



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Beauty queen Manushi Chhillar has launched a campaign on benefits of 'right' eating during World Nutrition Week

LEISURE P2



41 INMATES KILLED

Forty one convicts, including two foreigners, were killed when a massive fire broke out in a prison in Jakarta

INTERNATIONAL P10



BACK IN BUSINESS

Former skipper MS Dhoni will mentor the Indian team for the upcoming T20 World Cup

SPORTS P12

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BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9 | 2021

12 PAGES | ₹5.00



1 dead, 20 missing in Assam boat mishap

Jorhat/Guwahati: One person was killed and 20 others have gone missing Wednesday after private boat 'Ma Kamala' with over 120 people on board sank in the Brahmaputra river. The disaster took place when the boat collided with government ferry 'Tripkal' near Nimati Ghat in Jorhat district of Assam, officials said. The boat capsized and sank," informed an official of the Inland Water Transport (IWT) department. He also informed that even though 20 are still missing, many others have already been rescued.



Pradhan in-charge of UP polls

New Delhi: The BJP named Wednesday its organisational spearheads for elections in the four states of Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand and Manipur. Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan has been made in-charge of UP polls. However, Pradhan alone will not handle responsibilities. Union Ministers Anurag Singh Thakur, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Shobha Karandlaje and Annpurna Devi Yadav have been made co-incharges for UP along with him. They will be assisted by Saroj Pandey, Vivek Thakur and Captain Abhimanyu.

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IRREGULAR by MANJUL



No, not video games, I was watching news!

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX		VARIATION
SENSEX	58250.26	↓ 29.22
NIFTY	17353.50	↓ 8.60
DOLLAR	73.88	↑ ₹0.19
EURO	87.13	↓ ₹0.41
GOLD	₹46,989	↑ ₹50
SILVER	₹64,053	↓ ₹568

WEATHER		
	BHUB	CTK
TEMP. MAX	31.5°C	32.0°C
TEMP. MIN	24.6°C	25.0°C
Humidity	97%	89%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
Forecast	Light rain very likely	

₹6 CRORE, GOVT JOB FOR BHAGAT



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Para shuttler Pramod Bhagat, who won a gold medal in the SL3 category of the Tokyo Paralympic Games will be presented with a cash award of ₹6 crore. He will also be eligible for a Group-A state government job, the Sports and Youth Services department announced Wednesday. Bhagat will be handed over the cheque by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on his arrival in the state Capital, the department added. "The Odisha government is committed to support sportspersons and para sportspersons to achieve their potential. Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had announced cash awards for achieving medals in the Olympics and Paralympics - ₹6 crore for gold medal, ₹4 crore for silver medal and ₹2.5 crore for bronze medal," the department said in a statement. Amit Rohidas and Birendra Lakra were part of the Indian team that won bronze at the Tokyo Olympics. Both were handed over cheques of ₹2.5 crore each immediately after their arrival at the Odisha capital.



PTI PHOTO

Cars stationed in front of the CPI(M) office in Agartala were allegedly torched by BJP workers as the two parties clashed Wednesday

VIOLENCE RULES

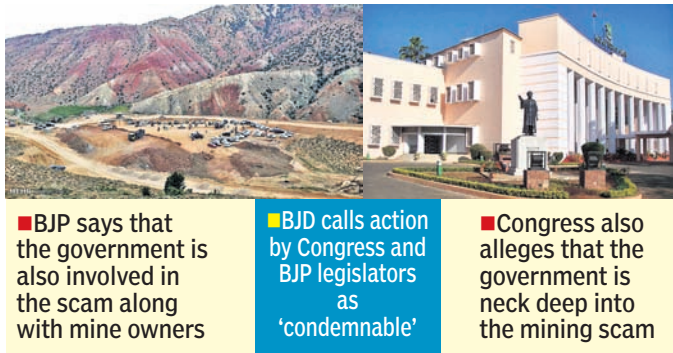
MINING SCAM ROCKS ASSEMBLY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Opposition BJP and Congress stalled Assembly proceedings and gheraoed Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro in his chamber for rejecting an adjournment notice on mining scam, here Wednesday. The Congress had moved the notice for a discussion on the mining scam in Odisha. However, the speaker turned it down.

The pre-lunch session saw no business as the Congress and BJP members rushed to the Well of the House protesting against the Speaker's refusal to allow the adjournment motion. Their actions forced the Speaker to adjourn the Assembly twice till 4 pm.

As soon as the House assembled for the day at 10.30am, Congress members protested against the rejection of the adjournment notice. BJP members also stood up on their seats and created ruckus on



■ BJP says that the government is also involved in the scam along with mine owners

■ BJD calls action by Congress and BJP legislators as 'condemnable'

■ Congress also alleges that the government is neck deep into the mining scam

the floor forcing Patro to adjourn the proceedings till 11.30am. The Opposition members also gheraoed the chamber of Speaker and did not allow him to come to the House to conduct business. Since Patro could not make it to the House after the first adjournment, Deputy Speaker Rajani Kant Singh adjourned the House till 4.00pm.

BJP chief whip Mohan Majhi

and Congress member Santosh Singh Saluja told mediapersons that they were forced to gherao the Speaker as he did not allow a discussion on 'mining scam' in the House.

"The government has a nexus with the mine owners and is equally involved in the scam. Therefore, the Speaker rejected the adjournment notice citing it doesn't have any

relevance at present," Majhi said.

The BJP members meanwhile have decided to move an adjournment motion over the issue Thursday. "The government is neck-deep into the mining scam. So it is now scared to even discuss the issue. We tried to discuss the mining irregularities in the state during the last session but the government ignored it then. This time too, we tried to bring an adjournment motion which the Speaker rejected," alleged Congress MLA Santosh Singh Saluja.

However, BJD leader Pratap Keshari Deb said the conduct of the members of the BJP and the Congress was condemnable. "This is called shifting of goalposts in politics. When a playing team sees that its tactics are not yielding any fruitful result, it immediately changes strategy by shifting goalposts. The opposition parties are attempting to do the same," Deb said.

Covid cell to monitor schools

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: With the number of Covid-19 infections rising in some schools across the state, the Odisha government has constituted a special cell to monitor the cases, officials said Wednesday. The Odisha School Education Programme Authority (OSEPA) has issued an order for this purpose. As per the order, a Covid-19 monitoring cell has been constituted in the office of the state project director (SPD), OSEPA with the command control centre.

The officials engaged in the cell will collect the daily attendance of the Classes - IX, X, XI, XII and monitor various Covid-19 related incidents in the districts. They will then submit reports on a daily basis to SPD, OSEPA.

The government has also asked all district education officers (DEOs) to constitute a Covid-19 monitoring cell at the district-level as soon as possible. All the DEOs have been asked to appoint a senior person as Covid compliance officer. These officers will ensure implementation of Covid-19 protocols in the schools. "If any Covid-19 related inci-

OVER 69K TEACHING POSTS LYING VACANT

BHUBANESWAR: A total of 69,369 teaching posts are lying vacant in various Government schools and colleges across Odisha. Among them, 68,362 belong to primary, upper primary and secondary schools alone, the concerned Ministers informed the House during the Monsoon Session of the Odisha Assembly. Replying to a question raised by MLA Amar Satpathy, School and Mass Education Minister Samir Ranjan Dash said 14,125 sanctioned posts in secondary schools and 54,237 in upper primary schools are lying vacant.

dent occurs in the district, it will be reported on that very day to the undersigned without delay," the OSEPA order said.

Meanwhile, School and Mass Education principal secretary, Satyabrata Sahu issued Wednesday a fresh SOP for the functioning of schools. In a letter sent to all DEOs, Sahu said teachers will have to ensure that students coming to schools must wear masks. Anyone without mask will not be allowed to enter. Also it has to be ensured that students do not take off their masks for lengthy periods during classes.

NDA doors finally open for women

■ The Centre has informed the Supreme Court that women who were previously not allowed to join the Armed Forces will henceforth be eligible to do so

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: In a historic move, the Centre told the Supreme Court Wednesday that women will be admitted into the National Defence Academy (NDA) for permanent commission into Armed Forces. The government, however, said it needs some time to frame guidelines to pave the way for women to take NDA courses. The Supreme Court has told the centre to file its reply by September 20.

"We are extremely glad to know that the Armed Forces took the decision to induct women into the NDA. We know that reforms cannot happen in a day. The government will place timelines of the process and the course of action," a Supreme Court bench comprising Justice SK Kaul and Justice MM Sundresh, said. The bench was hearing a petition for allowing women to take NDA and Naval Academy exams.



Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, told the bench that a decision has been taken at the highest level of the Armed Forces as also the government that females will be inducted for permanent commission through the NDA.

The ASG sought the apex court's permission to place the details on record through an affidavit and sought status quo in this year's exams as they need procedural and infrastructural changes.

"I am happy that the heads of Armed Forces have taken a positive decision. Put on record, we will take up the matter. We are happy

The Armed Forces play an important role... but need to do more for gender equality in the forces. We want them to take a proactive approach in ensuring gender equality

SUPREME COURT BENCH

with the stand. Let us hear the matter next week. Reforms cannot happen in a day. We are also conscious of that," the bench said. The bench also said it would like the Armed Forces to take more proactive approach towards gender

Suicide bid before House turns fatal

■ The victim alleged he was denied treatment under BSKY due to apathy of the hospital authorities after he was injured in an accident last year

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Odia youth Dushmantha Das, who attempted suicide Wednesday in front of the Odisha Assembly, died in the evening while undergoing treatment at the SCB Medical College and Hospital (SCBMH) in Cuttack. Dushmantha had slit his wrist and consumed poison over alleged denial of treatment under Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojna (BSKY). He belonged to Kujang locality of Jagatsinghpur district.

Dushmantha had alleged medical negligence at various hospitals where he went for treatment. He said that his life had turned into a living hell after he suffered grievous injuries to his left leg in an accident. This incidentally is the first time that a suicide attempt in front of the Odisha Assembly has turned fatal.

In the morning, an injured Dushmantha was overpowered by security personnel and was rushed to the SCBMH.

Dushmantha met with the accident March 22, 2020 while returning home on his two-wheeler. Initially, he was admitted for treatment at the Jagatsinghpur district headquarters hospital. Then he was shifted to SCBMH. The victim underwent a plastic surgery on his left leg, March 23. However, it was not successful. He then had another surgery June 20. It also proved futile.

Before he was shifted to the hospital, Dushmantha told mediapersons, that he was discharged from the hospital even before he fully recovered due to the Covid-19 situation in the state. "My treatment suffered following my discharge. Even though I knocked the doors of many concerned officials, all my pleas fell on deaf ears," Dushmantha said.

"When I came to know that I can



Dushmantha Das

use my BSKY card to get treatment up to Rs 5 lakh, I went to a private hospital February 2 this year. There I was informed that the surgery on my leg was incorrect," he added.

Dushmantha also said that the private hospital told him to get a written consent from the Health department so that he could avail treatment under BSKY. Dushmantha then wrote to Chief Minister seeking his assistance for treatment.

Coming to know about his plight, the Health and Family Welfare department directed SCBMH authorities to readmit Dushmantha and start his treatment under BSKY. But he again faced official apathy.

BJD SUSPENDS CHILIKA MLA

Bhubaneswar: BJD MLA Prashanta Kumar Jagdev was suspended with immediate effect from the party Wednesday. The decision to suspend the Chilika Assembly lawmaker was taken by BJD supremo and Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik. It came hours after he allegedly slapped a BJP leader Niranjan Sethi and abused him in front of a crowd at Balugaon in Khurda district. However, there was no official clarification from the BJD as to why Jagdev has been suspended. Sethi on the other hand has lodged a complaint against Jagdev.

leisure

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ARIES

You feel lost and thoroughly depressed today. This will make you turn towards spirituality, says Ganesha. You will devote more time to meditation and will pray a lot. Despite the adverse circumstances, Ganesha says you will make a good deal of material headway.

TAURUS

Luck is a four-leaf clover in your pocket. You might get the long desired success in education related matters today – a favourable result of a competitive examination, maybe. You will proudly smile at your power of resilience and sense of proportion, says Ganesha.

GEMINI

You are on your way to falling in love. Your parents or children are likely to fetch you substantial gains, financially or otherwise. You may want to make a few changes at work, probably a new business strategy.

CANCER

Financially, you may be in a bit of a bother today. Payment of bills, taxes and loans may keep you busy for most part of the day. You may even contemplate borrowing money to meet the demands. However, you are likely to receive one of your pending payments, which will be enough to get you out of the fix.

LEO

Today, Ganesha advises you to keep the Bhagavad Gita's verses in mind, and persist in fulfilling your duties without bothering about the fruits of your labour. Put in some extra effort to finish off whatever you undertake today.

VIRGO

Matters of religion and spirituality rise to the fore today. Throw yourself into a single-minded pursuit to be successful in your chosen field, and make the most of your skills and natural talent, says Ganesha. Matters of relationships will see you more critical and analytical than emotional.

LIBRA

The clock ticks on, but chances are it can hardly beat you in the race, thanks to your prompt and sincere efforts. Today, you shall be a paragon of excellence. However, Ganesha waves the red flag of caution: it always pays to be safe rather than sorry.

SCORPIO

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

SAGITTARIUS

Today, arranging meetings with customers and suppliers will eat into most of your time. Your patience will enable you to listen to suggestions and opinions offered by people. The result of all this, however, is slated to be most favourable and productive.

CAPRICORN

You have always been generous by nature, but your benevolent attitude will do you no good, warns Ganesha. People will try, almost blatantly, to take advantage of you, and for once, you will feel that being crafty and unrelenting would have helped kept those blood-sucking leeches at bay.

AQUARIUS

Today, you work hard and party harder! The morning sees you sweating it out at work, as you do your best to implement your plans. In the evening, you will don your best attire and get ready to have a gala time with your beloved. Ganesha says, you receive as much as you give.

PISCES

For you, today may all be work and no play, says Ganesha. This, however, will not stop you from putting in extra efforts to finish your pending projects and to meet your deadlines. But then who else but a Pisces is known to handle the pain nonchalantly without bemoaning the lack of pleasure?



PARIS: THERE ARE SO MANY MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT ME

Socialite and entrepreneur Paris Hilton feels that there are many misconceptions about her. She said this while talking about her life in *The Drew Barrymore Show*, which airs on Zee Cafe in India.

KYLIE CONFIRMS EXPECTING SECOND CHILD WITH SCOTT

Reality TV star and beauty mogul Kylie Jenner has confirmed that she is expecting her second child with partner Travis Scott. Kylie announced on Instagram Tuesday that she and Scott are expecting their second child together, reports *people.com*.



Manushi initiates campaign on benefits of eating right

Mumbai: Former beauty queen Manushi Chhillar, who is set to make debut in Hindi film industry, has launched a social media campaign to discuss the benefits of eating right during this World Nutrition Week.

Manushi has joined hands with Miss World 2014, Rolene Strauss, to share their thoughts on how paying attention to nutrition can help everyone lead a balanced lifestyle.

Manushi said: "As I have grown up, I have realised the need to pay attention to nutrition. Our daily life throws up innumerable challenges and the least we can do to take care of ourselves is to pay attention to what we eat."

"Nutrition is the main pillar of fitness and wellness and I have tried to incorporate as much of this learning into my daily life. I have unlocked the results that I have aimed for and I want to share my thoughts with as many people as possible," she added. **WNS**



Mallika finds Sugandha her mirror image

Mumbai: Actress Mallika Sherawat will be seen as the special guest on the *Zee Comedy Show* during this Saturday's episode while Mika Singh judges the show. Sugandha Mishra Bhosle and Gaurav Dubey's hilarious act made Mallika literally laugh out loud. While Gaurav flawlessly enacted Sooraj Barjatya, Sugandha delivered a stunning mimicry of Mallika that left the latter thoroughly impressed with her performance. In fact, Mallika was so thrilled by what she saw, she felt that the comedian was a mirror image of herself during



the act. As Mallika revealed: "Sugandha imitated me so well, it was just perfect. I am truly like that only! She aced the nuances, the expressions, everything. I never thought someone could mimic me so well, but Sugandha totally nailed it and I can never forget this one (the act)." Reacting to her compliment, an ecstatic Sugandha said, "I would really like to thank Mallika ji for being a sport. I was really scared initially. When I was told about this act, I was really sceptical as I didn't know how to mimic her at all, but they convinced me and thankfully it went well, and it was well appreciated." *Zee Comedy Show* airs on Zee TV. **WNS**

Nikkita, Abhiram captivate virtual viewers on day 4

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar: The fourth evening of 27th Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award Festival Wednesday proved to be a visual and auditory delight to audiences who witnessed memorable performances in both dance and music. The event started with a classical dance performance with Nikkita Banawalikar presenting Kathak, followed by a classical

music recital by Abhiram Nanda on the flute.

