with paddy. They parked the tractors on the NH for hours.

Vehicular movement on the

Bank staff robbed of ₹21L in Subarnapur

Sonepur: Six miscreants allegedly robbed two bank staffers of Rs 21 lakh at gun and dagger points on Baghalpur-Bisipada road in Subarnapur district Wednesday morning. The two staffers – Sudhanshu Pradhan and Sunil Moharana of Sonepur branch of Bank of Baroda – were carrying a bag containing Rs 21 lakh to an automatic teller machine (ATM) at Ullundam area, an official of the bank informed. Then, dacoits pounced upon the two and decamped with the cash. Sonepur police immediately rushed to the spot and launched a probe to nab the culprits.



NH-16 was paralysed for hours. Hundreds of trucks and buses were stranded on both sides of the NH. Farmers alleged massive

irregularities in paddy procurement which is being done by SHGs while farmers whose tokens have lapsed have been facing problems in disposing of their paddy.

They demanded immediate provision of paddy procurement from their area. Collector Gyana Ranjan Das held talks with farmer leaders and assured them that unsold paddy will be procured.

The agitating farmers relented later.

Mass nesting of Olive Ridleys under threat

FISH MAFIA ATTACKS FOREST STAFF DURING PATROLLING IN GAHIRMATHA

POST NEWS NETWORK

Rajnagar, March 17: Mass nesting of Olive Ridley turtles in the Gahirmatha marine sanctuary under this block in Kendrapara district has come under serious threat due to illegal fishing at prohibited zones of the sanctuary, a report said.

The matter came to the fore after Gahirmatha range officer Debashis Bhoi lodged a complaint of attack on a team of forest officials by the fishermen at Talachua marine police station, Tuesday.

He stated that a patrolling team of forest officials were injured in an attack by the fish mafia during a raid on a group of fishermen fishing in a prohibited zone late Monday night. Five forest officials on board a patrolling boat were injured in the attack.

Attack has spread panic among



forest officials engaged in the turtle protection drive in the sanctuary.

They apprehend that attacks on the patrolling team by the fish mafias are not new but a frequent occurrence might cost them their lives someday.

Reports said that mass nesting of Olive Ridley had started in phases in Babubali island and other adjoining

beaches following the arrival of female turtles.

The incident happened when a team of 14 forest and police officials led by forester Sanjay Kumar Das was patrolling in the prohibited zone. They caught fishermen in a trawler New Janani-1 fishing in the sea about 4-km from the Babubali island and

Attack has spread panic among forest officials engaged in the turtle protection drive in the sanctuary. They apprehend similar attacks on the patrolling team by the fish mafia and that might cost them their lives someday

asked them to leave the area.

However, the fishermen in the trawler called up 10 other trawlers and tried to ram the patrolling boat to drown it in the sea. As a result, the rear portion of the patrolling boat broke down and water started entering inside. The forest officials, however, managed to escape safely at the coast, the forest ranger said.

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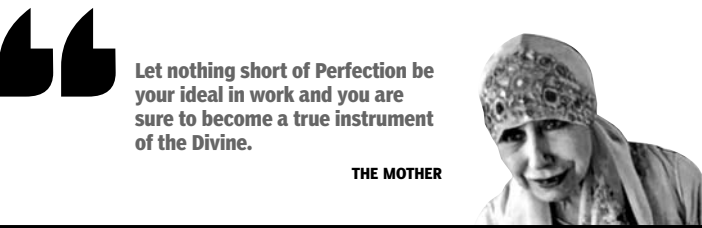
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REGISTRAR

Form No. INC-26
[Pursuant to rule 30 the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]
Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the company from one state to another
Before the Regional Director, Eastern Region(Central Government) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
In the matter of sub section (4) of section 13 of Companies Act, 2013, Section 13(4) of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of the rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014
AND
In the matter of **ARSS Bus Terminal Private Limited** having its registered office at C-79, BDA Duplex, Near Airport, Palaspalli, Bhubaneswar, Orissa - 751020, India
.....**Petitioner**
Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Regional Director, Eastern Region Bench (Central Government) under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Extra-ordinary General meeting held on March 9, 2021 to enable the Company to change its Registered office from the 'State of Orissa' to the 'National Capital Territory of Delhi'.
Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal(www.mca.gov.in) by filling investor complaint from or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director, Eastern Region, Ministry of Corporate Affairs, 23/4 A.J.C Bose Road, Nizam Palace, 3rd floor, Kolkata-700020, within 14 days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company at its registered office or send an email to varun_batra@welspun.com.

For and on behalf of
ARSS Bus Terminal Private Limited
Sd/-
Vinoo Sanjay
(Whole Time Director & CFO)
DIN: 07470339

Date: March 18, 2021
Place: Mumbai



Parvo, the pup killer

“Let nothing short of Perfection be your ideal in work and you are sure to become a true instrument of the Divine.”

THE MOTHER

In 1987, a street litter of a month old puppies, being fed by me, started dying at an alarming rate. The splotches of blood in their stool were diagnosed as parasitic worms. The ill-informed vet immediately gave them deworming tablets (which is a poison) and there was a rapid decline. All the pups died within 3 days, consumed by severe gastroenteritic haemorrhaging. The killer was the deadly Canine Parvo Virus (CPV).

First recognised in the 1970s, CPV is now in epidemic form. Outbreaks have been reported from all over India. Thousands of pups have died. Since government refuses to give the vaccine and government hospitals do not treat parvo cases, the animal welfare shelters are full and the mortality of these young pups crowded together is extremely high. Animal feeders simply do not have the money to give vaccines to the pups and we all stand by helplessly as they die. In a normal year only one street pup survives a litter. The rest are run over, die of starvation, poisoned or thrown away in plastic bags. This year, even that one is unlikely. A majority of pups sold by pet shops and dog breeders have parvo. There are two reasons: the puppy has been taken away from its mother at 3 weeks of age, by breeders and sellers, to supply customers who want really small pups. If it had been nursed by the mother the pup would have developed an immunity, which would have helped his little body fight off the virus. No pet shops vaccinate puppies, and they put pups from different breeders into one cage. The dogs are bred in slummy filthy conditions. The dogs, being bred at the breeding establishments, have low immunity due to constant abuse and minimal nourishment and, are the first victims of CPV. Typically, buyers write to me when they go to get a refund and are refused, because the entire puppy trade is illegal and done in cash with no receipts.

There are two prominent strains of the canine parvovirus (CPV-2a and CPV-2b) from the genus family of Parvoviridae. It spreads through infected faeces, vomit, blood, touch, surfaces, clothing etc. Shelters, kennels, clinics, public parks are prime locations where the virus lurks. Its favourite victim is the young pup, but unvaccinated dogs in general are vulnerable. Undetected, or diagnosed at a later stage, it is almost always fatal within 48-72 hours.

Parvo virus attacks the cells in the small intestine, making the intestinal wall vulnerable to bacteria in the center of the gut. The bacteria cross over into the blood stream leading to sepsis which causes organ failure. Parvo also attacks the bone marrow, causing dangerously low white blood cell counts. This denies the body the one thing it needs to fight off the sepsis. Parvovirus is extremely contagious. It takes 10-14 days to show symptoms after contraction. The basic clinical signs of CPV are fever or low body temperature (hypothermia), appearance of blood in vomit and stool, abdominal pain, nausea, dehydration and lethargy. Persistent vomiting and diarrhoea cause rapid dehydration, and damage to the intestines and immune system cause septic shock.

Parvo kills by dehydration and exhaustion, as the constant attack on the intestinal tract pushes out water and electrolytes before they can be absorbed, and the vomiting and diarrhoea keep the dog from getting any rest.

This is what you need to do if you have a pup with parvo:

Parvovirus causes life threatening dehydration and anaemia. They are basically bleeding out internally while also losing the fluids/nutrients they desperately need to fight it off.

Rush to a vet. The only thing your vet can do to treat this virus is to give IV fluids (50 ml twice a day), anti vomiting and anti diarrhoea medications, often along with a sedative to buy their immune system time to fight the virus, and antibiotics to fight secondary infections. The fluid therapy can be Loparamide, Metronidazole augmented with antibiotics Cefotaxim, Cefazolin, Ampicillin, Gentamycin, Tamiflu.

Home treatment, of pushing fluids and feeding nutritional broths, isn't always enough in one so young. It only takes a day or two for a 9-week-old puppy to become fatally dehydrated. Gently pull the pup's loose skin between and behind the ears on the neck and release. If the scruff falls back into its normal position within a second, he's not dehydrated and treatment is going well, so far. If it takes two or three seconds to fall back into place, he's starting to become dehydrated, the longer it takes the more dehydrated he is. If the scruff doesn't fall back into place, even after a few seconds, you have a life or death situation on your hands. His gums will be pale as well. He needs intravenous fluids and electrolytes, and FAST!

If there are absolutely no vets, or even compounders, who know how to give an intravenous injection, do this: Hydration is what may help to keep your pup alive. Focus on it. Keep your pup warm and give fluids every half hour: If he won't drink on his own, you'll have to syringe feed the fluids. Don't give plain water as he needs electrolytes to continue his survival, and pushing straight water can decrease his survival chances by flushing out the electrolytes he already has. Give clear Pedialyte. He will also need calories to fight the infection. If he can tolerate it, you can give chicken or vegetable broth with a bit of added salt (sodium will help him to retain water) mixed with a bit of puppy milk replacer (NOT COW MILK). Mix the milk to broth in a 1:3 ratio. Too much milk will also increase diarrhoea. But he needs those calories. Kapectate can be given for diarrhoea. It usually goes by weight (mg per kg). He may also need subcutaneous fluids, which is sterile saline injected just under the skin and which can be absorbed through the microscopic vascular system, bypassing the digestive tract. Find a human doctor who may be able to help with this.

Someone has suggested that you give the pup boiled and finely mashed egg yolk once a day, and increase the amount slowly. Avoid water for an hour after feeding. Don't give egg white or else the pup will vomit. Days three to six are usually the most touch and go. If you can help him past that, he is on the road to recovery. When the dog stops retching bile he is probably improving. The lack of blood in his stool is another marker. His activity level will go up. However, recovery from parvo takes weeks. If the pup survives, most will need to eat small, frequent meals of a bland diet and continue taking anti-nausea medications until they are able to hold down their normal food (usually a week or two). Give your dog the full course of any antibiotics that have been prescribed, even if he or she appears to be back to normal. A CPV survivor will continue to shed the virus for weeks, even months. This is why strict isolation of infected animals, and quarantine wards at veterinary hospitals/clinics and animal shelters, is important. It can live in the ground for more than six months.

Shelters, clinics and houses with CPV patients must maintain strict hygiene protocols to prevent cross contamination. Shelters and clinics must necessarily have isolation kennels.

If you are feeding a litter of street pups, stay vigilant for appearance of any parvo-related symptoms. Wash hands after handling a CPV patient, keeping it away from other dogs/pups.

The golden rule for combating the disease is timely and regular vaccination. Puppies need at minimum three Parvo vaccines given at 3-4 week intervals, between 6 and 16 weeks of age. Some veterinarians use variations on this protocol.

