



PRAISE FOR DAUGHTER
Actor Shweta Tiwari feels her daughter Palak, who is set to debut in a Hindi film, is a better actor than her
LEISURE P2



UK EASES TRAVEL CURBS
The UK Sunday eased travel restrictions for India by moving the country from its "red" to "amber" list
INTERNATIONAL P10



NEERAJ'S NEW GOAL
After winning India's athletics gold, Neeraj Chopra now wants to throw the spear over 90 metres
SPORTS P12

Curtains down on Olympics 2020

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tokyo, August 8: It began with a virus and a yearlong pause. It ended with a typhoon blowing through and, still, a virus. In between: just about everything.

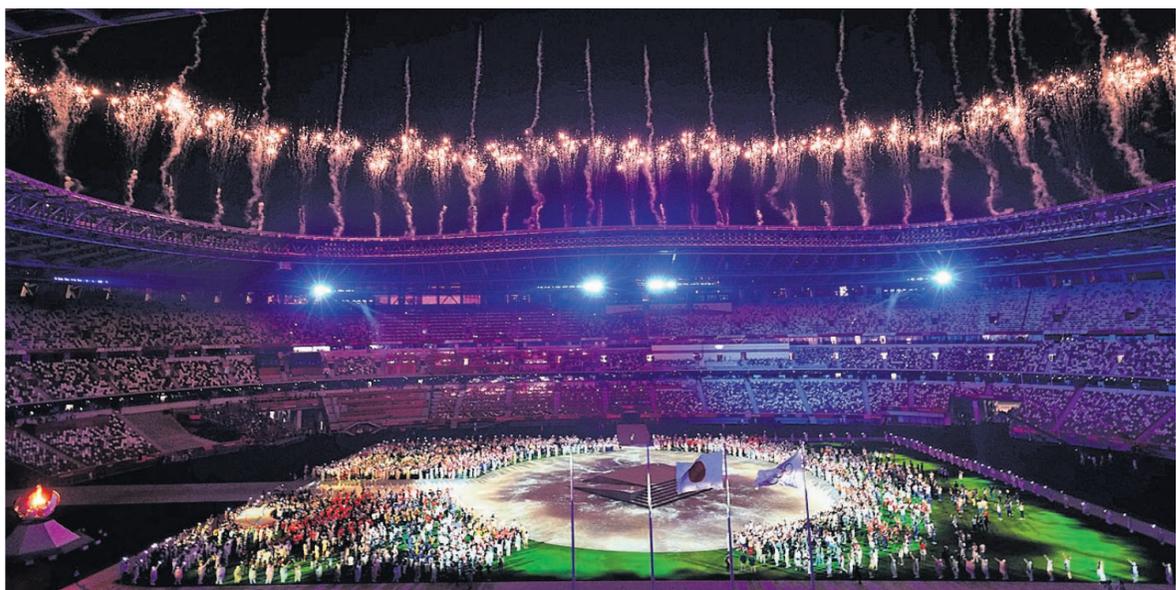
The Tokyo Olympic has been historic for India, as the country secured seven medals surpassing the six medals won in London Olympics 2012.

The Tokyo Olympics, christened with "2020" but held in mid-2021 after being interrupted for a year by the coronavirus, glided to their conclusion in a Covid-emptied stadium Sunday night as an often surreal mixed bag for Japan and for the world. A rollicking closing ceremony with the theme "Worlds We Share" – an optimistic but ironic notion at this human moment – featured everything from stunt bikes to intricate light shows as it tried to convey a "celebratory and liberating atmosphere" for athletes after a tense two weeks.

It was set to pivot to a live feed from Paris, host of the 2024 Summer Games. And with that, the strangest Olympic Games on record began closing their books for good.

Held in the middle of a resurging pandemic, rejected by many Japanese and plagued by months of administrative problems, these Games presented logistical and medical obstacles like no other, offered up serious conversations about mental health – and, when it came to sport, delivered both triumphs and a few surprising shortfalls.

From the outset, expectations were middling at best, apocalyptic at worst. Even Thomas Bach, president of the International Olympic Committee,



Fireworks explode during the closing ceremony in the Olympic Stadium at the 2020 Summer Olympics, Sunday, in Tokyo, Japan

said he'd worried that these could "become the Olympic Games without a soul." But, he said Friday, "what we have seen here is totally different."

At these Games, even the word "together" was fraught. Spectators were kept at bay. Athletes' perseverance became a central story. Mental health claimed bandwidth as never before, and athletes revealed their stories and struggles in vulnerable, sometimes excruciating fashion. Japan's fourth

Olympics, held 57 years after the 1964 Games reintroduced the country to the world after its World War II defeat, represented a planet trying to come together at a historical moment when disease and circumstance and politics had splintered it apart.

The closing ceremony Sunday reflected that – and, at times, nudged the proceedings toward a sci-fi flavour.

As athletes stood in the arena for the final pomp, digital scoreboards at

either end of the stadium featured what organisers called a "fan video matrix," a Zoom call-like screen of videos uploaded by spectators showing them cheering at home. In front of such formidable backdrops, athletic excellence burst through, from the Games' first gold medal (China's Yang Qian in the 10-meter air rifle July 24) to their last (Serbia defeating Greece in men's water polo Sunday afternoon).

While Tokyo is handing off the Summer Games baton to Paris for 2024, the delay has effectively crammed two Olympics together. The next Winter Games convenes in just six months in another major Asian metropolis – Beijing, Japan's rival in East Asia and home to a much more authoritarian government that is expected to administer its Games in a more draconian and restrictive way, virus or no virus.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



Sports person's number is constantly engaged. If you wish we can send your congratulatory message through Pegasus!

IGI Airport on alert after 'bomb threat' e-mail

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: Security has been beefed up at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport after a bomb threat email was received by the IGI police station, warning of a possible attack by the terrorist outfit Al Qaeda.

The email was received by the Delhi Police Saturday evening, which warned that a bomb could be used at the airport in the next one to three days. However, the threat was later found to be 'non-specific' and the Bomb Threat Assessment Committee (BTAC) has been terminated from the airport, after a search.

Sources said that the police received an email at around 5.50 pm Saturday, which mentioned "Planned bomb blast by Al Qaeda Sargana at IGI airport stating that Karanbir Suri alias Mohamad Jalal and Karanbir Suri's wife Shaily Sharda alias Haseena are coming to India Sunday from Singapore and plan to put the bomb on IGI in 1-3 days."

On examination of the threat mail, Security Operations Control Centre (SOCC) found that a similar threat message was received in the recent past



with the same names of the couple and on the similar language of the threat.

Immediately, police alerted the airport and the Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC), with checks carried out on the airport premises. At around 7.18 pm, the BTAC declared the bomb threat as 'non-specific'. However, BTAC asked for heightened security to remain on the premises. CISF officials said that checks by their quick-reaction teams will continue on the premises, with numbers increased, owing to the bomb threat, as well as Independence Day.

The Security Operations Control

Centre (SOCC) of the airport, on inspection, found that a similar threat message had been received by the airport in March, mentioning similar names and that the same threat, of blowing up the airport within one to three days was mentioned in that mail too. Even in March, the threat was declared 'non-specific' by BTAC, officials said.

Delhi Police has been requested to look into the investigation report of earlier threat message involving the same couple and also check up the e-mail source.

Taliban seize Kunduz, Sar-e Pul

REUTERS

Kabul, August 8: Taliban fighters overran two provincial capitals, including the strategic northeastern city of Kunduz and northern Sar-e Pul Sunday, local officials said, as the insurgents intensified pressure on the north and threatened further cities.

Taliban fighters seized key government buildings in the city of Kunduz, leaving government forces hanging onto control of the airport and their own base, a provincial Assembly lawmaker said Sunday.

The Taliban have also taken government buildings in the northern provincial capital of Sar-e Pul, driving officials out of the main city to a nearby military base, Mohammad Noor Rahmani, a provincial council member of Sar-e Pul province, said. A Taliban offensive has gathered momentum in recent days, as the insurgents unleashed their forces across Afghanistan after the United States announced it would end its military mission in the country by the end of August.

On Friday, the insurgents captured their first provincial capital in years when they took control of Zaranj, on the border with Iran in Afghanistan's southern Nimroz province.

In recent days the Taliban have escalated attacks on northern provinces, which lie outside their traditional strongholds in the south but where the group has been quickly taking ground, often along the border of Afghanistan.

Woman Maoist surrenders

POST NEW NETWORK

Phulbani, August 8: A woman Maoist from Kandhamal-Kalahandi-Boudh-Nayagarh (KKBN) division of the Odisha state committee laid down arms Sunday before the police in Kandhamal district. A senior police official informed that the woman cadre, identified as Kanti Mallick, is a resident of Gangaranga village under Baliguda block in Kandhamal district. She had joined the red rebels in 2018 and had been quite active till the time of her surrender.

"Kanti was a part of the KKBN division of Odisha Maoist state committee since 2018. Now, she has realised that the ideology she was pursuing is futile. She was inspired by various development activities being taken up by the Odisha government. So she decided to surrender," Kandhamal Superintendent of Police Vinit Agrawal told reporters.

"Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has urged all the active Maoist cadres and militia to surrender and join the mainstream. The Chief Minister's appeal encouraged Kanti to shun violence and leave the organisation," Agrawal added.

TATAS TO SELL KORAPUT COFFEE ALSO

Tatas will purchase the coffee from the govt and market it without interfering with the quality and originality

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: Tata Coffee plans to market Koraput coffee across the country to boost the presence of the local tribal product pan-India as well as abroad, the office of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said Sunday.

According to the state government, Tatas will purchase the coffee from the government and market it without interfering with the quality and originality.

"Tata Coffee's help in promoting the economic and social development of the coffee cultivators in the state is highly appreciated," Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik said Sunday.



State agencies like the Tribal Development Cooperative Corporation of Odisha Limited (TDCCOL), Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), Centre's Coffee Board and other agencies are now working with the Koraput coffee cultivators to extend a helping hand to them.

While TDCCOL has been playing a key role in procurement of coffee berries from the tribal cultivators in the district, several agencies are helping them in processing and packaging the product as well as training the coffee cultivators. The government has also started providing land on lease to the coffee growers free of cost, besides investing in their training and taking care of their input costs.

As of June 2021, 30,000 families have been granted 46,000 acres of forest land. In 2020-21, TDCCOL collected 28,790 kgs of coffee cherries from 193 tribal coffee cultivators in Laxmipur, Kashipur, Dasmantapur, Nandapur,

Lamtapat, Koraput and Pattangi blocks of the tribal-dominated Koraput district. The target is to grow coffee berries in more than 60 hectares in the next 21-22 years.

According to the agencies involved in coffee production in the district, several blocks of the district are apt for production of coffee due their hilly terrain and low temperature – prerequisites for growing coffee berries.

TDCCOL, meanwhile, has been helping in the marketing of the product online via e-commerce sites like Amazon, while offline Adisha shops situated in different parts of the state are also selling Koraput coffee, which has now become a global brand.

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Highest rights violations in police stations: CJ

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 8: Chief Justice NV Ramana Sunday said the threat to human rights and bodily integrity are the highest in police stations and even the privileged are not spared the third-degree treatment.

Justice Ramana was delivering the keynote address at an event organised by the National Legal Services Authority of India (NALSA) to launch the "vision and mission statement" and the mobile app for NALSA.

The Chief Justice said: "The threat to human rights and bodily integrity are the highest in police stations. Custodial torture and other police atrocities are problems which still prevail in our society. Going by the recent reports even the privileged are not spared third-degree treatment".

He stressed that despite constitutional declarations and guarantees, lack of effective legal representation at the police stations is a huge detriment to arrested or detained persons. He emphasised that the decisions taken in these early hours will later determine the ability of the accused to defend him.

"To keep police excesses in check dissemination of information about the constitutional right to legal aid and availability of free legal aid services is necessary," Chief Justice Ramana pointed out.



To keep police excesses in check dissemination of information about the constitutional right to legal aid and availability of free legal aid services is necessary
NV RAMANA | CHIEF JUSTICE OF INDIA

COVAXIN, COVISHIELD MIXING Cocktail vax better against variants: ICMR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: A study by ICMR involving 98 people, 18 of whom had inadvertently received Covishield as first dose and Covaxin as the second in Uttar Pradesh, showed that combining these two Covaxin-19 vaccines elicited better immunogenicity than two doses of the same vaccine.

The study also found that immunisation with combination of Covishield and Covaxin was safe and the adverse effects were also found to be similar when compared to the same dose regimen. The study titled 'Serenidipitous Covid-19 Vaccine-Mix in Uttar Pradesh, India: Safety and Immunogenicity Assessment of a Heterologous Regime' has been uploaded on medRxiv, a preprint server and is yet to be peer reviewed.

"To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study which reports the effects of heterologous prime-boost vaccination with an adenovirus vectored vaccine followed by an inactivated whole virus vaccine," the researchers said.

The immunisation programme against Covid-19 in India started with two vaccines – adenovirus vector platform-based vaccine Covishield and inactivated whole virion BBV152 Covaxin – and homologous prime-boost approach was followed. However, 18 individuals, under the national programme, in Siddharth-



nagar, Uttar Pradesh, inadvertently received Covishield as the first jab and Covaxin as the second. So, including these 18 individuals who had received one dose of Covishield and second dose of Covaxin, 40 recipients of two doses of Covishield and 40 recipients of two doses of Covaxin, were recruited in the study. The study duration was from May to June 2021.

"We compared the safety and immunogenicity profile of them against that of those receiving either Covishield or Covaxin. Lower and similar adverse events following immunisation in all three groups underlined the safety of the combination vaccine-regime." "Immunogenicity profile against Alpha, Beta and Delta variants in the heterologous group was superior and IgG antibody," the researchers stressed. "The findings suggest that immunisation with a combination of an adenovirus vector platform-based vaccine followed by an inactivated whole virus vaccine was not only safe but also elicited better immunogenicity," it said.

WEATHER		BHUB	CTK
TEMP		35.7°C	34.6°C
	MAX		
	MIN	26.3°C	25.0°C
Humidity		73%	79%
Rainfall		NIL	NIL
	Forecast	Light rain very likely	

leisure



LOVE ISLAND IS BIG PART OF MY LIFE: MARGOT ROBBIE

The *Suicide Squad* actress Margot Robbie is a huge fan of the ITV2 dating show *Love Island*, and has revealed Hollywood director James Gunn is also a big fan of the programme. She said: "It's a big part of my life. James Gunn is actually a big fan too."

BATHING ISN'T 'NECESSARY', BELIEVES JAKE GYLLENHAAL

Hollywood actor Jake Gyllenhaal doesn't think bathing is necessary as according to him it's helpful for 'skin maintenance' to allow the body to naturally clean itself. "More and more I find bathing to be less necessary, at times," Gyllenhaal told *Vanity Fair* magazine.



FORTUNE FORECAST

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ARIES
Go on, express your artistic side today, says Ganesha. Redecorate your home, or rearrange your work space. The stars foretell expenditure. However, if you've been eyeing that new mahogany dresser or the antique colonial teak desk, grab it. It is okay to splurge once in a while.

TAURUS
You will be on your feet today, shuffling from destination to destination for business purposes. Forehead wrinkles might burden your brow due to financial worry this afternoon. Fret not, says Ganesha, you will handle your situation well and enjoy the higher accountability by sun down.

GEMINI
You will propose, or get married today. Your family will be with you, trying to make sure that you don't let this opportunity go. You will look fantastic today, and nobody in his/her right mind would be able to say no to your proposal.

CANCER
With Ganesha's blessings, your day will be quite peaceful. It means that though you will have to face unfavourable circumstances, you will overcome them easily. Happiness on the home front enables you to display your efficiency in office. An exciting day!

LEO
You will come into some money by accident today. There is a good chance of making a huge gain in the share market today. You will be filled with a lot of self-confidence. Nobody will be able to influence your opinion today. However, your strongly expressed views may end up hurting someone, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
What you wish to do today is to overhaul the looks of your living space. You might want to add some pieces of furniture or some items of decoration that define your personality. Ganesha advises you to be ready in the evening to be a great performer or probably to lend some valuable help.

LIBRA
Ganesha says today you will have to pay more attention to those people in your family who is not keeping well health wise. Someone from the female sex will prove lucky for you around evening. Today is a day of mixed emotions and you will experience both joy and sadness. Ganesha advises you to follow the middle path and remain calm and patient.

SCORPIO
Being a constructive day, you may take up an uphill task at work, predicts Ganesha. You are miles ahead of your competitors and this fact shall relax you for the time being. In a nutshell, a day to make a note of, in your memories.

SAGITTARIUS
Your positive outlook and sense of humour seems to have taken a back seat today, predicts Ganesha. Today, your gloomy side reflects in your decisions-making as well. Spend some time with your partner and chat about anything under the sun. This is likely to cheer you up, feels Ganesha.

CAPRICORN
While your neighbours are irritating and troublesome, you will strike a conversation with them and build a cordial relationship with them. You will feel inclination for poems, novel, stories, and literary material like that during the later part of the day. Books will keep your mind fresh and give you new avenues to think about, says Ganesha.

AQUARIUS
Today, you will be determined to clean up the mess on your desk at the office or your home. Your enthusiasm to have a neat and clean space around will certainly win you some brownie points at both the places, says Ganesha. Later on the day, you may enjoy a nice romantic dinner with your sweetheart.

PISCES
Today you will take the decision on a long standing matter or problem to find a last solution. Today, with your head firmly on your shoulders, you will be able to see both sides of the coin and make meaningful decisions. There may be some doubt over what you decide but stand your ground and do not let your confidence waver, says Ganesha.

I am very different from my Cartel character: Pranati

Mumbai: Actress Pranati Rai Prakash, who will next be seen in the upcoming web series *Cartel*, has opened up on the striking dissimilarities she shares with her character on the show.

Coming from a family with an Army background, the actress plays Sumi Angre, a girl belonging to a family of gangsters, in the series.

Talking about the same, Pranati said: "Sumi and I are very different people. While she is a pampered girl who stays with her family at home and aspires to be an actress, I was someone who moved out for studies far away from home at 17. I had to manage a lot of things myself and didn't have a choice to be as pampered as her."

"She comes from a gangster family, on the contrary I come from an Army background. She is emotionally weak initially, and on the journey, discovers her strength and transitions into a stronger being. I always had to be emotionally very strong, even though I maintain a vulnerable side," Pranati added. IANS



'Palak is a better actor than me'

New Delhi: Popular television actress Shweta Tiwari feels her daughter Palak, who is all set to make her debut in Hindi film industry with the horror film *Rosie: The Saffron Chapter*, is a better actor than her. The 40-year-old actress added that she would love to share screen space with Palak if she gets a chance. Shweta said: "I would love to work with her. At times she does these auditions and she does these scenes. I feel that she is a better actor than me. How easily she does. It is so effortless, I just keep looking. Sometimes I get emotional when I see her performing."

"So, she is a better actor and I would love to perform with her if I ever get a chance," she further said. Shweta has been a part of the small screen industry for over 20 years now. She gained the spotlight with her performance as Prerna Sharma Bajaj in *Kasautii Zindagii Kay*, and later featured in shows such as *Parvarish* and *Begusarai*, among others. IANS

I still have a lot to accomplish: Huma

New Delhi: Huma Qureshi made her debut in Hindi film industry in 2012 with the two-part 2012 crime drama *Gangs of Wasseypur*. She was later seen in popular films such as *D-Day*, *Badlapur*, *Jolly LLB 2*, among many others.