Banawalikar presented *Avartan*, a complete cycle of rhythmic beats, representing the entire traditional repertoire of a Kathak performance. Commencing with a *Ganesh Stuti*, the invocation was followed by the *Taal Paksha* or the *Nrittang*, with compositions of rhythmic pieces performed to the accompaniment of tabla in the same 'bol' patterns.

After the *Nrittang*, she presented a *Thumri* composed by



Flautist Abhiram Nanda

Pt. Bindadin Maharaj. Ably accompanied on the tabla by Tanay Rege, on vocals by Aditya Apte, and on the harmonium by Omkar Agnihotri, *Avartan* was a dedication to the Gurus, presented with utmost commitment and élan by the young dancer from Mumbai.

Srjan then hosted the flute recital of Abhiram Nanda. Known for his versatility and captivating performances, the young flautist is presently undergoing advanced training

under the tutelage of Pt. Hariprasad Chaurasia. He began his recital by exploring *Raag Madhuvanti*, presenting a composition in *Rupak Taal* (7 beats) and *Teen Taal* (16 beats).

Abhiram's second and concluding presentation, titled *Dhun*, was set to *Raag Mishra Pahadi*, and *Dadra* and *Keherwa Taal*, was a harmonious exploration of the uplift-

ing tune of Mishra Pahadi.

Accompanied by Biswaranjan Nanda on the tabla and Priyanka Rath on the tanpura, this mellifluous flute recital concluded the penultimate evening of the festival.

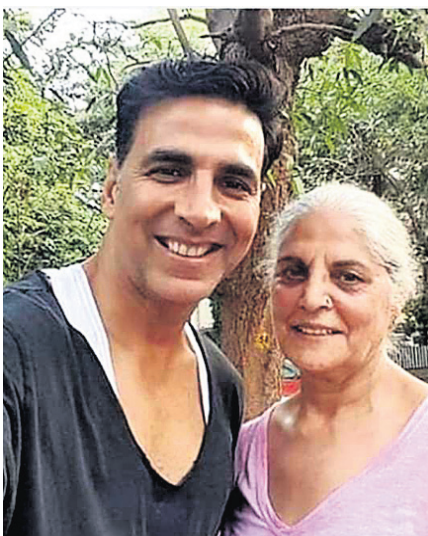
On the final evening, *Srjan* will conduct the award ceremony, with Odisha Governor Prof.

Ganeshi Lal presenting the coveted Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award 2021 to Binodini Devi, a veteran theatre artiste of the state. Similarly, the Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Yuva Pratibha Samman 2021 will be conferred on Arushi Mudgal for Odissi dance and Ramachandra Behera for Odissi music (Mardala) acknowledging their dedication to their art forms.



Kathak danseuse Nikkita Banawalikar

Akshay's mother no more



A file photo of Akshay Kumar and his mother

Mumbai: Top actor Akshay Kumar's mother Aruna Bhatia passed away Wednesday morning. The actor took to Twitter to express his grief. "She was my core. And today I feel an unbearable pain at the very core of my existence," he wrote.

The 53-year-old star said that his mother passed away peacefully.

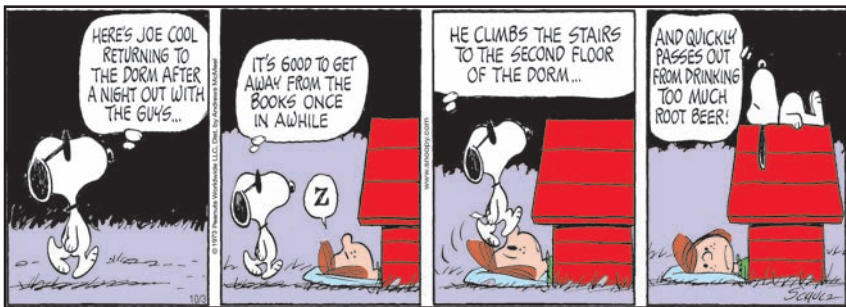
"My maa... Smt Aruna Bhatia peacefully left this world today morning and got reunited with my dad in the other world. I respect your prayers as I and my family go through this period. Om Shanti," he wrote.

Tuesday, Akshay had shared a health update about his mother and said that it was a "tough hour" for his family.

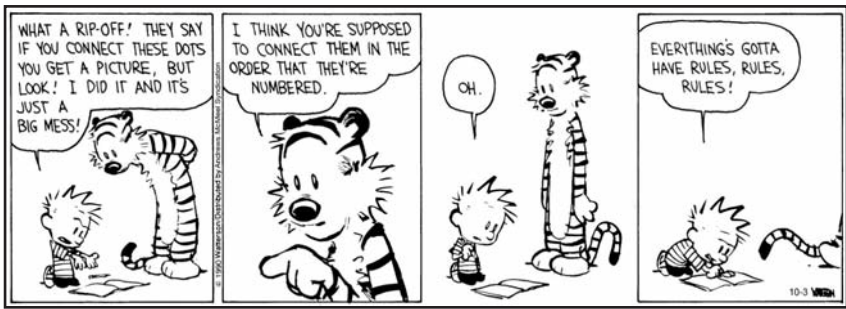
"Touched beyond words at your concern for my mom's health. This is a very tough hour for me and my family. Every single prayer of yours would greatly help," he wrote on Twitter. **WNS**

FUN post

PEANUTS



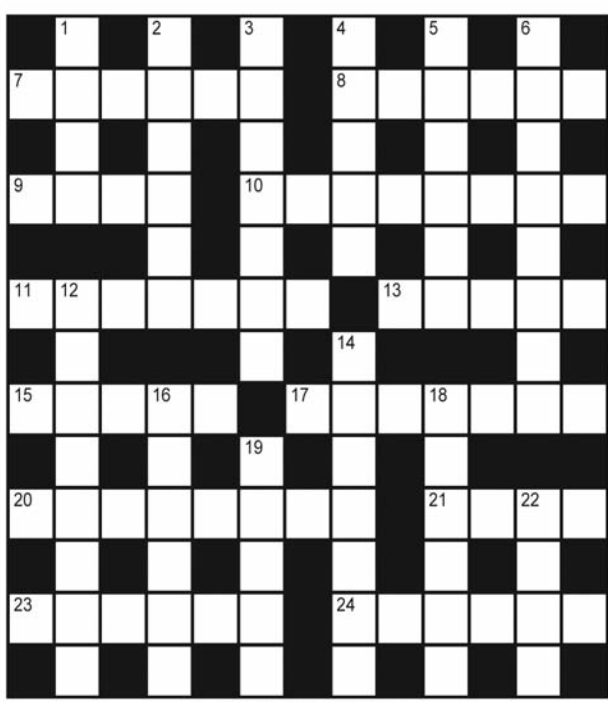
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



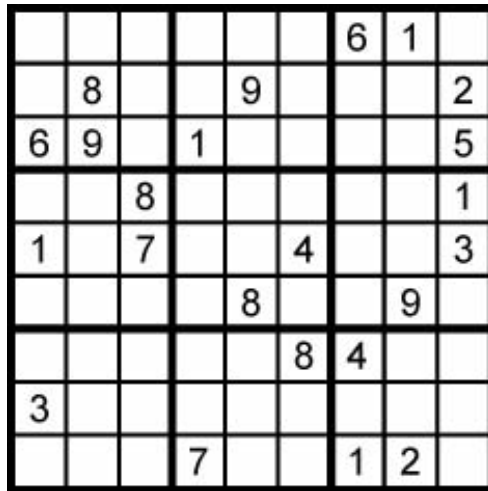
CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 Work place
 - 8 2nd longest European river
 - 9 Dam
 - 10 Fragrant
 - 11 Bent over
 - 13 Rocket section
 - 15 Lock site
 - 17 Holiday venue
 - 20 Change of mind (4-4)
 - 21 Volcanic flow
 - 23 Turkish capital
 - 24 Ledger woes (3,3)
 - 5 New bundle of joy
 - 6 Not all there, like a story
 - 12 Siam, now
 - 14 Big cat
 - 16 Entreaty
 - 18 Pre-entree dishes
 - 19 Assumed name
 - 22 Moving vehicles
- Down**
- 1 Uncertain
 - 2 Roman statesman and orator
 - 3 Akin
 - 4 Building wing (3-2)

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.

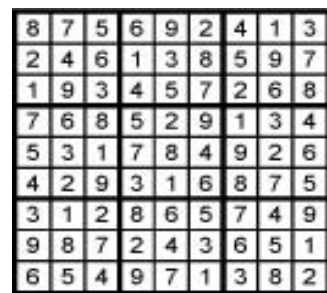


SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD



SUDOKU

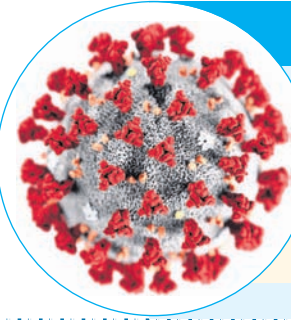


CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW



MASKING UP IS MANTRA

A girl dressed up as a mythological character creates awareness on Covid-appropriate behaviour at Khandagiri Square in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday



COVID-19 TRACKER

	INFECTED	RECOVERED	DEAD
World	22,30,55,538	19,95,74,657	46,04,579
India	3,30,96,718	3,22,64,051	4,41,411
Odisha	10,13,567	9,99,165	8,070

Now, Lord's darshan Saturday too

PNN/ AGENCIES

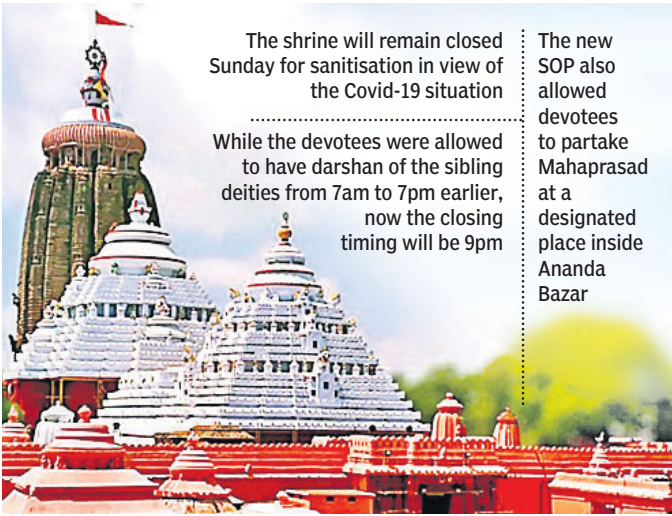
Puri, Sept 8: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Wednesday decided to extend the 'darshan' timing by two more hours and allow devotees to visit the 12th century shrine Saturday.

While the devotees were allowed to have darshan of the sibling deities - Lord Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra and Lord Jagannath - from 7 am to 7 pm earlier, now the closing timing will be 9 pm.

As the state government has lifted the weekend shutdown provision from Puri town, the SJTA decided to keep the temple open Saturday also. However, the shrine will remain closed Sunday for sanitisation in view of the Covid-19 situation.

The temple reopened for the people August 23 after remaining closed for about four months in view of the second wave of the pandemic.

The decisions were taken at a meeting held here under the chairmanship of Srimandir chief administrator Krishan Kumar to review and revise the SOP notified August 11 for reopening of the shrine. The meeting was attended by the senior officials, including Puri Collector and SP, and servi-



tor members of Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee (SJTMC).

"The new SOP will come into force from September 13. The issue will be reviewed again for the month of November 2021 or as required from time to time" Kumar said.

As per the decisions, the temple will also remain closed on major festivals in order to avoid any spike in transmission of Covid-19 on account of large gathering, the new SOP said.

The temple will remain closed September 10 (Ganesh Chaturthi), September 17 (Bamana Janma, Sunia & Biswakarma Puja), October 6 (Mahalaya), October 15 (Dussehra) and October 20 (Kumar Purnima).

As per the general guideline, it is mandatory for all devotees to wear masks at all times, inside and outside the temple, sanitize their hands before entering into the temple, maintain physical distance and follow Covid appropriate behaviour.

The SJTA also urged the devotees not to touch statues or idols inside the temple. Lighting of deepas (lamps) inside the temple at the designated place by the devotees will be permitted and the devotees were permitted to carry flowers/ bhoga inside the temple but such items shall be placed at pre-designated places as earmarked by the temple administration.

The new SOP also allowed devotees to partake Mahaprasad at a designated place inside Ananda Bazar while it banned carrying polythene bags inside the temple. A fine of Rs 100 will be levied for each violation.

There will be a separate queue for differently-abled devotees, for darshan of the Lords, it said, adding that senior citizens, children, persons having co-morbidities and pregnant women are advised not to visit the temple in view of the prevailing Covid-19 situation.

"All devotees visiting the temple will have to produce the final certificate for Covid-19 vaccination (of having taken two doses) or Covid-19 negative certificate (RT-PCR) obtained within 96 hours prior to their visit to the temple," the SOP said, adding that all devotees will be required to bring their photo ID card.

Bill to cap reservation at 50% in PRIs passed

THREE ACTS HAVE BEEN AMENDED AS PER THE SUPREME COURT'S DIRECTIVE TO RESTRICT THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF SEATS FOR SC, ST AND BCC WITHIN 50 PER CENT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Amid uproar by Opposition BJP and Congress members for rejecting an adjournment motion on mining the scam, the Assembly Wednesday passed four Bills including the Odisha Panchayat Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2021.

The Odisha Grama Panchayat Act, 1964, the Odisha Panchayat Samiti Act, 1959 and Odisha Zilla Parishad Act, 1991 have been amended to reserve maximum 50 per cent seats in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for SC, ST and Backward Class of Citizens (BCC).

As per provisions in the old Acts, in some of the PRIs, the reservation for SC, ST and Backward Classes exceeded 50 per cent. However, the Orissa High Court, in accordance with the judgement by the Supreme Court, had directed the Odisha government to cap reservation within 50 per cent.

"In view of the above decisions of the courts, the Odisha govern-



IN THE HOUSE

The reservation ceiling will not be applicable for the areas coming under Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act (PESA) Act.

The House had passed Tuesday the Odisha Municipal Laws (Amendment) Bill 2021 to keep the overall reservation in the urban local bodies (ULBs) up to 50 per cent.

The state Assembly has also passed the Odisha Government Land Settlement (Amendment) Bill, The Indian Stamp (Odisha Amendment) Bill and the Odisha Housing Board (Amendment) Bill without participation of the BJP and Congress members.

AAI likely to stall City airport expansion plan

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: A plan to expand the Biju Patnaik International Airport (BPIA) here in view of increasing traffic is likely to be scrapped due to non-availability of land as demanded by the Airport Authority of India (AAI).



As per sources, the city which had been handling 40 lakh passengers annually during pre-Covid period was slated to increase its capacity to meet the increasing traffic. After formulating a blueprint for expansion, the AAI informed the BPIA authorities that the plan would need an additional 64 acres of land.

"After several rounds of talks with the state government, we had placed our demands for additional land. The plan included extension of the runway from 9,000 feet to 10,500 feet. This would have catered to operation of special cargo planes and bigger passenger jets like Boeing 777 and Boeing 747," a BPIA official said.

However, the state government in 2017 had clarified that it would only be able to provide 47 acres under the possession of Odisha University of Agriculture Technology (OUAT). Meanwhile, the government also proposed to AAI to develop an alternative Greenfield International Airport on City outskirts as the BPIA did not have scope for expansion due to rapid urbanisation in surrounding areas.

Following this, the AAI examined three sites within 20-25 km radius of state capital. The state government had identified land at Malipada, Jankia, Tangiapada and Badasahi in Khurda district for establishment of the Greenfield Airport project. However, the feasibility test conducted by the AAI found that these suggested sites are not suitable.

Meanwhile, with the availability of about 1,500 acres of land in Girala village of Puri the authorities have decided to drop the state capital's airport expansion plan. "AAI is now prioritising development of the existing infrastructure and improving passenger service at the BPIA. A parallel taxi track construction is underway. We will also re-carpet the existing runway very soon," the official added.

It can be mentioned here that presently the BPIA which operates about 47 flights a day can handle arrival and departures of 12 to 13 aircraft in an hour. Once the parallel taxi track is built, the capacity will go up to 25 aircraft per hour. This will result in flights not waiting on the runway for take-off for long periods.

Decision on Durga idol height likely in 2 days



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The Odisha government Wednesday assured Durga Puja committee representatives of Cuttack that it will reconsider its earlier decision on restricting the height of idols, according to a BJD leader. While the decision regarding the height of idols will be taken in two days, the decision for covering puja pandals will be made in October, said sources.