In the case of unvaccinated dogs, 2 vaccination shots are recommended (first dose followed by a booster after a month). For vaccinated dogs, an annual booster vaccine is sufficient.

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



Jayati Ghosh

RATINGS AGENCIES DO NOT BEAR APPROPRIATE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ENORMOUS POWER THEY WIELD



Maneka Gandhi
If you are feeding a litter of street pups, stay vigilant for appearance of any parvo-related symptoms

SPECTRUM DIGITAL SPACE



Bhaskar Basu

CONCERNS ABOUT DATA PRIVACY WITH RESPECT TO WHATSAPP ARE NOT NEW

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

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

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

On March 10, the credit-rating agency Moody's placed Ethiopia on review for a downgrade. The problem isn't violence and repression in Ethiopia's embattled Tigray region. Rather, Moody's has concluded that the Ethiopian government's commitment to engage with private creditors, as part of the G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, raises the risk that those creditors will incur losses. For that, the country apparently must be punished.

Whereas the DSSI aims to provide immediate relief to low-income countries during the pandemic, the Common Framework was designed to help debt-distressed sovereigns reschedule or reduce their liabilities. For many countries, it offers the best chance of making their debt burdens sustainable. But now, the threat of ratings downgrades is casting a shadow over these countries' prospects.

This points to a systemic problem in international finance: the extraordinary – and undeserved – power wielded by a few private credit-rating agencies. Just three – Moody's, S&P Global Ratings, and Fitch Ratings – control more than 94 per cent of outstanding credit ratings. And there is significant cross-shareholding among them.

These oligopolistic firms are market movers and makers, influencing financial portfolio allocations, the pricing of debt and other financial instruments, and the cost of capital. Bolstering their authority, the US Securities and Exchange Commission has recognised them as official statistical rating organisations. And many institutional investors, required by law to hold only “investment-grade” assets in their portfolios, must abide by the rating agencies' verdicts.

Concerns about ratings agencies were first widely expressed during the Enron scandal in 2001. Enron, an energy-trading company, had been using accounting tricks and

FOCUS CREDIT-RATING AGENCIES

POWER SANS ACCOUNTABILITY



Concerns about ratings agencies were first widely expressed during the Enron scandal in 2001... Credit-rating agencies have also been accused of enabling the United States' subprime-mortgage bubble, which triggered the global financial crisis when it burst in 2008

complex financial instruments to mislead investors, creditors, and regulators about its value. The ratings agencies were certainly fooled: The Big Three all issued Enron investment-grade ratings just days before the company collapsed.

Credit-rating agencies have also been accused of enabling the United States' subprime-mortgage bubble, which triggered the global financial crisis when it burst in 2008, and of exacerbating the bust through rapid reversals and downgrades. And they have been known to adjust ratings in ways that seem to reflect ideological positions, such as a commitment to fiscal austerity.

And yet, as Yuefen Li, the United Nations Independent Expert on Foreign Debt and Human Rights, points out in a new report, ratings agencies face no accountability for their mistakes or damaging behaviour: Their ratings are legally described as “opinions,” which are protected under free speech laws, and they do not disclose their methodology. In short, ratings agencies do not bear appropriate responsibility for the enormous power they wield.

Moreover, as Li also notes, conflicts of interest abound. Ratings agencies are private businesses, funded largely by the institutions they rate. And they are players in the markets they purportedly assess, meaning that self-interest inevitably shapes their decision-making. Ratings agencies have, for example, been involved in the creation of financial products that they were then responsible for rating – including the mortgage-backed securities that, flush with AAA ratings, helped bring about the 2008 crisis.

And yet, even as regulators work to limit conflicts of interest among most financial-market players, they seem content to leave credit-rating agencies to police themselves. The lack of regulatory action partly reflects the lobbying power of the Big Three. And it is generating serious risks, which the coronavirus pandemic has intensified.

For example, procyclicality in rating – another issue Li highlights in her report – is making financial-market conditions inhospitable for developing countries whose economic prospects have been undermined by the COVID-

19 crisis. Furthermore, the threat of a ratings downgrade is preventing many governments from pursuing sufficient fiscal expenditure. Now, with the latest move from Moody's, developing-country governments must fear entering into debt-restructuring negotiations with private creditors, even as part of multilateral programmes aimed at providing debt relief.

If the G20 countries are serious about improving developing countries' debt positions during the COVID-19 crisis, they should begin by supporting the temporary suspension of credit ratings. In the medium term, regulators must take action to ensure that rating agencies are fulfilling their intended market-stabilising role. Tackling conflicts of interest – such as by limiting agencies' dependence on payments from those they rate – is essential.

But regulating private ratings agencies may not be enough. The UN Conference on Trade and Development has long argued that the world needs an independent public ratings agency to conduct objective evaluations of the creditworthiness of sovereigns and companies. Such an agency is also necessary to assess the instruments used to finance new public investment, which will be in high demand in the coming years.

A global agency makes sense, because credit ratings, especially for sovereign debt, are international in scope. Perhaps more important, it would provide a much-needed counterbalance to unaccountable private agencies. It might even force the Big Three to embrace reforms that they have long resisted.

The writer, Executive Secretary of International Development Economics Associates, is Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation.

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Beware! You are on the social web

Social networking has elevated the human life in terms of information sharing, response and content generation in the past decade. Though, over the period of time, the systems have become quite matured yet alongside the benefits, multiple concerns of the user with regard to the privacy and information security also exist. Moreover, most users of digital platforms agree to terms, conditions and privacy policies without actually reading them and understanding the consequences. WhatsApp's latest notification on its privacy policy created an uproar and sparked a mass exodus towards other messenger platforms like Signal and Telegram.

Concerns about data privacy with respect to WhatsApp are not new – the app has run into controversies about user data shared with its parent company, Facebook, ever since it was acquired by Facebook in 2014. For instance, the Russian operation Internet Research Agency was accused of interfering in the US presidential election of 2016 by using social media to spread disinformation that stirred up conflict and distrust. UK firm Cambridge Analytica's breach of Facebook data is a part of folklore today. But a new WhatsApp privacy policy released on January 4, 2021 triggered widespread global

alarm about the safety of user data and forced the messaging app to delay the implementation of its updated privacy policy by three months: the new date being set to May 15 instead of February 8.

The policy makes it clear that WhatsApp collects expansive meta data from users' phones, including internet protocol addresses and phone number area codes to estimate users' geographical location. More significantly, the privacy policy confirms that WhatsApp would allow Facebook access to messages that users share with businesses on the messenger app, enabling Facebook to further influence user behaviour through targeted advertising. This not only points out why its privacy policy does not attest to the same as also how an individual's right to data protection and privacy right cannot be compromised even whilst communicating with a business account. Experts feel WhatsApp's move to delay the implementation of its updated privacy policy by three months is not sufficient to alleviate the concerns raised by the plan or the larger issue of data sharing and privacy breach.

In the midst of intense outrage and debate over WhatsApp's new policy, Elon Musk fanned the fire by simply tweeting “Use Signal” – an endorsement for a messenger

platform that is open-source, encrypted and known for defending users' data security. In the wake of millions shifting to alternate messaging apps, Facebook-owned WhatsApp is reaching out to users reiterating that it is committed to protecting users' privacy as it does not access or read anyone's messages or location. But then, why is the company not providing relevant options for those who do not wish to provide such information?

Privacy and an individual's social network are viewed in a multifaceted relation. Social network analysis techniques describe the impact of different depth and strength of ties in an individual's social network and the importance of these ties in the flow of information across the network. Social engineering is a well-known practice in the information security domain in which confidential information is retrieved by manipulating legitimate users. Every time someone creates a new social media account, they leave a data trail behind on the internet. In addition, companies collect data on user behaviours: when, where, and how users interact with their platform. All of this data is stored and leveraged by companies to better target advertising to their users. Sometimes, companies share users' data with third-party entities, often without

users' knowledge or consent.

What are social media users worried about? Are their concerns justified? Typically, these concerns stem from the ubiquitous presence of social media in people's lives. Forty-five per cent of the world's population use social networks. These connections can leave users vulnerable in several ways. When personal information falls into the wrong hands, the consequences can be damaging. Different types of frauds, hacking, spyware, malware etc. have been in practice for capturing private data of user(s). Such hacks can result in stolen information and forced shares that redirect followers to malware, among other things. With the advent of new approaches in web technologies, connectivity of heterogeneous devices and sharing of data among them may cause new dimensions of privacy risks along with safety and security aspects. Social networking is actually a need of the time, where its usage needs a responsible behaviour. It is the user, who is solely responsible for his data and the user himself has to take strong measures for the protection of privacy.

The writer is Professor (Information Systems), Xavier Institute of Management, Bhubaneswar. Views are personal.

WISDOM CORNER

- “Problems are not stop signs, they are guidelines.” **ROBERT H. SCHULLER**
- “If you learn from defeat, you haven't really lost.” **ZIG ZIGLAR**
- “It's always too early to quit.” **NORMAN VINCENT PEALE**

Save elephants

Sir, Elephant was accorded the ‘National Heritage Animal’ status in 2010. Many projects are in place in India to save the magnificent creature from extinction. The number of elephants in the country, as per the 2017 data, stands at 29,964. But these numbers do not reflect the stark reality: between 2014 and 2019 as many as 23,000 elephants were killed in India. Odisha's Karlapat wildlife sanctuary in Kalahandi district was gripped by a mysterious disease—that was later termed as haemorrhagic septicaemia—resulting in the death of seven female elephants over two weeks. The authorities of the sanctuary which houses as many as 22 elephants woke up from their slumber to go into a damage control mode by disinfecting water and soil that were contaminated by the faeces of cattle, from the nearby Tentulipada village. Pasteurella multocida, the bacteria responsible for the septicaemia, infects herbivores like bison, buffaloes and cattle which in turn infects the elephants by soil and water contamination. In January, 40 buffaloes had died in another sanctuary due to haemorrhagic septicaemia. Therefore, the forest department should keep track of the situation in other sanctuaries. More so, the health of animals like elephants and cattle beg for a constant vigil. The state forest department is learnt to have directed the Karlapat sanctuary authorities to expeditiously immunise the cattle in the tiny hamlets within the sanctuary. The movement of elephants is being monitored. This should have been done before. The ‘mass deaths’ of elephants is described as the ‘largest ever’ elephant deaths in Indian forests. Steps have to be initiated to keep the big animals safe in their homes.

Ganapathi Bhat, AKOLA (MAHARASHTRA)

Shrey Siddharth, CUTTACK

Night curfew back in Bhopal, Indore



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, March 17: With the number of coronavirus infections increasing rapidly in many parts of Madhya Pradesh, the state government has imposed a night curfew in Bhopal and Indore from Wednesday night. The government has also directed that those people who commute by buses must wear face masks to protect against the pandemic.

As many as 264 Covid-19 patients have emerged in Indore and 199 in Bhopal. The number of Covid patients has surpassed 800 in a single day in the state. Bhopal and Indore have reported the maximum number of Covid cases. At the same time, there are eight more districts where Covid cases are increasing and where special precautions would be taken. The markets in Jabalpur; Gwalior; Ujjain, Ratlam, Chhindwara, Burhanpur; Betul and Khargone districts would close at 10 p.m. The Madhya Pradesh government has decided that the thermal screening of persons coming from Maharashtra would continue. Such passengers would have to stay in home quarantine for a week. During a review meeting of the Transport Department, Govind Singh Rajput, the Madhya Pradesh

Transport and Revenue Minister, said in view of the increase in Covid-19 cases, wearing masks should be made compulsory for bus passengers. If any passenger is found without a mask in the buses, then legal action would be taken against the bus owner, driver and the bus conductor.