Touching almost a decade in the Hindi film industry, the actress says she is grateful with her journey but feels she has a lot to accomplish. After romancing the silver screen, IANS

Huma's tryst with web-stardom came with series such as *Leila* and *Maharani*. Talking about her journey Huma said: "I feel grateful and happy. I feel I still have a lot to accomplish."

The 35-year-old actress, who hails from New Delhi, is now gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Bell Bottom* starring Akshay Kumar. The espionage thriller is set for a theatrical release August 19.

She reveals what makes this genre popular across all age groups. "I think it has a little something for everybody," says the actress. IANS



Fashion trends that make a comeback

New Delhi: Fashion trends are forever changing. What is in trend today may be a complete no next year. Famous fashion designer Ashima Sharma shares some yesterday trends that have been revisiting the fashion arena. She adds that the pandemic has made one comfortable with experimenting so try these styles out:

their legs look longer and slimmer. For a perfect office look, you can match it with a black or a neutral colour trouser with a white shirt and a short vest.

Asymmetrical Silhouettes
Nowadays the fresh asymmetrical trend is sweeping the fashion arena. Fashion influencers have adopted this uber-chic trend and are experimenting with ways of wearing asymmetrical dresses. The rule of fashion is 'not to follow' the rules. One needs to play with colours and silhouettes to create a style.

Cold Shoulders
Owing to the Covid-19 vaccination drive, the cold-shoulder is back with a bang. This entirely flattering and adaptable silhouette can be teamed with a flowing skirt or jeans. The simple reason is that people rather wear a one or cold shoulder top in place of a half or full sleeve t-shirt to avoid rolling up their sleeves.

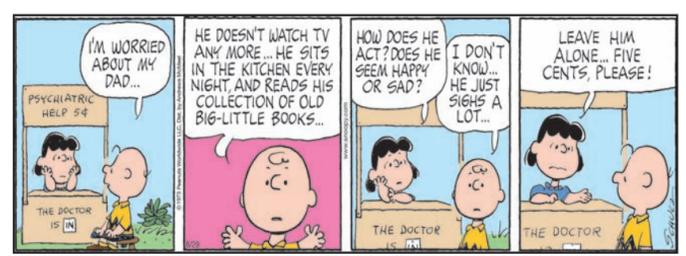
like leopard, zebra or even tiger are steadily taking the spotlight. Wearing animal prints is like experiencing the energy of exotic lands and their climates.

Halter Necks
The 2000 trend is back in 2021 with a makeover. The strap around the neck now has a modern spin. The halter neck blouse usually works for every style and body type. If you're into minimal fashion, then it is better to go for a neutrals or black. Images are for representation only. AGENCIES

Bell Bottoms
Bell bottoms are a trend from the '70s and '80s which have recently made a comeback. They exhibit a retro summer style for fashion divas. These trousers are ideal for those who want to make

Animal Prints
Animal prints always make a comeback with the latest fashion twist. Prints

PEANUTS



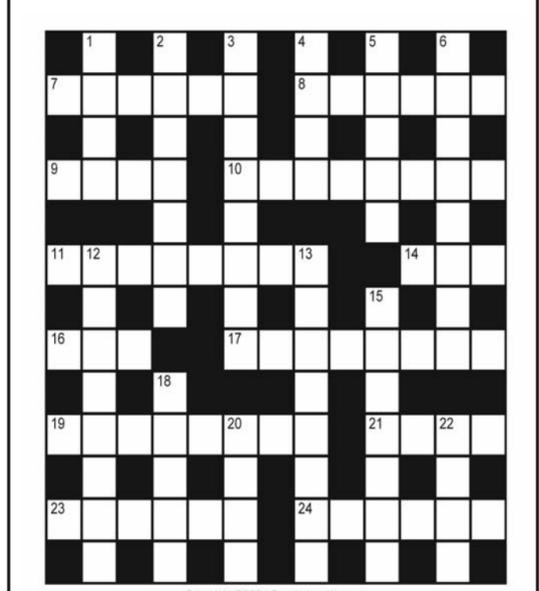
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



FUN post CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Look up to
 - 8 Pure
 - 9 Play group
 - 10 Final blurb
 - 11 It's found in the Yukon
 - 14 Exchange blows
 - 16 Possess
 - 17 Time without end
 - 19 Draw (4,4)
 - 21 Crowd noise
 - 23 Hard to come by
 - 24 Deep blue
 - 5 Hard to pin down
 - 6 Commence (5,3)
 - 12 Peter O'Toole role, "___ of Arabia"
 - 13 Utility bill
 - 15 Gate-crash
 - 18 Be nuts about
 - 20 Fencing sword
 - 22 Pond organism
- Down**
- 1 Icelandic epic
 - 2 Playful pets
 - 3 Take it all in?
 - 4 Super berry

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

	3	7		6				
				7		5		
2								
				9	8	4		1
		8						3
7	4					6		
1	6			5				9
		4					6	
						7		5

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

8	6	4	3	7	9	2	5	1
5	2	3	4	1	6	8	7	9
1	7	9	5	2	8	3	4	6
7	1	6	9	3	4	5	8	2
9	8	5	7	6	2	4	1	3
4	3	2	1	8	5	9	6	7
2	4	1	8	9	7	6	3	5
6	5	7	2	4	3	1	9	8
3	9	8	6	5	1	7	2	4

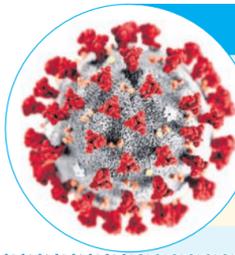
CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown



DENGUE AWARENESS

A mosquito net put up at Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar to create awareness on dengue, Sunday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	20,32,02,464	18,25,57,451	43,04,709
India	3,19,34,455	3,10,99,771	4,27,862
Odisha	9,87,070	9,69,916	6,435

Bid to shift British-era steam engine stalled



The 20-tonne steam engine was manufactured by Stewart & Co, England. The then Maharaja of Paralakhemundi had purchased it at a cost of ₹12,000 in 1898

In 1987, during the centenary celebrations of the South Eastern Railway, it was brought to Puri and installed in the BNR Hotel complex. The postal department had released a commemorative stamp with the picture of this engine to mark the centenary celebrations of SER

The BNR hotel, established in 1900 near Puri beach, is also a heritage hotel. The display of this heritage engine at the hotel entrance has enthralled scores of visitors who were privileged to witness these pieces of history

PNN/ AGENCIES

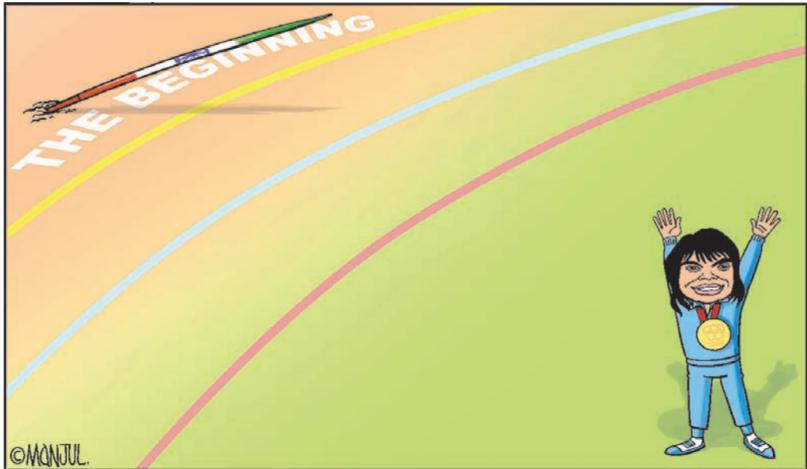
Puri, August 8: Hundreds of youth Congress and Jagannath Sena activists Sunday stalled an attempt to shift a British-era steam engine from the BNR Hotel premises here. The activists, opposing the shifting of the heritage engine, barged into the BNR Hotel premises when the authorities attempted to dismantle the parts of the engine in order to shift it to somewhere else. Youth Congress activists, led by Ashutosh Mishra and Jagannath Sena convenor Priyadarshan Pattnaik, reached the hotel and forced the authority to stop the dismantling work. They opposed the shifting of the engine on the ground

that it is a heritage item and an integral part of the history of this place. They vowed not to allow the hotel authorities to shift this heritage item from Puri. According to sources, the 20-tonne steam engine was manufactured by Stewart & Co, England. The then Maharaja of Paralakhemundi had purchased it at a cost of Rs 12,000 in 1898 and in the year 1900 it began its run between Paralakhemundi and Nuapara. The route was later extended to Vijaynagar. Since steam locomotives were phased out, they became out of service. In 1987, during the centenary celebrations of the South Eastern Railway (SER), it was

brought to Puri and installed in the BNR Hotel complex. The postal department had released a commemorative stamp with the picture of this engine to mark the centenary celebrations of SER. The BNR Hotel, established in 1900 near Puri beach, is also a heritage hotel. The display of this heritage engine at the hotel entrance has enthralled scores of visitors who were privileged to witness these pieces of history. However, historian Anil Dhir said that the engine, mounted just a hundred metres from the beach, has been being buffeted by the sea wind for decades. "A beautiful artefact of a glorious era left behind is now a rust encrusted and decaying

relic today. It is now lying in a pathetic state," he added. When it was lugged all the way to Puri to be kept at the iconic BNR Hotel, it was a beautiful and grand machine. The railways, he said, took good care of the old engine till they managed the hotel. But when the Centre leased out the hotel to the Chanakya Group in 2007, the new owners gave the old property a facelift but left the engine to rot, he added. The saline air spelt the doom of the engine. Rust has corroded it completely. The roof of the engine has withered away and there are rust scales on the boiler, wheels and chimney, he said.

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Physical classes at tech institutions resume

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: All the technical universities, engineering and professional colleges, polytechnics, diploma institutions and ITIs of the state that come under the Skill Development and Technical Education department will reopen from Monday. The department had declared August 4 that all the technical institutions would reopen from August 9. In a letter to all such institutions in the state, the department Joint Secretary Ajay Kumar Nayak directed that physical classroom teaching for final year stu-

dents will commence August 9 after all precautionary measures such as complete sanitisation and disinfection of classrooms, laboratories and hostels are taken as per the prescribed Covid guidelines. As per the standard operating procedure (SOP), physical classes will be held in regular manner to cover all chapters of the syllabus irrespective of the coverage of some chapters through online teaching. Physical classroom teaching will be recorded and shared with absentee students. Teachers and students residing in containment zones are not allowed to visit universities and colleges.

Hostels will open adhering strictly to Covid-19 safety protocols and thereby ensuring the safety of students, the department said. Isolation rooms in all hostels should be kept ready for immediate shifting of any inmate, upon reporting illness. Earlier, several students of BPUT met Skill Development and Technical Education Minister Premananda Nayak and demanded reopening of technical institutions. Notably, as part of the recently announced unlock guidelines, the state government had also allowed reopening of schools for Class X and Class XII students, which opened from July 26 this year.

NHRC moved over farmer's death, ₹30L ex-gratia sought

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: A rights activist filed petition before the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Sunday seeking Rs 30 lakh compensation to the family of a farmer who died of electrocution in Balasore district Saturday. The activist also urged the commission to direct the Principal Secretary to the State Energy Department to take stringent action against the erring officials after an independent enquiry within four weeks. The deceased was identified as Ganesh Chandra Jena, 40, of Rasulpur village in Bahanaga block of Balasore.



Notably, Jena accidentally came into contact with a low-hanging 11kv electric wire while going to his field with rice seedlings, early Saturday morning. He died of electrocution on the spot. Angry locals blocked the National Highway 16 in protest and claimed that Jena had repeatedly requested the authorities to repair the cable lying so low over his rice field.

Fake tobacco products worth ₹70L seized in Cuttack

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, August 8: The Commissionerate Police Sunday claimed to have seized huge cache of fake tobacco products worth Rs 70 lakh from Cuttack Sadar and Malgodown areas here. In the first incident, Sadar police carried out a raid at Mukameswar village here and recovered fake tobacco (zarda) products worth Rs 40 lakh stuffed in 200 sacks. According to Sadar police inspector-in-charge Sudhansu Bhusan Jena, Dillip Kumar Das and his son Rakesh used sachets with logos of reputed brands to pack sub-standard tobacco products and sell those to shops in the locality. "The father-son duo is on the run. They didn't have any food safety licence," said Jena, adding



that they would intensify crackdown on producers of counterfeit items in the Silver City. In the second incident, Malgodown police recovered counterfeit tobacco products (zarda, gutkha, sattabari) worth Rs 30 lakh



from a godown in the area. A man was arrested in connection with the incident. "We have seized 2.26 lakh sachets of gutkha and 8 lakh sachets of sattabari from the godown," said a police officer. Additional commissioner of police (ACP) Amarendra Panda said that the godown was under police scanner for a few days now. "Chemicals and tobacco leaves were being used at the godown to manufacture zarda. It's illegal under the provisions of the

Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA). The illegal tobacco products were being sold in Cuttack and its nearby districts," the ACP said. Cuttack Municipal Corporation health officer Satyabrata Mohapatra, Food safety officer Pratikhya Das Mohapatra and other senior officials were present during the raid. Sources said that the Millennium City is slowly becoming a hub for manufacturing of fake ghee, tea, ketchup and spices. The Commissionerate Police had seized huge amounts of fake and adulterated goods from Jagatpur and other areas of Cuttack during a series of raids, last year. The seized goods were destroyed after receiving permission from a local court, sources said.

Heavy rain, lightning unlikely today: IMD

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The regional office of India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday issued no warning of heavy rain, thunderstorm or lightning for Monday but forecast light to moderate rains in different parts of the state. The department in its weather forecast for Monday said, "Light to moderate rain or thundershower is very likely to occur at a few places over the districts of North

Lightning & thunderstorm could be seen Tuesday in a few districts including in Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sonepur, Bargarh, Sonepur, Bargarh, Sambalpur and Deogarh

Odisha and at one or two places over the districts of South Odisha." It also said that lightning and thunderstorm could be seen

Tuesday in districts like Kalahandi, Bolangir, Sonepur, Bargarh, Sambalpur, Jharsuguda, Sundargarh, Deogarh, Angul, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Balasore. The met department meanwhile predicted that besides lightning and thunderstorm, Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts could see heavy rainfall Wednesday. The weathermen said that cloudy sky and few spells of rain could be observed in the state Monday

whereas the maximum temperature in City could go upto 34°C. No warning for fishermen was issued Sunday. The department in its rain report claimed that during the day time, Sunday Baripada reported the highest rainfall of 44 mm followed by Balasore which saw 15mm of rainfall. The maximum temperature in the state was reported Sunday in Boudh at 36°C whereas the minimum temperature in the state was reported in Phulbani at 20°C.

Puri cinemas now history

LOCALS & MOVIE BUFFS URGE STATE GOVT TO TAKE APPROPRIATE MEASURES TO REVIVE THE CINEMA HALLS IN THE PILGRIM CITY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Puri, August 8: The state government might have allowed the cinema halls to raise their curtains while easing Covid restrictions but much to the chagrin of the moviegoers of the Pilgrim city, all the cinema halls have downed their shutters. According to sources, all the five cinema halls here had stopped silver screens much ahead of the outbreak of novel coronavirus. A few years ago, Srikrushna, Janata, Sriram, Laxmi and Srikhetra cinema halls were regularly screening shows. However, all these cinema halls stopped screening shows one after the other for various reasons, said a movie buff from the city. "Laxmi Talkies of Puri is one of the oldest cinema halls in Odisha. This hall had played the first Odia movie Sita Bibaha. Srikhetra Cinema of the Holy City was well-known for playing Telugu and Tamil movies for the people of these communities who have been residing in Puri for the last several decades. This is all history now," he said. According to the locals, Sriram, Srikhetra and Janata cinema halls had stopped movie shows around seven/eight years ago. Similarly, Laxmi Talkies has not played any movie in last four years while



Srikrushna hall downed its shutters a few months ahead of the outbreak of Covid-19. Laxmi Talkies suffered extensive damage due to cyclonic storm Fani that ravaged several coastal districts in May 2019. "The asbestos roof of the movie theater was blown away by the cyclonic storm. The screen and seats have been damaged in the absence of maintenance work. Equipment worth lakhs of rupees are now rusting away," said a local. Many locals, meanwhile, urged the state government to consider the issue and take appropriate steps to revive the cinema halls in Puri. "Many people from Puri are going to Bhubaneswar to watch movies. The state government is now pumping in huge amount of funds for developing Puri into a heritage city. We hope that it will do something to revive the cinema halls here," said movie enthusiast Shyamsundar Senapati. "Laxmi Talkies would lose its identity if the government doesn't provide any assistance," said the

owner of the hall Kailash Chandra Pandey. District culture officer Choudhury Aravind Dash said the Culture department has no role in the establishment and maintenance of cinema halls. "This is purely a business issue involving the private sector," he added.

CLOSING RITUAL



Chariots of this year's Rath Yatra being dismantled near the Lion's Gate of Srimandir in Puri, Sunday. The annual festival was organised amid Covid restrictions in July

CUTM holds 5-day faculty devp prog



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) has conducted a five-day online faculty development programme on 'Computational Fluid Dynamics—A Potential Engineering Design Tool' from July 26 to 30.

According to sources, around 200 faculty members and research scholars from a host of AICTE approved institutions took part in the programme that was sponsored by AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy.

The course content was designed for the participants to learn about the relevance of Computational Fluid Dynamics Analysis pertaining to Industry 4.0.

Prof. N Balakrishnan of IISc Bengaluru's department of Aerospace Engineering, Prof. JS Mathur, a senior scientist and head KTMD at (CSIR) NAL in Bengaluru, Prof. V Ramesh, a senior scientist and head CTFD at (CSIR) NAL in Bengaluru, Prof. Sekhar Majumdar of Centurion University in Odisha, Dr HN Das, Deputy Director at NSTL (DRDO) in Visakhapatnam, Mukundjee Pandey and Sujit Mishra of Centurion University in Odisha and G Satish of Entuple Technologies delivered lectures on related fields throughout the 14 sessions of the programme.

A stress management and meditation session by Prof. Sibakripa Bose marked the end of the programme. The five-day programme was inaugurated by Vice Chancellor Prof. Supriya Pattanayak and concluded by the Registrar Prof. Anita Patra.

693 kg ganja seized in Subarnapur dist

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The Special Task Force (STF) of crime branch seized huge quantity of contraband cannabis during a raid at a village Sunday in Subarnapur district. The STF also arrested two drug peddlers during the raid.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Purnananda Mudulli, a resident of Birmaharajpur of Subarnapur district, and Biswanath Karna of Manamunda area in Boudh district.

Upon receiving a tip-off, the task force team carried out a raid in village Sagaja and seized 693 Kgs of the contraband ganja from the possession of the accused duo. Tarava police assisted the task force in this raid. The accused duo was later arrested by the police. A case (159/21) has been registered at the Tarava police station in this regard.

CLASSIFIED

AFFIDAVIT

I, Vittalana Pavitra spouse of Army No. JC- 735118M, Rank Nb Sub S.Hari Kumar of Mohakhanda, Godbhaga, Dist.- Bargarh have changed my name from Vittalana Pavitra to Surampudi Pavitra vide affidavit No. 96 Dt.04.08.2021.