The government will decide on this by Ganesh Puja which falls September 10 this year; Cuttack Mahanagar Puja Committee secretary and BJD leader Pravrat Tripathy

The opposition wondered how restricting the height of Durga idols to four feet will help contain the Covid-19 spread

said after a meeting with the state administration comprising Chief Secretary S C Mahapatra and Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) P K Jena here.

The opposition parties had criticised the puja guidelines, wondering how the restriction on the maximum height of Durga idols to four feet in community pujas will help contain the spread of Covid-19.

On the other guidelines which asked the puja committees to cover three sides of pandals, Tripathy said, a decision in this regard will be taken in October based on the Covid-19 situation then.

"The outcome of the discussions was positive. While the decision over the height of idols will be taken in two days, the decision for covering puja pandals will be made in October," said Debendra Sahu, secretary, Cuttack Peace Committee.

The opposition Congress Tuesday created a ruckus in the House over the state government's decision to restrict the maximum height of Durga idols.

Speaker Surjya Narayan Patro had said that the government may reconsider the demands made by puja committees.

Good Intention Always Brings Victory

My Esteemed Investors & Kartavyayogi Worker Friends,

For past some days, some unscrupulous elements have been propagating that our organization is not making repayments to our esteemed investors. **In this regard, it is to be informed that repayments are being made to the esteemed investors but certainly there has been a situation of delayed repayments. However, in case of delay the esteemed investors are being paid interest for the delayed period.**

Why Delay In Payment

Due to the embargo imposed by Hon'ble Supreme Court that if Sahara Group sells or mortgages any of its property, then the money generated through this goes to Sahara-SEBI account and not even one rupee can be used for public repayment.

This way our amount with interest deposited in Sahara-SEBI account has been more than ₹24,000 crore while SEBI after advertising in around 150 newspapers throughout the country for 4 times could pay only around ₹150 crore in over the last 8 years.

It is a typical case of double payment of single liability.

Our Intention

Sahara India Pariwar is one such organization whose management has openly been putting its inconveniences and problems before its esteemed investors and workers from time to time. We deem it our responsibility to keep you apprised of the prevailing situations. Our intention has never ever been wrong. In 44 years of its existence, barring the last eight years when there has been a situation of delayed payments because of the embargo by Hon'ble Supreme Court in Sahara-SEBI case, no one's payment was delayed before nor will it be delayed in future. If our intentions had been wrong, we would have adopted an escapist attitude in the year 2014 when the organization was suddenly struck by enormous problems. We could have hastily sold our assets at throw away prices and got ourselves free from all our problems by depositing money with SEBI. But we didn't do so considering the best interests of our organization, our esteemed investors and our workers. In the past, assets of many companies were taken over by the Government, yet even after that the esteemed investors couldn't get even a single rupee back in more than two decades. **It means all your payments have to be made by Sahara India Pariwar only.**

Overseas-Air Services

In my last address I told you in detail how our business activities had been affected due to Corona pandemic in last one and half year, and how we couldn't complete

our those projects through which we expected to get money from, to repay our esteemed investors. I had also said that if the situation got normal and business operations around the world were back on track after recovering from the Corona pandemic, we would be in a position to repay in the months of July, August and September, 2021. At that time we had hoped that overseas travel will restart, but it didn't happen and even today, international air travel has not resumed. Now the Government of India has extended the curtailment of international flying till 30th September.

I had told you that most of our business transactions had happened overseas from which we would have received sufficient funds. But due to Corona, our representatives and those of other countries are not able to visit each other and the agreements are not getting finalized. Hence, we are not able to get adequate funds.

₹24,000 Crore

I had also told you the places, including the Sahara-SEBI account (**more than ₹24,000 crores**), where our funds were stuck. We assumed there would be progress in this direction and we would get our money that we were to use to make payments to our esteemed investors, but the adverse circumstances kept coming in our way. Due to Corona we didn't get a date of hearing from the Hon'ble Supreme Court in the last 14 months. Despite all these things our efforts are going on.

We are hopeful that the situation will normalize soon and our business activities will speed up again, which will take our deals to finalization and we will get enough money that will enable us to provide relief to all.

Because of the prevailing circumstances, at present we are not in a position to tell you how long it will take to happen.

However, we assure you that your payment is our responsibility which we will fulfill at all cost and by all means and **very soon we will be before you with good news.**

My regards to all the elders and loving blessings to the younger ones!

Always Yours,

Subrata Roy Sahara

Covid recovery nears 10L-mark

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The state registered 762 fresh Covid-19 cases and eight fatalities in the last 24 hours, a senior Health official said Wednesday.

Of the new Covid patients, 102 are in the 0-18 age group. However, the infection rate among the children slightly dipped to 13.38 per cent Wednesday from 14.57 per cent on the previous day.

While the fresh infections reported in 29 of the 30 districts pushed the state's caseload to 10,13,567, eight new deaths took the state's toll to 8,070.

The second wave of the pandemic has claimed the lives of 39 children, with 13 deaths being reported between August 10 and 31.

Of the 762 new cases, 443 were reported in quarantine centres, while 319 infections were detected during contact tracing.

Khurda district, under which Bhubaneswar falls, registered the highest number of new cases at 314, followed by Cuttack (119). Boudh did not report any fresh infection.

Dhenkanal and Khurda districts registered two fresh fatalities each, while one death each was reported in Angul, Balasore, Keonjhar and Koraput. Fifty-three patients have

■ Odisha has thus far tested over 1.85 crore samples for Covid-19, including 64,602 Tuesday. The daily test positivity rate stood at 1.17 per cent

■ The state has inoculated over 2.42 crore people, of whom 59.98 lakh have been fully vaccinated

■ The second wave of the pandemic has claimed the lives of 39 children, with 13 deaths being reported between August 10 and 31

In short

died due to comorbidities so far.

Odisha now has 6,853 active cases. Khurda remains in the 'red zone' with 2,617 patients still infected with the disease.

As many as 9.99,165 people have so far recovered from the infection in the state, including 574 Wednesday. The state has thus far tested over 1.85 crore samples for Covid-19, including 64,602 Tuesday. The daily test positivity rate stood at 1.17 per cent.

The administration has inoculated over 2.42 crore people, of whom 59.98 lakh have been fully vaccinated. The School and Mass

Education department Tuesday issued a fresh guideline calling for stricter implementation of Covid norms in schools after some children and teachers tested positive for the infection in Dhenkanal and Bargarh districts.

It said that students, teachers and other staffers have to mandatorily wear masks to enter the schools where classes are being held for students of standards IX, X and XII.

A Covid monitor, preferably the PET of the school, will have to ensure strict adherence to social distancing norms.

HC picks holes in nCoV death data

CUTTACK: The Orissa High Court has pointed out several discrepancies in a government affidavit regarding the deaths due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Government figures showed that the state recorded 3,097 deaths only in 47 days between July 15 and August 31 this year.

"Earlier, it was reported that there were 4,925 deaths as of July 15, 2021," the court said Tuesday.

"(But) the affidavit of September 6, 2021, shows there were 8,022 deaths in Odisha due to the pandemic as on August 31, 2021," it said. The court questioned the manner in which these figures have been arrived at.

It asked the government to file a fresh affidavit by October

and adjourned the matter to October 7. A division bench, headed by Chief Justice S Muralidhar, is adjudicating over a writ petition that sought a direction to the Union government for facilitating Covid vaccination for the elderly and differently-abled citizens of Odisha.

The HC questioned the estimated target population of elderly population and asked the state government to clarify whether the target has been fixed on the basis of the 2011 Census or the estimated figure of 2021.

"These figures also do not address the issue of the persons with disabilities and the peculiar problems they have, irrespective of age, in receiving the vaccines," the court observed.

Anyone exhibiting even mild symptoms must be refrained from entering the schools. Thermal screening and availability of sanitiser at the entrance have to be en-

sured, the notification said.

While both offline and online classes will continue, no student must be forced to attend the physical classes, it said.

Heavy rain pounds state

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Heavy rain battered several districts of Odisha Wednesday, the MeT Department said, as it forecast torrential downpour over the next 24 hours.

Heavy to very heavy rainfall has occurred at one or two places in Balasore district. Gobindpur received 120.8 mm of rain over the past 24 hours till 8:30am Wednesday, the Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar said.

Bargarh, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal, Angul and Kalahandi districts also received heavy rain. Light to moderate precipitation occurred at many places across Odisha, according to a MeT bulletin.

Betanati area in Mayurbhanj district received 96 mm of rainfall, followed by Ambabhona in Bargarh with 95 mm and Talcher in Angul with 60 mm of showers. Bandhugaon in Koraput and Madanpur Rampur in Kalahandi district received moderate rainfall of 48 and 50 mm respectively, while there was 20.9 mm of downpour in Bhubaneswar, the MeT Centre said.



respectively, while there was 20.9 mm of downpour in Bhubaneswar, the MeT Centre said. The weatherman forecast heavy rainfall in Mayurbhanj, Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara and Jagatsinghpur districts over the next 24 hours. A low pressure area is likely to form over north and adjoining central Bay of Bengal around Saturday. It is likely to become more marked during the subsequent 24 hours, it added.

The department also said that light to moderate rain could also be seen in different parts of the state during the next five days. The highest temperature in the state was reported from Sambalpur which saw 34.5 degrees Celsius while the minimum temperature of 16.5 degrees Celsius was reported in Phulbani.

WODC approves ₹3.74cr for 7 dists

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The Western Odisha Development Council (WODC) Wednesday approved Rs 3.74 crore for the development works in seven districts of western parts of the state.

Out of total amount, Sundargarh district got Rs 1.88 crore for 52 developmental projects while Subarnapur got Rs 1.39 crore for 47 projects that includes electricity supply, drinking water supply, education development, road construction, construction of kalyan mandaps among other projects.

While Sambalpur got Rs 20 lakh, Jharsuguda and Bolangir received 5 lakh each and Angul Rs 6 lakh.

Oncologist Sanjay Panda laid to rest at Cuttack crematorium

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 8: The mortal remains of noted oncologist Sanjay Panda, who breathed his last at a private healthcare facility in Chennai Tuesday, were consigned to flames at Khannagar crematorium here Wednesday. He was 55.

Panda, who served as an assistant professor at the Head and Neck Oncology Department of Acharya Harihar Post Graduate Institute of Cancer here, was undergoing treatment at Apollo Hospital in Chennai after being diagnosed for liver cirrhosis. Panda's mortal remains reached the Silver City around 3pm.

After completing MS from SCB Medical College and Hospital here, Panda started his career as a specialist at the premier cancer institute.

Panda was a permanent member of Indian Medical Association.

CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

By virtue of an affidavit at Bhubaneswar Court dated 07.09.2021, this is to certify that Sanand Dash and Sananda Dash are one and the same person. My name stands changed from Sanand Dash to Sananda Dash. I will henceforth known as Sananda Dash.

KVs celebrate Shikshak Parv

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: In a bid to recognise the valuable contributions of teachers to fight Covid-19 pandemic and take the New Education Policy (NEP)-2020 a step forward, the Union Ministry of Education is celebrating Shikshak Parv-2021 from September 5 to 17.

All the Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) of Bhubaneswar region, under the guidance of Deputy Commissioner Sumanta Kumar Chopdar, Tuesday made all arrangements for students to witness the inaugural session of the programme via video-conferencing.

As many as 1,749 teachers, 48,359 students and many parents witnessed inaugural session of the programme virtually.

The Union Education Minister also participated in the event through videoconference.

The theme of Shikshak Parv-2021 is 'Quality and sustainable schools: Learning from schools in India'.

In his inaugural address, Prime Minister Narendra Modi put emphasis on NISHTHA teachers' training programme for NIPUN Bharat and Vidyanjali portal to train teachers to cope with the New Education Policy-2020.

₹1.11cr fines collected

Bhubaneswar: The state government Wednesday in a written statement in the House claimed that it has collected Rs 1, 11, 28, 300 as compounding fees during 2020-21 for violations in weights and measures. The government was able to see a total of 4,290 erring cases against which the fees were collected. The department, however, collected a total of 1, 31, 94, 615 as fees from 5,791 erring cases in 2019-20.

Servitor sustains scalds

Puri: A servitor at Srimandir here sustained scalds when hot dal fell on him accidentally on the temple premises, Wednesday. The incident occurred when Biswajit Mahasuar, 30, of Goudabada Sahi was carrying hot dal from the temple kitchen to the sanctum sanctorum for offerings, Srimandir sources said.

RICH TRADITION



Artistes perform Srikrishna Leela as part of Sahijata at Matimandap Sahi in Puri, Wednesday

OP PHOTO

Minister unveils physiotherapy speciality clinic

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) Minister Naba Kishore Das inaugurated an ultramodern physiotherapy speciality clinic at Sunshine Hospital here on the occasion of World Physiotherapy Day, Wednesday.

A joint initiative of Abhinav Bindra Sports Medicine and Research Institute (ABSMARI) and Sunshine Hospital, the clinic will focus implementing physiotherapy and rehabilitation to treat



those affected by long Covid.

On the occasion, Das also inaugurated the Biju Swasthya Kalyan

Yojana at the healthcare facility.

The event saw a fitness session for Bhubaneswar cycle and Adventure club members. Around 15 cyclists took part in full body assessment services and got familiar with the latest technique used in the physiotherapy industry used mostly for sports performance and injury management.

Moreover, a health camp was also organised wherein visitors availed free physiotherapy consultation, followed by bone mass density tests.

APPEARANCE OF TRUANT LADY IPS OFFICER SOUGHT

POST NEWS NETWORK

Cuttack, Sept 8: The office of the additional director general (ADG) of State Crime Records Bureau (SCRB) at Rasulgarh in Bhubaneswar has issued a public notice seeking appearance of IPS officer NB Bharathi, who has been absent from work without intimation since 2017, before it October 29 this year.

Bharathi, a 1998-batch IPS officer posted as inspector general (IG) with the Human Rights Protection Cell (HRPC) of the Odisha Police, has been absent from her duty since 2017.

The Home department had initiated disciplinary proceedings against the officer for not turning up to work without any intimation (letter 45226/IPS) November 23, 2017. The department had January

3, 2020 (Order: 451/IPS) asked the SCRB ADG to inquire the officer's absence.

In the public notice, the ADG said they scheduled multiple dates between March 2020 and August 2021 to inquire the matter, but to no avail.

Letters sent to the IPS officer at various addresses though different modes returned undelivered.

"Your absence is unnecessarily delaying the investigation. The next date of inquiry has been scheduled on October 29, 2021 at 11 am at the office of the additional DG of State Crime Records Bureau. This notice informs you that you will be present at the appointed time on the above date, otherwise you will be deemed to have no objections and the order of the departmental action will be issued unilaterally," the notification read.

FOR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS CONTACT OUR BOOKING STATIONS

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MGNREGS FRAUD

Dead drawing wages in Malkangiri

POST NEWS NETWORK

Malkangiri, Sept 8: Dummy job cards were made in the names of deceased persons indicating massive irregularities in the implementation of rural job scheme at Padmagiri and Udupa panchayats under Sadar block in this district, a report said.

Parimal Biswas, a native of MV-102 village in Padmagiri panchayat, passed away in 2007. However, a job card still exists in his name and in the names of Premadasi Biswas and Rekha Biswas, two of the surviving members in his family

Locals Ashok Vaidya, Krushna Madkani and Debashis Majumdar alleged that some people who are no more still figure in the muster rolls and wages are being drawn against their names. A vested interest group comprising unscrupulous officials and political persons are behind this racket. They alleged that the officials instead of employing needy persons in the area had taken out job cards in the names of deceased people and are depositing their wages in the accounts of their relatives which is later withdrawn by them. They demanded a high level inquiry into the irregularities and action against the guilty. Reports said Parimal Biswas, a native of MV-102 village in Padmagiri panchayat, passed away in 2007. However, a job card still exists in his name and in the names of Premadasi Biswas and Rekha Biswas, two of the surviving members in his family.