Talking about road accidents, Rajput said one of the major reasons behind this is buses not plying with enough of a time gap. An interval of one to two minutes after being issued permits increases competition among buses, forcing the drivers to drive at high speed under pressure to arrive on time. Due to this, there is a constant possibility of accidents taking place.

To rectify this, it is necessary that before issuing the permits, the transport department officials should ensure that there is sufficient time gap between the buses.

Rajput said that a commercial driving license is an important step taken by the Madhya Pradesh government in the direction of making women 'Aatmanirbhar' or 'Self-reliant'. In this connection, a driving training centre for women has been opened in Indore. Apart from this, women would also be imparted training for commercial driving.

Freebies galore: Experts flag financial implications

EXPERTS FEEL THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL INHERIT THE MANTLE OF HUGE FISCAL DEBT AND THE ONUS OF BALANCING DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMMES AND SOURCING NEW FUNDS FOR POLL ASSURANCES

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 17: Loaded with doles and freebies to woo the electorate ahead of the April 6 Assembly polls in Tamil Nadu, archrivals DMK and AIADMK's populist agenda driven election manifestos are also being debated for the financial implications on a state already burdened with high debts.

With late DMK chief M Karunanidhi's 'hero' manifesto of 2006 that promised among others, free colour TV sets, virtually setting the trend for similar races in the future, Tamil Nadu has seen it all—free laptops, milch cows, mixer-grinder and gold for thali (mangal sutra) among others.

In 2021 too, the Dravidian majors chose to dish out a slew of promises that carry the 'free of cost' tag, a more politically correct term used to describe freebies by the proponents of such largesse.

The two parties—AIADMK seeking a record third term and the DMK planning a strong comeback after a decade in opposition, have converged not only on such freebies, but also on other contentious issues like the repeal of Citizenship Amendment Act and release of seven convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi



assassination.

Free washing machine, housing for all, solar cookers, education loan waiver, government jobs to families without anyone in state service etc are AIADMK's promises to the voter while that of DMK includes Rs 4,000 relief to COVID-19 hit rice ration card holders, laws to reserve 75 per cent jobs for locals and waiver of various loans and provision of various assistance.

Both have promised phased prohibition in a state whose coffers are largely filled by liquor sales, even as DMK's ally Congress promised to implement the dry regime soon after the 'new government', apparently headed by DMK, is installed post polls.

However, on the economic front, experts feel the new government will inherit the mantle of huge fiscal debt and the onus of balancing developmental programmes and sourcing new funds for poll assurances.

It will encounter several challenges, especially amidst apprehension of second Covid-19 wave



post-election, while both the AIADMK and DMK argue their assurances will get transformed into government schemes when elected to power.

"In my personal view the freebies announced by both the parties are phenomenal. I wonder if anybody has done any financial burden calculation if the party were to implement all its promises when it comes to power," MR Sivaraman, former Union Revenue Secretary, said.

In an apparent reference to the AIADMK, he said "one party" has promised government job to one person from every family without anyone in service. "This was apparently announced without a reality check on the number of households in the state. Imagine the fiscal commitment which the government would accrue in terms of salaries to all government employees if lakhs of households are accommodated," he told PTI.

KR Shanmugam, director and professor of Madras School of Economics, argues that one-time freebies may not strain the economy

in the long run.

"Recurring expenditure in the form of implementing the populist schemes may require huge volume of funds and could leave the government hardly any time and resources to devote to other development activities," he said.

When the poll promises become government schemes, the government would evolve a funding pattern in order to improve the lives of the people, he said.

The state government has performed commendably well to improve the situation during the pandemic and made conditions operational to revive the economy, he noted.

"Tamil Nadu's economy is expected to register a positive growth rate of 2.02 percent in 2020-2021 at a time when the country is facing a negative growth rate of 7.7 percent," he said.

Agreeing there were apprehensions of second COVID-19 wave, he said its effect on economy is debatable.

Maintaining that many of

AIADMK's poll assurances are part of the ongoing welfare schemes, former minister and party spokesman S Vaigaiselvan claimed that funding will never be a constraint for the party-led government.

"The performance of the Palaniswami government, the election manifesto and our achievements will ensure us a third successive victory," Vaigaiselvan, also party candidate from Aruppukottai assembly constituency, said.

The DMK is also confident of meeting the financial requirements for implementing its slew of populist promises.

"Our leader M K Stalin and election manifesto are the two heroes in this assembly election. Our poll assurances are doable," DMK spokesperson A Saravanan said.

On Tamil Nadu's huge debt burden of about Rs 5.70 lakh crore by March 2022, he said "the debts and borrowings are because of financial mismanagement by the government. It lacks administrative efficiency. Corruption too played a huge role."

Incidentally, the DMK manifesto, released on March 13, said that im-

Recurring expenditure in the form of implementing the populist schemes may require huge volume of funds and could leave the government hardly any time and resources to devote to other development activities

KR SHANMUGAM | DIRECTOR AND PROFESSOR OF MADRAS SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

plementing all promises was possible by eradicating corruption, pursuing measures including austerity and increasing tax revenue.

Discord brewing within Cong in MP

The Congress in Madhya Pradesh has always been known for factionalism, but the situation changed after the party handed over the leadership to Kamal Nath

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bhopal, March 17: Despite being out of power in Madhya Pradesh, there are enough indications that the Congress is once again witnessing an internal discord. This was evident while giving party membership to Hindu Mahasabha leader Babulal Chaurasia. This decision by the party did not go down well with senior party leader Manak Agarwal, who attacked the party for which he has



been expelled for six years.

The identity of the Congress in Madhya Pradesh has always been known for factionalism, but the situation changed after the party handed over the leadership to Kamal Nath before the state Assembly elections and this was the reason it won the 2018 Assembly elections.



In a span of just 15 months, the situation within the Congress deteriorated and the Kamal Nath government collapsed because former Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia rebelled and joined the BJP along with 22 former Congress MLAs.

After being out of power, the Congress has been continuously

strengthening its presence at the ground level. Meanwhile, the voices of dissent have started rising after Babulal Chaurasia was inducted into the party. Senior party leader and former Union Minister Arun Yadav, former MP from Mandasaur Meenakshi Natarajan, MLA from Chachoura constituency, Laxman Singh, former minister Subhash Kumar Sojatia, and several other party leaders questioned Chaurasia's inclusion in the party.

Everybody in the party opposed the entry of Babulal Chaurasia into the Congress. Manak Agarwal, former Congress Media Cell President and close aide of former Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh, launched a direct attack on Kamal Nath. The matter went to the party's Disciplinary Committee and Agarwal was expelled from the party for six years.

Political analysts believe that by taking action against Manak Agarwal,

the party has given a clear message to those leaders who raise questions and has also instructed them to remain within the ambit of discipline.

It won't be surprising if this decision deepens the discontent within the party since Agarwal is said to be close to Digvijaya Singh. In such a situation, Digvijaya Singh's supporters and Kamal Nath supporters may even confront each other.

State Home Minister Narottam Mishra has taken a dig at Manak Agarwal's expulsion from the party and said, "Action was taken against Congress leader Manak Agarwal for inducting a Nathuram Godse supporter in the party making him 'irrelevant'. The party did not even dare to say anything against Arun Yadav who was also against inducting the Godse supporter in the party. It seems that Congress is accepting pro-Godse supporters in its fold."

Liquor ban promise surfaces again in poll-bound TN

Political parties, including AIADMK, DMK and Congress, have pitched for a complete ban on liquor, albeit in a phased manner

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Chennai, March 17: Its election time and prohibition is back in focus in Tamil Nadu where the dry law was lifted about five decades ago.

Political parties, including the ruling AIADMK, opposition DMK and Congress, have pitched for a complete ban on liquor, albeit in a phased manner, making the promise in their respective manifestos for the April 6 assembly elections.

Total prohibition was in force in the state from 1937 to 1971 when the then DMK government headed by M Karunanidhi lifted it first.

The AIADMK and DMK have both bet on phased re-introduction of prohibition and closure of liquor outlets in a staggered manner in their manifestos.

PMK, an ally of AIADMK, and MDMK, a partner in the DMK-led front, have also made an assurance to ensure liquor-free Tamil Nadu.

While the DMK has also promised de-addiction centres, its ally Congress has presented a detailed roadmap for implementation of prohibition in its separate manifesto.

Gandhiya Makkal Iyakkam chief Tamizharuvi Manian, who has been in the forefront of anti-liquor campaign for years, is not impressed much by the promises.

"The mention of bringing pro-

hibition in the manifestos of AIADMK and DMK is just a passing reference which indicates there is no commitment to implement it," he told PTI.

Manian, a Gandhian and former Congress leader who has held several campaigns against liquor, said he would continue to fight for the dry law in the state.

In their manifestos for the 2016 assembly elections too the two Dravidian parties besides the Congress had assured to enforce ban on liquor, sale of which is a major revenue earner for the government contributing around Rs 30,000 crore annually.

Introducing complete prohibition, which encompasses closure of liquor outlets and a halt to production and storage of spirits, was a hotly debated topic during the 2016 assembly polls unlike the present election.

In 2015, the demand for prohibition peaked with the death of Gandhian Sasi Perumal during a protest against liquor outlets. Perumal championed the cause of a complete ban on production, storage and consumption of alcoholic products.

As part of implementing the AIADMK's promise, then chief minister J Jayalalithaa had issued an order closing down around 500 Indian Made Foreign Liquor shops



Total prohibition was in force in the state from 1937 to 1971 when the then DMK government headed by M Karunanidhi lifted it first

Rajaji, who was by then steering the Swatantra party, personally visited the DMK patriarch and requested him not to revoke the ban

Though the DMK regime did not heed to his counsel, the party re-introduced the ban three years later

after assuming power in 2016.

Prohibition is now featured in the manifestos of other parties as well including the PMK and MDMK.

The state Congress recalled that till 1967, when it held the reins of power in Tamil Nadu, total prohibition was in force and there need not be any hesitation in implementing it again.

In its poll document, the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee said as soon as a 'new government assumed

office, a high-level committee comprising experts and officials would be formed to work towards imposing a complete ban on liquor.

While mulling a ban on alcoholic beverages, the panel would work on ensuring that the proposed move does not lead to brewing of illicit liquor and also look into ways to offset the loss of revenue from liquor sale to the government due to the move, it said.

In the past, the DMK had argued

that a total liquor ban may lead to a spurt in illicit alcohol that would affect the people.

There were also difficulties in enforcing such a ban in view of factors like availability of liquor in all the neighbouring states, the DMK had argued years ago, but it reversed its stand later and promised dry law.

Freedom fighter and Congress stalwart C Rajagopalachari was instrumental in bringing the Tamil Nadu Prohibition Act of 1937, which ensured a dry spell in the state for decades.