LOST

I am Prashanta Kumar Dash, S/o- Agadhu Dash, At/PO- Nagapur, PS- Gop, Pin- 752110, D- Puri, Odisha have lost land Kabala (Plot No.- 3812, Khata No.- 459) at any where. If someone found and please contact with this Mobile No.- 7027026503.

State's Covid toll nears 6.5K

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, August 8: Odisha's Covid-19 death count shot up to 6,435 Sunday after 69 more patients succumbed to the virus, while 1,243 fresh cases raised the tally to 9,87,070, a Health department official said.

The coastal state now has 12,129 active cases and 9,68,453 people have so far recovered from the disease, including 1,525 since Saturday, said the official.

The case fatality rate (CFR), however, stands at 0.65 per cent, one of the lowest in the country, the official said. The CFR national average is at present 1.34 per cent.

Khurda, comprising state Capital Bhubaneswar, reported the highest of 399 new infections, followed by Cuttack at 177. While there were no new cases in Koraput district, 27 others registered below-100 daily cases.

The fresh fatalities include 21 from Khurda district, Cuttack (13), Sambalpur (eight), Balasore and Sundargarh (six each). Khurda and Cuttack alone registered 63.7 per cent of the fresh fatalities.

A total of 53 other Covid-19 patients have died due to comorbidities, said the official.

Khurda district has the highest



The state has altogether inoculated 1,78,47,895 people, with 41,42,460 beneficiaries having received the second dose of coronavirus vaccine

IN SHORT

Odisha's case fatality rate stands at 0.65 per cent, one of the lowest in the country. At present, the national average is 1.34 per cent

The Test Positivity Rate continued to remain below 2 per cent for the last three days. It, however, marginally increased from 1.64 per cent to 1.79 per cent in the past 24 hours. The cumulative positivity rate stands at 5.96 per cent

Odisha has thus far conducted over 1.65 crore sample tests, taking into account 69,429 Saturday

number of 3,996 active cases followed by Cuttack (1,513). The other 28 districts have reported less than 1,000 cases. Both Khurda and Cuttack have together reported 45.4 per cent of the total active cases in the state.

Odisha has thus far conducted over 1.65 crore sample tests, taking into account 69,429 Saturday. The cumulative positivity rate stands at 5.96 per cent.

The state has altogether inoculated 1,78,47,895 people, with 41,42,460 beneficiaries having received the second dose of Coronavirus vaccine, the official added.

Meanwhile, the Test Positivity Rate (TPR) of the state continued to remain below 2 per cent for the last three days. It was, however, marginally increased from 1.64 per cent to 1.79 per cent in the past 24 hours.

BMC seals Unit-IV fish market in City



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The enforcement squad of the Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation (BMC) sealed the Unit-IV fish market (wholesale & retail) Sunday for allegedly functioning on weekend shutdown in the city.

As per an order issued by the BMC, the market has been sealed for mass violation of Covid appropriate behaviour during the shutdown in larger public interest and in a bid to contain any possibilities of spread of Covid-19.

"A surprise raid was conducted in different market places of the city. The BMC enforcement squad found mass violation of Covid norms apart from the weekend shutdown restrictions at Unit-IV market. We had earlier warned the traders and they had assured us to follow the guidelines. However, we found that some shops in the wholesale market were still operating and thus orders of sealing were given," said BMC Zonal Deputy Commissioner

The market has been sealed for mass violation of Covid appropriate behaviour during the shutdown

Anshuman Rath.

It can be mentioned that raids were conducted as the Covid cases saw no decline in the last week. While most of the commercial activities have been allowed to resume, mass violations of Covid norms are being observed around the city. This is one of the main reasons attributed to no improvement in Covid situation in the state Capital.

"Apart from the administration, it is also the responsibility of the people to follow the norms and guidelines laid down by the state government. Today's action is just a measure to ensure that everybody follows the guidelines," Rath added.

Centre released ₹81cr for Bhawanipatna MCH, says Pawar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, in its recent written statements furnished before the Lok Sabha, said that it had already released Rs 81.62 crore for the proposed Bhawanipatna Medical College and Hospital (MCH) in Kalahandi.

The information came to fore when BJP MP Basant Panda sought update on the new medical college in Kalahandi.

"One medical college has been sanctioned at Kalahandi's Bhawanipatna under Phase III of 'Establishment of New Medical Colleges attached with existing District/ Referral Hospitals'. This medical college is shared between the Centre and the Odisha government in 60:40 ratio. The project was approved at Rs 325 crore, of which Rs 195 crore was the Centre's share," MoS for Health, Bharti Praveen Pawar said.

Shutdown eased in 3 towns on I-Day

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: The state government relaxed weekend shutdown in three towns for a few hours next Sunday for the 75th Independence Day celebrations.

As per the order by the Office of Special Relief Commissioner (SRC), the weekend shutdown imposed in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack and Puri will be relaxed upto 11.00 AM August 15 allowing citizens to hoist the Tricolour.



Youths having fun in Taladanda canal in Cuttack, Sunday. The state government has recently renovated a stretch of the canal

Cyber crooks dupe City bizman, use his bank a/c to cheat many

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: An interesting case has come to fore as some unknown cyber fraudsters have used the bank account of an elderly businessman of the capital city to dupe people from all over the country.

The businessman too has personally lost more than Rs 1 lakh to cyber criminals few months back. The Crime Branch of state police has filed a case following an initial probe in this regard.

The complainant, identified as Raj Kumar Joshi, 62, resides at Rabi Talkies Square under Lingaraj police limits. In April, 2020, Joshi came across an advertisement of the Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) Bajaj Finance private limited, on popular social media platform Facebook, promising easy loans. Joshi needed money to invest in his business at the time. So he shared all his personal details including his phone number with the advertisers.

Subsequently, the fraudsters, identifying themselves as officials of the NBFC, contacted Joshi over phone from various numbers. They



also sent fake ID cards in their names to the WhatsApp account of Joshi.

The cyber criminals asked the victim to share his bank account details, photo copies of the bank passbook, cancelled cheques, Aadhaar card, PAN card and other documents through WhatsApp which he did accordingly. He also deposited Rs 96,000 in the account of the fraudsters to fetch the loan.

Recently, Joshi was shocked to know that the account held at Baramunda branch of SBI had been transferred to the Karimnagar branch in Rampur of Telangana, June 6, 2020. He later found that

As many as 151 transactions worth Rs 21.17 lakh and 399 transactions to the tune of Rs 21.26 lakh have been made using the victim's debit card and credit card respectively

The cyber criminals used his account to victimise people from other states too and the account has currently been put on hold following requests from Maharashtra police and Uttar Pradesh police

transactions of around Rs 21 lakh have been carried out using his bank account.

Sources also revealed that as many as 151 transactions worth Rs 21.17 lakh and 399 transactions to the tune of Rs 21.26 lakh have been made using the victim's debit card and credit card respectively.

Interestingly, the cyber criminals used his account to victimise people from other states too and the account has currently been put on hold following requests from Maharashtra police and Uttar Pradesh police, sources added.

The cyber cell of the crime branch has started initiated a probe into the matter.



Puri beach wears a deserted look due to the weekend shutdown, Sunday

OP PHOTO

Irregularities alleged in plantation drive

POST NEWS NETWORK

Khurda, August 8: The district administration has ordered a probe into the alleged irregularities in the plantation drive at Chhanaghara panchayat under Jatni block here.

The villagers had lodged a complaint regarding the alleged irregularities with the district collector, project director (PD) of District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and the Vigilance department, sources said.

As per the complaint, the Soil Conservation and Watershed Development department has undertaken a massive plantation drive at Chhanaghara panchayat in 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 financial years.

The authorities concerned have planted around 250 coconut

saplings on the embankments of some village ponds under the project. Similarly, they have planned 1,000 saplings alongside a few roads in the panchayat. Around Rs 13 lakh were sanctioned for the plantation drive, said the complaint.

The authorities have planted 5,500 cashew saplings on around 30 acre grazing land in the panchayat. The department had sanctioned around Rs 22 lakh for cashew plantation, said the complaint. "More than Rs 15 lakh have been misappropriated from the amount sanctioned for the drive," alleged the villagers in their complaint.

DRDA PD Diganta Routray said they have ordered a probe into the alleged irregularities. "We will take stern action if the allegations are found to be true," he added.

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Deceased ACF's father writes to Modi, Shah seeking justice

Abhiram has also threatened self-immolation in front of Naveen Nivas in Bhubaneswar in case justice is denied to him



Paralakhemundi police have been beating around the bush since the murder of my son. An unfair and biased probe, which is underway, has made the incident murkier

ABHIRAM MOHAPATRA | FATHER OF THE DECEASED

and the cook who was also present at ACF's residence on the intervening night of the tragedy are involved. The conspiracy to eliminate his son Soumya was hatched a month before, he wrote.

"The investigating team has said time and again that my son died in his official quarters after suffering burn injuries. However, there was no trace of any burnt object when we visited the house. Had Soumya suffered burns inside the quarters, there would be enough indications. Moreover, the DFO who is also a prime suspect in the case has not been transferred elsewhere. He is influencing the probe," Abhiram said in the letter.

Abhiram has also threatened self-immolation in front of Naveen Nivas in Bhubaneswar in case justice is denied to him.

CRPF personnel seize huge cache of arms

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhawanipatna, August 8: CRPF personnel have seized a huge cache of arms and explosives suspected to have been hidden by Maoists in Kalahandi district, police said Saturday.

Based on intelligence reports, the jawans conducted a combing operation and recovered the arms near Tadijhola village in Lanjigarh block of the district, they said.

The seized items include guns, gelatin sticks, detonators, wire bundles and Maoist banners. Further investigation is underway, a police officer said.

Casualties bring stone crushers into focus

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Jenapur, August 8: Mushrooming of illegal crusher units with hazardous working conditions has resulted in casualties among labourers in Jajpur district, a report said.

The death of a labourer at an illegal crusher unit at Baghua Square adjoining National Highway-53, Friday is a case in this point. Jenapur police arrested Pranaya Kumar Samal alias Tutu, the owner of Samal Crusher in this connection and produced him in court, Saturday.

However, the arrest has failed to assuage miseries of scores of labourers working in similar hazardous conditions in other units. It is alleged that the workers work in hazardous conditions risking their lives for a pittance without any safety gear or equipment. Stone quarrying and crushing units have a considerable impact on environment by polluting air, water and land and biological resources as well as socio-economic settings of the local population. The fine par-



Heavy footfall at Gopalpur sea beach Sunday sparked panic on further spread of Covid-19 as people thronged the beach without abiding to Covid norms

IRREGULARITIES IN MGNREGS

3 officials suspended in Jajpur

Locals alleged that if proper investigation is undertaken, irregularities of similar proportions or more can be unearthed in other blocks of the district

POST NEWS NETWORK

Binjharpur/Singhpur, August 8: Collector Chakravarti Singh Rathore Sunday suspended three officials on charge of irregularities in implementation of poverty alleviation scheme Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in Jari gram panchayat under this block in the district.

According to reports, panchayat executive officer, Prakash Kumar Jena in Jari panchayat, gram rojgar sevak Parthsarathi Thatoi, and junior engineer Tushar Patra have been placed under suspension on charges of dereliction of duty and misappropriation of government funds.

Locals alleged that if proper investigation is undertaken, irregularities of similar proportions or more can be unearthed in other blocks of the district.

Sources said, development works were sanctioned under 22 projects in 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and from



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

2021-22 but no work was implemented during the period. The junior engineer, PEO and GRS prepared false bills and misappropriated public funds worth ₹30 lakh in the name of labourers.

The local panchayat samiti member, Bhubanananda Samal and his supporter had raised voice alleging irregularities and staged a hunger strike on the premises of the Bharat Nirman Rajiv Gandhi Seva Kendra June 28. The incident sparked ten-

sion following which people came out on streets and staged protests against the irregularities by burning tyres and staging demonstrations.

Samal refused to budge from his demand following which the district administration directed for a probe into the allegations five days after his hunger strike. The action was taken following an inquiry into the progress of development works in the panchayat.

NUAPADA CDVO UNDER VIG LENS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, August 8: Vigilance sleuths Sunday conducted simultaneous raids on the properties of chief district veterinary officer (CDVO), Nuapada after a huge amount of cash was recovered from his government vehicle.

CDVO Trilochan Dhal was on his way to Cuttack in his official vehicle carrying ₹2,77,000 in cash when the anti-corruption agency officers stopped him. Upon his failure to explain the source of the money, the officials initiated raids.

Vigilance teams from Kalahandi and Nuapada districts led by Koraput Vigilance DSP carried out search operations at Dhal's government quarters and office in Nuapada district and his ancestral house at Naraj in Cuttack district.

"The exact value of the officer's movable and immovable assets is yet to be ascertained as the raids are underway," informed an official.

Notably, Vigilance officials had August 7 conducted simultaneous raids at the residences and office of Rabindra Kumar Mohanty, who works as a senior clerk of Puintala block in Bolangir district.

Interstate fake note racket busted, 6 held



PNN & AGENCIES

Sambalpur, August 8: An interstate gang involved in printing counterfeit currency notes was busted Sunday by Sambalpur police. Six persons have been arrested in this connection. The arrested persons belong to Bargarh district and neighbouring Chhattisgarh.

Fake notes to the tune of ₹13.85 lakh were recovered from their possession. Had the fake notes been circulated in the market, it would have caused immense law and order problems, said Sambalpur superintendent of police (SP), B Gangadhar.

All the seized counterfeit notes are in 2,000, 500 and 100 rupee denominations. Police have also seized a printer that was being used for printing fake notes.

On the basis of a complaint lodged by a person in Sambalpur regarding circulation of ₹100 fake notes by unknown persons, a police team conducted searches at various places in Sambalpur town and arrested the six accused.

"We had formed a special investigation team headed by the Town Police Station sub-inspec-

All the seized counterfeit notes are in 2,000, 500 and 100 rupee denominations. Police have also seized a printer that was being used for printing fake notes

tor. They have conducted raids in Bhatli Police Station area and Ambabhana and busted the racket," Gangadhar said.

A case has been registered in this connection and the arrested persons will be produced before the court, police sources said.

A similar incident had taken place a few months back in March this year. Police had seized a huge quantity of counterfeit currency notes worth ₹7.9 crore from a car in Koraput March 2.

During routine vehicle inspection being conducted by Koraput police at a place under Sunki beat house limits, a total of 1,580 bundles had been seized from inside a car.

Folk artistes dispel vax hesitancy in Ganjam

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Berhampur, August 8: Folk dance and puppetry are being used to promote Covid-19 vaccine in Ganjam district. An official said that folk dance groups stage their performances mainly in villages across the district also to make people aware of the need to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour.

As many as 278 folk dance groups have staged their performances in different panchayats in the district with the direction of the block development officers. The awareness drive will continue for some more days, the official said.

Popular folk dances like 'Dasakathia', in which performers use sticks to create music, and 'Pala' that speaks tales from the mythology, 'Pasu Nurtya' (Animal Dance), 'Kandhei Nata' (puppetry) are being used to encourage the



REPRESENTATIONAL PIC

people for vaccination and educate them about its benefits.

Artists also perform other dance forms such as 'Prahallad Natak' (stories on Lord Vishnu's Nrusingha Avatar), Bharat Leela (dance based on mythology), Jodi Sankha (in which two connected conch shells are used) for the purpose.

"As folk dance is a vital medium to educate people to change the

mindset as well as to entertain the rural people, we have roped in folk artistes to create awareness on vaccination drive and Covid-appropriate behaviours," Ganjam Collector Vijay Amruta Kulange said. The folk artistes, who have lost their livelihood due to the pandemic, will get an opportunity to earn some money with this awareness drive, district culture officer

Akshaya Kumar Sethi said. He said that folk artistes would get their remuneration on performance through the block development officers after submitting their bills.

"Due to the Covid lockdown, the livelihood of hundreds of folk artistes was severely hit," said Prasant Kumar Padhy, the vice president of the Zilla Kala Sanskruti Sangh, an apex body of folk dance groups.

"We are happy as the district administration entrusted us with the job to create awareness," he said. Through the dances, the artistes try to help people get rid of the hesitancy caused by fear of vaccines or misappre-

hensions regarding them.

They also stage their performance abiding by the guidelines, which restricted a maximum of five artists in a group, he added.

"On the eve of the vaccination of a village, we educate the people, through a dance performance of around an hour, of the benefits and encourage them to take their jobs," said Bala Krishna Mishra, a Dasakathia artiste in Sheragad.

"Besides, people are told about the right way to wear masks, wash hands and the importance of maintaining social distance," said Alok Bisoi, a Ghudukhi artiste in Digapahandi.

On the eve of the vaccination of a village, we educate the people, through a dance performance of around an hour, of the benefits and encourage them to take their jobs

BALA KRUSHNA MISHRA | DASAKATHIA ARTISTE

FOR RELOCATION



People shift with their belongings to relocate elsewhere after their houses were demolished for expansion of Samaleswari temple in Sambalpur OP PHOTO

Each new dawn brings the possibility of a new progress.
THE MOTHER



Glory & Shame

As the Tokyo Olympics 2020 came to an end August 8, it has shown the summits of glory that sports can lift the participants to and also the low some of those watching the games or controlling them can stoop to. The latter was clearly visible in the manner Belarusian sprinter Krystsina Tsimanouskaya was humiliated by the Olympic committee of her country. The matter went far enough for the young runner to defect and seek asylum in Poland. For India, while both the women's and men's hockey teams and athletes did exceedingly well, the people at home, unfortunately, behaved in a very condemnable manner. During this subtitled sporting event due to the COVID-19 pandemic there was ecstasy on the tracks rarely seen before. But, the world also witnessed blind hatred and divisive social prejudices, fostered by sectarian politics, playing out in India which also had its share of glory in the form of individual feats and state-sponsored patronisation of hockey by the Odisha government.

The most coveted prize is the gold medal which is a singular badge of honour proclaiming to the world that the winner is unparalleled and unrivalled. But, a rare moment may come when a sportsman or sportswoman with a golden heart can decline to be decorated thus so as not to break the heart of a fellow competitor who has all along fought so well and deserved it no less. The world was sent into raptures when such a moment did come at the Tokyo Olympics where Qatar's Mutaz Essa Barshim scripted history along with his friend-cum-rival Gianmarco Tamberi of Italy by sharing the gold medal in the men's high jump event. Both Barshim and Tamberi had perfect jumps till the 2.39m mark. But, the winner could not be decided even after three failed attempts. A 'Jump-off', which is a last decisive attempt, was offered to the duo by the Olympic official. Tamberi was then seen groaning in pain due to exhaustion and injuries. He might lose out to Barshim, still appearing to have a fresh pair of limbs, if the "Jump-off" facility was availed. But, Barshim had other ideas no one had ever before thought of. He and Tamberi had been friends for the past few years training and contesting together in several world events. Both had suffered injuries while giving out their best and had their highs and lows. There were moments when they felt like quitting and sank into depths of despair. But, they survived with grit, encouraging each other to surmount all the difficulties and displayed their indomitable spirit. Tamberi had also attended Barshim's wedding. With such a background of camaraderie and love transcending on-field rivalry, Barshim asked the Olympics official in that defining moment, "Can we have two golds?" The official nodded. For, section 26.8.4 of the sport's Technical Rules, did allow the gold to be shared. The rule says that a jump-off should be conducted to determine the winner, but "if no jump-off is carried out, including where the relevant athletes at any stage decide not to jump further, the tie for first place shall remain."