The wages in the name of Parimal Biswas are processed every month and deposited in the account of Rekha Biswas (job card no-6471). The three have been shown working under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Similarly, another villager Mukund Halder in the same village died February 17, 2015. It was found that wages accruing to his job card no-6465 have been deposited in his bank account at Utkal Gramya Bank branch at Padmagiri May 25, 2021. Moreover, water conservation projects are being implemented on shallow land in both the panchayats. Job card holders are required to dig up 1,400 pits measuring 10/3 feet width and 2.5 feet depth. The officials have prepared bills of 1,400 pits while only 400 pits have been dug up. It is alleged that this work is being implemented by involving non-labourers. Notably, both the Centre and the state are spending crores of rupees to provide jobs to the rural populace under the MGNREGS through one job card to each family. However, due to lack of proper utilization of funds, genuine beneficiaries are deprived of jobs forcing them to migrate to other states for work. Reports said over 30,000 people from the district migrate to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Telangana every year due to lack of employment opportunities. They go with hope of getting jobs, but end up being tortured. The district administration has been making all efforts to provide employment to these people and spending funds for the purpose. Jobs can be created in plantation work and water and soil conservation projects. However, due to unscrupulous officials, vested interest groups reap the benefits of the job schemes. When contacted, Malkangiri BDO Ajay Kumar Pradhan said the allegations will be investigated and action will be taken against the officials concerned if charges against them are found true.

Balasore admin halts unlawful construction by West Bengal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhograi, Sept 8: After a hiatus, the West Bengal government reportedly intruded into Odisha borders near Udaypur beach under this block in Balasore district. It has unlawfully constructed a boundary wall. Meanwhile, officials of the district administration took stock of the situation and stopped the work Wednesday. ADM Bhabesh Nayak, Bhograi additional tehsildar Santosh Panigrahi and some people's representatives visited the area and directed Bengal people to halt construction work. Notably, parts of a watch tower and a boundary wall on the Udayapur beach collapsed during cyclone Yaas. The WB government started construction of the boundary wall by intruding almost 50 feet into Odisha's territory. When locals opposed it, both sides mutually agreed in 2011 that no government will construct anything in the disputed area. But this time around, the West Bengal government violated the agreement and intruded almost 50 feet into Odisha's border, locals said. As for the issue, ADM Bhabesh Nayak, said, "Construction was halted. We will take up the matter with our counterparts in East-Midnapore district. The dispute has to be resolved through talks."



He added that any unauthorised construction in the disputed area will not be allowed. West Bengal has made several attempts in the past to encroach upon fringe areas near Udaypur. In February this year, a meeting of top officials of Odisha and West Bengal governments was held at West Medinipur to discuss modalities for settling the disputes arising in several bordering villages in Jaleswar and Bhograi blocks.

Farmers dump veggies on road

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bargarh, Sept 8: Upset over distress sale of vegetables, hundreds of farmers Wednesday dumped vegetables on road at Dasmal Chhak between Bargarh and Sohela. They were seen handing out packets of vegetables to passersby free of cost during the agitation.

DISTRESS SALE According to reports, farmers from Srigida, Sarkanda, Karondala, Baipalli, Bhargna, Lebidi, Nagan, Chakarkenda, Kenpalli and Bhatabida gathered at Dasmal Chhak in the morning. About five quintals of brinjals, pumpkins, lady's fingers, pointed gourds and chilli

dumped on the state highway blocking it for two hours. They said lack of cold storages has affected farming in the region. Farmers have to face distress sale throughout the year. The government is not finding a fruitful solution to the distress sale. They warned of intensifying the agitation in the days to come.

GOD OF INTELLECT



A man and his son selling idols of Lord Ganesh in Sambalpur as Ganesh Chaturthi draws near

OP PHOTO

FAULTY BENEFICIARY LISTS

Over 8K families left out of PMAY

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bari, Sept 8: Poor families are provided with housing units under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) and the Biju Pucca Ghar Yojana. However, many such families in Bari block of Jajpur district have been deprived of these entitlements due to faulty lists of beneficiaries prepared by the administration, a report said. According to the report, officials in the panchayats have been asked to ensure provision of housing units to eligible people. In many cases, rich people have grabbed dwelling units while the poor keep waiting for them. Bari BDO had issued a letter (2417, dated July 14, 2021) to officials looking after implementation of the rural housing schemes to check if 8085 families in 29 panchayats are eligible to get PMAY housing units.

When officials made field visits as part of the investigation, people alleged many eligible people had been left out of the lists. Later, people approached the block administration and sought inclusion of their names in the lists. The block administration made it clear that people eligible for getting housing benefits can apply again. Many also applied for housing units. It was learnt that Umar Ali of Milimilapur in Bainsiria panchayat, Madhabananda Mallick of Balibili panchayat and Shibabrata Jena of Rampa panchayat among hundreds of people have been left out of the beneficiary lists even though they are eligible to get houses. Asked about the issue, BDO Shibananda Swain said as per an official directive, an investigation into the matter is under way. "The names of the applicants will be sent to the district administration. If the district administration issues an order for investigation, the left-out people will be brought under scrutiny," he added.

Seven highwaymen arrested

POST NEWS NETWORK

Balasore, Sept 8: Police have busted a gang of robbers who used to loot people on national highways in Balasore Wednesday. They arrested seven of them and recovered stolen items worth several lakhs of rupees. According to reports, police have recovered six mobile phones, five motorcycles, two swords, toy guns, a computer, and cash of ₹75,000 from their possession. The gang is reportedly involved in at least 10 cases of theft and robbery. The gang had looted truck drivers on highways, the police said. Raids were carried out at different places in the district to nab other members of the gang, the police said. The accused were produced in a local court which remanded them in judicial custody, the police added.



motorcycles, two swords, toy guns, a computer, and cash of ₹75,000 from their possession. The gang is reportedly involved in at least 10 cases of theft and robbery. The gang had looted truck drivers on highways, the police said. Raids were carried out at different places in the district to nab other members of the gang, the police said. The accused were produced in a local court which remanded them in judicial custody, the police added.

34 Jharkhand people held for destroying reserve forest



POST NEWS NETWORK

Rairakhole, Sept 8: People from neighbouring Jharkhand have been destroying forest, building houses and creating farmlands in forest lands in Sambalpur district. Though late, the forest department has woken up to this challenge and taken action against the encroachers. Forest officials have arrested 34 Jharkhand people for allegedly destroying a reserve forest near Taal village

under Badbahal range of Rairakhole Forest Division, Wednesday. Locals were upset over such illegal chopping of trees in reserve forests and growth of human settlements. "The forest cover has been declining due to this reason, but the forest department was not taking strong action against the encroachers despite complaints," they fumed. Reports said, over 50 people from Jharkhand had been clearing acres of forest land to make farmland and houses. Locals informed DFO

Ramkant Nayak about it. Following a directive from the DFO, a team of forest personnel from Reirakhole, Badabahal and Naktideula ranges conducted a raid in the forest. During the raid, the infiltrators were found clearing the forest and destroying valuable forest produce. Subsequently, they nabbed 34 persons. Forest officials also seized axes, bows, arrows and catapults from them. Locals said, people from the neighbouring state have also destroyed hectares of woodland in Chhuaberna, Ratakhandi, Shagadapat, Hiralo and other adjoining forest areas. The DFO said officials are keeping a close vigil on the encroachers and strong action will be taken against them. The accused will be produced in court Thursday, he added.

Advertisement for the 9th September | 7.30 pm Inauguration by Prof. Ganeshi Lal, Hon'ble Governor of Odisha. The event is the Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Award 2021, presented by Smt. Binodini Devi. It acknowledges her invaluable contribution and lifetime dedication to Theatre. The award is for Guru Kelucharan Mohapatra Yuva Pratiba Samman 2021, presented by Smt. Arushi Mudgal (Odissi Dance) and Sri Ramachandra Behera (Odissi Music). The event features a bouquet of neo-classical innovations in dance, choreographed by Guru Ratikant Mohapatra and presented by Srjan Ensemble. The event is supported by OMC, ODISHA, and various sponsors including MGM Minerals Ltd. and Jyoti Batts. The event is held at the Srjan Theatre, Bhubaneswar.

“An aimless life is always a miserable life.”

THE MOTHER



Biden’s Nightmare

It is far from clear that President Joe Biden deserves the obloquy heaped on him for the US evacuation from Afghanistan. This is especially true given the endings of other American wars, and the nearly impossible situation confronting him – in particular, that the Kabul airport is located within a city of millions which had just come under Taliban control.

The repetitive airing of scenes of panicked Afghans clinging to C-17 cargo planes after this was no longer happening made for far more dramatic scenes than the smooth take-offs that followed during the next 17 days of evacuation, yet news programmes kept rerunning those chaotic images, creating an impression of Biden as hapless. Yet, some 120,000 US people – including troops of US allies as well as Afghans who had helped the US cause – were evacuated by air from Kabul, a logistical triumph.

Since Biden chose to end the evacuation by August 31, the date he had set, a few hundred Americans – some not ready to depart, many unable to reach Kabul airport – as well as hundreds of Afghans who had worked with the United States, were left behind. (A few have been evacuated since.) But Biden faced only bad choices. Had he prolonged America’s presence, US troops and those of allies would have been put at more risk, especially from the murderous Islamic State (ISIS) offshoot that had begun a campaign of suicide bombings.

The retreat from Afghanistan has revealed much about the nature of the government that Biden is running and how he runs it. Although Donald Trump – who also wanted to get out of Afghanistan – left Biden with an unworkable settlement with the Taliban, Biden’s decisions on withdrawal were mostly buttressed by his long-held belief that, when al-Qaeda was driven out of Afghanistan and Osama bin Laden killed, America’s strategic needs had been met. Despite his deep convictions about the correctness of his decisions, Biden brought trouble on himself by offering cheery predictions – such as that the Afghan government wouldn’t fall any time soon. When that proved unrealistic, Biden became defensive, even belligerent, which dented his reputation as a nice guy.

Another factor that may have played a role in shaping Biden’s Afghan policy is the striking difference in the nature of the president’s foreign and defence policy team and his team of domestic policy advisers. The latter is comprised of former mayors, governors, members of congress, and at least one business executive – people of independent standing. But Biden’s national security team is dominated by former aides. The soft-spoken Secretary of State Antony Blinken is a loyal, longtime Biden adviser. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan, a youthful-looking 44, was Biden’s national security adviser as vice president. Biden often cites the concurrence of his advisers as confirmation of the wisdom of his decisions, but one gets the strong impression that he makes clear to them what advice he wants.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin does carry an aura of independence and gravitas. Austin speaks slowly and carefully and with that authority that comes almost naturally to a former four-star US Army general. He projects confidence without drama, and holds his views tight. A senator said, “I wouldn’t want to play poker with him.” Austin managed the draw-down of American troops in Iraq, where he had worked closely with the president’s deceased son Beau, both qualifications that undoubtedly stood him well with the president. (Biden’s continuing, and maudlin, invocations of Beau, occasionally at truly awkward moments, are beginning to worry even some of his close allies.)

Republicans, who had been frustrated in their search for an effective means to attack Biden, have seized the opportunity provided by the chaotic withdrawal despite the fact that the decision to end America’s 20-year Afghan war was widely popular. Despite this inconsistency on the part of the US electorate, for the first time since the inauguration Biden’s job-approval ratings have dipped below 50 per cent. Even some Democrats, their fingers held up to the wind, are planning to ask awkward questions of Biden and his team.

But what, exactly, is Biden to be blamed for? His administration is widely charged with not having planned for an evacuation, but Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia, a Democrat and member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who deals with the White House a lot, told me, “[The administration] had a plan; they just didn’t expect to have to implement it so quickly.”

Biden’s administration, although less rancorous and leaky than most (thus far), does follow in the tradition of military and intelligence leaders differing markedly in their assessments of the quality of the Afghan army. Having spent \$83 billion on training and equipping the Afghan army, the military has tended to view its efforts as a success. The intelligence agencies have been more skeptical. Kaine said, “For years we heard conflicting assessments about the Afghan military.”

Previous US presidents tended to relay to the public the bright side of America’s efforts in Afghanistan. In a ground-breaking series published in 2019, The Washington Post exposed the lies that presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Trump all told the country, such as how wonderfully the war in Afghanistan was going. Thus, most Americans were unprepared for the sudden collapse of the Afghan army or the flight of Afghan President Ashraf Ghani (with bags of money) when the Taliban stroled into Kabul.

Defense Department officials insist that no one warned them that the Afghan army would collapse within 11 days, but this could be a failure of imagination as well as of intelligence. In any event, there is intelligence and then there is how intelligence is interpreted. For example, Bush’s administration had received ample evidence that al-Qaeda was preparing to attack the US, even the World Trade Center, but leading figures brushed off the warnings. France, acting on the same intelligence about Afghanistan that the US government had, began to withdraw its troops in 2014.

A shaken Biden administration is now trying to change the subject away from Afghanistan by turning to domestic issues. But extricating itself from the consequences of its Afghanistan decisions, however warranted, may take longer than the administration envisions.

The writer is a Washington-based journalist and author.

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WISDOM CORNER

“Quality means doing it right when no one is looking.”

HENRY FORD

“The two enemies of human happiness are pain and boredom.”

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

“This is the way the world ends, not with a bang, but a whimper.”

TS ELIOT

WORDSWORTH

■ **Paregoric**

A paregoric is a medicine; specifically and figuratively, something that soothes. The origin of this odd word is the Greek paregorikos for soothing or encouraging words (from paregorein, to speak soothingly to). This derives from para, beside, and agora, literally the market place, but also a place of assembly (the related agoreuein meant to speak in public). The word moved into late Latin in the sense of something soothing or consoling; at one time it was used for any medicine that had that effect. Later it was applied specifically to a tincture (a solution in alcohol) of opium flavoured with camphor, aniseed and benzoic acid. It was a flavoured – and usually less potent – form of laudanum, a simple tincture of opium. It was used as a medicine to treat diarrhoea and coughing, especially in children.

FOCUS SUSTAINABILITY

THE POLITICAL LEVEE BREAKS



If this year’s flooding and wildfires came as a surprise to inhabitants of rich countries, that is because the modern political compact was built on effective water management. As natural forces overwhelm these countries’ infrastructure, their political institutions will come under growing strain

Swaths of Europe are flooded, and the American west is engulfed in heat, fire, and drought. Wealthy countries are experiencing what many developing countries have always known: a changing climate can become quickly unmanageable when our control of water fails.

Following this summer’s disasters, political leaders from German Chancellor Angela Merkel to Oregon Governor Kate Brown have duly called for accelerating the global fight against climate change. But while reducing greenhouse-gas emissions is urgently needed, it isn’t enough. Wealthy communities’ loss of water security is evidence not only of a changing climate but also of a broader political failure.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, everyone was routinely exposed to difficult climate conditions. The west of the United States, for example, was largely uninhabitable for those accustomed to mild climates. The orchards of California’s Imperial Valley were still to come, their rich soils baked dry into an un-prowable crust. The cities that now occupy the region’s deserts – San Diego, Los Angeles, Las Vegas, Phoenix – were waterless outposts that could not support anything near their modern populations.

Similarly, since the collapse of the Western Roman Empire in the fifth century, the European landscape had remained largely untamed. We may now think of the continent’s old forests as a romantic wilderness, but nineteenth-century children’s fairytales described them more accurately as impenetrable, swampy places inhabited by wolves and bandits. For centuries, Dutch engineers attempted to reclaim lands across the continent, but consistently failed to achieve permanent security.

At the time, Qing China had acquired global fame for its ability to control Asia’s powerful rivers (a skill that Adam Smith saw as a remarkable source of comparative advantage). And yet, even the Celestial Empire could not avoid recurring natural disasters. At the start of the twentieth century, the climate system still ruled the landscape. The only universal form of “climate adaptation” was acceptance.

Then, everything changed. Two world wars and growing political enfranchisement fuelled demands for universal welfare. Economic growth – a relatively uninteresting phenomenon to nineteenth-century elites who did not have to share wealth – became the principal preoccupation of politicians answerable to the unemployed and the insecure. Reliable access to water became a political imperative, an instrument in state-building.

Most countries that could afford to do so started transforming their water landscapes in the service of the consumer economy and a widening polity. Reclamation projects added cultivable land and broadened economic opportunity. Then came hydroelectric power, the first source of electricity that could be fully scaled to support industrialisation and mass employment. Rivers became blueprints for development.

As cities grew, floods – a tragic fact of life up to that point – became politically intolerable. Unsanitary conditions were swept away by near-universal access to clean water supplies. The shape of the modern landscape slowly changed as it filled with levees, flood defences, dams, canals, and reservoirs. These were invariably financed by the new economic power of the state and supported by the aspirations of a broadened electorate.

America led the way, delivering some of the twentieth century’s most iconic water projects, from the Hoover and Fort Peck Dams to the Army Corps of Engineers’ management of the Lower Mississippi River and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Investments in modern water infrastructure spread around the world, driving planetary-scale transformation. At the beginning of the twentieth century, humanity had virtually no water storage and practically no large dams; yet by the 1970s, infrastructure could catch roughly one-fifth of all runoff on the planet. As people replumbed the landscape – leaving a wide trail of unintended environmental consequences in their wake – a modernist dream was nurtured: finally, people could be fully insulated from the effects of a difficult climate.