Madras HC rules criminal proceedings against civic chiefs for manual scavenging

43 PEOPLE LOST THEIR LIVES IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS IN TAMIL NADU WHILE THEY WERE ENGAGED IN MANUAL SCAVENGING

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, March 17 (IANS): Manual scavenging continues to haunt Tamil Nadu. The Safai Karmachari Andolan (SKA), an umbrella body working for the welfare of manual scavengers, moved the Madras High Court after the state witnessed the second highest number of deaths of manual scavengers.

Forty-three people lost their lives in the last five years with 14 losing their lives in 2020 while they were engaged in manual scavenging, a figure which is second only to Uttar Pradesh which stands at 52 in the past five years. The first bench of the Madras high court represented by Chief Justice Sanjib Banerjee and Justice Senthilkumar Ramamurthy ruled that criminal proceedings will be initiated against the civic body chiefs like municipal commissioner or corporation commissioner if people die due to manual scavenging. The judges observed that "Even after passing stringent orders people are dying in pits. It is really painful to hear that 6 people have lost their lives after the dawn of this year."

The court observed, "It is high time that the heads of civic bodies are personally held liable to deaths owing to manual scavenging in their territories." It said that if any manual scavenging work is reported in

Tamil Nadu, the concerned commissioner or civic body chief must be immediately arrested. On February 14, 2021 three people had lost their lives owing to asphyxiation while they were cleaning the sewage pit of a catering unit at Kancheepuram. When Murugan, who entered the pit was not responding to calls, his co-workers Bhagyaraj and Arumugam entered the pit to rescue him but all three lost their lives after inhaling toxic fumes. On February 17 also one person died due to asphyxiation while trying to clean a 30 feet deep well in a residential premises at Saidapet, Chennai whose water was mixed with sewage water following a leak in a sewage pipe line. Workers Ravi and Kasi who entered the well fell unconscious and Ravi succumbed later while Kasi survived.

Samuel Raj, Secretary of the Tamil Nadu Untouchability Eradication Front while speaking to IANS said, "Every year more than 20 people die while working as manual scavengers but the figure may go up as there is no proper data available and unless a door to door survey is conducted there will be no proper data."

The Safai Karmachari Andolan reports that the figures of 43 deaths for the past five years is wrong and that according to the data available with them 69 people have lost their lives.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS DIVISION, BARGARH

No. O-1266 Email: rd_bgh@yahoo.co.in // Fax : 06646-230676, Gmail: adityabgh1@gmail.com

"e" PROCUREMENT NOTICE No. ONLINE-BGH-13 of 2020-21

1. Name of the Work	Periodical Maintenance of five years completed PMGSY road from : Rupapali chhak to Lupursiga chhak under Package No.OR-03-ADB-04 for the year 2020-21.				
2. Estimated Cstot Put Tender	Rs.41.38 lakhs				
3. EMD	1 (One) % of Estimated Cost				
4. Class of Contractor	B & A Class				
5. Time of Completion	4 (Four) Calendar Months				
6. Cost of Tender Paper	Rs.6000/-				
7. Other details	As per DTCN				

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of Tender Online for Bidding		Last date & Time of seeking tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender
		From	To		
1	2	3	4	5	6
Executive Engineer, Rural Works Division, Bargarh	ONLINE- BGH-13 of 2020-21	22.03.2021 at 11.00 A.M.	31.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	30.03.2021 upto 5.00 P.M.	05.04.2021 at 11.00 A.M.

Further details can be seen from the website: www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

Executive Engineer, R.W. Division, Bargarh
OIPR-25062/11/0013/2021

of the day **quote**

During my interactions with various sections of people in Assam, I was told that the BJP will return to power as the BJP-led government's biggest achievement has been halting militancy and stopping the killing of innocent people in the state.

NARENDRA SINGH TOMAR | UNION MINISTER

At the meeting with the PM, chief ministers of states reeling under a fresh spike made their statements. Fortunately, in Bihar the situation is not that bad

INITISH KUMAR | BIHAR CHIEF MINISTER

Congress never worked for development and progress of the region or the country's unity or welfare of the people, but only to grab power. This forced the people here to endure its misrule for a long time and the problem of illegal migration in the area

YOGI ADITYANATH | UTTAR PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Punjab CM, Sidhu meet over tea

Chandigarh: Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and Navjot Singh Sidhu met over tea on Wednesday, discussing the possible reinduction of the cricketer-turned-politician's into the state cabinet. The 40-minute meeting at the chief minister's farmhouse near here comes amid speculation over rehabilitation of the Congress MLA, who quit the state cabinet after being stripped of a key portfolio by the CM.

T'gana schools new nCoV hotspots

Hyderabad: Schools in Telangana are turning to be new hotspots of Covid-19 as the state faces a sudden spurt in new infections. Over 100 students and staff members of at least seven schools have tested positive during the last two days, worrying the state authorities. The state government is likely to announce new measures, including possible closure of schools to contain the spread.

70-year-old man beaten to death

Barabanki (UP): A 70-year-old man was beaten to death over a petty issue in Uttar Pradesh's Barabanki Wednesday, following which the accused was arrested, police said. Shatruhan, a resident of Dehua village, was found lying in a pool of blood by the villagers, who reported the matter to police.



I want to appeal to the Centre to take back the GNCTD Bill, don't cheat the people with this legislation

ARVIND KEJRIWAL | DELHI CHIEF MINISTER

COVID TESTING CAMPS FOR PROTESTING FARMERS

Expressing concern over the health of agitating farmers, camping on Delhi borders, Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Wednesday announced that Covid-19 testing camps have been set up and vaccination has begun at the protest site



Act decisively to curb Covid '2nd peak': PM to CMs

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 17: Meeting Chief Ministers amid growing alarm over resurgence of Covid-19, Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday urged them to act fast against the emerging "second peak" of the pandemic, warning "if we do not stop this now, a country-wide outbreak can occur".

He called for taking quick and decisive steps for stopping this "second peak" of Covid-19 virus, in the meeting held via video conference.

Stressing the importance of solving problems of local governance, he warned that the confidence which came from the achievements in the battle against Covid-19 should not turn into negligence as he expressed concern about the high positivity rate in Maharashtra and Madhya



Pradesh with 70 districts witnessing a 150 per cent rise in the last few weeks.

"Stop this emerging second peak of corona immediately," he urged the Chief Ministers. At the same time, Modi stressed that the public should not be brought to panic mode.

The Prime Minister noted the need for provision of micro containment zones and to be serious about 'Test, Track and Treat' as "we have been doing

for the last one year".

"It is very important to track every infected person's contacts in the shortest time and keep the RT-PCR test rate above 70 per cent. More RT-PCR tests should be done in the states like Kerala, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, and Uttar Pradesh, which give more emphasis to Rapid Antigen Tests."

The Prime Minister urged to increase testing and to pay special attention to the "re-



ferral system" and "ambulance network" in small cities.

"This is because now the whole country has opened up for travel and the number of people travelling has also increased. There is need for a new mechanism for sharing information among people," he said, focussing on responsibility of following SOPs for surveillance of the contacts of the travellers coming from abroad.

Vax wastage in India is 6.5%

The average of COVID-19 vaccine wastage in India is 6.5 per cent, with Telangana and Andhra Pradesh recording 17.6 and 11.6 per cent wastage respectively, the Centre said Wednesday as it called for optimal utilisation of the jabs. Addressing a press conference, Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said that 3.51 crore vaccine doses have been administered till now in the country, which include 1.38 crore beneficiaries aged 45-60 years with specific co-morbidities and those above 60 years who have been given the first dose. On March 15, 8.34 million COVID-19 vaccine doses were administered worldwide, of which India alone administered 36 per cent of doses, he said.

Massive spike in Maha

The surge in COVID-19 cases in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra in the past few days is not the "ripple in the first wave" but a "mighty scary second wave", a top health official said Wednesday. Speaking during a discussion on news channel NDTV 24x7, civic-run KEM Hospital's Dean Hemant Deshmukh said the case numbers were now getting scary.

Man sentenced to death for raping a minor

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jaipur, March 17: A special POCO court in Rajasthan's Jhunjhunu district Wednesday awarded death penalty to a man for raping a 5-year-old girl 26 days ago and appreciated the swift action by the police in the case.

According to the police, the 21-year-old man abducted the girl who was playing in an agriculture field near her house on the evening of February 19. Other children informed the girl's parents about it following which police were alerted.

The girl was found in an injured state at an isolated place. The accused was identified and arrested five hours later. Investigating officer in the case Suresh Sharma, who is the circle officer of Chirawa, said the court convicted the man Tuesday and pronounced the death penalty under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act Wednesday.



"Swift action was taken in the case and all evidence collected. The charge sheet was filed and the court pronounced the judgment today," he said. The court also appreciated the investigation conducted by the police, saying it was an example of an ideal investigation which contained direct, scientific, electronic and circumstantial evidence.

It was observed that the circumstantial evidence collected by the police was enough to prove the case. Hailing the judgment, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said the police filed the charge sheet within nine days and the court delivered judgment within 26 days of the incident.



Farmers winnow rice grains at a field on the outskirts of Visakhapatnam

PTI PHOTO

No concerns yet: Govt on AstraZeneca safety fears

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: Amid reports of possible side-effects of Oxford-AstraZeneca's COVID-19 vaccine and its suspension in some European countries, the government on Wednesday said there is "no signal of concern" regarding its use in the country as of now.

Asked about the suspension of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine in some European countries, Dr VK Paul, NITI Aayog member (Health) told a weekly press conference here that it has only been done as a precautionary measure.

Concerns about AstraZeneca's vaccine relationship with thrombotic events in people who received the vaccine have come to light and



as a result, about 10 European countries have paused their AstraZeneca vaccination programme, he said.

"The European medical agency

says it is a precautionary measure and there is no data to believe, as of now, the causal relationship between the vaccine and the adverse events. The assessment is

still being done," Paul added.

He said the World Health Organization (WHO) has said as a precaution, investigation should go on and has categorically said not to suspend the vaccination.

"India's own committee that looks at adverse effects is seized of this issue. For the last few days, it is tracking the information that is available to us in a very systematic manner and again I assure you that we have no signal of concern in this regard. Therefore, clearly our vaccination programme with Covishield will go on with full vigour. "We are mindful of the fact to address this concern, based on the emerging situation. As of today, there is no concern at all with regard to Covishield," Paul said.

AAP, BJP trade barbs over Delhi's 'most polluted capital city' tag

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: The ruling AAP and opposition BJP Wednesday indulged in a blame game over the issue of pollution in the national capital.

Delhi BJP spokespersons Harish Khurana and Praveen Shankar Kapoor, in a press conference, alleged that the Arvind Kejriwal government failed to utilise its environment budget.

Citing documents, they claimed that during financial years 2019-20 and 2020-21, the AAP government "failed" to utilise the budget allocated for environment.

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai, said the "central government had allowed the lapse of the Commission for Air Quality Management, and until the Centre gets serious about combating pollution, nothing could be done".

Mamata releases TMC manifesto

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, March 17: Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday unveiled a "development-oriented" manifesto for the upcoming assembly polls in West Bengal, promising an income scheme for all families, a student credit card and constitution of a task force to examine the inclusion of several communities under the OBC category.