Barshim and Tamberi hugged each other, whooped for joy and history was made. It was the first time since the 1912 Stockholm Olympics that a gold medal was shared!

When the scene shifted from Tokyo to Uttarakhand or Delhi, shameful events took place off-field. India saw a hockey renaissance of sorts at the Tokyo Games with the men taking third place, while the women were narrowly beaten by Great Britain in their bronze medal play-off. Indian men won their first medal in 41 years, though they had won a record eight Olympic gold medals earlier. When the women were advancing in the competition reaching the semi-final stage, there were justifiable accolades showered on the contingent from all parts of the country. But, their magnificent performance was tainted by abuse of the family of Vandana Katarriya, a distinguished member of the team, belonging to the Dalit community. Once, they narrowly missed the bronze medal, youths taunted Vandana's family at their home in Uttarakhand saying the Dalits in the team were to blame for the defeat. The family reported threats were issued to them too.

India's women hockey captain Rani Rampal condemned it and said: "We put our life and soul into the game. We come from different religions - Hindu, Muslim, Sikh - and from all parts of India. But here we work for India." Nothing can be more eloquent to underscore India's unity in diversity.

When Indian hockey was on its way to regain its glory, Prime Minister Narendra Modi made the surprise announcement that the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award has been renamed 'Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award'. He explained he got so many petitions for naming the highest sports award of the country after a sports personality. PM Modi's decision should be welcomed by all. Politicians must be delinked from all forms of sports, games and related facilities.

The PM should have taken the lead in this endeavour by erasing his name from the world's largest cricket stadium at Motera in Gujarat. Known earlier as Sardar Patel Stadium before the massive redevelopment, it was recently renamed Narendra Modi Cricket Stadium. In 2019, Firoz Shah Kotla Ground of Delhi had been renamed after former BJP Union minister late Arun Jaitley.

Sports and politics should not be mixed up so crudely and glaringly.

WISDOM CORNER

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The fight is won or lost far away from witnesses - behind the lines, in the gym, and out there on the road, long before I dance under those lights.
MUHAMMAD ALI

Man as an individual is a genius. But men in the mass form the headless monster, a great, brutish idiot that goes where prodded.
CHARLIE CHAPLIN

WORDSWORTH

Orange

Which named which? Did the fruit called an orange give rise to the name of the colour orange, or vice versa? This is an easy one to answer, since a quick look at the big Oxford English Dictionary gives the historical details. The fruit definitely came first - it is recorded in English in the fourteenth century, while the application of its name to the colour only appeared at the beginning of the seventeenth. This raises the question of what people called the colour before they had a word for it: either they didn't (few things in nature are that colour and there was no bright orange pigment available to artists and dyers until the early nineteenth century) or they borrowed terms like yellow, gold, amber, or red to describe various shades. By the way, the word orange is interesting, etymologically speaking, because it's an excellent example of a change called metanalysis in which the first letter of a word shifts to the end of the preceding word. So a numpire became an umpire, a napron became an apron, and so on. In Arabic, the fruit was named naranj (from Persian narang and Sanskrit naranga - the orange may have originated in northern India) and this name came with the fruit into Italian and also into Spanish, in which the fruit is still called naranja. The initial letter dropped off before the word reached English, possibly in Italian but more probably in French.

LOL

'Tacks evasion'

Driving to work, a gentleman had to swerve to avoid a box that fell out of a truck in front of him. Seconds later, a policeman pulled him over for reckless driving. Fortunately, another officer had seen the carton in the road. The policemen stopped traffic



and recovered the box. It was found to contain large upholstery tacks. "I'm sorry sir," the first trooper told the driver, "but I am still going to have to write you a ticket." Amazed, the driver asked for what. The trooper replied, "Tacks evasion."

FOCUS CHINA

DEMOGRAPHIC MANIPULATION

Rarely has a census report received as much attention as the one China released this past May. Given China's long history of fiddling with demographic data, the one-month delay in releasing its 2020 census results was suspicious, to say the least. But it was what happened soon thereafter that effectively confirmed China's bleak demographic reality.

Officially, China's demographic situation is nothing to be alarmed about: the 2020 census showed that China's population reached the expected level of 1.41 billion people in 2020, and continues to grow. And yet, less than a month after the census was released, Chinese authorities announced the loosening of family-planning rules, so that households can have three children, rather than two. They have now also put forward a more comprehensive plan for boosting the fertility rate.

These policy moves suggest that China's demographic structure is actually much worse than the authorities would have us believe. Indeed, an analysis of the country's age structure suggests that it has far fewer citizens than the census reported and that its population is already declining.

Past censuses indicate that China's fertility rate began to fall below replacement level (generally around 2.1 children per woman) in 1991 - 11 years after the one-child policy was implemented nationwide. In 2000 and 2010, China's fertility rate amounted to only 1.22 and 1.18 respectively, but the figures were adjusted to 1.8 and 1.63.

Those revisions were made on the basis of primary-school enrollment data. But such data are far from reliable. Local authorities often report more students than they have - 20-50 per cent more, in many cases - in order to secure more education subsidies. For example, according to a CCTV report, Jieshou city in Anhui province reported having 51,586 primary-school students in 2012, when the actual number was only 36,234; it duly extracted an additional CN¥10.63 million (\$1.63 million) in state funding.



In underestimating China's demographic challenges, Western leaders are overestimating its economic and geopolitical prospects. They see a fire-breathing dragon when what stands before them is really a sick lizard. This raises the risk of strategic miscalculation on both sides

So, from 2004 to 2009, China supposedly had 104 million first-graders. This was consistent with the 105 million births China's National Bureau of Statistics announced in 1998-2003. Yet there were only 84 million people aged 7-12 registered in the (mandatory) hukou system in 2010, and only 86 million ninth-graders registered in 2012-17.

When the 2000 and 2010 censuses showed a much smaller population than expected, the authorities inflated the numbers. For example, in 2010, Fujian province was found to have a population of 33.29 million, yet the figure was revised to upwards of 36.89 million.

But these headline changes could not obscure the flaws in the breakdown figures. Judging by the number of people aged 0-9 in the 2000 census, one could infer that as many as 39 million fewer babies were born in 1991-2000 than had been recorded in the revised data. Accordingly, the actual population in 2000 may have been closer to 1.227 billion than to the 1.266 billion that was officially reported.

The 2020 census is similarly misleading. The National Bureau of Statistics claims that 227 million babies were born in the 2006-19 period, and the census report shows that there were 241 million

Chinese aged 1-14 in 2020. But that would mean that China's average fertility rate in 2006-19 amounted to 1.7-1.8. Given that the government was enforcing strict population-control policies during that period - the two-child policy was introduced January 1, 2016 - this seems highly unlikely.

Yes, China's ethnic minorities were exempted from its one-child policy, so there was no need to hide their births. Yet their fertility rate was only 1.66 in 2000 and 1.47 in 2010. And given that Han Chinese tend to be wealthier and more educated, their fertility rate would be lower even if they were not subjected to stricter family-planning rules.

The truth is that China's population in 2020 probably amounted to about 1.28 billion - some 130 million fewer people than reported. That makes India, not China, the world's most populous country.

Of course, China's latest census was always going to be in line with past releases. Officials from the National Bureau of Statistics and the former family-planning commission are still responsible for executing the census, and they will be held to account if the data are inconsistent. But, given the importance of demographics to China's future prosperity, these

distortions do the country a serious disservice.

To be sure, a declining fertility rate is an expected upshot of development, especially for improvements in health and education. Taiwan, for example, recorded a fertility rate of just 1.55 in 1991-2006, and 1.09 in 2006-20. But Taiwan is about 15 years ahead of mainland China in terms of health and education, and mainland Chinese already show less willingness to have children than their counterparts in Taiwan.

Something else is going on in China, and it is not hard to discern what it is. After facing a strict one-child policy for 36 years, and a two-child policy after that, Chinese people's ideas about marriage and childbirth have changed profoundly (The divorce rate in mainland China is 1.5 times that of Taiwan.)

Yet China's top leaders have not fully grasped the demographic challenges they face. True, they are taking steps to boost the fertility rate. But they also seem convinced by the state economists' predictions - based on (distorted) official data - that China's GDP will keep growing until it dwarfs that of the United States. It is this belief in China's inexorable rise that has spurred them to pursue strategic expansion.

The West, too, is buying into this narrative. In underestimating China's demographic challenges, Western leaders are overestimating its economic and geopolitical prospects. They see a fire-breathing dragon when what stands before them is really a sick lizard. This raises the risk of strategic miscalculation on both sides.

By around 2035, China will be doing worse than the US on all demographic metrics, and in terms of economic growth. In fact, its GDP is unlikely to surpass that of the US. China's leaders must recognise this - and take a strategic step back.

The writer, a senior scientist in obstetrics and gynecology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is the author of Big Country with an Empty Nest.

PROJECT SYNDICATE

SPECTRUM SOCIETY

How wars are created on TV channels

I have been holding my sides watching two films, back-to-back, to dispel the Corona blues. There is an abiding moral in both.

In Michael Moore's Canadian Bacon, the US President builds up a war with Canada because his ratings in peace time are plummeting after the Soviet threat melted away in 1990-91. Peace destroys the business of his friend Hacker, an arms manufacturer.

The other movie, Wag the Dog, has spin doctor Robert de Niro and filmmaker played by Dustin Hoffman, collaborate, to salvage the election campaign of a Bill Clinton look-alike, caught in a sex scandal two weeks before voting. The duo creates a national hysteria about a war with Albania even though there is no war. It takes place entirely on TV channels. The De Niro-Hoffman team has made the media eat out of their hands. The 72 days bombing of Serbia under Clinton's watch and the carving out of Kosovo with its large Albanian population created a certain familiarity with Albania which otherwise would be totally unknown.

In Canadian Bacon an attempt is also made by the President's men to persuade Russian President named Vladimir Kruschkin to start

a mutually beneficial Cold War. A Cold War with Russia would help boost the arms industry. Kruschkin takes the sensible decision: he refuses to initiate a Cold War.

Will the Hindi film industry ever have the courage to mount such satire on the establishment? I suppose it is insensitive to ask such a question when a new Bill for double distilled censorship is being scripted.

An overriding reason why such audacity cannot be on show here is because we are primarily a feudal people: irreverence is alien to our ethos. We have our parochial humour, but cannot laugh at authority. Iconography comes easy to us. We cannot satirise 'Mai Baap'. Some youthful standup comedians are trying but not without incurring the wrath of the cultural constabulary.

The baby must not be thrown out with the bathwater. Indian cinema has after all set high standards in portraying social reality. This was particularly true during the early days of Indian cinema. Penury inflicted on a peasant (Balraj Sahni) deprived of his patch of land for a factory, is the theme of Bimal Roy's classic Do Bigha Zameen. In fact, as early as the late 40s, Chetan Anand's Neecha Nagar

has the landlord divert sewage water towards the township below to enhance the value of his land on high ground. The film was made 60 years before Roman Polanski's Chinatown focused on the water wars in California, including in Los Angeles.

Japanese maestro Akira Kurosawa's remark was on Satyajit Ray's social realism. "Those who have not seen Ray, have not seen the sun."

Even though I have a sense of the reality, I was astonished nevertheless at the way Indian theatre or cinema ignored Enron, a scandal which had its centre of gravity in Maharashtra, home to Bollywood. There was an uproar: with the Shiv Sena and the BJP taking the lead. The opposition to the deal was over high electricity tariffs beyond the reach of the poor. It collapsed. Enron, facing a host of other problems, declared bankruptcy. The CEO, Kenneth Lay, friend of George W Bush, died a broken man.

Luce Prebble wrote a superb play, Enron, which ran to packed houses at the Noel Coward theatre in London. Reception to the play at its Broadway premiere in 2010 was tepid. The Corporate World smarting under the Lehman Brothers collapse did not accord the

show much encouragement. Even though earlier David Hare's 'Stuff Happens' actually mimicked Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld and Condoleezza Rice for manufacturing the Iraq war.

Much of the script for Enron was centred on characters who negotiated the deal with the Dabhol power project. Surely there is a vigorous enough amateur theatre in Mumbai to have picked up the script.

However, even in the West the audacity of screen and stage is singularly missing in mainstream media. This is particularly so since post 9/11 wars for which the media, by and large, became the drum beaters, compromising its own credibility. The adage makes sense. "When wars break out, the first casualty is the truth." This has resulted in the media's declining credibility and, in consequence, a rise of 'illiberal' democracies. When Donald Trump complained that "China is going ahead of us," Jimmy Carter's response was succinct. "China has not been to war since 1978; we have never stopped being at war."

The writer is a senior commentator on political and diplomatic issues.

IAN S



Saeed Naqvi

EVEN IN THE WEST THE AUDACITY OF SCREEN AND STAGE IS SINGULARLY MISSING IN MAINSTREAM MEDIA

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

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Golden arm

Sir, Neeraj Chopra is an athlete who except for one occasion has won gold in all his national and international outings. This speaks volumes of his talent. With due respect to all the athletes, Neeraj was my personal favourite to win a medal in the Tokyo Olympics. I knew that India won't come home empty handed. His first throw of 87.03 metres was actually enough to win the gold medal. He qualified for the finals with his first throw and then went on to win the gold medal with his first throw in the finals. With this gold medal Neeraj has given birth to a new India which can boast of a medal in Athletics. Neeraj literally hurled a spear to the sky to burst it open on the 100-year drought for a medal in athletics. I want to thank Neeraj for giving us a reason to smile in these trying times. India is so proud of you. You are a champion and you have proved it. Indians have no doubt that more such medals will sparkle in your cabinet in days to come.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR (ASSAM)

Herculean task

Sir, It is two years since the Article 370 that conferred special status to Jammu and Kashmir was removed. Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two Union Territories with the assurance that J&K would be granted the statehood at the appropriate time. It may be recalled that Prime Minister Narendra Modi convened a meeting of prominent parties in Jammu and Kashmir to take steps to accord statehood. Mehbooba Mufti demonstrated her obduracy that the statehood and election should precede the restoration of Article 370. Integration of Jammu and Kashmir prior to the abolition of Article 370 was only symbolic. The true accession of it to India was felt when the controversial Article was abrogated. The incidents of stone pelting and terrorist activities have drastically come down in Jammu and Kashmir after the Article was repealed. Sporadic terror attacks launched in a bid to create a sense of fear among the people have met with appropriate response from the security forces. Unfortunately, Mehbooba Mufti has described that the terrorists are the sons of soil. Removal of Article 370 despite resistance from many political parties is a herculean task that the NDA government has achieved.

KV Seetharamaiah, HASSAN (KARNATAKA)

Cottage project in Niyamgiri hills fails to take off

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bisamkatak, August 8: In a bid to boost tourism, both the Odisha and the central governments jointly initiated a project to build cottages at the base of Niyamgiri hills in Rayagada district. However, the project is yet to take off due to administrative apathy and local opposition.

According to reports, ₹1 crore has been allocated for the project. Construction of cottages has been assigned to the Forest department. The project is being developed to attract tourists so that they enjoy the natural environment of Niyamgiri hills and get to know about the traditions, customs, and culture of Dongria Kondh tribals living in the region.

Two years have passed since the project was launched, but it has failed to make much headway.

The reports said the fund was initially allocated to Dongria Kondh Development Agency (DKDA). But the DKDA management has been suffering from staff crunch. The fund was then transferred to Gunupur Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA), which drew up the design of the cottage project.

Thereafter, the fund and the de-



Rs 1 crore has been allocated for the project with its construction assigned to the Forest department. The project is aimed at attracting tourists to Niyamgiri hills where they will know about traditions, customs of Dongria Kondh tribals

WPadmacharn Ghana, AE of ITDA, said that the post of PA is lying vacant. The tender process will be started only after a new PA is appointed. Then the land for the project will be identified, informed Ghana

sign were handed over to the Forest department. It has been planned to build three cottages in the same traditional manner they are constructed by the Dongria Kondh tribals. Bamboo and wooden works reflecting the culture and lifestyle of the primitive tribals were included in the construction design. Designs for the rooms, entry points and parking lot were also finalised.

Two years have passed since the project was launched, but it has failed to make much headway. The fund was initially allocated to Dongria Kondh Development Agency

identified near Khajurigaon on the foothill of Niyamgiri to build the cottages. The Forest department started the groundwork, but some local people opposed the project. They said that the locals will have to be employed in the project.

Dengue cases trigger panic in Aska, Badasahi



POST NEWS NETWORK

Aska /Baripada, August 8: After cases of dengue were detected in Aska in Ganjam district and Badasahi in Mayurbhanj district, locals are panicking. They are apprehensive that unless preventive measures are taken by the administration there is a possibility of the disease spreading rapidly.

A woman tested positive Sunday for dengue at Gandapalli Erogola slum in Aska NAC. Following detection, Health department officials have swung into action. A

team has rushed to the area to take stock of the situation.

The team took various sanitation measures in places where there is accumulation of stagnant water. They advised people to use mosquito nets. Officials said an awareness drive will soon be launched in the locality where the case has been detected.

Similarly, a youth tested positive for dengue in Badashi area, 10km from the Mayurbhanj district headquarters. The patient is currently undergoing treatment at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack. A team of health officials visited the locality and collected blood samples from seven people. Health department, ANMs and ASHA workers are trying to make people understand the utility of preventive measures.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE



Locals repairing a road at a village in Koksara area of Kalahandi district. They took upon themselves this task after their repeated pleas with block administration for reconstruction of the road fell on deaf ears

Locals oppose police build-up at project site

POST NEWS NETWORK

Kendrapara/Rajkanika, August 8: A mega drinking water project with water from Kharasrota river in Kendrapara district to Bhadrak district has triggered a controversy with locals opposing it. Fifteen platoons of police have been deployed in Rajkanika area to prevent the situation from going out of hand. The police have seized a vehicle of the Kharasrota Banchoo Sangram Samiti (KBSS), an outfit opposing the project.

Locals opposing the project have got together to prevent the setting up of the drinking water venture. They have conducted a meeting and vowed to oppose any move to divert water from the river.

"We will not let the river dry up. The project has been started without assessing its impact on the biodiversity of Bhitarkanika and the agriculture sector. So we will oppose it tooth and nail," people against the project said. They said they will launch an agitation if the government decides to continue with the project. Notably, the mega drink-

ing water is being executed at a cost of ₹892 crore under Basudha Yojana. The project if completed will provide drinking water to 91 panchayats in Bhadrak district.

Locals feel that if the project starts, it will dry up the river and gradually destroy agriculture and also drastically affect environment. Residents of many riverside villages in Aul and Rajkanika blocks will suffer if the project is implemented, they added.

Activists of the outfit - Duryodhan Mohanty, Bidhan Das and Raju Pani observed that as Kendrapara is identified as the only water-starved district in Odisha, the Central government launched a water conservation campaign from 2019. They said that the water of Kharasrota has sustained the Bhitarkanika National park. In summer, the river bed remains dry at many places while water flow in the river has dipped over years, they added.