Over time, many of those living in rich countries simply forgot about all the water flowing behind the dams and levees. Having

SPECTRUM LAW

Cow protection as a fundamental right

Justice SK Yadav of the Allahabad High Court has recently stirred a hornet’s nest by observing that “fundamental right is not only the prerogative of beef eaters, rather, those who worship the cow and are financially dependent on cows also have the fundamental right to lead a meaningful life... The right to life is above the right to kill and the right to eat beef can never be considered a fundamental right.” He has implored the government to declare the cow as the national animal and make strict laws against those who harm cows. Quoting scientists, the judge further observed that “cow is the only animal that inhales and exhales oxygen.”

Cow slaughter is an emotive issue in India because of the animal’s status as an endearing and respected living being among Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists. When the Constitution was being drafted most of the Hindu members were strongly supportive of a ban on cow slaughter. Mahatma Gandhi was in favour of such a law, while Jawaharlal Nehru was opposed to it. Because of the sharp schism in views, the framers of the Constitution decided to keep the prohibition on slaughter of cow, calf and other milch and draught animals as a directive principle under Article 48, which is not enforceable in the court of law. The preservation, protection and improvement of livestock are the prerogative of the state governments, as they figure as item 15 in the State List. Accordingly, the legal provision of different states widely varies. In Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and West Bengal, where there are sizable Muslim and Christian populations, there is no ban on cow slaughter.

The Supreme Court has been seized of this contentious matter since 1958. The first major case, Mohd Hanif Quareshi & Others vs the State of Bihar came up in 1958, when the Bihar government passed the Bihar Preservation and Improvement of Animals Act, 1955, putting a complete ban on slaughter of cow and her progeny including bulls. The petitioners had prayed before the court that a total ban on cow slaughter would infringe their fundamental rights under Article 19(1)(g), which gives them the right to carry on any trade or business and Article 25 which protects their religious rights. In a unanimous judgement, the court tried to strike a balance between the fundamental rights and the directive principles. The court prohibited slaughter of cows and calves and other milch cattle which were still having useful life. However, those which were not useful the court felt “maintenance of such useless cattle involves a wasteful drain on the nation’s cattle feed.” Further it had observed that a total ban will bring about a serious dislocation of the business of butchers, hide merchants and a large section of society.

The Quareshi judgement remained valid till the Gujarat government came up with an Act to completely ban cow slaughter. The matter came up before the Supreme Court in Mirzapur Kasab vs. State of Gujarat in 2005, when the court upheld the Act. The judges focused on the utility of cows and their progeny. Then Chief Justice of India RC Lahoti had famously observed “the value of dung is much more than even the famous Kohinoor diamond.” However, Justice Mathur in a dissenting note had observed that “if an enact-

ment is made for advancement of directive principles and it runs counter to fundamental rights, an attempt should be made to harmonise the same if it promotes larger public interest.”

Ever since the BJP government came to power at the Centre, efforts are being made to divide the people on communal lines. When the government came up with a law in 2017 to confiscate animals of traders, the Supreme Court came down heavily on it. Then Chief Justice of India SA Bobde while asking the government to amend the law had observed “animals are a source of livelihood. People live on the basis of their animals. You cannot confiscate them before the man is convicted. Your rules are arbitrary.”

Justice Yadav’s call for cow protection as a fundamental right will run contrary to the pluralistic and multi-religious character of India and the right to freedom of what we eat and what trade we take up. Cultural homogenisation is anathema to a liberal democratic society like ours.

The writer is an honorary research associate at the Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment, University of Oxford

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Save emperor penguins

Sir, In 2016, the world’s second largest colony of penguins in Antarctica lost more than 10,000 emperor penguin chicks. Climate change is threatening emperor penguins with extinction. The penguins live much of the year on the Antarctic sea ice, which is disappearing or breaking apart because of the heat-trapping gases released by humans’ use of fossil fuels. The penguins need the ice to breed, raise their young ones and escape predators. If listed as threatened, the birds would join two dozen species, including polar bears, two kinds of seals and 20 coral varieties, which the US federal government considers threatened by climate change. A study found that if the sea ice continues to disappear at the rate predicted by climate models given the world’s current energy trends and policies, more than 80 per cent of emperor penguin colonies would in effect become extinct by the year 2100. If the world takes swift and drastic actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Climate Agreement enough sea ice will be left to support a reduced, but still viable, population of emperor penguins, the study found. We need to act now, before it’s too late. If the sea ice disappears before the young penguins exchange their fluffy baby feathers for the sleek adult ones, they cannot swim in the frigid waters and will perish.

Asit Mohanty, JAJPUR

Prayers work wonders


Sir, Evening prayers used to be an important ritual while we were growing up but this ritual is gradually losing its ground. After washing our hands and feet in the evening we would head straight to our prayer rooms and recite prayers at the top of our voice. This ritual worked wonders as it would calm our nerves and help us focus on our studies. Depression, a serious mental illness which has only aggravated in recent times, is wreaking havoc on people’s personal and social lives. Depression should be taken seriously. There are a host of treatments and cures for depression and prayer can emerge as the best among the cures. The people who are feeling low can take out at least 10 minutes from their daily schedule to pray. It will not only calm their tangled minds but also help them to have a new perspective of life. Prayers work wonders.

Noopur Baruah, TEZPUR

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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Flood threat in Balasore as Jalaka is in spate



PANCHJANYA ATTACK ON INFOSYS

Kannada outfits furious, seek apology

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Sept 8: Several Kannada Organisations in Karnataka have reacted sharply to an article in RSS mouthpiece Panchjanya attacking Bengaluru based software giant Infosys and its founder NR Narayana Murthy, a Kannadiga.

They have also demanded an apology from the magazine and warned of befitting reply if it failed to do so.

Talking to IANS, Praveen Shetty, President of Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (Praveen Shetty faction) described the magazine as stupid and injudicious. But, we all remember the journey of Narayana Murthy and Sudha Murthy. They have been an inspiration for the youth. They have set standards for other corporates and the society, he said.

We have been seeing how certain forces from north India are trying to tarnish the image of tall personalities from the southern region. Immediately, the magazine should tender an apology. It is not fair on its part to insult a fine Kannadiga technocrat like Narayana Murthy, he explained.



Which is an anti-national? The persons who carry out anti-national activities are different. The Tukde-tukde gang is also different. But, insulting Narayana Murthy is untenable. We carry tremendous respect towards him. The magazine should tender a public apology. Otherwise, we will burn the copies of Panchjanya and

effigies, he stated.

Sanneerappa B, State General Secretary for Karnataka Rakshana Vedike (Narayana Gowda faction) stated that they will stand with Infosys on the issue. If it continues, we know how to give a befitting answer, he underlined.

The humanitarian work taken up by Narayana Murthy and

Sudha Murthy across the country and in Karnataka is unmatched. Even Bill Gates has not done so much human service in India. Through Infosys, Narayana Murthy has created lakhs of employment for Indians. They want to damage the brand Infosys and assassinate the character of Murthy, he said.

Infosys has been involved in hundreds of central as well as state government projects. Whenever, there is a cyclone in Gujarat, floods and be it a Metro Project, Infosys has come forward to put in crores of rupees. Why Japanese, US based or MNCs from other countries do not come forward to support the people. Instead of encouraging Indian businessmen, industrialists from across the globe to create jobs in India, the magazine is indulging in falsely targeting Narayana Murthy, he stated. We want to assure Infosys and Narayana Murthy not to get worried over these fake threats. Write-ups like this can't do anything. You have created jobs for all Indians belonging to different faiths. Even if a hundred similar attempts are made, they can't hurt you and we will fight against it, he explained.

BMC bans physical darshan, curbs procession gathering

The civic body has already restricted the height of household Ganpati idols to two feet and for the public mandals to four feet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: The Mumbai civic body has issued fresh guidelines for the Ganpati festival beginning from Friday and has banned physical darshan for devotees at public pandals as well as imposed restrictions on the number of participants in processions during the celebrations.

For bringing the idols of the deity and during their immersion, there will not be more than 10 people in the processions of public mandals and not more than five for the household Ganpatis, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) in the guidelines issued Tuesday.

All devotees should wear masks and observe social distancing. Also, the 10 participants should have taken both the doses of Covid-19 vaccine and completed 15 days after taking the second dose, the guidelines said.

In the wake of a rise in the number of new coronavirus infections and fear of a third wave, the BMC



has banned physical darshan for devotees at the public Ganpati pandals and appealed to citizens to celebrate the festival with simplicity. Considering the potential danger of a third Covid-19 wave, devotees are strictly forbidden from taking darshan. It has been decided that Ganeshotsav mandals should provide darshan facility to devotees through cable network, website, Facebook or (other) social media, the civic body said. The mandals falling in Covid-19 containment zones will have to

make arrangements for the immersion of the Ganpati idols in the pandal premises or postpone it. Similarly, in sealed buildings, devotees will have to make arrangements for the immersion of idols at home, it said.

If a housebuilding is declared a containment zone, the rules for it should be followed during the festival, the BMC said.

The cap on the height of Ganpati idols and restrictions on celebrations have been imposed for the second year in a row.

NIA: How Vaze & Co diabolically 'silenced' Hiran – B'wood style

In its 290-page charge sheet, NIA has disclosed the investigations into the sensational SUV abandonment followed by Hiran's killing in a meticulously calculated conspiracy

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Mumbai, Sept 8: Chilling details have emerged of how Thane businessman Mansukh Hiran paid with his life for refusing to implicate himself in the planting of his own SUV near Antilia, the home of businessman Mukesh Ambani, and was finally eliminated by several former cops and others in a cold-blooded Bollywood-style operation.

The main players in the SUV and Hiran's killing cases are the 10 prime accused - Sachin H Vaze, Vinayak B Shinde, Hisamuddin Kazi, Sunil D Mane, Pradeep R Sharma (all ex-cops), Naresh R Gor, Santosh A Shelar, Manish V Soni, Anand P Jadhav and Satish T Mothkuri, all slapped with murder and terror charges.

After the SUV planting case erupted in a big way and it was transferred to the crack Crime Intelligence Unit (CIU), the then Investigating Officer (IO) Vaze pressurised Hiran, on a promise of immediate bail, to own up the crime.

When he flatly refused, Vaze was worried of the ramifications since Hiran was the only person who knew the entire sequence of events but was a 'weak link' who could 'spill the beans' on them and get all the conspirators trapped in the crime. Vaze and Sharma discussed the implications and decided to 'eliminate' Hiran, and the latter hired a contract killer Shelar, who along with the other accused met March 2, and Hiran's presence was ensured to identify him before the prospective killers.

The next day, Vaze met Sharma at his NGO, 'PS Foundation' office in Andheri west, and handed over a large bag containing bundles of ₹500 notes.

Thereafter, Sharma called Shelar to finalise a red-coloured vehicle

Chevrolet Tavera and Vaze asked Hiran, oblivious of the ongoing diabolic plot to bump him off, to meet Mane at a particular location in Thane March 4.

Mane picked up the Tavera, bought half a dozen handkerchiefs and a hood, while Vaze hatched out a raid in the Topsy Bar at Grant Road, to create an alibi that he was far away from the crime scene of Hiran's murder.

Simultaneously, Vaze lured Hiran out from Thane to Kandivali to meet Mane, who used an alias of 'Inspector Tawde' on the pretext of transporting him (Hiran) safely to another location in a white Volkswagen Polo.

Hiran complied, informed his wife that he was going to meet the so-called 'Tawde' in Kandivali, travelled by auto near Suraj Waterpark on Ghodbunder Road and met Mane in the white Polo, around 8.30 pm March 4.

By 9.30 pm, Mane reached a spot near the Fountain Hotel where the Tavera was waiting, asked Hiran to hand over his mobile phone, and ordered him to step into the vehicle which would take him to a secure spot.

The Tavera was already quite crowded and Hiran was made to sit between Shelar and Jadhav, while Mothkuri grabbed his head from the rear seat, and gagged him with the handkerchiefs.

As Hiran struggled for his life, the trio held onto him and smothered the 'weak link' to death on the car seat - ending the potential threat to all enmeshed in the mega-conspiracy.

Then, Shelar asked Soni to drive the Tavera to Kasheli Bridge on the Thane Creek where they reached after around 45 minutes.

Halting the vehicle, the killer trio of Shelar, Jadhav and Mothkuri dragged Hiran's body, hoisted it up and threw it into the darkness of the Thane Creek below.

The following day, Hiran's body - washed away by the currents - was found stuck in the marshlands around a km away from the Kasheli Bridge, creating a fresh hullabaloo - barely a week after the SUV planting incident outside Antilia.

In between, the NIA detailed how Vaze and Co used and destroyed various evidences related to the twin cases, most of it were later either detected or recovered by the sleuths.



Withdraw order on height of idols: Cong

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Bangalore, Sept 8: The Ganesha festival is just three days away and the Karnataka government's new decision is troubling the life of the idol makers who have to face a meaningless restriction that the idols should not be more than 2 feet high at home and 4 feet high at public places.

The Congress has demanded the order to be withdrawn immediately or the idol makers should be adequately compensated.

Millions of Ganesha idols have been made over the last two months. If the government were to impose such a restriction, what would be their status? If the government had said this two or three months ago, the idol makers would have made smaller idols, said KPCC president DK Shivakumar.

Ganesha idol makers, who had no income at the time of Covid, have invested money. If this restriction is imposed in the last minute, where should they go? The government has so far not paid a single rupee to Covid affected people, he charged.



This is sheer apathy on the part of the government, making the life of those who make the idols of God miserable. It is unfortunate that the state government has built a huge gap between the devotee and the Lord in the process of celebrating the Ganapati festival.

The statue of Ganesha is restricted to 2 feet in the house, 4 feet in the public area, and the god must be as tall as he is.

We agree that more people should not gather at public places. But what is the logic behind the restriction on the height of the idol? This is being done by the people who

claim to be the spokesmen of Hindu culture, Shivakumar ridiculed.

If the government makes this decision at the last minute, should the idols now be placed in front of the decision makers' house? Those who have made the decision have demanded that they be purchased.

We are not questioning the Covid restrictions, we are questioning the government's unscientific decision. The life of those who rely on this profession should not be made miserable. The government should either get rid of this nonsense or give relief to the idol makers, Shivakumar demanded.



Afghan students stage a protest against the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan and raise slogans against Pakistan for helping the Taliban capture Panjshir province, in Bangalore, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Bizman turns burglar, blames lockdown-losses

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: A 45-year-old cloth trader from Solapur allegedly took to committing burglaries and thefts after suffering losses in his business due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, police said Wednesday.

He was arrested last week in Maharashtra's Solapur city in connection with eight such cases, they said. The accused, identified as Anand Kodam, a resident of Vajreshwari Nagar in Solapur, located about 400 km from Mumbai, was nabbed September 2 when he was on way to sell some ornaments allegedly stolen by him, a police official said.

Kodam was earlier into his family's cloth business and they used to run a factory in Solapur, he said. In 2018, he parted ways with his

family due to some reasons and started living separately with his wife and children.

He then started an independent business of sale and purchase of towels, which was running well, the official said.

However, last year, a businessman allegedly cheated him of ₹8 lakh, due to which he had to take loans and after a few days, had to shut his business in the wake of the lockdown imposed to curb the spread of Covid-19, he said.

After being unable to repay the loans, Kodam allegedly started committing burglaries since August 1 this year, the official said.

His modus operandi was to commit thefts between 11 am and 2 pm and he used to target houses having cast iron locks which could be broken easily, said Solapur Jail Road police station's sub-inspec-



tor Alfaz Shaikh, who nabbed the accused.

According to the official, Kodam had allegedly committed at least

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, Sept 8: With work from home (WFH) continuing for employees in the information technology sector, Maharashtra is mulling to create 'nodal centres' on the lines of co-working spaces in smaller cities and towns, from where software professionals can work for their respective companies, a minister has said.

The state, which is home to the IT hub in Pune and also has a presence of enterprises in other pockets like Mumbai, Nagpur and Nashik, has invited suggestions from the industry for an 'inclusive IT policy', Minister of State for IT Satej Patil has said.

Almost the entire IT staff has been in the WFH mode since the beginning of the pandemic in March 2020 and companies have been saying that the future will have a 'hy-

brid model' where a good part of the employees continue working from offices.

A lot of the work done by IT professionals is for critical sectors like finance, where privacy concerns and data confidentiality are important which also forced a few of the professionals to continue working from offices even during the lockdowns.