Claiming that her government has reduced poverty in the state by 40 per cent, the manifesto also promised to increase annual financial aid to farmers from Rs 6,000 to Rs 10,000. "For the first time, every family in Bengal will be extended a minimum basic income. Under this, 1.6 crore general category families will get Rs 500 a month, whereas SC/ST category families will get Rs 1,000. The money will be directly transferred to the woman head of a family," Banerjee said.

A new student credit card scheme will be introduced with a credit limit of Rs 10 lakh and an interest rate of only 4 per cent will be



charged, the West Bengal chief minister said. "We will set up 10 lakh new MSMEs and 2000 new big industrial units in the next five years," she said.

"We shall appoint a Special Task Force to examine and propose OBC status to all the communities which are not recognised as OBCs like Mahishya, Tili, Tamul and Sahas. We will also ask the Government of India to grant ST status to Mahatos," the TMC chief said.

A Special Development Board would be set up for the development of Terai and Doarais region in north Bengal, she said.

Pakistan sending weapons through drones: Govt to RS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: The government Wednesday said some instances of supply of weapons through drones from Pakistan have come to light and security agencies were taking action on it.

Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said this in Rajya Sabha, while responding to a question on whether the central government is aware that Pakistan has started supplying weapons to infiltrators via drones. "Certain instances of supply of weapons via drones from across the Pakistan border have come to the notice of security and law enforcement agencies," he said in



his written reply.

Reddy said the government has been taking various steps to meet such challenges, which include round the clock effective surveillance, streamlining the intelligence set up, capacity building of forces, patrolling on the borders along with sensitization of local population in border areas, establishment of observation posts, border fencing, flood lighting, deployment and use of modern and hi-tech surveillance equipments, etc.

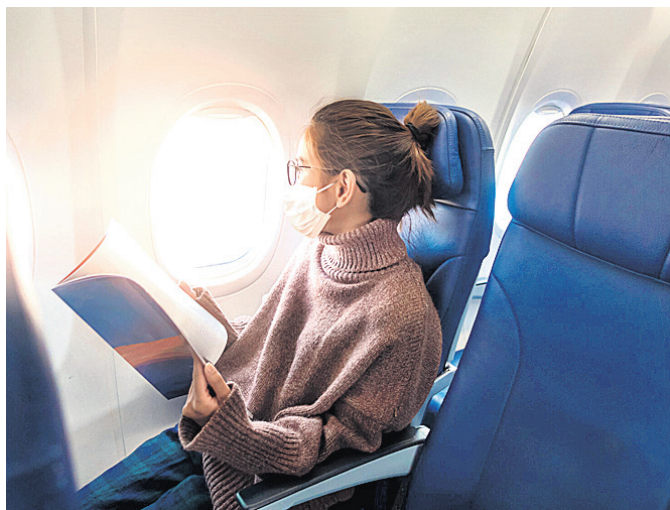
'Passengers not wearing masks properly to be de-boarded'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: The DGCA informed the Delhi High Court on Wednesday that action is being taken against passengers not wearing masks properly despite repeated warnings and they will be de-boarded from planes before departure and treated as "unruly passengers".

The high court expressed satisfaction over the steps being taken by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and said it hoped that the action would continue in the same spirit considering the safety of passengers from COVID-19 infection.

A bench of Justices Navin Chawla and C Hari Shankar observed that the court was initially planning to keep the suo motu case open to con-



tinue monitoring the implementation of directions issued by the

court earlier. However, after noticing the proac-

tive action by the DGCA, the court decided to close the case and observed that initiation of punitive action against the violators is a welcome step, the bench said.

Justice Shankar had March 8 taken suo motu cognisance of the situation after witnessing passengers not wearing masks properly during transportation from airport to the flight and their stubborn reluctance to wear masks properly.

The court, which had issued various guidelines to DGCA and all other airlines for immediate compliance, said it was constrained to pass the order because of an alarming situation which was witnessed by the judge himself during the Air India flight from Kolkata to New Delhi March 5.

DGCA, represented through Additional Solicitor General (ASG)

Chetan Sharma and advocate Anjana Gosain, informed the court that following its directions, it issued a circular March 13 relating to strict guidelines to be followed in the airports.

"On board the aircraft, in case any passenger does not adhere to wearing of mask properly even after repeated warning, he/ she should be de-boarded, if need be, before departure," the circular stated. "In case, any passenger on board an aircraft refuses to wear mask or violates the 'COVID-19 Protocol for passengers' even after repeated warnings, during the course of the flight, such passenger may be treated as 'Unruly Passenger' as defined... Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR)...And the procedure in respect of handling such unruly passenger, as provided in above men-

tioned CAR, shall be followed by the concerned airlines," it said.

Advocate Gosain also informed the court that in a Jammu to Delhi flight, March 16, four passengers were declared unruly for not properly wearing masks and were handed over to the security officials. She said the authorities have also decided to conduct surprise checks.

When the counsel for Air India said they have also issued a circular with necessary guidelines, the bench asked the DGCA to ensure that other airlines also follow the guidelines.

The DGCA has also said in its circular that passengers shall wear masks and maintain social distancing norms at all times during air travel. The mask shall not be moved below the nose except under exceptional circumstances, it said.

of the day quote

A significant situation is emerging as plummeting pandemic is going up. The Prime Minister said that pandemic seems to be more so in Tier II, Tier III cities and closer to rural areas. The earlier phase was in big metro cities

DR VK PAUL | HEAD OF INDIA'S VACCINE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Three children are raped every hour in India and five children are victims of sexual abuse. This is a national emergency and the children of India need our help

FARHAN AKHTAR | ACTOR

Goa is at increasing risk vis a vis a resurgence in Covid-19 cases in the state

GOA PRAMOD SAWANT | CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Bihar minister insults Speaker

Patna: Bihar Vidhan Sabha Speaker Vijay Kumar Sinha adjourned the house Wednesday after Samrat Chaudhary, the Panchayati Raj minister asked him "not to get too anxious", which did not go down well with Sinha. Sinha strongly objected to the Hindi word "vyakul" used by Samrat Chaudhary, which loosely translates to being anxious. The Speaker asked the minister to withdraw his remark immediately which he not only refused but repeated to Sinha's chagrin.

Congress block chief shot dead

Chhatrapur/Bhopal: Ghuwara Block Congress President Indra Pratap Singh was shot dead in Chhatrapur district, the police said. The Congress leader was killed Tuesday evening, following which his family members created a ruckus in the district hospital. The reason behind the murder is said to be an old rivalry. According to official information, he was sitting at a small eatery when he was shot dead.

Nepali woman shot dead

New Delhi: A 45-year-old woman was shot dead by bike-borne assailants here Wednesday. The victim identified as Meena was from Nepal and was residing in Timarpur in North Delhi, where the attack took place. She used to sell water, snacks and cold drinks. Police received information about the shooting around 7 a.m.

30 school kids test nCoV+ve

Palghar: As many as 30 students and a teacher from an ashram school have tested positive for coronavirus in Maharashtra's Palghar district, an official from the health department said Wednesday. The cases came to light after a couple of students displayed symptoms of the viral infection earlier this week, the official from the taluka medical office said.

2 Nigerians held with drugs

Bangalore: Two Nigerians have been arrested with synthetic drugs worth Rs 75 lakh, police said Wednesday. Joseph Ndukwe (38) and Uzochukwu Mark Maurice Mb Atuegwu (38) were arrested for allegedly possessing and supplying the drugs to people here, the police said.



The days of Pinarayi Vijayan government is numbered as there is no doubt that Kerala will have a Congress Chief Minister

AK ANTONY | MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, RS

FIRE BREAKS OUT IN HOSP

A fire broke out in the Calcutta Medical College and Hospital here Wednesday morning, Fire Brigade officials said. There was no report of any injury in the fire, they said



Farmers to intensify agitation

During the nationwide strike March 26 that also marks four months of the farmers' movement, all shops and other business establishments will remain shut for 12 hours, followed by the burning of the copies of the three laws during 'holika dehan' March 28

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 17: Ahead of their Sampurna Bharat Bandh March 26, farmer leaders Wednesday said they were preparing to intensify the agitation against the three farm laws.

"The strike will start from 6 in the morning and will continue till 6 in the evening, during which all shops and dairies and everything will remain closed.

"We will burn the copies of the three laws during Holi and hope that better sense prevails within the government, and it repeals the laws, and gives us a written guarantee for MSP," said Ranjit Raju of Ganganagar Kisan Samiti addressing a press conference. The bandh has found support in all trade and transport unions, students', youth and women's unions.

"We are also trying to create such meetings at the state level so that the strike is observed everywhere," said another farmer leader Purushottam Sharma. All India



Kisan Sabha (AIKS) leader Krishna Prasad said the fact that the movement had managed to continue for as long as 112 days was an achievement in itself, and it would only get stronger from now.

He added that the Bharat Bandh will happen at "state, zila, tehsil and village levels". "The protest

has been going on for 112 days. That itself is an achievement. Neither you, nor us had thought that we could do this, and the public has shown that it supports us," he said.

Prasad also expressed concerns over the central government's move to introduce the Electricity Amendment Bill 2021, claiming

that any amendments made to the act would be in violation of the government's commitment made to the farmers in January. "During the 11 rounds of talks that we have had with the government, Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar said that they accepted our demands over the electricity bill.

"The media wrote that 50 per cent demands of the the farmers' movement were resolved. But, now they are trying to introduce the act again. This is cheating," he said. Enacted in September, the three farm laws have been projected by the Centre as major reforms in the agriculture sector that will remove the middlemen and allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere in the country.

The protesting farmers, on the other hand, have expressed apprehension that the new laws would pave the way for eliminating the safety cushion of the Minimum Support Price (MSP) and do away with the "mandi" (wholesale market) system, leaving them at the mercy of big corporates.

PROTEST TURNS UGLY



UP Police lathi-charge on Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) workers during their protest, in Lucknow

PTI PHOTO

IAF Group Captain killed in MiG-21 crash

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: A group captain of the Indian Air Force (IAF) was killed in an accident involving a MiG-21 Bison aircraft in Gwalior Wednesday morning, officials said.

The pilot has been identified as Group Captain A Gupta. The accident took place at around 10:50 am, when the aircraft was taking off for a combat training mission, the officials said. The air headquarters has ordered a court of inquiry to ascertain the cause of the crash.

"A MiG-21 Bison aircraft of IAF was involved in a fatal accident this morning, while taking off for a combat training mission at an airbase in central India," the IAF said in a tweet.

"The IAF lost Group Captain A Gupta in the tragic accident. IAF expresses deep condolences and stands firmly with the family members. A Court of Inquiry has been ordered to determine the cause of the accident," it added.

The Soviet-origin Mig-21 Bison is an upgraded version of the Mig-21 aircraft that the IAF began inducting in the 1960s.

The Mig-21 Bison is capable of carrying beyond-visual-range missiles and other potent weapons.

On February 27, 2019, Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman flew a Mig-21 Bison and shot down an F-16 aircraft of the Pakistan Air Force, before his aircraft went down in a dogfight. He was captured by the Pakistan Army and released two days later. The IAF has lost many Mig-21s and other aircraft in accidents in the last few years.