Former MLA Debendra Sharma and BJP leader Dolagobinda Nayak have strongly opposed the project. Social activists Sanjay Behura and

DIVERSION OF KHARASROTA RIVER WATER TO BHADRAK



Former MLA Debendra Sharma and BJP leader Dolagobinda Nayak have strongly opposed the project. Social activists Sanjay Behura and Kshitish Kumar Singh said that various surveys made by the state and the central governments go against such a project

Kshitish Kumar Singh said that various surveys made by the state and the central governments go against such a project. The PMO, NGT and even courts have been informed in this regard, they added.

The project also needs environment clearance and approval of

the National Wildlife Board while diversion of water from an already deficient river would lead to ingress of seawater in upstream areas and adversely affect agricultural activities, people opposing the project said. Srikant Nayak, member of Bhitarkanika Eco-sensitive Zone

Committee stated that the project site and water lifting point come under an eco-sensitive zone. Legally, the project is not feasible, he pointed out. Nayak also said that the matter will be taken to the court as a resolution to this effect has been passed in the meeting.

Students block NH-149 over school merger plan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Parjang, August 8: Students of Mohanpasi Government Primary School under Parjanga block with their parents staged a sit-in protest for more than two hours on the Kamakhyanagar-Parjang National Highway-149 in Dhenkanal district. They were protesting against the government's decision to merge their educational institution with a neighbouring school. They staged the sit-in with their school bags and eggs and rice. As a result traffic on the national highway was severely disrupted for more than two hours.

The students and their parents relented and withdrew their demonstration after Gopabandhu Sahu, cluster resource centre coordinator (CRCC) reached the spot and assured them that their institution will not be merged with nearby Kendumunda School. Parjang police also tried to pacify the students and urged them not

to take law into their own hands. According to reports, more than 50 students are currently studying at the Mohanpasi School. Last year, the administration had announced that it would merge the school due to low enrolment as per a decision of the Odisha government. However, recently the state government has relaxed the norms for merger of schools in remote regions. It has said that schools situated in remote regions will not be merged with other institutions even if the number of students is less than 20.

However, resentment among the students belonging to Mohanpasi School and their parents grew when they learnt that the administration is planning to merge their school with another school. They voiced their protests and asked how their school can be merged with another educational institution when the number of students is more than 50.

AGRI-FEST



Tribals pray for a better harvest while participating in rituals for Uansha Parav, an agrarian festival at Dongriguda village under Umerkote block in Nabarangpur district, Sunday

Mining outside lease area triggers row

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chandikhole, August 8: The district administration has leased out three areas of two hills under Darpan tehsil in Jajpur district for mining of murrum. But a lease holder allegedly has started quarrying murrum in Manduka hill and has been accused of mining the murrum outside the lease area. This has caused resentment among locals of Manduka village. They have opposed the move of the lease holder. The villagers alleged that lease holder is mining the minor mineral inside the cashew jungle instead of the lease area. Locals demanded demarcation of the lease area. Revenue officials assured that a proper demarcation will be done for the lease area. The lease area is a hilly one. A patch of 12 acres has been leased out for five years. Tehsildar Pradip Kumar Sethi said that the lease area will be demarcated soon.

Staff crunch paralyses Baisinga PS

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baisinga, August 8: The safety and security of lives and properties of around 1,45,000 people in 205 revenue villages of 17 panchayats are dependent on the Baisinga police station under Betnoti block in Mayurbhanj district. However, acute staff shortage at this police station is having a severe impact on its day-to-day operations.

Over 300 cases are registered at this police station every year. Besides, it has to deal with strikes, roadblocks, demonstrations and agitations throughout the year. According to local residents, the setting up of an outpost at Mantri of Badasahi block has had a visible impact on the law and order situation in the nearby four panchayats.

"We demand two more outposts to be set up at Purunia and Anla Bazaar. These places are 10 and 15 kilometres away from Baisinga police station respectively. It will not only reduce the pressure on



Baisinga police station but also ensure speedy disposal of cases," a local resident observed. Incumbent DSP Laxmidhar Swain had served this police station as IIC. In 2020, he had written a letter to higher officials, requesting them to appoint some more staff at the police station and establish more outposts. No action has so far been taken in this regard, it was alleged.

Over 300 cases are registered at this police station every year. It also has to deal with strikes, roadblocks and agitations

As of now, out of 10 sanctioned posts, four are lying vacant.

Expressing his concern, local BJD leader Brundaban Das said the four sub-inspector posts which are lying vacant at the police station should be immediately filled up and steps to operationalise more outposts should also be taken.

Advocate and member of Ama Police Samiti, Manoj Kumar Panda said the location of the police station makes it vital. It is situated on the border of Mayurbhanj and Balasore districts. "At the Ama Police Samiti meeting, proposals for filling up the vacant posts and setting up of more outposts were given and approved as well," he informed.

SPECTRE OF DROUGHT LOOMS LARGE

Farmers engage water tankers to save crops

POST NEWS NETWORK

Hinjilicut, August 8: Owing to insufficient rainfall, a spectre of drought is looming large in pockets of this block in Ganjam district. Agricultural land is drying up and the farmers are struggling to save their crops. They have engaged tankers to supply water to their farmlands, a report said.

Hinjilicut and its peripheral areas have not received sufficient rainfall for the last two-and-a-half months. Farmers informed that paddy saplings have started wilting due to lack of water. Some of the agricultural lands have dried up so much that cracks have appeared on the surfaces.

With no option left, the farmers are now bringing in tankers to water the parched land. This is creating a huge dent in their pockets. Paddy has been grown in over 6,000 hectares of land in this block. Unless the saplings are watered in a proper manner, there is every possibility of them dying.



In Durbandh, Dayapalli and Gandala, farmers hold 'frog marriages' to appease rain god

In non-irrigated areas like Durbandh, Dayapalli and Gandala panchayats, farmers have pinned hope on divine intervention, by organising 'toad marriages', a traditional belief of the local people. Myth has it that 'frog marriages' will appease the rain god. Farmers in these three panchayats said that if there is no rain in the next three days, it will be very difficult for them to save the saplings.

Lightning strikes kill 8

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore/Bhadrak/Mayurbhanj, August 8: Eight persons were killed and seven others sustained serious injuries after lightning struck them at different places in Balasore, Bhadrak and Mayurbhanj districts Saturday.

Balasore district reported the maximum number of lightning deaths with six people dying. The districts of Mayurbhanj and Bhadrak reported one death each. All the seven injured are from Balasore district. They are currently undergoing treatment at government hospitals in Basta and Jaleswar.

According to a source, lightning struck when labourers were working on paddy fields at Sasan village under Singla police limits and at Mathani village under Basta police limits killing two and injuring three women on the spot.

The deceased have been identified as Pana Majhi from Talatapanda village under Basta police limits and Chhabi Kalandi from Brahmanamara village under Muruda police limits in Mayurbhanj district. The injured ones - Sabitri Kisku, Gurubari Kalandi and Barsha Kalandi - are currently undergoing treatment at Basta community health centre (CHC).

In another incident, 16 women were working on a paddy field at Baghabali village under Jaleswar police limits when lightning struck. Three women collapsed after being struck by lightning.

They were rushed to the GK Bhattar Hospital where one was pronounced dead on arrival. The deceased has been identified as Purnima Singh, wife of Badal Singh from Kusumasaahi village under Baradia panchayat in Raibania police limits.

In another case, Gajendra Tudu (12), son of Mangal Tudu of Krushnanagar village under Jaleswar police limits and Padan Marandi, son of Mangal Marandi were killed when they had taken shelter near a brick kiln.

Anakar Mallick (42), a farmer was killed at Padhuan village in Balasore district. In Bhadrak district, the person killed by lightning has been identified as Purnachandra Sahu (56).

TN pushing for new law on communal harmony

THE DMK GOVERNMENT OF MK STALIN HAS GIVEN A STERN MESSAGE THAT THE STATE WOULD NOT TOLERATE RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, August 8: After the Kanyakumari district police in Tamil Nadu arrested Father George Ponnaiah under the Kuzhithurai archdiocese on delivering hate speech hurting the sentiments of the Hindu community, the DMK government of MK Stalin has given a stern message that the state would not tolerate religious bigotry. The government was also keen that there were no untoward incidents of communal violence in the state.

The arrest of the Catholic priest took place July 24 and he was subsequently remanded to judicial custody for 15 days. While the priest denied the charges, the Kuzhithurai archdiocese came out against the speech of the priest.

In another incident of religious intolerance a few miscreants placed an idol of Lord Ganesha at a barren land near a church property in Tiruchengode, the police immediately swung into action and arrested four people. The incident occurred August 2.

These two incidents are a clear



example of the DMK government taking an intolerant stand against hate speeches and actions tantamount to hurting the sentiments of a community or religion. While Tamil Nadu has had a history of communal amity, there have been incidents of miscreants trying to

break the peace and amity among various religions and turning into major incidents of violence.

Stalin, planning to convert the state into an investment destination and focusing on Rs 1,00,000 crore investments in the five years of his tenure, has already com-

municated to the religious groups and communities in no uncertain terms that he would not allow any communal fights or communal violence to erupt in the state.

The state is planning a new law for communal harmony. Tamil Nadu Congress leader and chairman of state minority commission, Peter Alphonse has already come out in the open advocating a new law for communal harmony in the state.

Taking a cue from this the CM has called upon the state law department and home department to moot a proposal regarding the same.

With the state focusing more on investments and modernisation and to increase its GDP, Stalin is clear that he would not tolerate any untoward incident that disturbs his goal for converting Tamil Nadu into the most industry-friendly state in the country.

The Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowment (HR&CE) department of the state government has taken a bold step of converting the chanting of 'archanas' in Tamil, and 47 big temples have

commented this, which is another indicator that the government would pro-actively involve itself in the religious affairs. The HR&CE department is also active in retrieving the 40,000 acres of the temple land which was lost since 1985 as per the records showing disparity between the temple title documents of 1985 and 2020. The HR&CE department has already taken over around 650 acres of land ever since the government assumed office from encroachers and other people who had taken over the temple land.

This again is an open measure that the state government would not tolerate any encroachment on religious properties, at the same time would not give up to any religious extremism or communal rift.

With taking strong measures against communal hatred and involving actively in the religious affairs within the ambit of the government, the DMK, and in particular CM is giving a message that the government means business and that he and the government would not remain a silent spectator in these issues.

1 more held for casteist slur on Katariya's family

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, August 8: One more person has been held for passing casteist remarks on national women's hockey team player Vandana Katariya's family taking the number of those arrested in connection with the case to three.

Twenty-two-year-old Sumit Chauhan was arrested from his home Saturday, Haridwar SSP Senthil Avoodai Krishna Raj S said.

With his arrest, three people have been arrested in connection with the case, the other two being Vijay Pal and his brother Ankur Pal who were arrested earlier, he said.

They have all been booked under Section 504 (intentional insult with intent to provoke breach of peace) of the Indian Penal Code and provisions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, the official said.

They are charged with dancing and bursting fire crackers outside Vandana's house in a gesture of mockery soon after the Indian women's hockey team lost to Argentina in Olympics semifinals.

They also allegedly passed a casteist slur against the family



saying that the team had lost because it had too many Dalit players in it.

Meanwhile, police personnel have been deployed outside the Olympian's house in Roshnabad area for the family's security, he said.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has announced a reward of Rs 25 lakh for Katariya in recognition of her great performance at the Olympics. He also spoke to the Olympian Saturday to congratulate her.

27% people above 60 in TN show vaccine hesitancy

Only 13% of the senior citizen population in the state is fully vaccinated

AGENCIES

Chennai, August 8: Vaccine hesitancy was prevalent among 27.6 per cent of people aged above 60 years while the same was present in 16.9 per cent between the age group of 18 and 44 years, a study by the Tamil Nadu government revealed Sunday.

As many as 18.2 per cent of people between the age group of 45 and 59 years were also hesitant to receive the jabs, the survey conducted by the Directorate of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, in July across Tamil Nadu, said.

According to the study, vaccine hesitancy was observed in 19.7 per cent men and 18.4 per cent women, while 17.5 per cent people living in urban and 20.3 per cent in rural areas expressed "unwillingness" to get inoculated.

Some of the reasons for the vaccine hesitancy was fear of injections (48.4 per cent), fear of complications after receiving the jabs (57.6 per cent), long queue to get the jabs (22.5 per cent), no person to accompany (21 per cent). About 59.9 per cent people faced difficulty in collecting details on where to receive the vaccines, while 24.5 per cent doubted the efficacy of the vaccines. The sample size was 1,596 people between 18-45 years, 771 between 45 and 59 years and 483 above the age of 60 years. As many as 1,401 men and 1,453 women were covered in the survey conducted in the state. Vaccine acceptance was prevalent among 83.1 per cent people between 18-44 years,



while it was 81.8 per cent between 45-59 years and 72.4 per cent above the age of 60 years.

Nearly 82.5 per cent of those residing in urban areas and 79.7 per cent in rural areas were willing to get vaccinated, while 82.8 per cent people said the reason to get vaccinated was to prevent disease while 23.7 people said it prevents spread to others.

Following the results from the study, the department of public health said it would focus on awareness activities to address the misconceptions. "People above 60 years will be given special attention and strategies will be created to counter the barriers and empower everyone to get vaccinated with confidence," the study said. The survey was done across Tamil Nadu in July by the department with a survey team constituted and led by respective deputy director of health services.

"In Chennai, the study was done by community medicine post-graduate students of Madras Medical College with support from Greater Chennai Corporation," it said. As many as 95 clusters were chosen randomly in the state and 30 random houses were selected in each of the cluster.

Experts recommend evacuation of Uttarakhand village

RELOCATION AND REHABILITATION OF DISASTER-HIT VILLAGES IN UTTARAKHAND IS A LONG-DRAWN OUT AFFAIR AS AROUND 330 VILLAGES AFFECTED BY SUCCESSIVE CALAMITIES ARE STILL WAITING TO BE RELOCATED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Dehradun, August 8: Haunted by horrifying memories of the February flash flood, residents of Raini village—the cradle of the Chipko movement—that bore the brunt of the calamity still cannot sleep peacefully fearing what will happen to them if yet another disaster comes knocking at their doors.

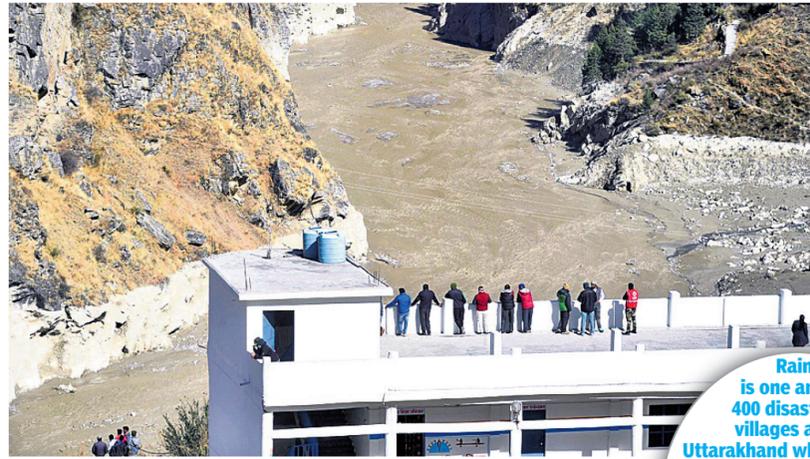
A hydel project on the Rishi Ganga River at Raini village had been totally demolished in the February deluge which had also killed five of its residents.

The fear of villagers about another imminent calamity is not unfounded as a team of experts which conducted a study on the impact of the February flash flood on Raini recently recommended its evacuation at the earliest warning due to its increased vulnerability to natural disasters.

Relocation and rehabilitation of disaster-hit villages in Uttarakhand is a long-drawn out affair as there around 330 villages affected by successive calamities are still waiting to be relocated.

"Raini is vulnerable at present and requires adequate slope stabilisation works to arrest slope failure activities. If appropriate measures are not taken, it may lead to mass movement activities in saturated, dynamic conditions and toe erosion by rivers," geological experts said in a report based on their field study of the affected village in Chamoli district.

"Therefore, the slopes in Raini village located on the confluence point of Rishi Ganga and Dhaulti Ganga



should be treated or the entire village evacuated as early as possible," the report conducted under the Uttarakhand Disaster Recovery Initiative (UDRI) said.

"During the field visit, it was observed that the slope forming material is highly saturated due to incessant rainfall. The soil/debris material loses its strength when the slope forming material gets saturated. As a result, there are many slip areas in the village from toe to uphill of the slope," the UDRP report submitted already to the district administration said.

The fear of villagers of an imminent disaster was deepened after a 40-metre stretch of Joshimath-Malari road just 10 metres below the village caved in a couple of months

back, Raini village Pradhan Bhawan Rana said. Though the stretch has been repaired by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), cracks have appeared on it once again following heavy rains, he said.

Residents of Raini are eagerly waiting for being moved to a safe location. Dhak and Subhai villages have been recommended by the team of experts in their report as the appropriate sites for their relocation.

When asked whether the administration had initiated steps for the relocation of the village, Rana said the report has been sent to higher authorities in Dehradun for action.

"But nothing has been done yet despite district authorities being re-

peatedly told about the situation in Raini. The villagers are forced to live in constant fear, especially at night when running to safety, in case of a disaster, could be even more difficult if not impossible," Rana said.

Even the school building where residents of Raini were shifted following the flash flood in February can be reached only after crossing a bridge which may be at the risk of being washed away in case of a crisis, he said.

There are around 30 families consisting of 122 people still re-

located in the village, Rana said. "Those whose grown up children work in towns have shifted with them, but those who have no other option are forced to live in the village," the village pradhan said.

Meanwhile, most disaster management officials in Dehradun expressed ignorance about the study report of which a copy is available with PTI.

While the Executive Director of Disaster Mitigation and Management Centre Piyooch Rautela said he was not aware of the report, Disaster Management Secretary SA Murugesan said the report had not reached his office yet.

"Anything about Raini can be done only after we receive the report and study it," Murugesan told PTI.

"Raini is one among 400 disaster-hit villages across Uttarakhand which need to be rehabilitated and relocated.

We are done with 70 of them. Work on the rest will be taken up in the order of priority. It is an endless process," he said.

Though officials in Dehradun appear to be in no particular hurry to address the problem of Raini, the UDRP report should prompt them into immediate action as it warns of toe erosion of the slope base by rivers in the village, mass movement, loose, unstable and overhanging boulders on the slope surface posing danger to houses.

Raini is one among 400 disaster-hit villages across Uttarakhand which need to be rehabilitated and relocated. We are done with 70 of them. Work on the rest will be taken up in the order of priority. It is an endless process.

SA MURUGESAN | DISASTER MANAGEMENT SECRETARY

PROUD MOMENT



Insp/CM Kamlesh Kumar of ITBP salutes his daughter Diksha, who joined ITBP as Assistant Commandant, after the Passing Out Parade and attestation ceremony at the ITBP Academy at Mussoorie in Uttarakhand. PTI PHOTO

Covid boost for Indian Spirulina exporters

Tamil Nadu is one of the major producers and exporters of the blue-green algae

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Chennai, August 8: The spread of Covid-19 across the world has increased the demand for nutrition supplements in Europe and the US which augurs well for us, said manufacturers and exporters of the organic Spirulina which is a blue-green algae and is a nutrition supplement consumed as tablets or in a powder form mixed with juice.

Incidentally, American space agency NASA has recommended Spirulina for its astronauts going into space as it boosts the immune system.