We are also planning to start government-run well-equipped nodal centres where IT employees can come and work for their respective companies. All ideas are welcome in this regard, Patil said in a tweet Monday, responding to suggestions made by billionaire Anand Deshpande, the founder chairman of Pune's Persistent Systems. Mumbai and Pune have been leading in the IT sector and have been saturated due to migration to these cities.

but as the accused wore a mask while committing the offences, it was difficult to identify him.

However, in one of the CCTV footage, he was found without the mask and identified, the official said. Accordingly, the police laid a trap September 2 and apprehended him when he was on way to a jewellers' market to sell some of the stolen ornaments, he said.

The official said the accused initially told the police that he had committed only one theft, but later, during questioning, he informed about other six burglaries committed by him in the Jail Road area and one in the MIDC (Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation) area.

The police have so far recovered gold worth ₹7.60 lakh and ₹1 lakh cash allegedly stolen by him, he said.

of the day **quote**

Taking another big decision today in the interest of farmer brothers and sisters, the government has approved the increase in MSP of all Rabi crops

NARENDRA MODI | PRIME MINISTER

The government should avoid confrontation with the farmers and find amicable solution

BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA
FORMER HARYANA CHIEF MINISTER

The meeting with Tejashwi ji was not a political one. I have family ties with him which have continued since the beginning of my father and Lalu ji's political career in Bihar

CHIRAG PASWAN | LUP MP

SHORT TAKES

EC makes fresh push for power

New Delhi: The Election Commission has made a fresh push to change the electoral law to get powers to de-register political parties which are dormant and have not contested polls. The issue was among the various electoral reforms discussed by a senior EC official with Law Minister Kiren Rijiju here last week, EC sources said. There are several proposals on electoral reforms pending with the government.

India, Portugal ink new pact

New Delhi: The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi Wednesday approved the signing of an agreement on the recruitment of Indian citizens to work in Portugal. This agreement would set an institutional mechanism for partnership and cooperation between India and Portugal on sending and accepting Indian workers and a Joint Committee will be set up to follow up the implementation of the same.

FB's new campaign

New Delhi: Facebook Wednesday launched a new campaign highlighting the importance of taking continued precautions to curb the spread of the Covid-19. The campaign, #MyStory, includes 10 short films, each focusing on narrating personal and relatable stories about the impact of Covid-19 on our lives, the social media giant said.

Kerala: 46 test-ve for Nipah so far

Kozhikode: Test results of 46 people who had come in close contact with the 12-year-old child who succumbed to Nipah have been negative, till now, for the virus infection, Kerala Health Minister Veena George said Wednesday. Earlier in the day, the minister had told media persons here that with negative test results of 20 more people being reported in the morning, the total number of people who are in the clear was 30.

Flood situation improves in Assam

Guwahati: The flooding in Assam's Brahmaputra valley receded as rivers running through and into the valley from the Himalayas reported lower water levels. However, over 16,000 people remained affected by the current flood in nine districts of the state, according to a bulletin issued by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA). The death toll from the ongoing floods remained static at eight as no fresh casualties were reported Wednesday.



"We only know how we fought against all odds to win the assembly polls. The BJP brought in goons from other states during the assembly elections. I had to contest this by-poll as a conspiracy was hatched against me (in Nandigram)"

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CHIEF MINISTER

SHOCKING INCIDENT

Some miscreants allegedly buried around 150 dogs alive in the Shivamogga district of Karnataka, police sources said Wednesday. The incident occurred in Ranganathapura within the limits of Kambadaalalu-Hosur gram panchayat near Bhadravathi town



NSA Doval, top Russian security official hold talks

AGENCIES

New Delhi, Sept 8: NSA Ajit Doval Wednesday held talks with his Russian counterpart Gen Nikolay Patrushev in mitigating any possible security threat from the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan, a day after holding similar deliberations with CIA Chief William Burns.

Burns, Patrushev and the UK's Chief of the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) Richard Moore were among a number of key intelligence and security officials to visit India over the last few days, it is learnt. The Doval-Patrushev talks delved into security implications of the Taliban's capture of power for India, Russia and the Central Asian region as a number of dreaded terror groups including Jaish-e-Muhammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba having a strong presence in the war-torn country, people familiar with the meeting said.

A Russian read-out of the delegation-level talks said attention was paid to intensifying joint work by "special services and military bodies" of both the countries and that emphasis was given on further interaction on the "anti-terrorist track", combating illegal migration and drug trafficking. It is learnt that Chief of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Burns, accompanied by a few officials, paid a quiet visit to India primarily to discuss ways to mitigate security threats that may emanate from Afghanistan. The CIA chief held talks with Doval and a number of



NSA Ajit Doval meets Secretary of the Russian Security Council General Nikolai Patrushev in New Delhi

PTI PHOTO

senior officials of the National Security Secretariat Tuesday. When asked about the visit, the US embassy declined to comment. There was no comment from the Indian security establishment as well.

It is learnt that Moore also held extensive talks with Doval during his brief visit. Asked about the MI6 chief's trip to India, a British High Commission spokesperson said: "We do not comment on intelligence matters." India has been in touch with all leading powers on the developments in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of troops by the US. Three weeks after taking control, the Taliban Tuesday unveiled a "caretaker" government, saying it would be headed by Mohammad Hasan Akhund.

"As a follow-up to the telephone conversation between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Indian Prime Minister Narendra

Modi on August 24, an exchange of views took place on the military, political and socio-economic situation in Afghanistan," the Russian read-out said.

"They also touched upon humanitarian and migration problems in this country, as well as prospects for the Russian-Indian joint efforts aimed at creating conditions for launching a peaceful settlement process on the basis of an intra-Afghan dialogue," it said.

"The importance of defining parameters of the future state structure of Afghanistan by the Afghans themselves, as well as the need to prevent the escalation of violence, social, ethnic and confessional contradictions in the country, were emphasised," it added. The people cited above said both India and Russia share similar concerns on terrorism that could flow out of Afghanistan.

Uttarakhand Guv Baby Rani Maurya resigns

AGENCIES

Dehradun, Sept 8: Uttarakhand Governor Baby Rani Maurya resigned Wednesday two years before completing her tenure amid speculation that she may be given some active role in politics.

She tendered her resignation to the President of India, a Raj Bhawan official said. She has resigned for personal reasons, he said. Speculation, however, is rife in the media that her resignation will pave the way for her to play a more active role in politics.

It is also being linked with her recent meeting with Amit Shah in Delhi September 5.

Sixty-five-year-old Maurya who



has long been associated with the BJP was sworn in as the Uttarakhand governor August 26, 2018, taking over from Krishna Kant Paul at the end of his five-year tenure. She had completed three years in office as the Uttarakhand governor last month.

She has the distinction of being the first woman mayor of Agra from 1995 to 2000. She had also been a member of the National Commission for Women from 2002-2005.

SC upholds extension of Mishra's tenure as ED director

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: The Supreme Court Wednesday upheld the Centre's decision to extend the tenure of ED Director Sanjay Kumar Mishra from two years to three years with retrospective effect, taking into account its justification that important investigations were at a crucial stage in trans-border crimes.

However, the top court made it clear that extension to the officers, already superannuated, should only be done in rare and exceptional circumstances.

A bench of Justices L. Nageswara Rao and B.R. Gavai noted: "The justification given by the Union of India for extension of the tenure of Second Respondent (Mishra) is that important investigations are at a crucial stage in trans-border crimes. The decision to extend the tenure of the Second Respondent is pursuant to the recommendation made by the high-powered



committee." "We have upheld the power of the Union of India to extend the tenure of Director of Enforcement beyond the period of two years... we should make it clear that extension of tenure granted to officers who have attained the age of superannuation should be done only in rare and exceptional cases," it said.

The top court observed that reasonable period of extension can be granted to facilitate the completion of ongoing investigations only after reasons are recorded by the committee constituted under Section 25 (a) of the CVC Act.

KARNAL MAHAPANCHAYAT

Another round of talks fails



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Karnal (Haryana), Sept 8: Another round of talks between district officials and farmers protesting over a police lathi-charge last month failed Wednesday and the protesters said they will continue their sit-in at the gates of the district headquarters here.

The farmers' demands centre around the suspension of IAS officer Ayush Sinha, who was caught on tape allegedly telling policemen to "break heads" of farmers if they cross the line during their August 28 protest.

About 10 farmers were hurt that day when police used force to stop them from marching to the venue of a BJP event in Karnal. The sit-in outside the Karnal mini-secretariat, following a mahapanchayat in the same city, began Tuesday evening after talks between district officials and farm leaders "failed".

On Wednesday, the district administration again invited a delegation of Samyukt Kisan Morcha leaders for a meeting at 2 pm in another bid to end the standoff. "The talks completely failed because the government is adopting an adamant attitude," SKM leader Yogendra Yadav told reporters after the three-hour meeting. He said the government is not even ready to suspend the IAS officer, leave alone register a case against him.

'REPORT 100% IN FARMERS' FAVOUR'

Hopeful of an early resolution to the long-running farmers' protests on the national capital borders, a key member of the Supreme Court-appointed panel on contentious agri-laws on Wednesday said the report submitted by the committee is "cent per cent" in favour of farmers and the apex court must take up the matter without any delay. The panel member acknowledged that the government and the Supreme Court have to consider the law and order issue that may arise with the release of the report for which they needed to take time, but "they just cannot dump it and they should not dump it."

Bhartiya Kisan Union leader Rakesh Tikait said they have decided to continue with the dharna at the same site, where many spent the previous night.

The protest leaders had also claimed that a farmer died after the August 28 violence, an allegation rejected by the administration. SDM Sinha was transferred days after the controversy over his remarks, but the move was part of a larger bureaucratic shuffle in Haryana.

SEEKING SHELTER



A boy covers himself with a plastic sheet while sitting on a cart, during a drizzle in Amritsar

PTI PHOTO

Disasters around the world inter-connected: Report

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: A new report analysed 10 disasters from 2020-21, including Cyclone Amphan in the border region of India and Bangladesh, and found that even though they occurred in vastly different locations and did not initially appear to have much in common, they were interconnected with each other.

The report, Interconnected Disaster Risks 2020/2021 was released Wednesday by the United Nations University - Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS).

As shown by the key findings of the recent IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, extreme events,

such as droughts, fires and floods, are increasingly compounding each other, likely as a consequence of human influence. Viewed through a lens of interconnectivity, this new report shows in detail how not only climate disasters, but human-made disasters in general build on the impacts of the past and pave the way for future disasters. The frequency of severe weather events, epidemics and human-made disasters is increasing globally, and it is becoming ever more challenging to keep pace with the corresponding changes and impacts.

In 2020-21, the world witnessed a number of record-breaking disasters: the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the globe, a cold wave



crippled the state of Texas, wildfires destroyed almost five million acres of Amazon rainforest, and Vietnam experienced nine heavy storms in the span of only seven weeks.

By analysing past events through the lens of interconnectivity, both

the disasters that are happening right now and those that will happen in the future can be better understood. "When people see disasters in the news, they often seem far away," said UNU-EHS Senior Scientist Zita Sebesvari, a lead au-

thor of the report. "But even disasters that occur thousands of kilometres apart are often related to one another and can have consequences for people living in distant places." An example of this is the recent heatwave in the Arctic and cold wave in Texas.

In 2020, the Arctic experienced the second-highest air temperatures and second-lowest amount of sea ice cover on record. The increasing temperature in the Arctic destabilizes the polar vortex, a spinning mass of cold air above the North Pole, allowing colder air to move southward into North America. Thus, changes in Arctic temperature influence locations far away from the Arctic and likely also contributed to the below-

freezing temperatures in Texas, a state that is used to year-round warm weather. Around four million people were without electricity as the power grid froze up, and 210 people died.

Disasters also often occur simultaneously and compound each other, as happened with the COVID-19 pandemic and Cyclone Amphan in the border region of India and Bangladesh. In an area where almost 50 per cent of the population is living under the poverty line, the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns left many people without income options, including migrant workers who were forced to return to their home areas and were housed in cyclone shelters while under quarantine.

of the day quote

What is even more regretful is the attempts to present the ideology elaborated by separate groups of states as a guiding light for the entire humanity

ANNA EVSTIGNEEVA | DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UN, RUSSIA

Our country is facing a severe foreign exchange crisis. The data from the central bank shows the country's net foreign exchange reserves are close to zero, which means almost all of its reserves are borrowed

BASIL RAJAPAKSA | FINANCE MINISTER, SL

This pension process cannot resume until the pandemic is under control and the economic recovery is sufficiently solid. For now the conditions are not in place

JEAN CASTEX | PM, FRANCE

SHORT TAKES

4 Tiananmen vigil leaders held in HK

Hong Kong: Hong Kong police Wednesday arrested four leaders of the group that organised the city's annual Tiananmen Square commemorations after they refused to cooperate in a national security investigation, the group said. The Hong Kong Alliance in Support of Patriotic Democratic Movements of China had openly challenged the enforcement of a 14-month-old national security law, saying police were arbitrarily labeling pro-democracy organizations as foreign agents.

Putin accuses EU of discrimination

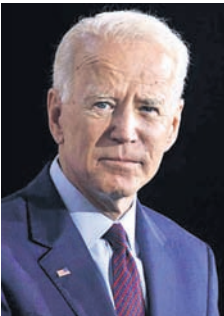
Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin Wednesday told European Council President Charles Michel that the European Union was continuing to discriminate against residents of Crimea, the Kremlin said in a statement. "Attention was drawn to the fact that the European Union continues to conduct a discriminatory policy towards inhabitants of the peninsula," the Kremlin said in a readout of a phone call between Putin and Michel, without giving further details.

NZ banks struck by cyber attack

Sydney: Websites of a number of financial institutions in New Zealand and its national postal service were briefly down Wednesday, with officials saying they were battling a cyber attack. The country's Computer Emergency Response Team said it was aware of a DDoS (distributed denial of service) attack targeting a number of organisations in the country. In a Facebook post, ANZ told customers it was aware some of them were not able to access online banking services. Our tech team are working hard to get this fixed, we apologise for any inconvenience this may cause, the post said.

Biden visits NYC

New York: President Joe Biden declared climate change has become "everybody's crisis" Tuesday as he toured neighborhoods flooded by the remnants of Hurricane Ida, warning it's time for America to get serious about the "code red" danger or face ever worse loss of life and property. Biden spoke after walking streets in New Jersey and then Queens in New York City, meeting people whose homes were destroyed or severely damaged by flooding when Ida barreled through.



China has a real problem with the Taliban. They try to work out some of that with the Taliban, I am sure. As does Pakistan, as does Russia, as does Iran. They are all trying to figure out what do they do now. It will be interesting see what happens

JOE BIDEN | PRESIDENT, US

CHINA LAUNCHES NEW EO SATELLITE

China has successfully launched a new Earth observation (EO) satellite into space to improve the country's hyperspectral observation capacity of the atmosphere, water and land, the official media reported Wednesday



Resistance plea against Taliban recognition

AFGHAN RESISTANCE GROUP PLEDGES TO DECLARE DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURE SOON

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Kabul, Sept 8: Terming the Taliban-unveiled new 'caretaker' government in Afghanistan as 'illegal', the anti-Taliban forces in the country have urged the international community not to recognise it.

The interim cabinet announced has drawn criticism from the US, as it consists entirely of Taliban leaders or their associates and does not include any woman member.

The interim cabinet is led by Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund, who is on a UN blacklist. Another figure, Sirajuddin Haqqani, is wanted by the American FBI.

The Panjshir province based National Resistance Front (NRF) asserted that the announcement of the Taliban's caretaker cabinet is "a clear sign of the group's enmity with the Afghan people."

Afghanistan will soon see a "legitimate, responsible and demo-



cratic political structure after consultations with important political figures and policy experts," the NRF has underlined, stressing that their fight will continue "until the country is freed from the Taliban and their terrorist allies".

"Their illegitimate regime in Kabul is a threat to stability and security of Afghanistan, the region and the world. NRF believes that

the establishment of a democratic, legal and legitimate government can only be achieved through the will and vote of people in a general election that is also acceptable to the international community," the resistance group further said. "Imposing an occupier's regime on the people of Afghanistan is against our human dignity and international law," it underlined.

Fire kills 41 inmates in Indonesian prison



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jakarta, Sept 8: A massive fire raged through an overcrowded prison near Indonesia's capital early Wednesday, killing at least 41 inmates, two of them foreigners serving drug sentences, and injuring 80 others.

Firefighters battled through the early morning hours to extinguish the flames as black smoke billowed from the compound of the Tangerang prison on the outskirts of Jakarta.