In June 2019, the Ministry of Defence informed Parliament that 27 IAF aircraft have crashed since 2016. In 2016-17, six IAF fighter jets, two helicopters, a transport aircraft and a trainer crashed. In 2017-18, the IAF lost two fighter jets and a trainer aircraft in crashes.

DELHI WOMAN DIES AFTER SON SLAPS HER

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: A 76-year-old woman died after she was slapped by her son following an argument between them in Dwarka, the police said Tuesday.

In the CCTV footage of the incident that occurred Monday afternoon, the woman, Avtar Kaur, can be seen being slapped by her son on the face, after which she became unconscious and fell on the ground.

After the video emerged, the police registered a case against her 45-year-old son under section 304 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) at the Bindapur police station and arrested him.

According to the police, before the incident, there was an argument between the woman and

one of her neighbour over parking vehicles. A PCR call was also made by the neighbour, but when the police reached the spot, the complainant told them that the issue was sorted out and she did not want to pursue the matter anymore. Subsequently, Kaur's son confronted her about "picking up a fight" with the neighbours. During the ensuing argument between the two, the son slapped his mother on her face, a senior police officer said. The CCTV footage showed that after the dispute over parking of vehicles was sorted, another argument broke out between the woman, her son Ranbir and his wife.

The woman was taken to a nearby hospital, where she was declared "brought dead" by the doctors, senior police official (Dwarka) Santosh Kumar Meena said.

WATER RESOURCES ISSUES

INDIA, BANGLADESH TO EXPAND COOPERATION

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: India and Bangladesh have agreed to expand cooperation across the entire gamut of water resources issues, including framework for sharing of river waters, mitigation of pollution, river bank protection, flood management, basin management, according to an official statement Wednesday.

The India-Bangladesh Water Resources Secretary level meeting under the framework of the Joint Rivers Commission took place on March 16 here.

The Indian delegation was led by Pankaj Kumar, Secretary (Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation). The Bangladesh delegation was led by Kabir Bin Anwar, Senior Secretary,



Ministry of Water Resources.

Noting that India and Bangladesh share 54 common rivers which directly impact the livelihood of people in the two countries, both sides commended the close cooperation that exists between them in the matter.

"Both sides agreed to expand co-operation across entire gamut of water resources issues including

framework for sharing of river waters, mitigation of pollution, river bank protection, flood management, basin management, etc.," the statement said.

A Joint Technical Working Group will provide inputs on the matter. The discussions were substantive and held in a cordial atmosphere, it added.

The meeting took place ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh later this month.

On Tuesday, sources said, the two sides discussed sharing of waters of the Manu, Muhuri, Khowai, Gumti, Dudhkumar and Dharla rivers. Discussions also took place to further cooperation in the area of flood forecasting, they added. Both sides also agreed to schedule the next secretary-level meeting in Dhaka on mutually convenient dates.

Kashmiris await traditional guests to return lost smiles

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, March 17: As the minimum temperatures rose notches above normal in most places in Kashmir Wednesday, hoteliers and guesthouse owners have started face lifting their establishments to welcome visitors this year.

"Water taps have remained frozen for the last four months and just two days back, these taps are opening up. We have started facelifting of our hotel as we are expecting good number of visitors this year," said Nazir Ahmad, a hotel owner in Sonamarg tourist resort.

"After abrogation of 370, the pandemic hit our industry. 2019 was tense and after that there was no tourism in 2020. All our hopes are now pinned on this year.

"We have been assured by our partners outside J&K that they will be organising groups of tourists this year since many people have expressed their desire to visit Kashmir.

"Let us hope all goes well and 2021 becomes year of hope and revival for our industry, said Abdul Hamid, a tour and travel operator who has been associated with the hospitality industry for nearly four decades.

Even ordinary taxi drivers and Shikara owners on the Dal Lake are praying with folded hands that 2021 brings back smile on their faces.

"I am only praying that Allah should come to our rescue. We have suffered to such an extent that any further suffering would end our lives," said Nisar Dar, a taxi driver in Srinagar.



Locals associated with handicrafts like shawl weaving, wood carving, papier-macche etc also

complain that their expertise and hard labour have not given them any returns in the absence of tourism

VALLEY HOPEFUL

As spring heralds melting of snows and blooming of flowers, locals are hopeful of peace and better tourism this year

What Kashmir awaits today is a chance to play host to its traditional guests associated with tourism, Hindi film industry, adventure sports and honeymooners

during the last many years.

"Local buyers are very few and far between when it comes to items of wood carving and papier-macche. These things are mostly bought by visitors as souvenirs

of their visit to Kashmir.

"Unless tourism is revived in its real sense, we cannot keep the wolf away from our door for long," said Naseer Ali, a papier-macche artisan living in Zadibal locality of old city Srinagar.

Although horticulture is still the biggest industry in Kashmir, it is confined to only to orchard owners and fruit dealers.

It is the tourist industry that concerns the lives of thousands local artisans, taxi operators, Shikara and houseboat owners, hotel and guest house operators, tour and travel operators, Ponywallahs, furrriers, pavement sellers etc.

Better tourism has always brought smile on the faces of Kashmiris whose hospitality is famous all over the World.

international

of the day quote

I, too, kneel on the streets of Myanmar and say: may violence cease; I, too, extend my arms and say: may dialogue prevail



POPE FRANCIS | HEAD OF VATICAN CITY

I just don't understand this sort of macho thing about I'm not going to get the vaccine, I have a right as an American, my freedom to not do it. Why don't you be a patriot, protect other people?



JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT OF THE US

We keep the effects of these vaccines under review all the time and we know that the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is saving lives in the UK right now so if you get the call, get the jab



MATT HANCOCK | HEALTH SECRETARY, UK

SHORT TAKES

Gunmen kill 58 in Niger market

Niamey: Gunmen on motorcycles attacked a group of civilians returning from market day in a volatile corner of Niger, leaving at least 58 people dead and then burning granaries to the ground, the government has said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility for Monday's massacres, though extremists belonging to the Islamic State in the Greater Sahara group are known to be active in the Tillaberi region where the villages were attacked.

Oz to give vax to PNG

Canberra: Australia will send COVID-19 vaccines from its own supply to its near-neighbour Papua New Guinea and will ask AstraZeneca to send more to try to contain a concerning wave of infections, Australia's prime minister has said. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said 8,000 AstraZeneca doses would be sent next week for Papua New Guinea's frontline health workers and he and his Papua New Guinea counterpart James Marape would ask AstraZeneca to send another 1 million doses as soon as possible.

7 killed in Pak coal mine blast

Karachi: At least seven Pakistani miners were killed after an explosion at a coal mine in the troubled Balochistan province, the second such incident in the province in a week. The explosion took place Monday night after the accumulation of methane gas in the mine in Torgar gas field in Hanai district, Balochistan Coal Mines Workers Federation president Sultan Muhammad Lala said. Last week, six miners were killed after an explosion in a coal mine in Marwar district of the province.

Philippines imposes entry restrictions

Manila: The Philippines has announced that it will temporarily suspend the entry of foreigners and some citizens as the Southeast Asian country battles a renewed spike in Covid-19 cases. In a statement issued Tuesday night, the Philippines' coronavirus task force said foreign citizens and returning nationals who had not been working overseas will not be able to enter the country from March 20 to April 19 under the ban.

US sanctions 24 China and HK officials ahead of talks



The White House has set low expectations for the meeting with Chinese officials at Alaska

AGENCIES

Hong Kong, March 17: The US sanctioned an additional 24 Chinese and Hong Kong officials over Beijing's ongoing crackdown on political freedoms in the semi-autonomous city, just ahead of the Biden administration's first face-to-face talks with China.

The step reflects Washington's "deep concern" about the erosion of Hong Kong's autonomy following changes to its election system endorsed by China's ceremonial legislature last week, Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a statement Wednesday.

Foreign financial institutions that deal with the 24 officials would be subject to US sanctions, the State Department said.

The planned changes to Hong Kong's electoral law give a pro-Beijing committee power to appoint more of Hong Kong's lawmakers. The move will reduce the proportion of those directly elected and ensures that only those determined to be truly loyal to Beijing are allowed to run for office — effectively shutting opposition figures out of the political process.

The US announcement was made during a visit by Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin to Japan and South Korea, both of which are wary of China's growing economic, military and political heft.

The imposition of new sanctions "fully exposes the US side's sinister intention to interfere in China's internal affairs, disrupt Hong Kong and obstruct China's stability and development," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian told reporters at a daily briefing Wednesday.

"China will take strong measures as appropriate to resolutely defend national sovereignty, security and development interests," Zhao said.

While in Tokyo, the Blinken and Austin delivered a joint statement with their Japanese counterparts expressing concern about Beijing's human rights violations in the western Xinjiang region against ethnic minorities and China's determination to alter the status of a group of uninhabited islands administered by Tokyo but claimed by Beijing. The two arrived in Seoul on Wednesday for talks.

EU envoys agree on China sanctions

Brussels: The European Union agreed Wednesday to blacklist Chinese officials for human rights abuses, two diplomats said, the first sanctions against Beijing since an EU arms embargo in 1989 following the Tiananmen Square crackdown. EU ambassadors approved the travel bans and asset freezes on four Chinese individuals and one entity, whose names will not be made public until formal approval by EU foreign ministers March 22, as part of a new and wider rights sanctions list. While the sanctions are mainly symbolic, the adoption marks a significant hardening in the EU's policy towards China, which Brussels long regarded as a benign trading partner but now views as a systematic abuser of basic rights and freedoms. The 1989 EU arms embargo on China, its second-largest trade partner, is still in place.

Thursday, Blinken and national security adviser Jake Sullivan are scheduled to meet Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and the foreign affairs chief of China's ruling Communist Party, Yang Jiechi, in Anchorage, Alaska.

The White House has set low expectations for the meeting. A senior official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity, said the two sides would not deliver a joint statement and no major announcements were expected.

SARKOZY GOES BACK ON TRIAL

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Paris, March 17: Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy is on trial over accusations of illegal campaign financing starting Wednesday, two weeks after he was sentenced on separate charges of bribery.

Sarkozy is accused of exceeding the legal threshold for campaign expenses by 20 million euros (23.8 million dollars) during his re-election campaign in 2012, dpa news reported.

An additional 13 people are also accused of fraud or aiding and abetting.



The so-called Bygmalion affair, after the name of a communications agency involved in the case, regards fake invoices issued to keep Sarkozy's campaign expenses under the legal threshold of 22.5 million euros. A verdict is expected in mid-April.

According to media reports, the trial might however be delayed immediately after opening, as one of the defendants' lawyers has fallen ill.

Sarkozy, who ruled France between 2007 and 2012, is facing one year in prison and a fine of 3,750 euros. At the beginning of the month, the former leader was already sentenced to three years in prison, two of them suspended, in a corruption case.

B'DESH MARKS 50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

Bangladesh Wednesday began the 10-day golden jubilee celebrations of the country's independence from Pakistan along with the birth centenary of the Father of the Nation 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman



Political role under fire in AstraZeneca vaccine suspension



REUTERS

Berlin, March 17: The decision by more than a dozen European countries to suspend AstraZeneca's COVID-19 shot faced deepening scrutiny Wednesday, amid concerns the step could undermine public confidence and delay efforts to beat the coronavirus pandemic.