Termed as a super food, Spirulina contains around 55 to 70 per cent protein, high levels of gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), beta carotene, several essential and non-essential amino acids, nucleic acids and others.

"The coronavirus spread has accelerated the awareness about Spirulina. Globally, Spirulina is slowly moving into other segments like beverages, bars. Some small companies use it in bakery products," S. Srikanthan, Brand Head, Nutraceutical, EID



Parry, told IANS.

The EID Parry part of the Murugappa group last fiscal earned about Rs.254 crore from its nutraceutical division.

In India also, there are some players who make nutri-bars with Spirulina, apart from selling it as tablets, capsules, powder, but the market, though now small, is expected to grow and is attracting newer players.

Based in Tamil Nadu's Karur district, Prolgae Spirulina Supplies Pvt. Ltd is soon to hit the market with its Spirulina protein bar and

sweetened Spirulina powder.

"We have been exporting our sun dried organic Spirulina to Europe. After Covid-19 there is increased awareness and demand for nutritional supplement food. In India we want to get into the consumer market launching protein bars and sweetened spirulina powder," S. Akas, Founder CEO, Prolgae, told IANS.

According to Akas, an aeronautical engineering graduate, the two products will be launched August 15 and talks are on with gyms to stock the products.

The products developed by Prolgae will be contract manufactured by the Delhi-based Swasthman.

However, the immunity booster product segment is wide including the age-old chyawanprash and new players have to find a positioning niche.

"We are also talking with nutritionists about our product and its health benefits. We will launch the products in the four metro cities first and expand to other markets and also have our own e-commerce site," Akas added.

Tamil Nadu is one of the major producers and exporters of Spirulina with players like EID Parry, Sanat Products part of Schwabe group, Prolgae Spirulina and others. There are several smaller players whose products go to other sectors like fish/poultry feed and others.

"The high-end product will be about 2,000 tpa of which our market share will be about 30 per cent. In India we are the largest player with about 700-800 tpa production. We produce organic premium Spirulina," Srikanthan said.

national

of the day quote

The effort of All India Shri Meena Social and Educational Committee, Kota in spreading education among tribal community as well as other sections is commendable



ASHOK GEHLOT | RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

In a place like Kashmir, where there are sufi saints everywhere, there is no place for violence and militancy



MANOJ SINHA | LT GOVERNOR OF J&K

Today, we have a budget of Rs 2.25 lakh crore. In the last five years, works worth over Rs 10 lakh crore were done by our government. Even today as per my CM Dashboard, works worth Rs 2 lakh crore are underway in Gujarat, and this keeps increasing every year



VIJAY RUPANI | GUJARAT CHIEF MINISTER

SHORT TAKES

Fresh 39,070 Covid-19 cases

New Delhi: With 39,070 people testing positive for coronavirus infection, India's total tally of Covid-19 cases rose to 3,19,34,455, while the death toll climbed to 4,27,862 with 491 fresh fatalities, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Sunday. The active cases have declined to 4,06,822 and comprise 1.27 per cent of the total infections. The national Covid-19 recovery rate has improved to 97.39 per cent, the data updated at 8 am showed.

Northeast likely to face more rainfall

New Delhi: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) Sunday predicted widespread rainfall activity, with isolated heavy falls, is very likely over northeast and sub-Himalayan, West Bengal, and Sikkim during next five days. "Under the influence of likely prevailing of stronger southwesterly/southerly winds from Bay of Bengal in the lower levels over these areas, from August 11 onwards, the intensity of rainfall is very likely to increase over these areas and it is likely to be isolated heavy to very heavy falls in the region August 11 and 12," the IMD said in a release.

Man stabbed to death in Raj

Kota (Rajasthan): A 32-year-old man was stabbed to death by an acquaintance in a village here Sunday, police said. The incident took place around 10.45 am in Purohiti Ki Gali at Tilak Chowk in Bundi city police station area where Rizwan, a resident of Mahawat Mohalla in Meera Gate, was killed while his friend, Abid, a resident of Bhirampur area, sustained injuries. Circle Inspector Sahadev Meena said. A murder case was lodged on the complaint of Rizwan's family against Banti Suman (26), his friend Aameen (30) and about three unidentified other men.

Soldier found dead inside camp

Jammu: A 24-year-old soldier was found dead Sunday under "mysterious circumstances" inside a camp in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir, a defence spokesman said. He said a court of inquiry has been ordered to investigate into the circumstances leading to the death of the soldier. "On 08 Aug 2021, at about 2000 hrs, a 24 yrs old Army soldier was found dead under mysterious circumstances in Rajouri Garrison (J&K). Court of Inquiry has been ordered to investigate into the circumstances leading to death," he said in a statement.



When I talk about (winning) 400 seats, people start raising questions. But, when the BJP talks about the bullet train, no one questions it. You (BJP) had said that Varanasi will be transformed into Kyoto. But, what the city has turned into can be seen by anyone

AKHILESH YADAV | SAMAJWADI PARTY CHIEF

GOODS VEHICLES BACK ON ASSAM-MIZORAM HIGHWAY

After the withdrawal of "economic blockade", hundreds of Mizoram-bound goods vehicles, stranded since the July 26 clash, were moving normally on National Highway 306 Sunday, ensuring supply of the essentials to the border state, officials said



PEGASUS, FARMERS' ISSUES

Listen to us, Oppn tells govt



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: The opposition strategy of speaking on the Pegasus snooping row and farm laws during discussions of bills in the Rajya Sabha has now been compiled in a three-minute video in an attempt to make the government listen to their demands, leaders said Sunday.

The video, released by the TMC Sunday morning from RS MP Derek O'Brien's handle, urges, "Mr Modi come listen to us".

Opposition party sources indicated that over the last few weeks, leaders have realised that the disruptions by them in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha are not enough. It was important to say the words, "farmers", "Pegasus" and "spyware on the floor of the Houses."

Asked about the opposition MPs' strategy of raising such issues while seeking to speak on bills in Parliament, O'Brien said that their "strategy was deliberate".

"When the official channels are being denied, this is a new way to reach the masses," said O'Brien who is also the leader of the TMC in the Rajya Sabha. "PM @narendramodiji seems to have lost his nerves. Why is he not keen on answering questions in Parliament? The opposition parties are ready for

discussions in Parliament, but @BJP4India govt is stalling the proceedings so that the truth doesn't get to the people," Congress's Mallikarjun Kharge said in a tweet posting the video.

The video, which has been compiled using clips from RSTV, comprises statements made by the opposition MPs in the Upper House, with the words "farmer" and "Pegasus" in the opening lines. "You are not allowing the discussion we have been asking for the past 14 days and the discussions we can do later. You are passing that bill now. If you have courage, begin the discussions on Pegasus now," Kharge is heard saying in the video on the floor of the House.

The compilation includes opposition speakers like Vandana Chavan of the NCP who raised the Pegasus issue, accusing the government of "not listening to the people". RJD's Manoj Jha too is seen speaking on the spyware issue. "Pegasus has reached everyone's house. We have to discuss this," says Jha. Congress's Deepinder Hooda raised the issue of farmers stating that he would talk about the matter if his "microphone is not switched off". The CPI(M) accused the government of "stealing" parliamentary democracy, while TMC's Sukhendu Shekar Roy raised the issue of "freedom of

speech in Parliament". The other parties which have representation in the video include Samajwadi Party, TRS, DMK and AAP.

One of the leaders in the video, Shiv Sena MP in Rajya Sabha Priyanka Chaturvedi said in a democracy if the government of the day has a responsibility, so does the opposition. "Whether it is about farmers, about the economy, safety and security of women, just the word mentioned by the opposition makes them silence our voices, makes them adjourn Parliament, makes them mute our microphones." "Our inability to be heard by a government which is so brazen has made us realise that the only way we can speak and make our point heard is when such bills are being discussed and passed in such a hurry," Chaturvedi said. CPI(M) leader and RS MP Elamaram Kareem said that speaking during the discussion on bills was the only way to make the government listen. Since the start of the Monsoon Session July 19, parliamentary proceedings have been continuously witnessing disruptions due to protests by opposition parties and a logjam has persisted over their demand for a discussion on the Pegasus snooping row. The opposition has also been strongly protesting against the price rise issue and demanding the repeal of the farm laws. An international media consortium had reported that over 300 verified Indian mobile phone numbers, including that of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Union ministers Prahlad Singh Patel and Ashwini Vaishnav, businessman Anil Ambani, and at least 40 journalists, were on the list of potential targets for surveillance using Israeli firm NSO Group's Pegasus spyware.

CBI arrests five for posting 'defamatory' content against judges

The arrest came days after the CJI pulled up probe agencies, saying they "do not respond" when judges complain about threats



AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: The CBI has arrested five people for allegedly posting defamatory content against judges of the Andhra Pradesh High Court and the Supreme Court on social media, officials said Sunday.

The role of a Lok Sabha member, Nandigam Suresh, and ex-MLA Amanchi Krishna Mohan, both of the YSR Congress, are under scanner in the case, and both have been examined by the agency in its effort to unearth a larger conspiracy, they said.

"To investigate the larger conspiracy, the CBI has also examined certain persons, including an MP and an ex-MLA, and also continued investigation into the role of other persons who were not mentioned in the FIR," CBI spokesperson R C Joshi said.

The agency had Saturday arrested two people -- Pattapu Aadarsh and Lavanuru Samba Siva Reddy - from Andhra Pradesh.

Earlier, the CBI had arrested Dhani Reddy Konda Reddy and Pamula Sudheer July 28, while Lingareddy Rajasekhara Reddy, who was residing in Kuwait, was arrested July 9 when he landed in India, the officials said.

"The agency was monitoring his movements. The moment he landed in India, the officers took him into their custody", an official

said. The arrests were made by the CBI in the case in which it had booked 16 individuals for allegedly posting defamatory content against the judges.

The Andhra Pradesh High Court had directed the agency to probe the case and submit a report to it in a sealed cover. "It was alleged that the accused, by intentionally targeting the judiciary, made derogatory posts on social media platforms against judges and judiciary, following some court verdicts delivered by the judges of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh," Joshi said.

After registration of the case, the CBI traced 13 of the 16 accused named in the FIR on various digital platforms, he said. "Three out of them were found to be abroad. The CBI has so far examined 11 out of the above 13 accused persons and arrested five out of them. Evidence against the remaining six accused persons is being evaluated for further necessary legal action. CBI is pursuing to secure the presence of two other accused said to be abroad for their examination," Joshi said.

The agency carried out searches at the premises of the accused persons that led to the information that one of them was allegedly using a passport in a different name, he said. During the searches, incriminating documents were found, the CBI spokesperson added.

Human trafficking case: NIA conducts raids in B'lore

New Delhi/BANGALORE: The NIA has carried out searches in Bengaluru at the premises linked to a person suspected to be involved in making fake identity proof documents for Bangladeshi traffickers, the agency said Sunday. The raids were conducted at two locations Saturday in connection with a human trafficking case involving Bangladeshi nationals. "During the searches various incriminating documents, six digital devices including hard disks and mobile phones used for making the forged documents were seized," the investigation agency said in a statement. The case was registered in June at the Ramamurthy Nagar police station in Bengaluru against 13 accused in connection with a raid conducted by the Karnataka police at a rented house from where seven Bangladeshi women and a child were rescued from the custody of human traffickers, an official of the National Investigation Agency said. The women were trafficked from Bangladesh to India by the accused on the pretext of providing them jobs but were forced into prostitution instead. The NIA re-registered the case under sections of the IPC, the Foreigners Act and the Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act. Further investigation in the case is underway, the official said.

'Increase high alt monitoring for glacial lake outburst floods'



AGENCIES

altitude and inclement weather conditions. "Of late, climate change has had a great impact on glacier movement in the Indian Himalayan region. In general, glaciers have been rapidly melting and retreating resulting in formation of a number of moraine dammed glacial lakes, posing numerous threats, particularly to the population and infrastructure located nearby due to their outbursts.

"Recognising and spotting of dangerous glacial lakes is very important so that all the stakeholders i.e. planners, scientists, academics, and the general public may evolve, adopt, and carry out suitable mitigation steps such as monitoring, early warning, evacuation and relief and rehabilitation," the 12th report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Water Resources, headed by Dr Sanjay Jaiswal, tabled August 5 said.

New Delhi, August 8: Concerned with glacier movement in the Himalayan region due to climate change, a Parliamentary Committee has recommended widening the network of high altitude meteorological and discharge stations equipped with modern technology to avoid damage after disasters such as glacial lake outburst floods (GLOF).

Agencies involved, however, have apprehension owing to the high

BRAVING THE ODDS



People carry their essential commodities as NDRF team evacuates people during a rescue operation at flooded Maruthi Nagar colony in Varanasi

PTI PHOTO



Battle between two Chanakyas

If all goes as per plans, the country may soon be on the cusp of a battle royal between BJP's Chanakya Amit Shah and Opposition's poll strategist Prashant Kishore (PK). Both were key strategists for Narendra Modi's Prime Ministerial campaign in 2014 and fell out later. The Congress is on the verge of picking PK as its key poll strategist until the 2024

Lok Sabha polls. PK will not charge any fee for his services as he may be formally joining the Congress at a mutually suitable date. He has told the three Gandhis that if inducted, he will oversee the party's poll strategies in all the elections leading up to 2024. He would like to make a big beginning with Gujarat and Karnataka where Assembly polls will be held in November 2022.

When MoS Home reports to MoS only

The Opposition may have been gunning for Nishit Pramanik ever since he was inducted as Minister of State in the Narendra Modi government as 11 criminal cases including that of outraging the modesty of the women, and attempt to murder are pending against him. His citizenship issue also rocked the Parliament. But Pramanik got the shock of his life

after assuming charge in the north block when a work allocation order was issued to three MoS by Cabinet Minister Amit Shah. The order was peculiar when work was distributed among Nityanand Rai, Ajay Kumar Mishra and Nisith Pramanik. Nityanand Rai has been allocated 15 departments and divisions including Internal Security, Jammu & Kashmir, Counter-terrorism, Left Wing Extremism, Foreigners' Division, Border Management Division-I and Border Management Division-II. Ajay Kumar Mishra was given 8 divisions including Freedom Fighters, women safety, department of official languages, cyber Information Security, Judicial, Administrative and Coordination and International Cooperation. But Nishit Pramanik got the worst deal in the allocation of business as the star inductee from West Bengal got only three divisions; Border Management Division-I and Division -II and

Official Languages Division. But the first two divisions have already been allocated to Nityanand Rai and the Official Languages Division given to Ajay Kumar Mishra. Pramanik's supporters are fuming as the work allocation order also says all files relating to three divisions will be put to Pramanik through Nityanand Rai and Ajay Kumar Mishra. These three divisions are in dual charge now. Thus within the Home Ministry he is not at par with his two other MoS colleagues. Officials in the ministry are tight-lipped.

Watchdog body headless again

Strange are the ways of governments. The Central Vigilance Commission is headless again after Sanjay Kothari retired June 23 this year. The Department of Personnel & Training (DOPT) has woken up now and sought

applications for the post. The temporary charge has been given to banker Suresh N Patel who hails from Gujarat. But there are no Vigilance Commissioners under him now. The 3-member body has now one temporary CVC. Suresh N Patel is a banker and brought as VC by the Modi government April 24, 2020. He was the head of Andhra Bank. Normally, CVC comprises an IAS, IPS and a banker. But Patel is walking on eggs till the Modi government appoints a full time successor of Kothari. Informed sources say that the DOPT has already called for applications for the posts of CVC and another vigilance commissioner.

Cyberattacks, a tough challenge

Long before the Pegasus scandal rocked the world in 2021, India has been facing serious threat from

Terror funding case

NIA searches 56 locations in J&K

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, August 8: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) Sunday raided 56 places in 14 districts in Jammu and Kashmir following registration of an FIR against prominent members of the banned J&K Jamaat-e-Islami in the terror funding case, officials said.

An NIA spokesperson said that the anti-terror probe agency, along with the CRPF and the Jammu and Kashmir Police, carried out searches in Srinagar, Budgam, Ganderbal, Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, Anantnag, Shopian, Pulwama, Kulgam, Ramban, Doda, Kishtwar, and Rajouri districts.

The official said that the agency had registered a case on the orders of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs on February 5 this year relating to separatist and secessionist activities of J&K JeI, an unlawful association under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, following its proscription on February 28, 2019.

Members of the organisation have been collecting funds domestically and abroad through donations, particularly in the form of "Zakat, Mowda and Bait-ul-Mal" purportedly to further charity and other welfare activities, "but these funds are instead being used for violent and secessionist activities," the official said.

The official said that the funds raised by JeI are also being channelised to proscribed terrorist organisations such as Hizbul-Mujahideen (HM), Lashkare-Taiba (LeT) and others through well-organised networks of JeI cadres.



PM Modi to chair UNSC debate on maritime security

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a high-level open debate on "Enhancing Maritime Security - A Case for International Cooperation" Monday via video conferencing.

His office said Sunday the meeting is expected to be attended by several heads of state and government of member states of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), and high-level briefers from the UN system and key regional organisations. "Modi would be the first Indian Prime Minister to preside over a UN Security Council Open Debate," the Prime Minister's Office said. The open debate will focus on ways to effectively counter maritime crime and insecurity, and strengthen coordination in the maritime domain. The UN Security Council has discussed and passed resolutions on different aspects of maritime security and maritime crime, the PMO noted. However, this will be the first time that maritime security will be discussed in a holistic manner as an exclusive agenda item in such a high level open debate, it added.

international



I said that I don't want to celebrate successes, but it must be said that Italy has inoculated more doses per 100 inhabitants than France, Germany, the United States
MARIO DRAGHI | PM, ITALY

SIXTH DAY OF GREEK FIRES

Thousands of people have fled their homes on the Greek island of Evia as wildfires burned uncontrolled for a sixth day Sunday, and ferries were on standby for more evacuations after taking many to safety by sea



of the day quote

We have to adjust our policies to manage the quality, numbers and concentrations of foreigners in Singapore. If we do this well, we can continue to welcome foreign workers and new immigrants, as we must
LEE HSIEN LOONG | PM, SINGAPORE

Through ASEAN framework, we have been able to maximize opportunities to cultivate friendly ties and cooperation with countries in the region and external partners around the globe
HUN SEN | PM, CAMBODIA

In my opinion, natural gas is a strategic resource and needs to have government participation (as well) as new hydroelectric projects of large size
GUIDO BELLILO | PM, PERU

SHORT TAKES

5K evacuated as floods hit N Korea

Seoul: More than a thousand homes were damaged and about 5,000 people evacuated in North Korea after flooding caused by heavy rains, the country's state broadcaster reported, with swathes of farmland also inundated by the deluge. The TV report comes as the impoverished North in June admitted it was tackling a food crisis, sounding the alarm in a country with a moribund agricultural sector that has long struggled to feed itself. Footage from Pyongyang's state-run KCTV showed homes flooded up to their roofs.

Iraq forces launch anti-IS operation

Baghdad: The Iraqi security forces have launched an operation to hunt down members of the Islamic State (IS) terror group in the eastern province of Diyala, a police official said. Based on intelligence reports, a joint force from the provincial police and Sunni tribal fighters launched the operation Saturday in areas north of the town of al-Muqadadiya, some 100 km northeast of the capital Baghdad. The operation aimed to clear rural areas in the north of Maqadadiyah from IS militants and destroy their hideouts, al-Mahdawi said.