After the blaze was extinguished, ambulance after ambulance filled

with body bags containing the victims were driven by Red Cross workers to the morgue of a local hospital, where they were stacked wall-to-wall on the floor of a room awaiting transport to a larger facility for identification.

The cause of the blaze appears to have been an electrical short circuit, according to initial findings.

Relatives of prisoners trickled in to the prison throughout the day to check and see whether their loved ones were among those killed.

Most of the 41 killed were drug convicts, including a man from South Africa and a man from Portugal, while other victims included a terrorism convict and a murderer, Indonesia's Law and Human Rights minister Yasona Laoly told reporters.

"This is a tragedy that concerns all of us," Laoly said. "We are working closely with all relevant parties to investigate the causes of the fire."

INDIA AT UN

'Pak promoting culture of violence'

Pakistan's Permanent Representative Munir Akram devoted six paragraphs of his nine-paragraph speech to India and the RSS and asked the General Assembly to confront Hindutva

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

United Nations, Sept 8: India has accused Pakistan of promoting a culture of violence and using the high-level UN meeting on the culture of peace for hate speech.

We have witnessed yet another attempt today by the delegation of Pakistan to exploit a UN platform for hate speech against India, even as it continues to foment a 'culture of violence' at home and across



its borders, Vidisha Maitra, a First Secretary at India's UN mission told the General Assembly Tuesday.

We dismiss and condemn all such efforts, she said in her address to the high-level forum on culture of peace while making a passive reference to Pakistan's Permanent Representative Munir Akram's remarks.

Though often speeches at the UN veer off the topic, Akram's address was unusual in that it al-

most entirely targeted an organisation in a member country using an invective for it.

Without identifying Pakistan, Maitra drew attention to the religion-based terrorism emanating from there, saying there can be no doubt that terrorism, which is a manifestation of intolerance and violence, is the antithesis of all religions and cultures. The world should be concerned by terrorists who use religion to justify these acts and those who support them in this quest.

She said that the UN and the member states refrain from selectivity on such issues which hinders a culture of peace.

India reiterates its call for the application of the principles of objectivity, non-selectivity and impartiality to form the basis of discussions in the United Nations especially on the issue of religion, she said.

SHOW OF SUPPORT



A demonstrator in support of Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's attack on the country's Supreme Court in front of the Brazilian National Congress in Brasilia, Brazil

REUTERS

Mighty earthquake makes buildings sway in Mexico

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mexico City, Sept 8: A powerful earthquake struck near the Pacific resort city of Acapulco Tuesday night, killing at least one person and causing buildings to rock and sway in Mexico City hundreds of kilometers away.

The US Geological Survey said the quake had a preliminary magnitude of 7 and was centred 17 km northeast of Acapulco.

Guerrero state Governor Hector Astudillo told Milenio Television late Tuesday night that one person had been killed by a falling post in the town of Coyuca de Benitez near Acapulco.

"We heard loud noise from the building, noise from the windows, things fell inside the house, the power went out," said Sergio Flores, an Acapulco resident reached by



phone. "We heard leaking water; the water went out of the pool and you heard people screaming, very nervous people."

Flashes of light were seen in the sky above the capital as the earthquake hit the power grid.

The mayor of Acapulco, Adela Roman, said in statement to the television news outlet Milenio that "there is no really serious situation" so far and no reports of casualties. In Mexico City, more than 320 km

16 die as floods swamp hospital

Torrential rains in central Mexico suddenly flooded a hospital early Tuesday, killing 16 patients, possibly due to the loss of oxygen equipment as the power went out, the national Social Security Institute said. A video posted on the agency's social media feed said about 40 other patients survived as waters rose swiftly in downtown Tula, about 60 miles (100 km) north of Mexico City, and flooded the public hospital around 6 am.

away, the ground shook for nearly a minute in some parts of the capital, but the quake was less evident in other parts.

France opens historic trial over 2015 Paris attacks

NINE GUNMEN AND SUICIDE BOMBERS STRUCK WITHIN MINUTES OF EACH OTHER AT FRANCE'S NATIONAL SOCCER STADIUM NOV 13, 2015

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Paris, Sept 8: In a custom-built secure complex embedded within a 13th-century courthouse, France Wednesday opened the trial of 20 men accused in the Islamic State group's 2015 attacks in Paris that left 130 people dead and hundreds injured.

Nine gunmen and suicide bombers struck within minutes of each other at France's national soccer stadium, the Bataclan concert hall and Paris restaurants and cafes Nov 13, 2015. Survivors of the attacks as well as those who mourn their dead packed the rooms, which were designed to hold 1,800 plaintiffs and over 300 lawyers.

The presiding judge, Jean-Louis Peries, acknowledged the ex-

traordinary circumstances of the events of that night and the nine-month trial to come.

"The events that we are about to decide are inscribed in their historic intensity as among the international and national events of this century," he said.

Dominique Kielemeos, whose son bled to death at one of the cafes, said the month dedicated to victims' testimonies at the trial will be crucial to both their own healing and that of the nation.

"The assassins, these terrorists, thought they were firing into the crowd, into a mass of people. But it wasn't a mass — these were individuals who had a life, who loved, had hopes and expectations, and that we need to talk about at the trial. It's important," she said,



Twenty men are charged, but six of them will be tried in absentia. Abdeslam, who abandoned his rental car in northern Paris and dis-

carded a malfunctioning suicide vest before fleeing home to Brussels, has refused to speak with investigators. But he holds the answers to

Suspect tells court he's an IS soldier

The main suspect of the jihadist rampage described himself Wednesday as "an Islamic State soldier" at the start of the long-awaited trial into the 2015 attacks. Salah Abdeslam, 31, appeared in court dressed in black and wearing a black face mask. Asked what his profession was, the French-Moroccan removed his face mask - obligatory because of the Covid-19 pandemic - and told a Paris court defiantly: "I gave up my job to become an Islamic State soldier." Abdeslam is believed to be the only surviving member of the group that carried out the attacks. Asked by the court's top judge to give his name, Abdeslam used the Shahada, an Islamic oath, saying: "I want to testify that there is no god except Allah and that Mohammad is his servant."

many of the remaining questions about the attack and the people who planned it, both in Europe and abroad.

The trial is scheduled to last nine months. The month of September will be dedicated to lay-

ing out the police and forensic evidence. October will be given over to victims' testimony. From November to December, officials including former French President François Hollande will testify, as will relatives of the attackers.

of the day quote

The government is planning to bring some changes in the mining sector and may invite suggestions from the stakeholders in a fortnight. We are bringing amendment in the next session of Parliament in November

PRALHAD JOSHI | MINES MINISTER

The reduction in corporate tax rates, attempts to reduce litigation through dispute resolution schemes, bringing in more transparency through various tax administrative reforms, boost to the MSMEs through various policy initiatives, are all yielding results

VIKAS VASAL | NATIONAL MANAGING PARTNER (TAX), GRANT THORNTON BHARAT

The new corporate sub-brand for digital is testimony to our commitment to serve the customers across the world. With 'bob World', we offer all our digital offerings under one umbrella so that the customer is provided with all digital services under one roof with a consistent experience

SANJIV CHADHA | MD & CEO, BANK OF BARODA

SHORT TAKES

Bangari becomes Exim Bank MD

New Delhi: Exim Bank of India (Exim Bank) Wednesday said it has appointed Harsha Bangari as its new Managing Director. Harsha Bangari has taken over as the Managing Director of Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) today, it said in a release. Before this, Bangari was the Deputy Managing Director of the bank. Before her elevation as the DMD a year ago, she was a Chief General Manager and the Chief Financial Officer of Exim Bank.

Molbio gets DCGI approval

New Delhi: Molbio Diagnostics Wednesday said its platform Truenat has received emergency use authorisation from DCGI for Nipah virus testing. Testing for Nipah virus can now be performed rapidly on Truenat, a real-time PCR platform, on demand, the Goa-based firm said. This will result in early and fast diagnosis for effective management of the disease and containment of the spread of Nipah virus, it added.

UCO Bank out of PCA list after 4 yrs

New Delhi: The RBI has lifted UCO Bank out of the prompt corrective action (PCA) list after a gap of four years. The banking regulator found that the state-run lender was not in breach of its rules on regulatory capital, bad loans, and leverage ratio, according to a statement released by the RBI Wednesday, September 8. In 2017, UCO Bank was placed under PCA framework restrictions due to its poor financial health, when several other lenders in the country battled unsecured assets.

'IGI's ECT to be ready by 2022'

New Delhi: About 60% of Delhi airport's elevated eastern cross taxiway (ECT) has already been constructed and it would be ready by 2022-end, according to a statement Wednesday. Once the ECT is commissioned, the aircraft taxiing distance will significantly go down from 9 km to just 2 km as it will taxi along the taxiway parallel to runway 11/29 and use the ECT to take a straight path to Terminal 1 or vice-versa, said the statement by the Delhi International Airport Limited.

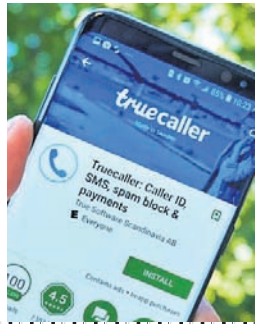


The (PLI) scheme will help bridge gaps in India's textile ecosystem, aligning domestic production to the global demand for MMF and technical textiles

PAVETHRA PONNIAH | SENIOR VP & CO-GROUP HEAD (CORPORATE SECTOR RATINGS), ICRA

TRUECALLER CROSSES MILESTONE

Truecaller announced a milestone of 500 customers for its business offerings. This success has been achieved within few months of conscientious efforts by the team in helping brands connect with their customers' better. The businesses span across 25 countries including India, who have adopted the solution to add value to their existing business



India, UK in 'sweet spot' as trade negotiations begin

LIZ TRUSS, UK SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERNATIONAL TRADE, REVEALED THAT THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS AHEAD OF THE TRADE NEGOTIATIONS ATTRACTED "HUGE INTEREST" FROM BUSINESSES ACROSS THE UK

AGENCIES

London, Sept 8: The UK and India are in a "sweet spot" of global trade dynamics as negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA) begin in the coming weeks, according to Britain's trade minister in charge of the bilateral talks.

Liz Truss, UK Secretary of State for International Trade, revealed that the public consultation process ahead of the trade negotiations attracted "huge interest" from busi-

nesses across the UK and its completion last month means that FTA negotiations can now begin.

Addressing a special reception hosted by the Lord Mayor of London to celebrate the UK-India Economic Partnership Tuesday evening, the minister confirmed that both sides will "hammer out" the details during the upcoming visit of Commerce and Industry minister Piyush Goyal to the UK and Europe next week.

"We just completed our consul-



tation on an Indian trade deal, which saw huge interest from businesses across the country. We are

now going to begin negotiating a free trade agreement," said Truss.

"I see the UK and India in a sweet spot of the trade dynamics that are building up... We are looking at a comprehensive trade agreement that covers everything, from financial services to legal services to digital and data, as well as goods and agriculture. We think there is strong possibility for us to get an early agreement, where we lower tariffs on both sides and start to see more goods flowing between our two

countries," she said.

Pointing to the post-Brexit scenario as the UK's chance to set out an independent trade policy outside the European Union (EU), the senior Cabinet minister flagged India as the "big, major opportunity" ahead following 68 trade deals clinched by Britain since leaving the economic bloc.

She also referenced her visit to India earlier in the year, including a tour of the Serum Institute of India (SII) in Pune which is in

a UK tie-up to produce the Oxford University and AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccines, as she highlighted collaboration in the field of science and tech as a sign of things to come as that trade route between the UK and India is deepened.

"Like the UK, India is a science and tech superpower...the Serum Institute of India provides two-thirds of the vaccines that inoculate children around the world. That is truly a tremendous achievement," said Truss.

'India to post strong GDP growth in coming quarters'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: India is expected to post strong economic growth in the coming quarters, even as inflation, led by food prices, is likely to remain elevated, S&P Global Ratings said Wednesday. The economy is expected to clock 9.5% growth in the current fiscal year, followed by 7% expansion in the next year, it said, adding high nominal GDP growth would be important for ensuring fiscal consolidation going forward.

"Given India's weak fiscal settings and high stock of debt around 90% of GDP, the nominal GDP growth is going to be very important to prevent any further erosion of fiscal settings in the country and to enable some degree of fiscal consolidation going forward," S&P Global Ratings Director (Sovereign) Andrew Wood said.

He said the fiscal deficit would remain elevated over the next two years but debt/GDP ratio is expected to stabilise or flatten out.

Wood further said India's external position has strengthened in the context of the pandemic and India has been generating forex reserves at record pace.

"India's external position is very strong and this is quite supportive of India's sovereign rating



despite the fact that we have had this deterioration in fiscal position concurrently," he said.

Speaking at the India Credit Spotlight 2021, S&P Economist (Asia Pacific) Vishrut Rana said: "Looking ahead we continue to expect fairly strong economic growth going into calendar Q3 and Q4.

"The second wave of the pandemic has been pretty costly to economic activity. Households have been affected...Households are going to be repairing their balance sheets and withholding from

spending which means activity will remain below trend once the recovery gets underway".

The Indian economy grew at 20.1% in April-June helped by a lower base, vis-a-vis 1.6% in March quarter. He said inflation has been on the upper end of the tolerance range which means the central bank will be watching inflation very closely.

"The outlook is mixed and energy prices are likely to remain elevated. But the real influential element in the inflation basket is going to be food," Rana said.

BYST mentors state's young Grampreneurs

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust (BYST) in partnership with FCDO, funded by the UK government's Infrastructure Equity Programme, organised Wednesday a digital event to showcase its support for the young and underprivileged entrepreneurs of India.

The digital event was held on the topic of Nurturing Grampreneurs for Sustainable Growth. The BYST-FCDO partnership event displayed the impact and success stories created, challenges mitigated, way forward and also acted as a call to all the stakeholders to replicate the model in their designated project areas.

Satyabrata Sahu, Principal

Secretary of Odisha MSME department, Subroto Bagchi, Chairman, Odisha Skill Development Authority, Nick Low, British Dy. High Commissioner, Kolkata and R Mukundan, Member, Board of Trustees, BYST were the dignitaries at the online event.

Subroto Bagchi said, "FCDO under the Infra Equity Programme (NEEV Fund) is promoting entrepreneurship development in the states of Odisha and Jharkhand through BYST. The objective of the programme is capacity building of 1200 potential young entrepreneurs out of which 30% will be women and disabled entrepreneurs. The project will also develop a pool of 300 mentors, who will in turn help in entrepreneur growth."

Govt okays PLI scheme for textiles

UNDER THE SCHEME INCENTIVES WORTH ₹10,683 CRORE WILL BE PROVIDED OVER FIVE YEARS

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Sept 8: The Union Cabinet Wednesday approved the much-anticipated production linked incentive (PLI) scheme for the textiles sector. Under the scheme incentives worth ₹10,683 crore will be provided over five years.

According to the government, the move will especially positively impact states like Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha among others. The government expects investments of more than ₹19,000 crore into the sector during the five-year period. It is also expected to bring about additional production



turnover of over ₹3 lakh crore during the period and create employment opportunities of over 7.5 lakh people directly and several lakhs more for supporting activities, as per the government.

The government will give higher priority for investment in the aspirational districts and tier-3 cities.

Industry participants have lauded the decision of the government. Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) Chairman A. Sakthivel said that it will be a game changer

for the Indian textile industry and will transform India's growth story

Sakthivel said that the scheme will result in fresh investment of gigantic proportions, expand manufacturing capacities and enhance exports manifold.

"It will make India a key player in the global textile value chain with focus on high value MMF products. Besides, it will promote industrial development in backward regions of the country," he added. The focus of the PLI scheme would be for the development of man-made fibre and technical fibre segments that are in high demand in advanced economies where India already has a big presence with its technical products.

Criticism of Infosys, Tata worries Indian businesses

REUTERS

New Delhi, Sept 8: A public diatribe against two Indian business giants by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's officials and his ideological allies has unnerved the business community, several industry executives told Reuters. Over the weekend, a magazine run by members of the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) launched an attack on Indian tech giant Infosys for failing to resolve glitches in the income tax website it manages.

The group, which is the ideological parent of Modi's ruling party, called Infosys "anti-national" for letting down the tax system, sending a chill through Indian industry wary of falling on the wrong side of the Modi government.

Just last month, the finance ministry "summoned" Infosys' CEO

The frontal attack on iconic elements of Indian businesses have only buttressed the need for companies to ensure they are conforming, not just with tax issues, but with other government initiatives

DILIP CHERIAN, IMAGE GURU & CO-FOUNDER, PERFECT RELATIONS

over the tech issues and in an unusual step took to Twitter to announce the summoning, heightening a media frenzy around a company that has been the face of India's IT's prowess.