The role of Germany, and in particular Health Minister Jens Spahn, is in the spotlight after a chaotic round of telephone diplomacy at the start of the week ended with the EU's biggest states agreeing to put AstraZeneca on hold.

Spahn says he acted on expert advice after Germany's vaccine watchdog reported on what it described as a statistically significant number of cases of a rare brain blood clot. AstraZeneca says it has found no evidence that the blood clots were caused by the vaccine. The World Health Organization called on countries not to delay lifesaving vaccine programmes.

Germany's actions have been interpreted as political both at home and abroad, with opposition leaders calling on Chancellor Angela Merkel to sack Spahn. Officials in

WHO official calls blood clots 'very rare'

Geneva: A top World Health Organisation expert on vaccines says people should feel reassured that even if health authorities turn up a link between blood clots and the AstraZeneca vaccine, such cases are "very rare." Dr Kate O'Brien, who heads WHO's department of immunisations and vaccines, said the UN health agency and the European Medicines Agency are trying to investigate the possibility of a link between blood clots and the AstraZeneca shots. The potential side effect has prompted some countries -- mostly in Europe -- to temporarily suspend use of the AstraZeneca vaccine. A WHO committee on vaccines is looking into the issue.

major European capitals have given mixed accounts over how the joint move to halt AstraZeneca came about. The stop on AstraZeneca threatens to hobble Europe's vaccination campaign just as a third wave of infection breaks over the continent, accelerated by more infectious variants.

The bloc has already lagged far behind the United States and former EU member Britain in vaccinating citizens. Hospitals are filling up again, and politicians in several European countries have been forced to consider fresh lockdowns, even as comparable rich countries prepare for normal life to return.

'Unconstitutional to bar same-sex marriage'

REUTERS

Tokyo, March 17: A Japanese court ruled Wednesday that not allowing same-sex couples to get married is "unconstitutional," setting a precedent in the only G7 nation not to fully recognise same-sex partnership.

The ruling by a district court, the first in Japan on the legality of same-sex marriages, is a major symbolic victory in a country where the constitution still defines marriage as being based on "the mutual consent of both sexes".

Following the ruling, plaintiffs and supporters unfurled rainbow flags and banners in front of the court. While a new law will be needed before same-sex marriages can actually take place - which could take some time in socially conservative Japan - the plaintiffs' lawyer called the ruling "revolutionary", while LGBT activists deemed it life-changing.

While Japanese law is consid-

ered relatively liberal by Asian standards, social attitudes have kept the LGBT community largely invisible in the world's third largest economy. Taiwan became the first place in Asia to legalise same-sex marriages in 2019.

Under the current rules in Japan, same-sex couples are not allowed to legally marry, can't inherit their partner's assets - such as the house they may have shared - and also have no parental rights over their partners' children. Though partnership certificates issued by individual municipalities help same-sex couples to rent a place together and have hospital visitation rights, they still don't give them the same full legal rights enjoyed by heterosexual couples.

"Sexual orientation cannot be changed or selected by a person's will," the ruling said. "It is discriminatory treatment ... that they cannot receive even some of the legal benefits that heterosexuals do."



Following the ruling, plaintiffs and supporters unfurled rainbow flags and banners in front of the court

LITTLE BUT LOUD



Ariana Lamcellari, 4, holds a sign at a protest against violence, following the charge of a British police officer in the London kidnapping and murder of Sarah Everard, in Dublin, Ireland

REUTERS

B'desh hosp fire leaves 3 Covid patients dead

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Dhaka, March 17: A major fire Wednesday morning in Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) here has left three Covid-19 patients dead, said DMCH Director Nazmul Haque.

Haque told IANS that the victims were being treated at the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the hospital, when the fire broke out. "Rest of the 11 patients of the ICU unit-2, dedicated to Covid-19 patients, have also been evacuated from the ICU following the fire outbreak. They were, later, shifted to the burn unit and ICU of the old building," Haque added.

The fire broke out at around 8 am, causing dense smoke inside the ICU unit-2 of DMCH, the state owned biggest hospital of the country. Three patients who were in life support in ICU, died during shifting to CCU of the Dhaka Medical College.

Pak poll body summons PTI on foreign funding

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Islamabad, March 17: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has issued notices to the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) and its own scrutiny committee to appear before it March 22 to explain their stance over secrecy of scrutiny in the PTI foreign funding case.

This follows a complaint by petitioner Akbar S Babar against the

scrutiny committee's decision to keep PTI documents secret.

The decision was taken by a three-member bench headed by ECP member from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa retired Justice Irshad Qaiser after hearing Babar's complaint Tuesday, Dawn reported. Babar's lawyer, Ahmad Hassan Shah, challenged the scrutiny committee's decision and invoked the Right to Information Act to seek access to the documents.

The lawyer argued that access to PTI documents is a right of the petitioner in light of Article 5(4) of the Political Parties Order, 2002 and Section 203(5) of the Election Act, 2017, Geo tv reported. By keeping the documents secret, the ECP scrutiny committee is violating the terms of reference of scrutiny that clearly demands scrutiny in the presence of both parties, the petitioner's lawyer said.

He said the scrutiny process would be a sham and mere attempt to rubber stamp fake documents.

The lawyer said a secrecy order of the committee is illegal.

About the performance of the committee, Shah regretted that other than writing a letter to the SBP to seek PTI accounts, there has been no investigation into the credible evidence provided regarding illegal funding from across the globe.

Mars may be hiding most of its 'missing' water underground

PREVIOUSLY, SCIENTISTS SEEKING TO EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FLOWING WATER ON MARS HAD SUGGESTED THAT IT ESCAPED INTO SPACE DUE TO MARS'S LOW GRAVITY

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Washington, March 17: Vast amounts of ancient water may have been trapped beneath the surface of Mars, according to a NASA-funded study which challenges the current theory that the Red Planet's water escaped into space.

Evidence found on the surface of Mars suggests that abundant water flowed across Mars billions of years ago, forming pools, lakes, and deep oceans, and where did all that water go has been a matter of investigation.

The new study, published in the journal Science, shows that a significant portion of Mars's water - between 30 and 99 percent - is trapped within minerals in the planet's crust.

The researchers from California Institute of Technology and NASA's

Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) found that around four billion years ago, Mars was home to enough water to have covered the whole planet in an ocean about 100 to 1,500 metres deep. However, a billion years later the planet was as dry as it is today.

Atmospheric escape doesn't fully explain the data that we have for how much water actually once existed on Mars, said Caltech PhD candidate Eva Scheller, lead author of a paper on the research.

The team studied the quantity of water on Mars over time in all its forms - vapour, liquid and ice - and the chemical composition of the planet's current atmosphere and crust.

They did so through the analysis of meteorites as well as using data provided by Mars rovers and orbiters, looking in particular at the



ratio of deuterium to hydrogen.

Water is made up of hydrogen and oxygen. Not all hydrogen atoms are created equal, however. There are two stable isotopes of hydrogen - deuterium to hydrogen.

The lighter-weight hydrogen has an easier time escaping the planet's gravity into space than its heavier counterpart, according to the re-

searchers.

Because of this, the escape of a planet's water via the upper atmosphere would leave a telltale signature on the ratio of deuterium to hydrogen in the planet's atmosphere, and there would be an outsized portion of deuterium left behind, they said.

However, the researchers noted that the loss of water solely through

the atmosphere cannot explain both the observed deuterium to hydrogen signal in the Martian atmosphere and large amounts of water in the past.

The study proposes that a combination of two mechanisms - the trapping of water in minerals in the planet's crust and the loss of water to the atmosphere - can explain the observed deuterium-to-hydrogen signal within the Martian atmosphere. The researchers said that when water interacts with rock, chemical weathering forms clays and other hydrous minerals that contain water as part of their mineral structure, a process that occurs on Earth as well as on Mars.

Mars, however, is mostly tectonically inactive, and so the drying of the surface, once it occurs, is permanent, according to the researchers.

business



I would urge the Govt that the way they have notified Digital Media Ethics Code to regulate social media and OTT platforms, they should enact a law on the pattern of Australian Code so that we can compel Google to share its revenue with traditional media

SUSHIL KUMAR MODI | SENIOR BJP LEADER

'WHATSAPP TO REVIEW POLICY'

The Centre has asked messaging firm Whatsapp to review its proposed privacy policy changes, said MoS for IT and Comm. Sanjay Dhotre. WhatsApp has drawn massive criticism from users globally, over concerns that data was being shared with its parent company, Facebook



of the day quote

The introduction of the Danfoss Climate Solutions segment in India will reinforce our thought leadership in the market and create new avenues to highlight the role of the Indian industry in achieving global climate targets

RAVICHANDRAN PURUSHOTHAMAN | INDIA PRESIDENT, DANFOSS

The government has received complaints against certain e-commerce companies alleging violation of FDI policy and necessary actions under the provisions of Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999 have been taken for investigation by the Enforcement Directorate

PIYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

Indian customers have always desired the legendary Jeep Wrangler, and I am pleased that today we are able to bring this to them, assembled in India. Jeep Wrangler's capability is unmatched because our engineers have continued to improve our 4x4 technology to make it a global benchmark

PARTHA DATTA | MD, JEEP INDIA

SHORT TAKES

ICICI Prud MF launches new ETF

Mumbai: ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund is launching a new exchange-traded fund targeted at the 30 least volatile stocks from the Nifty 100 index. The new fund will open on March 23 and close on April 6, the AMC said Wednesday. ICICI Prudential Nifty Low Volatility 30 index is an open-ended fund of funds that will invest in these stocks, and the underlying ETF replicates the Nifty 100 low volatility 30 index, the fund house said.

Blue Star likely to raise price of ACs

Chennai: Air-conditioner and commercial refrigeration maker Blue Star Ltd Wednesday did not rule out the possibility of a hike in prices following the rise in raw material and freight charges. This proposed move follows the earlier price increase in January. Blue Star Ltd MD B Thiagarajan, who unveiled a new range of products online under the 'affordable' segment, said the AC industry was expected to register a 15-20% growth.

Dell launches 17 next gen servers

New Delhi: Dell Technologies Wednesday announced to refresh its PowerEdge server portfolio with 17 next-generation servers that will help firms analyse and take action on data wherever it resides. Dell-EMC PowerEdge servers and systems management can deliver up to 85% time savings on average and eliminate dozens of steps with automation, the company said in a statement.

'BHEL emerges lowest bidder'

New Delhi: State-owned engineering firm BHEL Wednesday said it has emerged as the lowest bidder for supply of equipment for 6x700 MW nuclear power projects of Nuclear Power Corporation of India. "In an open competitive bidding process, BHEL has emerged as the lowest bidder (Rs 10,800 cr) for the fleet mode tender floated by NPCIL for the 6x700 MW Turbine Island Package Projects," the company said.