Iran closes border crossing with Af

Tehran: Iran has announced the closing of one of its most important border crossings with Afghanistan amid an intensification of the violence in the war-torn country. This comes as Afghan citizens are entering neighbouring countries to escape the violence by the Taliban, Middle East Monitor reported. The border between Afghanistan and Iran stretches over 921 kilometres. As the military conflict intensified in western Afghanistan, Afghan families fled to the Iranian border areas Friday night.

2 killed, 12 hurt in Pak hotel blast

Islamabad: At least two policemen were killed and 12 people, including eight policemen, injured Sunday when a powerful blast targeted a police van near a luxury hotel in Quetta, the capital of Pakistan's troubled southwestern Balochistan province, officials said. "The initial probe showed that the bomb was fitted with a motorbike," Balochistan government spokesman Liaquat Shahwani said.

UK EASES TRAVEL CURBS FOR INDIA

The requirement for a compulsory 10-day self-isolation in a government approved facility will no longer apply

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

London, August 8: The UK Sunday eased travel restrictions for India by moving the country from its "red" to "amber" list, which means fully vaccinated Indian passengers will no longer be subjected to a compulsory 10-day hotel quarantine on their arrival in Britain.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has confirmed that all arrivals from India who have been vaccinated in India, which is on the amber list, are re-

India moves from 'red list' to 'amber list'

Indians vaccinated in India to self-isolate at home
Travellers vaccinated in UK or Europe are exempted from quarantine

Covishield is the only vaccine currently recognised under the exemption rules



Under a bilateral agreement, limited number of flights between India and the UK continue to operate

quired to isolate at home or their designated location mentioned on the compulsory locator form.

"We recognise there are a large variety of Covid-19 vaccines being administered worldwide and work is ongoing to determine which non-UK vaccines and certification solutions to recognise," a DHSC source said.

There had been some speculation over Covishield, the Serum Institute of India made Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine, being considered within the wider UK-approved vaccines ambit.

Under the legal rules for countries on the amber list of the UK's traffic light system, passengers must take a Covid test three days before departure and book in advance for two Covid tests to be taken upon arrival in England as well as complete a passenger locator form on arrival.

On arrival in England, the passengers must quarantine at home or in the place they have confirmed as their location for 10 days and take a Covid-19 test on or before day two and on or after day eight.

India has been on the Red List since end-April when the Delta variant was at its peak.

UK PM THREATENED TO DEMOTE SUNAK

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is said to have been furious over a letter being leaked to the media last week, which claimed his Chancellor Rishi Sunak had written to push for easier international Covid-19 travel norms ahead of a planned review. The reaction followed media reports that the Indian-origin finance minister had written to his boss, calling for a significant easing of the Coronavirus travel restrictions, warning that they were damaging the economy.



According to The Sunday Times, which reported on the letter last Sunday, Johnson is said to have been "apoplectic" with anger and even suggested a demotion for Sunak from the powerful Treasury department to take charge of Health. "Maybe it's time we looked at Rishi as the next Secretary of State for Health. He could potentially do a very good job there." In an open meeting, after ranting about Rishi, PM suggested the Chancellor could be demoted in the next reshuffle.

COVID HEALTH PASS

France braces for nationwide outcry

About 237,000 people turned out across France, including 17,000 in Paris



AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Paris, August 8: Almost a quarter of a million people took to the streets across France Saturday for the biggest protests yet against a Coronavirus health pass needed to enter a cafe or travel on an inter-city train, two days before the new rules come into force.

Championed by President Emmanuel Macron, the French regulations make it obligatory to have either a full course of vaccination against Covid-19, a negative test or be recently recovered from the virus to enjoy routine activities.

About 237,000 people turned out across France, including 17,000 in Paris, the interior ministry said, exceeding the 204,000 recorded last weekend - unusual numbers for protests at the height of the summer break.

In one of several protests in Paris, hundreds marched from the western suburbs to the centre, chanting "Freedom!" and "Macron, we don't want your pass!"

'Get vaccinated'

From Monday, the health pass will be needed to eat in a restaurant or enjoy a drink at a cafe - both indoors and on a terrace. It will be obligatory on inter-city transport including high-speed trains and domestic flights although will not be needed on metro systems and suburban transport.

The pass has already been required since July 21 to visit cultural venues such as cinemas, theatres and museums. Its extension was approved by France's Constitutional Council Thursday. In a slight easing of rules, Health Minister Olivier Veran said Saturday that the time period over which a recent Covid test would be valid for the pass would be extended to three days instead of two.

Most of the protests were peaceful but there were seven arrests in the southeastern city of Lyon for throwing projectiles while in Dijon a tram line was blocked. There were 35 arrests nationwide, the interior ministry said, adding seven members of the security forces were lightly wounded.

Prolonged Af civil war likely: Ex-envoy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Washington, August 8: A prolonged civil war in Afghanistan is more likely than a rapid Taliban takeover as the United States' full military withdrawal nears, Washington's former ambassador to Kabul said Sunday.

The insurgents have snatched five provincial capitals since Friday in a lightning offensive, almost a month before the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks that sparked the American-led invasion.

"A prolonged civil war is a more likely outcome than a swift Taliban takeover of the entire country. They're being very smart about this. They're not launching major strikes into Kabul," said former US ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker.

Kunduz, Sar-e-Pul and Taloqan in the north fell within hours of each other Sunday, lawmakers, security sources and residents in the cities confirmed.

Kunduz is the most significant Taliban gain since the insurgents launched an offensive in May as foreign forces began the final stages of their withdrawal.

It has been a perennial target for the Taliban, who briefly overran the city in 2015 and again in 2016 but never managed to hold it for long.

"They're doing what they're doing in part to create a climate of fear and panic. They are succeeding wonderfully," Crocker added, referring to the Taliban.

The withdrawal of foreign forces is due to finish at the end of this month and Crocker said he could not see any circumstance under which the United States would send its troops back.

"President (Joe) Biden has made that clear. We're going out and are staying out," the diplomat added. "He owns it. It's already an indelible stain on his presidency."

DENOUNCING ATROCITIES



Horsemen from towns and villages of the outskirts of Addis Ababa and Finfine Special zone are flocking to Meskel Square, to rally against the TPLF under the motto 'I march to Save Ethiopia' and renew commitment to support the national army

Hezbollah ready for war with Israel

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Beirut, August 8: The head of Lebanon's powerful Hezbollah movement, Hassan Nasrallah, Saturday vowed a "suitable and proportionate" response to any Israeli air strikes on Lebanon after a flare-up at the border this week.

"Our response was linked to the Israeli strikes that occurred in south Lebanon for the first time in 15 years," he said in a televised speech. "We wanted to tell the enemy... that any air strike by the Israeli air force on Lebanon will inevitably draw a response, though in a suitable and proportionate way because we want to serve the purpose of protecting our country," he added.

Nasrallah described the air strikes this week as a "very dangerous development", but said Hezbollah did not want war.

"We are not looking for war and we do not want to head towards war, but we are ready for it" if necessary, he said, echoing similar comments by the Jewish state this week.

HK Secy signals to adopt China anti-sanctions law



AGENCIES

Hong Kong, August 8: Hong Kong's justice secretary said Sunday that a mainland Chinese law to counter foreign sanctions could be adopted in the China-ruled city by writing it into Hong Kong's mini-constitution, pending a decision by the Chinese parliament.

Justice Secretary Teresa Cheng's comments are the strongest official indication so far that Hong Kong would embrace the mainland law, passed in June to counter foreign sanctions as the US and EU step up pressure over trade, technology, Hong Kong and Xinjiang.

Under the law, individuals or entities involved in making or implementing discriminatory measures against Chinese citizens or entities could be put on an anti-sanctions list by relevant depart-

ments in the Chinese government. Cheng wrote in an official blog entry that the "most natural and appropriate way" to introduce the anti-sanctions law into Hong Kong would be to add it to an annex of the Basic Law, or HK's mini-constitution.

She added that such a move needed first to be approved by the highest organ of China's parliament, the National People's Congress. Critics have warned that the anti-foreign sanctions law could undermine Hong Kong's reputation as a global financial hub, and tarnish sentiment among foreign firms.

Prehistoric cave paintings show Neanderthals were artists

MODERN HUMANS WERE NOT INHABITING THE WORLD AT THE TIME THE CAVE IMAGES WERE MADE

AGENCIES

Spain, August 8: Neanderthals may have been closer to our species of prehistoric modern human than previously believed after cave paintings found in Spain proved they had a fondness for creating art, one of the authors of a new scientific report said Sunday.

Red ochre pigment discovered on stalagmites in the Caves of Ardales, near Malaga in southern Spain, were created by Neanderthals about 65,000 years ago, making them possibly the

first artists on earth, according to the study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) journal.

The new findings add to increasing evidence that Neanderthals, whose lineage became extinct about 40,000 years ago, were not the unsophisticated relatives of Homo sapiens they have long been portrayed as.

Pigments were made in the caves at different times up to 15,000 and 20,000 years apart, the study found, and dispel an earlier sug-



gestion that they were the result of a natural oxide flow rather



than being man-made. Joao Zilhao, one of the authors of the PNAS

study, said dating techniques showed that ochre had been spat

by Neanderthals onto the stalagmites, possibly as part of a ritual. "The importance is that it changes our attitude towards Neanderthals. They were closer to humans. Recent research has shown they liked objects, they mated with humans and now we can show that they painted caves like us," he said.

Wall paintings made by prehistoric modern humans, such as those found in the Chauvet-Pont d'Arc cave of France, are more than 30,000 years old.



India has a huge potential for the consumer credit and the pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns caused a heavy financial strain for consumers and the need for short-term loans were filled by NBFCs and fintech startups
CHARLIE LEE | FOUNDER AND GLOBAL CEO, TRUE BALANCE

OMCs KEEP FUEL RATES UNCHANGED

Oil marketing companies (OMCs) kept petrol and diesel rates unchanged Sunday as international crude oil prices have started to recede. This was the 22nd day of pause in the fuel price change



of the day quote

It's not yet clear what exactly would be the role of the monetary policy in addressing climate change. We are looking at both, natural disasters which hit infra and also the planning for new infra investments taking into account increased risks

ULKA KELKAR | DIRECTOR (CLIMATE), WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE (WRI)

We have plans to invest up to ₹500cr in the (tech platform) project which will be raised through debt and equity dilution. Exit/opinion polls are part of market research. Now, we have a vision to resolve problems of all 25 crore Indian households, which is an ambitious plan and no doubt very challenging as well

PRADEEP GUPTA | FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN AND MD, AXIS MY INDIA

During the quarter, there were 45 days of lockdown. So, there was hardly any activity in this period. We expect to manage these better from this month onwards even as we have managed to pull back some NPAs. We have pulled back about ₹80cr of NPA in July itself

HARDAYAL PRASAD | MD AND CEO, PNB HOUSING FINANCE

Not just Flipkart, ED should send notice to Amazon also: CAIT



INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, August 8: As the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has served notices to e-commerce major Flipkart and its founders over alleged violation of foreign exchange norms, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) has said that similar notices should also be sent to Walmart-backed Amazon.

"The notice sent by the Enforcement Directorate to Flipkart is a much-awaited right step. Both Amazon and Flipkart are conducting a preferential seller system on their respective marketplace which is against the FDI in e-commerce policy for which CAIT has been raising its voice since a long time. We demand the Enforcement Directorate to send similar notice to Amazon also since both Amazon and Flipkart are sailing in the same boat," said CAIT Secretary General Praveen Khandelwal.

The traders' body lauded the ED's move and said that violation of laws during 2016-2021 by both Amazon and Flipkart needs to be investigated.

Khandelwal said that ED should not only impose heavy fine and penalty but also recommend the government to ban portals of both Amazon and Flipkart till the time they follow the FDI laws both in letter and spirit.

He said that under the FDI in e-commerce policy, the foreign funded companies could act as a marketplace providing only technology facilitation and cannot sell the goods directly or indirectly whereas these companies were acting in inventory mode, as well which

The notice sent by the ED to Flipkart is a much-awaited right step. Both Amazon and Flipkart are conducting a preferential seller system on their respective marketplace which is against the FDI in e-commerce policy. We demand the ED to send similar notice to Amazon since they both are sailing in the same boat

PRAVEEN KHANDELWAL | SECRETARY GENERAL, CAIT

is prohibited under the policy. The ED issued notices to Flipkart, its founders and nine others in connection with foreign exchange violation case.

According to financial probe agency sources, in the notice they have asked to explain why they should not face a penalty of \$1.35 billion for alleged violation of foreign investment laws.

The sources said that Flipkart and its other holding firms including one in Singapore violated Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) while attracting foreign investments between 2009 and 2015.

According to the ED, the investigating agency has found that WS Retail, a firm incorporated in 2009 to transact with customers, was allegedly acting as a front for retail operations of Flipkart Online Services, incorporated in 2008. The ED investigation started after the RBI had raised the issue. In 2018, Walmart took a majority stake in Flipkart. Sachin Bansal sold his stake to Walmart during the deal, while Binny Bansal retained a small stake.

4 IPOs to hit mkts next week, aim to garner over ₹14K cr

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: The buzz in the IPO market continues with four companies launching their initial share sales this week to rise around ₹14,628 crore collectively.

This comes after four companies: Devyani International, Krsnaa Diagnostics, Windlas Biotech and Exxaro Tiles-- launched their initial share-sales last week to mobilize ₹3,614 crore.



So far in the current fiscal, 16 companies have raised ₹30,666 crore through IPOs against ₹31,277 crore by 30 firms in the entire 2020-21.

Going forward, market analysts expect the IPO environment to remain buzzing during the entire 2021-22.

Hemang Kapasi, Head of Equities at Sanctum Wealth Management, said that as many as 40 IPOs are lined up for the rest of the year looking to raise ₹70,000 crore.

Nuvoco Vistas Corporation, part of the Nirma Group, and online auto classified platform CarTrade Tech will launch their initial share-sales on Monday, while that of Apts Value Housing Finance and Chemplast Sanmar will be open for public subscription on Tuesday, information with exchanges showed.

Sale of Cairn shares by Centre a bad decision?

THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO SCRAP RETROSPECTIVE TAXATION BUT THE INTERNATIONAL EMBARRASSMENT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: Faced with prospect of its assets across the globe being seized just like Pakistan and Venezuela, the government decided to scrap retrospective taxation but the international embarrassment could have been avoided had 'attached' shares of Britain's Cairn Energy Plc not been sold, according to tax and legal experts.

The government, Thursday introduced a Bill in Parliament to scrap the tax rule that gave the Tax department power to go 50 years back and slap capital gains levies wherever ownership had changed hands overseas but business assets were in India. The 2012 legislation was used to levy a cumulative of ₹1.10 lakh crore of tax on 17 entities, including UK telecom giant Vodafone, but substantial punitive action was taken only in the case of Cairn.

The Income Tax department not just sold Cairn's near 10 per cent shareholding in its erstwhile Indian subsidiary but also seized its dividends totalling ₹1,140 crore and stopped tax refunds of ₹1,590 crore.

"The shares the firm held in Cairn India (renamed Vedanta Ltd) were attached by the income tax department soon after it served an ini-



tial assessment of ₹10,247 crore tax demand on Cairn Energy in January 2014. "Most of these shares were sold within two years of serving a formal tax demand in March 2015," a leading tax expert said, requesting not to be identified.

The Tax department reasoned the decision to the fact that Cairn had begun the process to sell its residual stake in 2014 and the company would have fled the country after that, leaving no avenues to recover the levy.

"But, what is being overlooked is the fact that Cairn couldn't have sold the shares as they were already attached by the Tax department. They would have remained in its possession till the final con-

clusion of any or all legal processes," he said.

Once the December 2020 ruling of the international tribunal on the arbitration initiated by Cairn came overturning the levy of taxes on the reorganisation of India business that Cairn carried in 2006 before listing the local unit, "the government could have just released those shares and the matter would have ended," he said.

E-mails sent to the Finance Ministry as well as the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) seeking comments remained unanswered.

"There is no right or wrong decision. Decisions are bad or good. The share sale decision was a bad one," another legal expert said.

SHORT TAKES

JSPL accepts revised offer

New Delhi: JSPL has said that its board has accepted the revised offer of ₹7,401 crore from Worldone Private Limited for divestment of its subsidiary company Jindal Power Ltd. JSPL, July 25, had announced receiving the ₹7,401-crore revised offer from Worldone Private Limited to acquire 96.42% stake in Jindal Power Ltd (JPL).

'Bikes delivery gathering pace'

Mumbai: RattanIndia-backed electric bike maker Revolt Motors Sunday said the delivery of its bikes is gathering pace after resuming production last month following a brief pause due the pandemic. The company has delivered its e-motorcycles in July to customers, including a leading quick service food firm for its delivery fleet, across the six cities in the country where it is operational. Revolt Motors said in a release.

itel reclaims top position

Bhubaneswar: itel reinstated its number 1 position for two consecutive quarters of 2021 in the sub-₹6,000 price band according to the latest Counterpoint Research report. It has a stronghold in the list of top 5 brands in the overall handset category in Q2, 2021 as per the report by Counterpoint. itel also maintained its leadership in the feature phone segment for last 7 consecutive quarters backed by its innovative feature phone range. itel has recorded stupendous growth backed by its wide range of smartphone portfolio.

AM/NS inoculates over 40K workforce

Bhubaneswar: ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India (AM/NS India) began its inoculation drive, thereby vaccinating as many as 40,000 people comprising its workforce, their family members and business associates with the first dose. Efforts to administer the second dose too are under way. After seeking vaccine doses support from the government initially, AM/NS India privately procured Covishield vaccine from the Serum Institute of India in order to alleviate the pressure on the public health system.

Bank of Baroda registers over ₹1,200cr net profit in Q1 FY22

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, August 8: Bank of Baroda (BoB) Saturday posted a standalone net profit ₹1,208.63 crore for the quarter ended June 30, 2021, said some authorities from the bank during a virtual conference.

BoB had posted a net loss of ₹864 crore in the year ago period. Moreover, the Net Interest Income (NII) increased nearly 16% to ₹7,892 crore as against ₹6,816 crore in the year ago period.

The bank also stated that its operating profit increased by a

robust 41.2% to ₹5,707 crore in first quarter of the current fiscal. Cost to income ratio fell to 47.45%, a decline of 574 bps over the previous year.

Gross NPA position improved to 8.86% from 9.39% in the same period last year. BoB's capital adequacy ratio (CRAR) increased to 15.4% in same quarter of the current financial year.

Global Net Interest Margin (NIM) exceeds 3% at 3.04% and domestic NIM at 3.12%. The bank reoriented its loan book to high yield segments. Its organic retail loans have

increased by 11.8% in Yo-Y. Within retail loans, auto loans increased by 25.0% Yo-Y and personal loans grew by 19.5% Yo-Y. Also, gold loans increased by 37.7% Yo-Y.

The bank also brought down its cost of deposits significantly by 103 bps to 3.92%. CASA deposits increased by 12.7% Yo-Y, the domestic CASA ratio increasing to 43.21% from 39.49% last year, an increase of 372 bps Yo-Y. Resultantly, there has been a significant rise in return on assets (RoA) at 0.42% and Return on equity (RoE) of 8.63%.