And in August, the commerce minister publicly lashed out at the \$106 billion Tata Group for criticizing proposed stringent rules for e-commerce and said local companies should not only think about profits. In India, safeguarding do-



mestic businesses has been Modi's priority. While government or RSS criticism of foreign businesses like Amazon and Monsanto is common, local businesses are rarely caught in the crossfire.

But the latest events have raised concerns among business leaders about whether Modi is now taking a hardline approach towards domestic giants as well, five industry sources said.

One venture-capital executive said the criticism was akin to "harassment" of businesses and risks souring investor sentiment. Another executive working at a global consultancy said "everyone is scared" as businesses don't want to run foul of the government.

"The frontal attack on iconic elements of Indian businesses have only buttressed the need for companies to ensure they are con-

forming, not just with tax issues, but with other government initiatives," said Dilip Cherian, an image guru and co-founder of leading Indian PR firm Perfect Relations.

RC Bhargava, chairman of Maruti Suzuki, defended Infosys, saying it had played a key role in building India's software reputation globally. "It needs to explain the glitches, but it doesn't mean there is a conspiracy to damage the country," he told Reuters.

A senior member of RSS, however, said there's nothing wrong in the way the companies have been criticized, saying they must be thick skinned and held accountable.

"Why should questions not be raised, have corporates become a holy cow?" said the RSS official who declined to be identified. Infosys and Tata didn't respond to a request for comment.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, Sept 8: The creator of exquisite jewellery, Zoya, the diamond boutique from the House of Tata will host its first trunk show at the Taj Vivanta Plumeria 3 in City. The show will be held from September 11-15, 2021. The luxury brand of fine jewellery is planning a special showcase of its stunning collections.



With its heart rooted in India and a discerning eye on the world, Zoya has redefined the way fine jewellery is designed and experienced in India. Over the last decade, Zoya has built a reputation for its products with distinguished designs and masterful craftsmanship.

The muse for Zoya's exquisite designs has always been the Zoya woman, a modern sophisticate who is aesthetically astute, globally aware and well-travelled.

Every Zoya piece is a meticulously crafted work of art with ever-evolving design inspirations — from external journeys across the world to the internal journey of a woman as she embraces her individuality and reconnects with her true self.

ASHWIN RETURNS TO WHITE-BALL SQUAD AS BCCI ANNOUNCES TEAM FOR ICC MEN'S T20 WORLD CUP

Dhoni to mentor India



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Iconic former captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni was Wednesday brought in as mentor of India's 15-member T20 World Cup squad by the BCCI, a move that took everyone by surprise.

The 40-year-old Dhoni retired from international cricket last year, his last India game being the 2019 World Cup semi-final, which the team lost to New Zealand.

"Former India captain MS Dhoni to mentor the team for the T20 World Cup," announced BCCI secretary Jay Shah in a press conference to unveil the squad for the T20 World Cup scheduled to start

MS Dhoni to mentor the team for the T20 World Cup. (I) spoke to him in Dubai. He agreed to be mentor for WT20 only and I discussed with my colleagues and all are on same page. I spoke to captain (Virat) and vice-captain (Rohit) and everyone agreed

JAY SHAH / BCCI SECRETARY

October 17 in the UAE and Oman.

"(I) spoke to him in Dubai. He agreed to be mentor for World T20 only and I discussed with my colleagues and all are on same page. I spoke to captain (Virat Kohli) and vice captain (Rohit Sharma) and everyone agreed," he added.

It is believed that Dhoni has been brought in for his experience in devising near-perfect white ball strategies and for knowing what it

takes to win crucial ICC tournaments, where trophies have remained elusive for his successor.

One of the most successful captains in the history of Indian cricket, the enigmatic wicketkeeper-batsman led India to two world titles – the 2007 T20 World Cup in South Africa and the 2011 ODI World Cup in India.

Dhoni is currently with his IPL team Chennai Super Kings, gearing up for the resumption of the league from September 19 in the UAE.

The reticent player's retirement, announced by him through an Instagram post August 15 last year, had taken the cricket world by surprise and he has not spoken even once about it after that.

Ashwin in; Chahal, Dhawan dropped

NEW DELHI: Senior off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin returned to India's white-ball outfit after four years when he was included in the 15-member squad for the World T20 alongside the fast-rising trio of Ishan Kishan, Axar Patel and Varun Chakaravathy.

Also making the squad was Suryakumar Yadav, the 30-year-old Mumbai batsman who has been making a name for himself for his power-hitting.

The 34-year-old Ashwin last played white-ball cricket for India in 2017 before being sidelined from one-day cricket following the Champions Trophy. However, he kept performing in the IPL besides leading India's spin attack in Test cricket.

Kishan (23) and Chakaravathy (30) have been rewarded for their consistent performance in the IPL and also impressed in the few opportunities they got with the Indian team.

The T20 World Cup starts October 17 in the UAE and Oman. The 'Men in Blue' will open their campaign October 24 by taking on arch-rivals Pakistan.

The big names to be dropped were opener Shikhar Dhawan and leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal. Rahul Chahal has been preferred over Chahal who was a certainty in India's limited over squads until now.

Dhawan has been overlooked with KL Rahul, Rohit Sharma and Kishan picked as the three openers.

Talking about the squad, chief selector Chetan Sharma said: "Ashwin is an asset. He performed



well in the IPL and we needed a player of his experience. We need an off-spinner with Washington (Sundar) injured. Ashwin is the only off-spinner in the squad. Varun is a mystery spinner who is a surprise package for the world," he added.

Sharma also stated that all-rounder Hardik Pandya is "absolutely fit and will bowl his quote of overs." "We have picked Rahul Chahal over Yuzi as we wanted someone who bowls fast and gets pace off the pitch," Sharma explained.

Axar has been picked as a back up to all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja. The others who could not find a place in the main squad were Prithvi Shaw and Shreyas Iyer. Iyer has, however, made the standbys list along with Shardul Thakur and Deepak Chahal. Thakur has been in tremendous form and has already produced eye-catching performances in the ongoing Test series against England.

The highly-respected wicketkeeper-batsman played 90 Tests, 350 ODIs and 98 T20 Internationals amassing 4876, 10773 and 1617 runs respectively across formats.

He has largely kept a low profile after retiring internationally, focussing on his IPL engagements and organic farming at his home town Ranchi.

Shami fit; Rohit, Pujara status being monitored



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, Sept 8: Veteran India speedster Mohammed Shami has recovered from his niggles and is fit to play the final Test against England in Manchester, starting September 10.

Shami and fellow senior pacer Ishant Sharma were rested from the Oval Test that India won by 157 runs to take 2-1 lead in the five-match series as the duo was nursing niggles.

It is learnt that Shami had joined the team's training session Wednesday, two days before the commencement of the final Test. Shami's fitness status will certainly help captain Virat Kohli and only available coach Vikram Rathour to mull on available options ahead of the fifth game.

As of now among the Indian bowlers, Bumrah is way ahead in terms of quantum of overs with 151 of them sent during the seven innings across four Tests which is effectively more than 21 overs per innings.

Bumrah has 18 wickets to his credit but with a T20 World Cup to play and before that an Indian Premier League where he has commitments towards Mumbai Indians, it will be interesting to see how his body holds up during the last five days of this long series.

India, who are again eyeing a series win in England after 14 years, would ideally want their best eleven to be on the park but at the same time

also needs to be aware of the workload management of the pacers.

In case that Bumrah is rested, keeping in mind the next two months of continuous T20 cricket, then Shami will straightaway replace him.

But if Bumrah plays the last Test which he would want to as India need to close in on the series win, then Mohammed Siraj will have to make way as both Umesh Yadav (6 wickets in the game) an Shardul Thakur (two fifties and 3 wickets) can't be dropped.

According to many experts, Manchester is one of the venues, which despite its pacer-friendly nature could provide some assistance for a second spinner in which case the till-now ignored Ravichandran Ashwin can fit in. Rohit, Pujara fitness

The medical team is still assessing both the senior players Rohit (knee injury) and Cheteshwar Pujara (ankle) but it couldn't be ascertained whether they have partially or completely recovered.

It's learnt that Rohit is recovering well and chances of him being available are still bright but a decision would only be taken after medical team gives a go ahead. If Rohit fails to get fit in time, the choice is between Abhimanyu Easwaran, Mayank Agarwal and Prithvi Shaw.

In case of Pujara's absence, it will be a two horse race between Hanuma Vihari and Suryakumar Yadav.

Comfortable outings for European giants

Griezmann equals int'l scoring tally with Platini as France end winless streak with a 2-0 win over Finland

REUTERS

Lyon, Sept 8: Antoine Griezmann played chief tormentor as France sprung back into life to end a five-game winless streak by beating visitors Finland 2-0 in a World Cup Group D qualifier Tuesday.

He has now scored 41 international goals to become France's joint third all-time top scorer alongside Michel Platini, only behind Olivier Giroud (46) and record holder Thierry Henry (51).

Griezmann struck in each half after his partnership with Karim Benzema bore fruit in satisfying fashion to put the world champions on 12 points from six matches at the top of the group.

Finland, who had a decent opening half, are third on five points but have two games in hand of the French. Bosnia are fourth on three points from four games after a 2-2 draw with bottom side Kazakhstan, who also have three points. Ukraine are second on five points from as many matches.

After two 1-1 draws against Bosnia and Ukraine, Deschamps' tinkering paid off as France started in an usual 5-2-3 formation with Leo Dubois and Theo Hernandez

as fullbacks and Griezmann, Anthony Martial and Benzema up front.

But it was Finland who had the first clear chance through Urho Nissila, whose floating strike was tipped over the bar by Hugo Lloris.

Les Bleus, however, were on the attack and Lukas Hradecky pulled off a nice save in the 22nd minute to deny Benzema. Griezmann found the back of the net when he whipped the ball past Hradecky with the outside of his foot after collecting a clever deflection in the box by Benzema on 25 minutes.

Finland continued to threaten on the break, but France proved clinical early in the second half. After some more nice work from Benzema, Dubois found Griezmann in the area and the forward sneaked the ball between Hradecky and the left-hand post to give the hosts some breathing space in the 53rd.

Shortly afterwards, Martial missed Hernandez's cross for what would have been France's third. France controlled the end game, keeping the ball high on the pitch and creating a few chances through Benzema, who had a night to remember on his visit to his former stadium, 12 years after leaving Olympique Lyonnais for Real Madrid.



SPECTACULAR FINISHING: Antoine Griezmann (No.7) wheels away in celebration along with a teammate after scoring against Finland, Tuesday

REUTERS

Amsterdam, Sept 8: Memphis Depay scored a hat-trick as the Netherlands ran out 6-1 winners over 10-man Turkey at the Amsterdam Arena Tuesday to go top of World Cup qualifying Group G.

It was the first international treble for the 27-year-old striker as the Dutch posted an emphatic victory for the second time in four days to reach 13 points from six games and take over from Turkey at the head of the section.

Davy Klaassen scored in the opening minute in a dream start for the home side, who had lost 2-4 to Turkey in Istanbul in March at the start of the qualifiers for the Qatar 2022 finals, before Memphis added three more, including a penalty.

Guus Til scored the fifth 10 minutes from time and Donyell Malen added a sixth in stoppage time before a consolation goal for Cengiz Under.

Turkey slipped from top to third in the group as they stayed on 11 points with Norway moving second, behind the Dutch on goal difference, after beating Gibraltar 5-1 Tuesday.

The Netherlands picked up where they left off after an emphatic 4-0

No CR7, no problem

BAKU: Portugal cruised to a 3-0 victory away to Azerbaijan in World Cup qualifying Tuesday to move top of Group A. Portugal were without Cristiano Ronaldo, who was suspended after picking up a yellow card while celebrating his second goal in their last-gasp 2-1 victory over Ireland last week, but his absence was not felt as first-half strikes from Bernardo Silva and Andre Silva plus a Diogo Jota header secured victory. The visitors took the lead after 26 minutes as Bernardo latched onto Bruno Fernandes' deep cross to volley in at the back post. Fernandes was heavily involved again as Portugal doubled their lead, this time his cross was turned across goal by Jota for Andre Silva, who tapped in from close range. Jota then rounded off the victory 15 minutes from fulltime, heading in Joao Cancelo's centre.

Leylah enters US Open semifinals



ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York, Sept 8: When Leylah Fernandez wins a pivotal point at the US Open — and she's won enough of them to become the tournament's youngest semifinalist since Maria Sharapova in 2005 — the teenager with the exciting game and enthusiasm to match raises her right fist or windmills her arms, firing up herself and the crowd.

What often happens next, after good points or bad, is just as important to the success of the unseeded Canadian left-hander with the quick reflexes: She'll turn her back to the court and her opponent, face the wall behind the baseline for a few moments, gather herself and repeat whatever that day's mantra of choice is.

During Tuesday's 6-3, 3-6, 7-6(7-5) victory against No.5 seed Elina Svitolina in Arthur Ashe Stadium, which followed wins over past US Open champions and former No.1s Naomi Osaka and Angelique Kerber, Fernandez focused on self-belief.

Another Canadian moved into the semifinals when 21-year-old Felix Auger-Aliassime's opponent Tuesday night, 18-year-old Carlos Alcaraz of Spain, stopped playing in the second set shortly after a visit from a trainer. Auger-Aliassime was coming off two five-set wins in a row and conceded this match while trailing 6-3, 3-1.

No.12 seed Auger-Aliassime will play No.2 Daniil Medvedev next. Medvedev, a 25-year-old from Russia, earned a spot in the final four at Flushing Meadows for the third consecutive year by stopping the surprising run of Dutch qualifier Botic van de Zandschulp 6-3, 6-0, 4-6, 7-5.

Next on this magical ride for Fernandez will come yet another test against a player who is ranked higher and has more experience on the sport's biggest stages. Thursday, she will play No.2 Aryna Sabalenka, a Wimbledon semifinalist in July, who defeated French Open champion Barbora Krejickova 6-1, 6-4 at night.

Memphis Depay strikes hat-trick to help the Netherlands overpower 10-man Turkey in World Cup Qualifiers



win over Montenegro on Saturday to snatch the lead as Klaassen combined with Memphis to score almost straight from the kick off.

An aggressive Dutch approach led to Klaassen then providing the assist for Memphis' first goal in the 17th minute as they doubled the score and it was 3-0 at halftime after Memphis converted a 38th-minute penalty.

Caglar Soyuncu was booked for a foul on Klaassen to concede the spot kick, which was awarded after a VAR check. The Turkey defender was then sent off for a second caution on the stroke of halftime.

Memphis completed his hat-trick with a diving header on the goal-line to touch home Steven Berghuis's cross in the 54th minute before Til and Malen sealed the win with two more goals.

The one blemish came from a errant pass from goalkeeper Justin Bijlow that allowed Under to score for Turkey with the last kick of the game. It was a triumphant night for veteran coach Louis van Gaal at the start of his third spell as coach. He had just days to prepare the team for their draw in Norway last Wednesday but has since engineered two emphatic wins and a clear path to automatic qualification.

Haaland lifts Norway

OSLO (NORWAY): Erling Braut Haaland continued his phenomenal goal-scoring form with a hat-trick as Norway thrashed Gibraltar 5-1 in World Cup qualifying. Kristian Thorstvedt opened the scoring and then provided the assist for Haaland to make it 2-0. Haaland then got his second before Reece Stychy's lob made it 3-1. Alexander Sorloth pounced on a loose ball to restore Norway's three-goal lead in the second half and Haaland tapped in his third in injury time. Borussia Dortmund striker Haaland now has 11 goals in eight games for club and country so far this season and has already scored two hat-tricks, having got one in his first game of the campaign in a 3-0 win against Wehen Wiesbaden in the German Cup.

Croatia beat Slovenia

SPLIT (CROATIA): Croatia proved they can win without Luka Modric as it beat Slovenia 3-0 Tuesday in their fight for a World Cup qualifying spot. Real Madrid midfielder Modric missed all three of Croatia's games during the international break with a thigh injury, but the 2018 World Cup runner-up has emerged with two wins and a draw. Croatia is level with Russia on 13 points atop Group H but leads on goal difference. Marko Livaja gave Croatia the lead in the 33rd minute with a header on the rebound after Marko Pasalic headed against the post. Pasalic finally got his goal in the 66th from point-blank range off a low cross from Ivan Perisic. Substitute Nikola Vlasic added a third goal in stoppage time. Croatia gained revenge for their 0-1 loss to Slovenia in March.