Asia's emerging market recovery to withstand rising US yields: S&P

The recovery across Asia's emerging economies should withstand rising US yields so long as this reflects an improving growth outlook and reflation rather than a monetary shock

SHAUN ROACHE | CHIEF ECONOMIST, APAC, S&P GLOBAL RATINGS

NPAs likely to increase in H1 2021, says survey

The survey was conducted on 20 banks, including public sector, private sector and foreign banks, representing about 59% of the banking industry, as classified by asset size



AGENCIES

Mumbai, March 17: Asset quality of banks, which saw some improvement in the second half of 2020, is expected to worsen during the first six months of 2021, according to a survey. The findings are part of the 12th round of bankers' survey carried out by FICCI-BBA between July and December 2020.

The survey was conducted on 20 banks, including public sector, private sector and foreign banks, representing about 59% of the banking industry, as classified by asset size.

In the current round of the survey, half of the respondent banks reported a decline in NPAs during the second half of 2020. About 78% of participating state-run banks have cited a reduction in NPA levels. "However, in terms of outlook, nearly 68% of respondent bankers expect the NPA levels to be above 10% in the first half of 2021," the survey showed.

Close to 37% of respondents expect NPA levels to be upwards of 12%. The Reserve Bank of India's Financial Stability Report, released in January this year, showed that gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) of banks may rise to 13.5% by September 2021, under the baseline stress scenario.

Some of the high NPA risk sectors identified by majority of respondent bankers in the current

round of survey include tourism and hospitality, MSME, aviation and restaurants, the survey showed.

Around 55% of respondents believe NPAs to rise substantially in the tourism and hospitality sector, while another 45% reported that NPAs are likely to increase moderately in this sector.

Another high NPA risk sector reported in the current round of survey is the MSME sector, with 84% respondents expecting an increase in NPAs in this sector.

Close to 89% respondents also expect the restaurant sector to see an increase in NPAs, though only 26% expect NPAs to increase substantially in this segment, it showed.

The survey revealed that there was a significant increase in the requests for one-time restructuring for MSMEs, announced by the RBI in August last year. "An overwhelming 85% of the respondent banks have cited an increase in requests for restructuring of advances as against 39% in the last round," it said.

The long-term credit demand has been growing for sectors such as infrastructure, pharmaceuticals and food processing, the findings showed.

"Particularly for the pharma sector, 45% of the respondents have indicated an increase in long term loans in the current round of survey as against 29% in the previous round," it showed.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: S&P Global Ratings Wednesday said the recovery across Asia's emerging economies would withstand rising US yields so long as this reflects an improving growth outlook and reflation rather than a monetary shock.

US yields are rising mostly due to expectations of higher growth, rather than fears of imminent tightening, or monetary-policy shock. This time around, initial conditions in Asia are sturdier than they were in 2013, the rating agency said.

It said current account surpluses, low inflation (for the most part), higher real interest rates, and faster foreign-exchange reserve buffers give regional policymakers more



flexibility and should allow central banks to remain focused on supporting recovery.

"The recovery across Asia's emerging economies should withstand rising US yields so long as this reflects an improving growth outlook and reflation rather than a monetary shock," S&P Global Ratings Asia-Pacific Chief Economist Shaun Roache.

The US-based agency, however, said that if markets price a policy mistake and US real yields surge

CHEMICAL INDUSTRY

'₹10L cr investment opportunity on cards'

AGENCIES

New Delhi, March 17: The government Wednesday said the Indian chemical industry has an opportunity to attract investment of about ₹10 lakh crore by 2025 as the country offers a location advantage.

Opportunities exist in the entire value chain and across the sector: There are opportunities for investment in PVC, methanol value chain, among others, it said.

"We are aware that the chemical industry is a critical and integral part of the growing Indian economy and present enormous opportunities of attracting about ₹10 lakh crore of investment by 2025 and creating jobs for lakhs of persons," Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister DV Sadanand Gowda said while addressing India-Chem 2021 event

higher, risks of a 'taper tantrum' rise, with India and Philippines most exposed.

In 2013, US yields leaped after the US Federal Reserve indicated it would begin unwinding its quantitative easing program. The resulting panic over rising credit costs led to sharp outflow from emerging markets, including Asia's, and forced central banks to hike interest rates.

Since then, S&P said, the central banks in India and Thailand have been more aggressive in building up reserve buffers.

It said the effect of \$1.9 trillion in stimulus on US inflation and rates remains uncertain and markets can react in a non-linear way if inflation expectations surge above central bank targets and imminent tightening is priced in.



organised by Ficci.

Coupled with enormous opportunities and high potential of the Indian chemical industry, makes it a preferred investment destination globally, he said.

India as a market also offers a location advantage as the Indian peninsula is centrally located between the East and West of Asia. It is also the centre of the trans-Indian ocean routes, which connect the European countries in the west and counties of East Asia, he added.

BIZ BUZZ

ASUS launches new gaming laptop

Bhubaneswar: ASUS India announced the expansion of its TUF laptop portfolio in India with the launch of new TUF Dash F15, a super slim 15-inch device that represents portability and thin & light design. Engineered to empower users with the ability to game, work, and stay productive anywhere, the new ASUS laptop comes with the latest 11th Gen Intel Core i7-11370H processor and GeForce RTX 3070/ 3060 GPU, for an unbeatable performance. The laptop was unveiled globally during a virtual conference at CES 2021 and is finally set to make a mark in India. Its powerful core experience is equipped with high-end features, not typically seen at accessible price points, such as a tournament-level gaming panel with up to a 240Hz refreshes rate, a versatile Thunderbolt 4 port, and Two-Way AI Noise Cancellation technology.



IDFC Mutual Fund launches Index Funds

Bhubaneswar: IDFC Mutual Fund announced the launch of two innovative fixed income funds: the IDFC Gilt 2027 Index Fund and the IDFC Gilt 2028 Index Fund. Both funds are open-ended Target Maturity Index Funds which will invest in government securities and treasury bills that constitute the CRISIL Gilt 2027 Index and Gilt 2028 Index respectively. The New Fund Offer (NFO) will close March 19, 2021. Target Maturity Funds have a defined maturity date, unlike regular open-ended mutual funds that remain open indefinitely. Upon maturity, the net asset value of these funds will be paid back to unit holders. Additionally, IDFC's Gilt Index Funds will invest only in sovereign rated instruments, which are guaranteed by the Government of India, reducing any credit risk. These funds will also steadily reduce the residual maturity of investments over the holding period.

GLOBAL WORKFORCE

'2 in 5 believe their job will be obsolete in 5 yrs'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: Nearly 40% of the global workforce believe their job will be obsolete within 5 years due to accelerated automation in view of the pandemic, according to a survey by PwC. The survey, conducted between January 26 and February 8, involved 32,500 respondents from 19 countries, including India and China. It also pointed out that the global workforce sees the shift to remote working as just the tip of the iceberg.

Reflecting the fact the pandemic has accelerated a number of workforce trends, the survey found 60% are worried that automation is putting many jobs at risk; 48% believe traditional employment won't be around in the future and 39% think it is likely that their job will be obsolete within 5 years.

"However, this is not a counsel of



despair, as 40% of workers say their digital skills have been improved through the prolonged period of lockdown, and claim they'll continue to embrace training and skill development," it said.

As many as 77% are ready to learn new skills or completely retrain, whereas 74% see training as a matter of personal responsibility.

60% are worried that automation is putting many jobs at risk, finds the survey

7% are ready to learn new skills or completely re-train

80% are confident they can adapt to new technologies entering their workplace, with a large majority from India (69%) and South Africa (66%) being 'very' confident

"And, 80% are confident they can adapt to new technologies entering their workplace, with a large majority of those asked in India (69%) and in South Africa (66%) saying they are 'very' confident," said the survey.

The study also found that 49% of respondents were focused on building entrepreneurial skills with an

interest in setting up their own business. PwC said respondents included workers, business owners, contract workers, students, unemployed people looking for work, and those on furlough or who were temporarily laid off.

The survey involved 19 countries: Australia, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Poland, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, the UAE, the UK and the US. The survey also found that 50% of workers "say they've faced discrimination at work which led to them missing out on career advancement or training".

As per the study, 13% reported missing out on opportunities as a result of ethnicity and 14% of workers experienced discrimination on the grounds of gender, with women twice as likely to report gender discrimination as men.

'De-risking biz top priority of industries'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, March 17: De-risking business from impacts of climate change and becoming environmentally sustainable is one of the top priorities alongside increasing worker productivity and production, a new survey has said.

The survey of over 400 industrial companies in Maharashtra by Climate Trends revealed that a majority of 65% would prioritise reducing dependence on non-renewable resources, water harvesting/recycling and switching to renewable energy.

"A majority of Maharashtra's industrial sector (more than 70%) believes that climate change is a real issue, however, some nuances exist," the survey said. "Those associated with largest industries have a stronger acknowledgment of the issue compared to those working with MSMEs."

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT



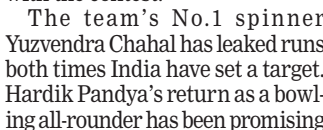
Nearly half of those surveyed believe that climate change impacts their industries and business "by a lot". The direct impacts to the businesses are productivity, expenditure and profits and supply chain of the business, it said.

"A majority (65%) of the industrial sector ranks 'de-risking business from climate change' as one of the top priorities for their business," it said.

Other priorities being increasing worker productivity, raising output, strong preparedness for any situation, more efficient chain supply management and decrease worker attrition rate.

Do or die for India

Going by Kohli's words post the third game, a third all-rounder



England, like India, also want to win in all conditions and will be buoyed by their emphatic win in the previous game. Buttler being

It will take a special effort from India to stop the top-ranked team from winning the series Wednesday night. The hosts winning the toss should make their task less tough.

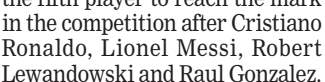
The series marked India's return to international cricket after



BRIEF SCORES: India Women 188 (Mithali Raj 79 n o, Harmanpreet Kaur 30 r h; Nadine de Klerk 3/35, Tumi Sekhukhune 2/26) lost to South Africa Women 189/5 (Anneke Bosch 58, Mignon du Preez 57, Marizanne Kapp 36 n o; Rajeshwari Gayakwad 3/13) by 5 wickets.

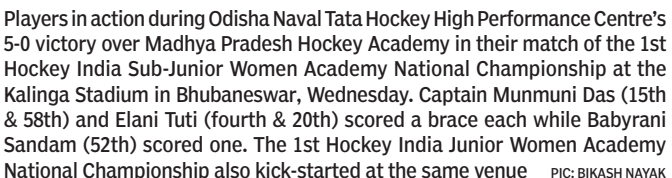


Sportiello tried to play from his area but misplayed his shot and the ball went directly to Luka Modric, who entered the box and made a low pass for an easy goal by Benzema from near the penalty



Captain Sergio Ramos and Marco Asensio sealed Madrid's victory by scoring a goal each in the second

This looks to be City's best chance of becoming European champion for the first time, though. Thanks to a blistering 12th-minute strike in off the crossbar by Kevin De Bruyne and Ilkay Gundogan's goal six minutes later after a flowing team move, City racked up a 24th win in its last 25 games in all competitions and a seventh straight clean sheet in the Champions League.



Odisha eves suffer defeat in semifinals

The third/fourth place match between Uttar Pradesh and Odisha will also be played Wednesday, before the final later in the day.

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