Deloitte, KPMG, 5 others in race for transaction advisor

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, August 8: Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu India LLP, KPMG and five others are in the race for be the transaction advisor during the proposed strategic sale of the IDBI Bank. The other bidders in the fray are EY, ICICI Securities, JM Financial, RBSA Capital Advisors, and SBI Capital Markets.



The bidders would make virtual presentations before the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management August 10.

In the Union Budget for FY22, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said privatisation of the IDBI Bank, along with two state-run banks, would be done in this financial year.

Both the stake of the Life Insurance Corporation of India's (LIC) and the Indian government in the IDBI Bank will be sold in the instant transaction along with transfer of management control.

The quantum of stake may be decided during the course of the transaction. The LIC holds 49.24% stake in the bank while the government has 45.48%.

BIZ BUZZ

Tata Steel BSL sets up UV oxidation plant in state

Bhubaneswar: Tata Steel BSL Ltd has set up the "world's first" ultraviolet oxidation plant in the industry at its facility in Odisha's Dhenkanal district to treat cyanide in coke oven wastewater, a deadly pollutant, the company said. The UV oxidation unit has been established with support from the research and development team of parent company Tata Steel, it said in a release. The steel maker said the conventional method of treating cyanide in coke oven wastewater is called solid sludge separation technology, which may lead to cyanide toxicity by secondary means of toxic sludge decomposition. The UV oxidation technology would address the issue at the Narendrapur plant with capacity to treat 80 cubic metres of wastewater per hour, it said. "One of the best ways to handle cyanide is complete destruction of it by oxidation," Tata Steel BSL Chief Operating Officer Subodh Pandey said.

Inox to add 926 screens: CEO Tandon

New Delhi: Multiplex chain operator Inox Leisure has so far signed agreements with various developers to add 926 screens to its network, which are expected to come in the next few years, said a top company official. India is an "underscreen" nation and the company is growing and is "bullish" about this industry, said Inox Leisure CEO Alok Tandon in a conference call with the investors. Besides, Inox is also planning to spend around ₹65 crore as capital expenditure and has plans to take a fit-out of another 25 screens. "Based on the agreement already signed, I feel proud to share that beyond the FY 2021-22, we have properties signed up to the extent of nearly 133 more properties, 926 more screens with an addition of another 1,71,675 seats," said Tandon.



Delhi-London economy class fares zoom

New Delhi: Average economy-class fares on international flights operating on key routes connecting India have risen significantly during the last one month due to high demand, according to data from EaseMyTrip.com. The travel website's data shows that average economy class fare on a flight heading from Delhi in India to Newark in the US increased from ₹69,034 in July to ₹87,542 in August. An average economy class ticket on Mumbai-Moscow flight and Mumbai-Doha flight was priced ₹43,132 and ₹11,719, respectively, in July this year, according to the data. This increased to ₹85,024 and ₹18,384, respectively, by August. In a statement, Nishant Pitti, CEO and Co-founder of EaseMyTrip.com, said there has been an increase in the average economy fares of international routes in August compared to July.

90% want govt to frame booking refund policy: Survey

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 8: As many as 90% of people in a survey carried out to assess issues faced in getting refund for cancelled travel bookings, including of flight tickets, in the wake of Covid-19, want the government to formulate a pandemic-specific cancellation refund policy.

According to the survey by on-line platform LocalCircles, based over 37,000 responses received from citizens across 359 districts, some travel agents (online and offline), airlines as well as hotels did not initiate any refund with people losing the complete booking amount.

As per the platform, only 12-13% of those who cancelled travel bookings due to the second Covid wave could get timely refunds.

"As many as 95% of citizens believe that the current policies of the

airlines, railways or hotels are not in consumer interest and 90% want the government to come up with a travel booking refund policy till the time the COVID pandemic is on," LocalCircles said.

The same could be brought by the respective ministries like Civil Aviation, Tourism and Railways or by the Ministry of Home Affairs under the Disaster Management Act 2005, it said, adding that people have also suggested a 3-option traveller-friendly travel booking cancellation and refund policy.

Based on the survey results, the best-case scenario could be giving people the option of either giving a refund within a week and 20% amount to be deducted as processing charges, or a refund within a month and only 10% amount to be deducted as processing charges or no refund but a voucher for full amount issued which can be used



towards future travel within two years, it said. This way, travellers have the

confidence that their losses will be limited in case they were faced with a cancellation situation due

TRAVEL AMID PANDEMIC

According to the survey, some travel agents, airlines as well as hotels did not initiate any refund with people losing the complete booking amount

95% people believe that the current policies of the airlines, railways or hotels are not in consumer interest

According to the platform, while some were able to retrieve a partial amount, others were asked to rebook the flights and hotel stays for a later date

towards the pandemic, LocalCircles said. The platform said it will be submitting the findings of this survey with the key stakeholders in the Central Government so the same can be used as an input in deci-

sion-making in regard to formulating a uniform policy for travel booking cancellation refunds during the Covid pandemic.

According to LocalCircles, the second wave of the pandemic forced many citizens and families to cancel their travel plans. At the time, many citizens reported on LocalCircles about issues they faced when trying to cancel tickets and hotel stays for their booked summer travel, it stated.

Taking cognizance of the issue, LocalCircles said it conducted a survey to gauge the magnitude of the issue that people faced with travel cancellation refunds due to the second wave and also sought citizens' pulse about the need for the Government to come up with a cancellation policy that applies to airlines, railways, hotels, and others till the time the COVID pandemic continues, it said.

CHOPRA SETS NEW GOALS

JAVELIN THROWER TARGETS TO BREACH THE 90-METRE MARK THIS YEAR

AGENCIES

Tokyo, August 8: History created, but javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra doesn't want to sit on his laurels. His next target is to go past the 90-metre mark as soon as possible. Chopra tried to break the Games record (90.57) here Saturday, but could not accomplish it.

"Javelin throw is a very technical event and a lot depends on the day's form. Anything can happen. So, my next target is to breach the 90m (mark)," Chopra said Sunday.

"I was just focusing on Olympics this year. Now that I have won gold, I will plan ahead for the upcoming competitions. After returning to India, I will again plan to participate in international events. I have still a long way to go," the dapper

looking Chopra said. He is planning to attend Diamond League events in Lausanne (August 26), Paris (August 28) as well as the Zurich finals (September 9). Chopra also said he was not under any

things do not come to my mind," Chopra informed.

"The most important thing was I got international competitions before Olympics. I was desperate for that. I requested Target Olympics Podium Scheme (TOPS), SAI and Athletics Federation of India (AFI) to arrange some. They did so, and because of that, I am here now

For all the facilities I have got, I want to thank SAI, AFI and TOPS," added the history-maker.

Chopra was asked how he was able to come up with big

throws in his first two attempts. "If the first throw goes well, then it releases the pressure. That happened. The second throw was also very good. I knew at the point of release both will go far. That must have put pressure on the other athletes," Chopra said.

The Indian also talked about his friend and gold medal favourite Johannes Vetter of Germany. The latter was eliminated after the first three throws. "He was struggling, I don't know whether it was because of pressure or was it due to playing in too many events. He was not in form,"

Chopra who is a friend of Vetter off the field, pointed out. The 28-

year-old Vetter had come into the Olympics as the top contender for gold.

Klaus overwhelmed

Tokyo: Klaus Bartonietz, the bio-mechanics expert who guided Neeraj Chopra to Olympic gold, said Sunday he felt overwhelmed at his ward's feat to become the best in his sport. Bartonietz has been with Chopra since the second half of 2019 when the youngster was undergoing rehabilitation following an arthroscopic surgery on the elbow of his throwing right hand. "I feel overwhelmed that Neeraj was able to win a medal, not a bronze, not a silver, but a gold and he became the best javelin thrower in the world," Bartonietz said in a short clip released by AFI. "It's a great joy for AFI, for all the people who are interested in athletics in India," said the German expert.

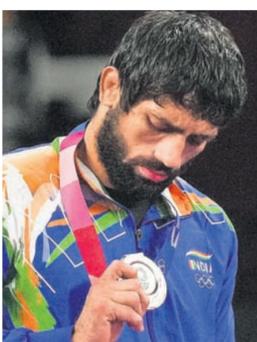
undue pressure. "There was no pressure and I was taking it (Olympics) just like any other event. It was like I have played against these athletes before and there's no reason to worry. I was able to focus on my performance which helped me win gold. Yes, I did think about India not winning a medal in athletics but once I get hold of my spear, all these

Neeraj deserves gold. He has done all the hard work. The entire country is proud of him, so are the hockey team

MANPREET SINGH | CAPTAIN

BEST-EVER SHOW BY INDIAN SPORTSPERSONS AT THE OLYMPICS

IN 7TH HEAVEN



Ravi Dahiya



PV Sindhu



Lovlina Borgohain



Mirabai Chanu

AGENCIES

New Delhi, August 8: It started with a bang, tapered off in the middle and then ended spectacularly. India were quite literally on a roller-coaster during the Tokyo Olympics which ended Sunday.

So, there was the first medal in track-and-field which also happened to be the first gold in 13 years. There was the first medal in hockey in 41 years, the first silver in weightlifting, the first boxing medal in nine years, the first woman with two Olympic medals, the most number of debutants ending up on the podium, and the most number of medals ever won. It all happened in one single Olympics for India.

Mighty impressive? No, it was more than that.

India's campaign at the Olympic Games was as much a story of human resilience as of sporting excellence and it came to the fore on the opening day of competitions itself starting with Mirabai Chanu. The Manipuri weightlifter stands a mere 4'11" but lifted 202kg (87+115) to fetch a silver and put India on the medals tally, showing the world why size doesn't and shouldn't matter.

In her moment of glory, the phenomenal weightlifter was a personification of perseverance. She had left the same stage in tears and dejection five years ago, failing to log a single legal lift. And there she was smiling ear to ear July 24 becoming

India's first silver medallist in weightlifting.

It was just the kind of start that the country needed but what followed was a lull simply because the shooting contingent failed to live up to expectations.

But along came PV Sindhu and put things back on track with her bronze. While she was at it, the two hockey teams also showed stomach for fight after early setbacks.

And in the boxing ring, an heir apparent to the iconic MC Mary Kom began to take shape in Lovlina Borgohain (69kg). The 23-year-old from Assam ended with a bronze August 4 as women got down to the

task of rebuilding momentum in the Indian camp. And it worked out quite spectacularly.

The very next day, Ravi Dahiya became only the second Indian wrestler to clinch a silver at the Games but the first to do so on debut. Hours before that came the long-awaited hockey medal, a bronze worth its weight and wait in gold.

There were tears, joy, nostalgia and above all a sense of renewed pride because hockey was India's favoured sport before it declined and cricket took over the mind space.

The stage seemed set for a grand finale and it was with Neeraj Chopra's javelin striking gold that

was the icing on the cake. Bajrang Punia's resolve paid off for him with a bronze on the wrestling mat as the debutant grudgingly accepted the medal after falling out of the expected gold medal contention.

Then there were those who were hit by the curse of the fourth-place finish. Their agony was a story in itself as golfer Aditi Ashok and the women's hockey team ended within touching distance of the podium but not quite there. But they proved that one could bank on them in Paris.

Bye bye Tokyo, see you in Paris with hope-filled hearts. Certainly there is more to come.



Indian men's hockey team pose with their bronze medals after ending a 41-year wait for a podium finish

PTI PHOTOS

SUPERSTAR BREAKS DOWN AT FAREWELL FUNCTION

TEARFUL MESSI WASN'T READY TO LEAVE BARCA

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Madrid, August 8: Struggling to control his emotions, Lionel Messi said Sunday in his farewell to Barcelona that he wasn't prepared to leave the club. Messi began crying even before he started speaking at the Camp Nou Stadium. "This is very hard for me after so many years, after being here my entire life," Messi said. "I wasn't prepared for this," he added. He called his unexpected departure from the club "the most difficult" moment of his career.

Messi's family and some of his teammates were at the Camp Nou for the player's farewell. Messi avoided speaking specifically about his future. However, he indicated that joining PSG was a 'distinct possibility'. It means that the Messi-



Neymar combination would again be in the limelight. "Nothing is final yet. For the moment nothing is arranged. However, discussions are on with a few clubs including PSG," Messi informed.

Barcelona had announced Thursday that they could not keep their greatest player because they weren't able to fit a new contract within the Spanish league's financial fair-play regulations. The club's salary cap has been significantly slashed because of its huge debt.

WRESTLER WAS WITHOUT MAT PRACTICE FOR NEARLY 3 WEEKS DUE TO KNEE INJURY

Injury cost Bajrang dearly

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: Star wrestler Bajrang Punia revealed Sunday that knee injury forced him to skip mat training for nearly three weeks. This severely hampered his Olympic preparations and he took the mat for the bronze play-off without any knee protection, going against the advice of his support staff.

Bajrang had skipped the Poland Open, the last ranking event before the Tokyo Games. He had argued that he needed training more than the points and headed to Russia. He trained there and also ended up injuring his right knee by choosing to compete in a local event – the Ali Aliev tournament. He suffered the injury June 25.

Bajrang was off-colour in his first three bouts in Tokyo but played his usual tactical and aggressive game

My coaches and physio wanted me to play with taped knee in the bronze medal bout. But I did not feel comfortable. So I refused to do so

BAJRANG PUNIA

in the do-or-die bronze medal bout and comfortably beat Daulet Niyazbekov from Kazakhstan to earn a podium finish on Olympic debut.

"I could not do mat training for nearly 25 days. I was not able to run as well after the injury. Before a tournament like Olympics even missing one day's training is not good," Bajrang said during a media interaction.

The 27-year-old said he will continue to compete in the 65kg category till the Paris Games. "There



is no scope to move to 74kg. Next year we have the CWG and the Asian Games. I have missed the gold medal now but will work on my weaknesses and try to get a

top-finish in Paris." Bajrang said. He informed he will start rehabilitation after returning to Haryana. His next target is to do well in the World Championships at Oslo, Norway, October 2-10.

The Haryana wrestler also asserted that a lot of athletes succumb to pressure but he is comfortable carrying the weight of expectations. "I have seen people crumble under pressure. It mostly happens with the new athletes but I feel happy when people tell me that they want to see me win Olympic medal. Pressure gives you nothing, so we must learn to play freely," Bajrang pointed out.

Unlike other wrestlers, weight-cut is not an issue that bothers Bajrang much. Now he wants to go home and eat 'Choorma' that his mother Om Pyari prepares for him whenever he gets back home.

Vikas undergoes shoulder surgery

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, August 8: Boxer Vikas Krishan, whose Olympic campaign ended abruptly after a dislocated right shoulder caused an opening-round loss, has undergone a surgery to fix the injury which will keep him out of action for the next three months. The 29-year-old, who was competing in his third Olympics in Tokyo, was forced out early after 'fighting with one hand' in the opening clash against Japan's Sewon Okazawa.

The surgery on his dislocated shoulder was performed Thursday at Mumbai's Kokilaben Hospital by renowned surgeon Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala. Incidentally it was the same surgeon who operated and fixed a career-threatening shoulder injury which newly-crowned Olympic gold-winner Neeraj Chopra had suffered in 2019. Vikas is expected to be fit in three weeks.

Rain robs India of victory

AGENCIES

Nottingham, August 8: Persistent rain proved to be anti-climatic as India, who had a realistic shot at victory in the series-opener, were forced to share points with England after entire fifth day's play was washed out, at the Trent Bridge here Sunday. India needed to score 157 runs on the final day but the rain did not allow a single ball to be bowled. As part of the new World Test Championship cycle, both India and England got four points each.

Only 250 plus overs out of a maximum 450 were possible due to the inclement weather. India chasing 209 for victory, were well placed at 52 for one after the end of the fourth day's play.

While cricket remains a game of glorious uncertainties, Virat Kohli and his men certainly had a better shot at full 12 points from the match.

It would have taken a special bowling effort from England to



Skipper Virat Kohli looks heavenwards at Trent Bridge, Sunday

PHOTO: BCCI

stop India from scoring 209 runs despite overcast conditions which would have certainly aided seam and swing bowling.

KL Rahul, who scored a dogged 84 in India's first innings, had insisted that the surface was not 'unplayable' though scoring runs might have been 'challenging'.

However there are a lot of take-aways for India from the opening Test of the series. The Indian team in recent times, save the series in 2007 and the one in 2014, have always lost the opening Test in England and this was a welcome change in that respect.

Brief scores

England 183 and 303; India 278 and 52 for 1. Match drawn

The biggest positive for India would be getting the 'Test batsman' Rahul back, which going forward should benefit the visitors. His overall discipline was laudable. He was ready to play close to his body and not fiddle with most of the deliveries outside the off-stump.

If Rahul's performance was the brightest spot, one can't deny the contribution of Jasprit Bumrah, who is again back in his element with a nine-wicket haul. He picked up four wickets in the first innings and five in the second.

TOKYO 2020
The final day of the Olympics saw some stunning performances that brought down the curtains on the competition. Here are some of the highlights that took place Sunday.

In elite company

Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge defended his Olympics marathon title with ease as finished the race in two hours, eight minutes, 38 seconds on a breezy and humid Sunday along the streets of Sapporo. It was more than 80 seconds ahead of runner-up Abdi Nageeye of the Netherlands. Bashir Abdi of Belgium earned bronze to close out the track and field portion of the Tokyo Games. Kipchoge becomes the third athlete to win multiple gold medals in the men's marathon, joining Abebe Bikila

OLYMPIC ROUND-UP (INTERNATIONAL)

(1960, '64) and Waldemar Cierpinski ('76, '80)

Bitter blow

The Russian rhythmic gymnastics juggernaut collapsed at the Olympics here as they lost to Bulgaria in the gold medal match. This is the first time since 2000 that the Russians have failed to win the rhythmic gymnastics gold at the Games. "It's so unreal, we cannot believe it. I don't know what to say," Bulgarian gymnast Stefani Kiryakova said. "This is the happiest moment ever."

Sprint gold for Mitchell

Kelsey Mitchell of Canada won gold in the women's sprint event in track cycling, sweeping past Olena Starikova of Ukraine at the Izu Velodrome here Sunday. Mitchell upset reigning World Champion Emma Hinze of

Germany in the semifinals before facing off with Starikova, who likewise had upset 2019 World Champion Lee Wai Sze of Hong Kong in her last four match.

US hoopsters shine

American Sue Bird capped off her unblemished 17-year Olympic run with a record fifth gold medal at the Saitama Stadium as US beat Japan 90-75 in the women's basketball final Sunday. She along with teammate Diana Taurasi has won five successive Olympic gold medals... a feat no one else has achieved in basketball. "Couldn't have asked for a better ending. There's really not much else to say," Bird said after the match.

1st volleyball gold

Jordan Larson fell to the floor, put her head in her hands and cried after Brazil couldn't return her

spike on match point. In the process, the US women created history by winning the volleyball gold for the first time. The US women won 25-21, 25-20, 25-14 in the final played Sunday against Brazil. "I'm just still in a state of shock," Larson said.

Memorable odyssey

By the time she reached the 65th and final lap of her eight-day Olympic odyssey, Sifan Hassan's neck had seized up and she couldn't turn her head. She could barely breathe and she couldn't feel her arms anymore. But she did not let that bother her as she won the 10,000 metres gold with a burst past world-record holder Letesenbet Gidey. Sifan had earlier won gold in 5,000 metres and a bronze in the 1,500 metres. Sifan said that her decision to move to the Netherlands from Ethiopia had helped her win a handful of medals at the Tokyo Games.